ARTS FUNDING FOR THE REST OF US, P4
AMAZON STALKS THE BIG APPLE, P6
FALL MUSIC, P20

RESISTANCE & RESILIENCE IN PUERTO RICO
COVERAGE STARTS ON PAGE 10

SANDY 5TH ANNIVERSARY
WE REMEMBER. WE RESIST. WE RISE.
SATURDAY OCTOBER 28TH IIAM CADMAN PLAZA, BROOKLYN

MARCH ACROSS THE BROOKLYN BRIDGE
COMMUNITY CALENDAR

FRI OCT 20
6:30PM • FREE
SCREENING: BLACK PANTHER: VANGUARD OF THE REVOLUTION
A film screening and discussion on the riveting documentary exploring the Black Panther Party, its significance for black people and to the broader American culture and the painful lessons wrought when the movement dwindled.
MAYDAY SPACE
178 St. Nicholas Ave., Brooklyn

MON OCT 23
7PM–9PM • $5+$10
DEBATE: DOES NEW YORK STATE NEED A CON-CON?
Once every 20 years NY voters have the chance to convene a state constitutional convention. This Nov. 7 will be that chance. But is it a good idea? The Indy hosts a debate featuring Danielle DeMatteo, founder of SheNYCArts, and digital strategist Minista Jazz for the Yes side and Mike Fabricant, 1st Vice President of Professional Staff Congress-CUNY, and Dahlia McManus, deputy director of the Working Families Party, for the No side. BROOKLYN COMMUNITY SERVICES 388 Atlantic Ave.

FRI OCT 27
7PM–9:30PM • FREE
BOOK LAUNCH: WE CROSSED A BRIDGE AND IT TREMBLED: VOICES FROM SYRIA
Appearing with journalist and illustrator Molly Crabapple, Wendy Pearlman will discuss her new book, which chronicles the war in Syria from its origins to its present horror through the words of ordinary people. BLEUSTOCKS BOOKSTORE 172 Allen St.

SAT OCT 28
11AM–2PM • FREE
MARCH: 5 AN DV
On the 5th anniversary of Superstorm Sandy, New Yorkers will march together to remember the lives lost, the damage incurred and to demand bold climate action from elected leaders.
160 Cadman Plaza East, Brooklyn

THU OCT 31
7:30PM TUE–FRI, 2PM & 7PM
MON Nov 7
7:30PM • $30
PERFORMANCE: MACBETH
No Name Collective presents a novel interpretation of William Shakespeare’s Macbeth at the Brooklyn Navy Yard. Lady Macbeth morphs into her husband when she invokes the spirits to “unsex me here.” THE YARD
16 Waverly Ave., Brooklyn Navy Yard

WED NOV 1
7:30PM • $30
BOOK LAUNCH: MATT TAIBBI PRESENTS I CAN’T BREATHE: A KILLING ON BAY STREET
ST. JOSEPH’S COLLEGE
245 Clinton Ave., Brooklyn

SAT NOV 4
8PM–11PM • $10
PARTY: LATIN LEATHER DANCE PARTY
Gogo men, raffle prizes, DJ Chiki, salsa, merengue, bachata and more. All proceeds go to the Hispanic Federation for hurricane Maria relief efforts.
THE EAGLE NYC
554 W 28th St.

SUN NOV 5
2PM–5PM • Sliding scale, $6–$15
TALK: KENT STATE: DEATH & DISSENT
Thomas Grace will discuss his book Kent State: Death and Dissent in the Long Sixties. Grace, a Kent State alum, explores the historical tragedy that occurred when members of the National Guard opened fire on students on May 4, 1970. The battle over...
the memory and meaning of shooting continues to this day. Hosted by the Marxist Education Project.

NEW PERSPECTIVES THEATRE COMPANY
458 W. 37th St.

TUE NOV 7
6PM–9PM • FREE
CELEBRATION: THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE SOCIALIST REVOLUTION IN RUSSIA
Join the Journal of Labor and Society in commemorating this world altering event. Learn about how socialism wiped out illiteracy, ended women’s bondage, unemployment and Russia’s participation in war and empire.

CENTER FOR WORKER EDUCATION, 7TH FL. AUDITORIUM
25 Broadway

THU NOV 9
7PM–9PM • $19
SCREENING: “195 LEWIS”
Enjoy two new releases highlighting the experiences of queer and trans people of color. First, catch the short Wait for Me, a contemporary coming-out story; next, an episode of the web series “195 Lewis,” a boundary-pushing dramedy that follows a group of women navigating black and queer life in Bed-Stuy.

THE 92ND STREET Y
1395 Lexington Ave.

WED NOV 15
7:30PM–10PM • $20
CLASS: WITCHCRAFT 101: PLANT MAGIK
Take part in a hands-on, in-depth exploration of herbs, roots, minerals and curios, their attributes, uses and interactions. Learn how to access the medicine and magic plants have to offer. Find out what makes certain herbs “sacred.”

CATLAND
987 Flushing Ave., Brooklyn

THE NOV 14
6PM–9PM • FREE
SHOWCASE: WOMEN PHOTOGRAPHERS OF THE AFRICAN DIASPORA
A celebration of the highly-anticipated inaugural issue of MFON, a bi-annual journal committed to establishing and representing the voices of women photographers of African descent. This issue features 100 women photographers from across the African diaspora.

MAGNUM FOUNDATION
59 East 4th St.

THE NOV 16
7PM • $25
MUSIC: YASMIN HAMDAN
The Lebanese singer brings her modern take on Arabic pop sound to Le Poisson Rouge on Nov. 16.

FROM BEIRUT TO BLEECKER STREET: Yasmine Hamdan, shown here in Jim Jarmusch’s Only Lovers Left Alive, takes her soulful Arab pop sound to Le Poisson Rouge on Nov. 16.

JOANNA GET YOUR GUNS
A Soviet agitprop poster circa 1919. Get your Bolshevik on with a Nov. 7 celebration of the Russian Revolution at the Center for Worker Education and a costume party fundraiser hosted by The Indy on Nov. 12.

QUEER LOVE
A poem for Puerto Rico.

A CUNY student cries foul at Cuomo’s scholarship plan.

A SOVIET AGITPROP POSTER CIRCA 1919. GET YOUR BOLSHEVIST ON WITH A NOV. 7 CELEBRATION OF THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION AT THE CENTER FOR WORKER EDUCATION AND A COSTUME PARTY FUNDRAISER HOSTED BY THE INDI ON NOV. 12.

CULTURAL LABOR
Artists of color want a chance to make it here.

FREE EDUCATION?
A CUNY student cries foul at Cuomo’s scholarship plan.

AMAZON, TECH & DISPLACEMENT
As New Yorkers grapple with gentrification, what kind of innovation does New York really need?

NYUORICANS RESPOND
Mainland mutual aid work for relatives on the island is underway. Here’s how you can help out too.

DISASTER CAPITALISM
Creditors and Private contractors are preparing to prey on storm-struck Puerto Rico.

RECOVERY FROM BELOW
Puerto Rican activists fought austerity, now they’re fighting for survival.

CALLING MAMA
A poem for Puerto Rico.

PEACE & COCAINE
The Trump administration’s demands for more coca eradication have put Colombia’s fragile peace process in peril.

WHEN THE REDS RULED
On the achievements and failures of the Russian Revolution one hundred years on.

AUTUMN SOUNDS
New music to listen to this fall.

COP WATCHER
Author Alex Vitale doesn’t have much use for the police.

INSIDIOUS MIND
Two new titles explore the nature of the far right.

ALL TOO REAL
The dystopian world of Blade Runner is nearly upon us.

CREDITORS AND PRIVATE CONTRACTORS ARE PREPARING TO PREY ON STORM-STRIKED PUERTO RICO.
A BROADER CANVAS
PEOPLE OF COLOR FIGHT FOR A PLACE IN MONEYED ARTS ECOSYSTEM

By Maya Chung

A small number of legacy arts institutions are sweeping up vast shares of public art funding, while newer immigrant and ethnic arts groups in New York City are clamoring for the remaining resources.

A new coalition of artists and advocates is pushing the city to increase access to arts dollars for those who have been left out. The group has put together a 17-page document called the People’s Cultural Plan to serve as a set of policy recommendations for the city government which, if implemented, would more definitively benefit smaller arts groups — often grassroots organizations run by immigrant or minority artists.

The document comes in response to a cultural plan unveiled by the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in July 2017. Called CreateNYC, the plan aims to “serve as a roadmap to a more inclusive, equitable, and resilient cultural ecosystem, in which all residents have a stake.”

Those behind the People’s Cultural Plan argue that CreateNYC isn’t doing enough. And access to funding is where smaller groups suffer. In fiscal year 2017, $111 million of the $777 million Department of Cultural Affairs budget was granted to just 33 large institutions, according to CreateNYC. These organizations are members of the Cultural Institutions Group, made up of culturally significant, generally well-established public institutions. This imbalance of funding comes at the expense of smaller, often immigrant or minority-run arts groups, which then face stiff competition for the remaining resources.

Nicole Reiner, an organizer of the People’s Cultural Plan, noted that there are about 1,000 smaller and often less established organizations that then must compete for what is left of the budget. Manhattan receives “ten times the funding per capita compared to Queens,” she said.

Reiner believes the problem persists because people are “stuck to a definition of artistic quality that’s grounded in elite Eurocentric norms” that advantage already privileged organizations.

Northwestern University’s Jennifer Novak, author of a 2016 paper entitled “Considering Cultural Integration in the United States,” agreed. “Broadening the aperture we use to understand arts and cultural participation” is crucial in an increasingly diverse country, she said.

The People’s Cultural Plan recommends the city increase the Department of Cultural Affairs’ budget to $840 million — nearly five times fiscal year 2017’s budget of $177 million, though still just 1 percent of New York City’s total budget. Under its plan, $140 million would be allocated to “initiatives in support of POC [persons-of-color] artists and cultural workers.”

An imbalanced allocation of funds is not the only issue the People’s Cultural Plan takes up. Smaller and mid-sized organizations also “need to compete every year for funding” through complicated grants systems, Reiner said. This is “incredibly burdensome, especially for immigrant communities for whom English is not their first language.”

Further, the city’s cultural plan introduces a range of new mandates, including diversity quotas for staff and boards. For smaller organizations, this may mean greater investment in administrative costs. CreateNYC is creating “more hurdles” for these groups, says Reiner. CreateNYC mandates organizations develop diversity plans, but it doesn’t “allocate funding for the creation of the plans.”

Larger institutions are better positioned to meet the new requirements because of their disposable income, Reiner said. They also benefit from designated development staffs who can focus on fundraising, while smaller grassroots organizations don’t have this kind of support. “You’ve got a system that’s really piling up advantage on a select few institutions which tend to represent a very narrow view of what culture is worth funding,” she said.

From her office on West 89th Street, Ballet Hispánico’s Chief Development Officer Lorraine LaHuta paints a different picture. Ballet Hispánico is a success story, said LaHuta, explaining the company was founded in 1970 as a Latino-focused “grassroots or-
WHO PAYS THE PRICE FOR CUOMO’S “FREE” TUITION PLAN?
WORKING-CLASS STUDENTS LIKE ME

BY AMIR KHAFAGY

It’s the start of the school year and like many of my fellow students, I am holding high aspirations for the upcoming semester. Yet, at the same time, I have an aching feeling of dread deep in the pit of my stomach.

Normally, at the beginning of a semester, an overwhelming feeling of anxiety about how I am going to pay for my classes at Queens College comes over me. I wonder if I will qualify for financial aid and debate if I can even afford to take time off from work. I spend more time stressing over the money I need to afford school than I do over my grades. I stress about another semester skipping meals, missing rent and losing sleep. Luckily our most honorable and gracious governor, Andrew Cuomo, has come to my rescue!

When I heard Cuomo announce his Excelsior Scholarship program for free college tuition at a press conference with Bernie Sanders, I was excited. Finally, some financial relief. But a part of me was suspicious. We native New Yorkers can smell bullshit a mile away. If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is. The devil is in the details.

In the days after the governor made his announcement, the grimy specifics of the plan began to slowly come out. Each drop began to look much worse than the last and my optimism slowly died. What looked at first to be a revolutionary plan to change the lives of millions of New Yorkers, ended up becoming a plan to further marginalize millions of our state’s poorest and most vulnerable residents. What was supposed to be a plan to bridge racial and economic divides and spread equality will widen those divides.

Approximately 60 percent of CUNY students go to college for free already. Most members of CUNY’s student population are poor or working class, rendering them eligible for New York’s tuition assistance program (TAP) and for federal Pell grants. More than half of CUNY students dangle dangerously close to the poverty line, earning less than $30,000 a year. That population is also overwhelmingly composed of people of color.

In 2015, a CUNY demographic study found that white students make up just 26.2 percent of the senior college population and 15.3 percent of the community college population. Almost a third of students in both the CUNY and SUNY systems go to school part time. Cuomo’s plan demands students take 30 credits a year and graduate on time in order to go to school for “free.” Part-time students, including the 80,000 students in the CUNY system like me, are being overly ignored by the plan. It punishes students who must work while attending school in order to survive.

The governor claims that his plan incentivizes part-time students to become full-time students. He obviously does not have a clue what it’s like growing up poor and of color in one of the most unaffordable and economically unequal cities in the world. The state has not offered working-class students of color relief from the burdens preventing them from pursing a full-time course load. We’re not considered the “deserving poor.”

Cuomo’s Excelsior Scholarship program is effectively affirmative action for middle-class whites at the expense of working-class people of color, and that expense has just got substantially more expensive. For the 80,000 part-time students at CUNY, including undocumented students who are not eligible for the Excelsior Scholarship, the governor’s program has ended up being a Trojan horse for tuition hikes.

On July 21, the Executive Board of CUNY’s Board of Trustees voted...
By Peter Rush

When Amazon, the company that has expanded from dominating online book sales to chasing near-monopoly status in Internet retailing, announced in September that it was looking for a city to plot its second North American headquarters into, Brooklyn Borough President Eric Adams saw an opportunity. He teamed up with Andrew Hoan, president of the borough’s Chamber of Commerce, to pen a letter to the fat cats in Seattle.

“Dear Amazon: Ready, set, grow!” it begins. “Since Robert Fulton steamed and Emily Roebling bridged, Brooklyn has been getting ready for you.”

The wording on the letter went on to praise Brooklyn’s “world-class arts and culture, five-star foodie experiences, healthy workplace initiatives” and its “incredible transit access.” Yes, they were talking about the same transit system that developers have been calling for investigating four months earlier, in order to calculate how much its enemic delays cost in “lost economic productivity” and the “resulting impact to business in our city and state.”

“With several prime options along Brooklyn’s Innovation Coast already in construction, stretching from Sunset Park to Williamsburg, we can accommodate your immediate and long-term needs,” Adams and Hoan continued.

New York has joined a host of other cities across North America in submitting bids for Amazon’s $5 billion “HQ2” in advance of an Oct. 19 proposal submission deadline. The company has not, as of yet, stated when it expects to make its final decision.

Even if New York beats out contenders like Atlanta, Boston and Toronto, whether the company will establish a base in Brooklyn is anybody’s guess — although the borough’s spacious, increasingly deindustrialized waterfront is indicative of our political class’s suck-up approach to stem the tide of hypergentrification already under way here in Empire City.

Andrew Berman, director of the Greenwich Village Society for Historic Preservation, considers the proposed tech hub part of a “development virus.”

“What we’re seeing in the blocks directly adjacent to the site is a stunning and overwhelming wave of development, some of it fueled by the expansion of the tech industry,” says Berman, whose organization seeks to protect the neighborhoods between 14th and Houston streets.

Numerous condo and office towers are in the works along Broadway, as well as a luxury hotel on East 12th Street and the recently completed “Death Star” at Astor Place — nicknamed for its imposing bulk and dark tinted windows. Whatever the merits of Civic Hall may be, the GVSPH wants the neighborhood’s current zoning laws, which date back to 1961, amended to the new developments lining Broadway to the preservation and creation of affordable housing.

City Councilmember Rosie Mendez, who represents the East Village, has said she won’t sign off on the tech hub unless it is accompanied by such a rezoning, as has her near-certain successor, Democratic candidate Carlina Rivera.

“It is disappointing certain groups would use that project as a pawn to change unrelated zoning blocks away,” a spokesperson for the mayor told DNAinfo.

Affordable housing is the “kind of thing the Mayor says he wants,” notes Berman, “but here he is, standing in the way, saying ‘no’ to anything other than luxury high-rise development in the area.... If you look at places like Cambridge and San Francisco, the unchained expansion of the tech industry can fuel the fires of gentrification to an astounding degree. What we’re saying is, ‘Do it the smart way. If you’ve identified a spot for the tech industry to go, just make sure you are protecting the surrounding neighborhoods’.”

Andrew Rasiej, the entrepreneur behind Civic Hall, has donated $4,950 to the mayor’s re-election campaign and $1,000 to Rivera. RAL Development Group, which is slated to build the tech hub, and its lobbyist, James Capalino, each made separate $10,000 donations to de Blasio’s Empire City. Rudin Management, which is behind the luxury hotel slated for 12th Street, is another major de Blasio campaign donor. Lichtenstein is also on the board of directors for the EDC — which is overseeing the development on the P.C. Richard site.

Neither Rivera nor the mayor’s office responded to requests for comment.

**INNOVATION COAST?**

Regardless of whether it locates its HQ2 in New York, Amazon is already expanding here. It announced on Sept. 21 that its advertising, fashion and Web-services divisions will be setting up offices near Wall Street, at 5 Manhattan West, after securing $20 million in tax credits from the Empire State Development Corporation’s (ESDC’s) Excelsior Jobs Program. Amazon is also opening a warehouse — or in the digital age’s Orwellian market-speak, a “fulfillment center” — on Staten Island, for which it will receive $18 million in tax relief from ESDC.

Two years ago, Amazon was long been flattered by accusations of mistreating its workers. It has sabotage unionization drives and subjected workers to security screenings that have added as much as an hour of unpaid time to each workday. Amazon kept an ambulance on call at a Pennsylvania fulfillment center because that was cheaper than preventing heatstroke by putting in air-conditioning.

The company’s cruelty has not been limited to its blue-collar employees, either. “Nearly every person I worked with, I saw cry at their desk,” a former employee at its Seattle headquarters told the New York Times in 2015. Public officials from Adams to de Blasio and Gov. Andrew Cuomo argue that the tech industry brings economic growth and jobs. But what kind of growth and what kind of jobs?

“I think every city should take a pass on HQ2,” says Jeff Reifman, a Seattle tech blogger and former Microsoft employee. “But I hope one of them does choose Amazon, because I don’t want them to double their size here in Seattle.”

Amazon’s Seattle-based workforce has grown from 5,200 employees in 2010 to more than 40,000 today. It has pursued a classic monopoly strategy, undercutting competitors’ prices in order to gain market share. The company isn’t so much concerned with making money as it is with making sure other retailers don’t. Despite being the world’s third-largest retailer after Walmart and CVS and having $482 billion in market capitalization, it made just $252 million in profits in the third quarter of this year. Some years it hasn’t made a profit at all.

Amazon’s rise in Seattle, cautions Reifman, has been accompanied by increased overcrowding, the widespread displacement of longtime residents and a general “erosion of the quality of life.” Average rents and the number of people sleeping on the city’s streets have both more than doubled. The company’s massive investments in growth have not substantially improved Seattleites’ incomes. More than half of city residents earn less than $50,000 a year and a quarter make less than $25,000. Unlike Seattle, New York has rent-stabilization laws and policies that require some new buildings to meet an affordable-housing quota, but those haven’t been enough to stem the tide of hypergentrification already underway in the city.

“Who stands to gain from the arrival of a second Amazon headquarters?”

The biggest beneficiaries, as with the tech hub near Union Square, would be developers. Rudin Management, Forest City Ratner, Rubenstein Partners and Jamestown Properties have formed an alliance, joining with Borough President Adams to lobby Amazon. Rubenstein Partners’ $500,000-square-foot property under construction at 25 Kent Avenue in Williamsburg is one option. Another is Jamestown’s Industry City, a 6-million-square-foot former industrial port on the waterfront in Sunset Park that has been converted to a campus for offices, artisanal-restaurant makers and an avocado bar. It has drawn ire from the surrounding community over gentrification concerns.

Industry City CEO Andrew Kimball told the Village Voice in September that 6,000 people are currently employed on the campus, about half from Sunset Park and the neighboring communities.

“No one in our documentation shows whether significant new job growth took place as a result of Industry City,” responded Doug Turetsky of the city’s Independent Budget Office. “It’s hard to tell if the company brought anything to the neighborhood — besides $25 coffee.”

Ryan Chavez of UPROSE, a Sunset Park-based environmental-justice group, says his organization would like to see development in the neighborhood, but Industry City is precisely the opposite of what the historically immigrant community needs. Jamestown is “looking to turn an industrial hub that has for decades served the
working class into a playground for the privileged,” he told The Indy. “They’ve opened the floodgates to the commercialization of our entire working waterfront.”

Chavez must have missed the memo. It’s called “Innovation Coast” now, according to Adams and his developer allies.

Jamestown is applying to rezone Industry City — currently the largest privately owned industrial site in the New York area — in order to accommodate a luxury hotel. UPROSE has a different kind of innovation in mind. It wants the city to do more to ensure that Brooklyn’s waterfront preserves its manufacturing jobs by encouraging the development of new, green industries, such as producing solar panels, that will help address climate change.

“The city should draw a red line around our industrial zones and not sign off on projects that directly undermine them,” says Chavez. “There should be a coordinated, interagency effort to identify and attract green business and foster their local development. These are blue-collar jobs that are going to be created somewhere. Why not put a community that itself is vulnerable to climate change to work?”

CALL TO ARTISTS

New York City’s beloved progressive voice, WBAI Radio, is conducting its second annual fundraising art exhibit and auction. The event will take place on Thursday, Nov. 16, at the Chesterfield Gallery on Norfolk Street, NYC.

These sad political times serve to remind us of just how crucial the voice of WBAI is.

Only an excess of truth can protect us from an excess of lies.

Support the work of WBAI with a contribution of artwork by emailing: artauction@wbai.org

35 years of celebrating music of peace and resistance!

PEOPLE’S VOICE

October 18
The Rix
Chris Nauman

November 4
Jaeger & Reid
Filthy Rotten System

November 11
Tisbele
Diane Perry

Saturdays at 8 p.m.
Community Church of New York Unitarian Universalist
40 E. 35th St. (Madison/Park)
New York, NY 10016

doors open 7:30; wheelchair accessible
111-787-3901
www.peoplesvoicecafe.org

Suggested Donation: $18, $10 PVC subscribers
More if you choose; less if you can’t; no one turned away
Tuition Plan

Continued from page 5

to enact a $150-per-semester tuition hike, part of a plan to raise tuition by $300 a year over the next five years. Who knew something free could be so expensive? Students attending CUNY’s senior colleges are currently up against a $6,530 yearly bill. As Cuomo congratulates himself for his progressive chops, the most socially and economically oppressed groups of students are paying the price.

CUNY’s legacy has always been steeped in class and racial conflict. Working-class black and Latino students fought for and won the desegregation of CUNY in 1969. The demographic makeup of our university today is a direct result of that struggle. It is up to us to live up to that legacy. We owe it to those who came before us. We owe it to ourselves. And most of all, we owe it to future students.

Without a student movement demanding an end to CUNY’s racist and class-prejudicial policies, we will continue to be at the mercy of those who care little about us. Our continued exclusion within CUNY should be an eye-opening caveat to the struggle that lies ahead.

Amir Khafagy is a self-described “Arab-Rican” New Yorker, born and raised. A political activist, organizer, writer, performer and spoken word artist, Amir is currently pursuing a master’s degree in Urban Affairs at Queens College.
AKEEM BROWDER
FOR MAYOR

As public advocate, I will provide the tools for organizing and empowering communities to stand up to city government and its agencies when they fail us and build a New York City that honors and respects all people and not just the wealthy few.

My top priorities are:
- Transforming our electoral processes
- Creating more affordable housing
- Establishing community control over policing

As public advocate, I will provide the tools for organizing and empowering communities to stand up to city government and its agencies when they fail us and build a New York City that honors and respects all people and not just the wealthy few.

Paid for by the Akeem Browder for Mayor campaign.

The time to change laws, policies and regulations that devastate poor communities and families that have been impacted by mass incarceration is now.

Support Akeem, Not the Machine!

Paid for by the Akeem Browder for Mayor campaign.

I believe that capitalism destroys human values of respect, tolerance and solidarity and that socialism is the cure. As borough president, I will fight for:
- Housing for all and an immediate stop to all evictions
- Immediate $15 per hour minimum wage and defense of the right to unionize in all employment sectors
- An end to abusive policing practices and full accountability for cops who break the law
- Decriminalization of marijuana
- Self-determination for African-Americans, independence and socialism for Puerto Rico
- Full citizenship for all undocumented immigrants who do not have a violent criminal record

Paid for by the Daniel Vila for Manhattan Borough President campaign.

JAMES LANE
FOR PUBLIC ADVOCATE

My top priorities are:
- Transforming our electoral processes
- Creating more affordable housing
- Establishing community control over policing

As public advocate, I will provide the tools for organizing and empowering communities to stand up to city government and its agencies when they fail us and build a New York City that honors and respects all people and not just the wealthy few.

Paid for by the James Lane for Public Advocate campaign.

DANIEL VILA
FOR MANHATTAN BOROUGH PRESIDENT

- Co-host for 14 years of WBAI’s La Voz Latina radio program
- Coordinator of Labor Affairs for Sisa Pakuri Cultural Center in Queens
- Former organizer for the American Postal Workers Union
- Chair of the Manhattan Green Party

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Paid for by the Daniel Vila for Manhattan Borough President campaign.

VOTE GREEN PARTY ON NOV. 7

AKEEM BROWDER
FOR MAYOR

DANIEL VILA
FOR MANHATTAN BOROUGH PRESIDENT

JAMES LANE
FOR PUBLIC ADVOCATE

November 2017
SUPPORTING PUERTO RICO FROM NEW YORK

BY LENINA NADAL

They called her “Screaming” Hurricane Maria on the island. Here, in New York and beyond, Diasporicans roar back with large and small acts of love, light and a reclamation of our madre tierra (Mother Earth).

They are also speaking their truths. The stories below are drawn from interviews with longtime Puerto Rican activists and organizations in the diaspora who have been active in various ways in the relief efforts — gathering and loading supplies, identifying organizations to send shipments to, coordinating actions, and creating manifestos on facebook to enliven the base. This is small sample of stories, but they suggest there are ways to engage, participate and increase the outrage.

SOLIDARITY IN ACTION

UPROSE
uprose.org
The oldest Puerto Rican organization in Brooklyn, UPROSE is working with local businesses in Sunset Park to bring sustainable supplies and resources to Puerto Rico. They are also working with national environmental groups like Greenpeace in order to send massive amounts of rebuilding supplies to the Island.

#PR ON THE MAP
rosaclemente.net
#PRontheMap
Activist/journalist Rosa Clemente is collecting funds for a P.R./ Latinx relief efforts — gathering and loading supplies, identifying organizations to send shipments to, coordinating actions, and creating manifestos on facebook to enliven the base. This is small sample of stories, but they suggest there are ways to engage, participate and increase the outrage.

EL MAESTRO CULTURAL CENTER
facebook.com/elmaestrobx
Named in honor of Puerto Rican independence leader Pedro Albizu Campos (“El Maestro”), this East Bronx community center is collecting necessities to send to Ponce, Puerto Rico’s second largest city, which has experienced extreme neglect since Hurricane Maria struck the island.

CENTER FOR POPULAR DEMOCRACY
mariafund.org
The CPD has created a Hurricane Maria Community Relief & Recovery Fund. Grants will be awarded by a committee of Puerto Ricans, 50 percent from the island and 50 percent in the diaspora. Groups that have already receive help include the Taller Salud in Loiza, the G8 of Caño Martín Peña in San Juan and Centro para Desarrollo Político, Educativo y Cultural in Caguas.

MUTUAL AID NETWORK FOR PUERTO RICO
redapoyomutuopr.com
This volunteer-run decentralized network of more than 100 groups is coordinating rapid response and long-term mutual aid with Puerto Rico. It hosts daily 5 p.m. phone calls with Spanish and English translation provided to maximize inclusivity.

BY KIYA VEGA-HUTCHENS
Climate Justice Policy Organizer, UPROSE

I grew up in the Lower East Side as a Nuyorican, and this has been a really emotional experience. My extended family lives in the municipalities of Loíza and Carolina in the northeast of Puerto Rico. They do not have power. We spent a lot of time trying to find them. It’s hard to know that my family is in this urgent, desperate situation, and at the same time I also feel disconnected. There is a lot of guilt and feeling like we can never really do enough.

The Trump administration’s mismanagement and lack of knowledge is infuriating. It is so callous. I’ve been really inspired by the Nuyorican and Puerto Rican diaspora coming together. It makes me hopeful that we have a strong resilient foundation. We had a healing space at UPROSE where a lot of people came and were able to grieve and also plan our next steps together. We communicate regularly with folks on the island and are organizing to send sustainable supplies. The groups we are working with are asking about bicycles, quality soil, non-GMO seeds, water supplies and solar panels so Puerto Rico can move toward economic sovereignty.

On Oct. 11 we held a rally at Union Square as part of a national day of action for a just recovery. The following day we sent supplies down with bikes and generators.

What we really want is a just recovery for Puerto Rico. We don’t want investment capitalists to further a plan that prioritizes their corporate interests. We want the communities that have been directly affected to determine what needs to be done for Puerto Rico.

UPROSE is apart of the Climate Justice Alliance. We will be following the lead of grassroots groups that have been asking that we build their energy infrastructure in a way that doesn’t exploit the planet and in a way that is resilient and regenerative. We will be bringing more food to the island. We are going to be supporting them.

— COMPILED BY INDY STAFF
My family is impacted directly by the aftermath of Hurricane Maria. The majority of my family lives in Camuy on Puerto Rico’s northwestern plateau. We still don’t know the extent of damage to property or their ability to endure more days or weeks with minimal to no electricity. But we at least know everyone has survived. I’ve been most affected and empowered by the immense solidarity and national efforts made toward relief efforts for Puerto Rico. I have seen people collecting money on the street, bakeries selling goods in exchange for donations, and initiatives popping up in cities where the Puerto Rican population is less than 1 percent. APREE has put together a Hurricane Relief Education Fund. We are accepting monetary donations and physical items that will enable children to return to school while also making efforts to support the ability of students to continue their education. We are making every effort to collaborate directly with community-led efforts so donors know who and where their donations are impacting directly. In addition to collecting money to rebuild schools and provide food and clean water for children, we are also looking into having generators donated so schools can reopen and keep electricity operational so students have access to fresh food and a safe school environment.

Puerto Ricans should invest time and effort into finding out exactly what the residents of Puerto Rico need now, and how to rebuild together. We should recognize that Puerto Rico was already enduring a humanitarian crisis. Everyone, not just Puerto Ricans, should be investing time into studying the history of Puerto Rico and the political reasons it was impossible to receive international aid after Hurricane Maria due to the Jones Act.

Hurricane Maria due to the Jones Act.

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*GISELY COLÓN LOPEZ*

**Alliance for Puerto Rican Education & Empowerment (APREE)**

My immediate family lives there. My dad and my sisters live in the small town of Florida which was not as hard hit, and I also have uncles and an aunt in Las Piedras in Humacao and I haven’t heard from them.

I’ve been active since this crisis began. I work for a labor union and I am involved in several organizations. I do the work of identifying groups that we know and trust, and am beginning to connect networks to donate money directly to them. I had a meeting with Giovanni Roberto who runs an organization called Comedores Sociales de Puerto Rico (Puerto Rico Social Kitchens). They run a food program and their inspiration comes from the Black Panther Party. They are feeding hundreds of people, but they also make sure to speak to folks about what is happening and what climate change is all about and how to make Puerto Rico more sustainable.

In the towns, everyone gathers and they fire up the generator and the people are sharing together, if people need water, you bring back for the whole block. There is the beautiful Puerto Rican spirit that outshines the negativity and makes us feel like we will be okay.

We need the support from our larger networks of progressive brothers and sisters to stop any and all efforts to privatize our paradise. It’s great to see what is happening locally in New York. I visited a local restaurant in Harlem where they are just wrapping up efforts on behalf of islands struck by Hurricane Irma. The owner is African American and the wife is Chinese and they want to know how they can help those affected by Hurricane Maria. They don’t have to do that. I think Puerto Ricans in the city are so much a part of the rhythm and soul in this city. You can’t help but get involved.

*DAVID GALARZA SANTA*

**Board member of the Labor Council of Latin American Advancement, lead organizer of Emergency Action on Puerto Rico**

Hurricane Maria due to the Jones Act.

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*HIRAM RIVERA*

**Former executive director of Philadelphia Student Union, organizer**

I have one set of grandparents that are all in Isabella in the northwest and friends throughout the island. I also have friends as well in the Virgin Islands, which was also hard hit by the storm. I feel driven to do something and to act. I’ve heard from family from the west side. People are okay, but they are running out of water.

I used to run the Urban Youth Collaborative here in the city and have been involved with donation gathering and packaging in Brooklyn and in Philadelphia where I live now. Another thing I’ve been doing is sharing as much as I can through social media. I’ve been speaking to other organizers and Hurricane Katrina survivors and then trying to share those lessons with others.

We have had a tremendous positive response for the relief efforts. Now we need to shift to what will come after all this. The current push is to waive the Jones Act permanently and to cancel the Wall Street debt. In order to win that, organizers and activists need to start targeting the banks directly, the bondholders directly. We need to bring the storm home. They need to stop business as usual. That means targeted direct actions, rallies, workshops to build the skills of our people to carry out these campaigns.

People need to be organizing. Anyone and everyone who donates items, we need to get their contact information. We need to do popular education with our people. Our people are confused and scared and we need to help clarify this for them. They need to understand that this is a question of colonialism, and right now we have more Puerto Ricans questioning the colonial reality of Puerto Rico than we’ve had in decades.

We can learn the lessons of Hurricane Katrina. As soon as New Orleans was inundated by the storm, there were Republicans carving out a plan for a plan they were going to do: Fire much of the public sector workforce, destroy the Board of Education and charterize the entire school district, tear down public housing. The plan came out of then-Congressman Mike Pence’s office. They will offer people pennies to buy up their lands and take Puerto Rico away from the Puerto Ricans.

The last lesson is about what we can’t buy at Home Depot, what soldiers and relief workers can’t do. We cannot buy the emotional and psychological support our community needs. There is a collective trauma that will live in our brains and bodies in terms of generations to come. We will need to deal with this together in order to survive.

Right now we have to be building political organizations, not nonprofits. We need to start building up the political education of our people, run workshops on how to do home repair, basic carpentry and plumbing. We need to convince the people in Puerto Rico to stay. Not to leave and abandon their homes. The only way you can convince them to stay is if we are willing to go there in droves to help them rebuild.
Disaster Capitalists on Debt-Ravaged Puerto Rico

By Joel Conzuelo Arroyo

A STORM MORE SEVERE

After Hurricane Maria made landfall in Puerto Rico on Sept. 20, 2017, telecommunications services collapsed, particularly cell phones and internet providers. People struggled for days to contact their loved ones, and although there have been some improvements, making a call, sending a text message, and connecting to the Internet is still a challenge in many parts of the island.

Ordinarily, a hurricane and telephones would enable citizens to manage the critical infrastructure. The island currently has over 4,000 miles of transmission lines that need to be repaired.

PEEPLING FEEDY

U.S. corporations have begun to arrive on the island, seeking to exploit its citizens and private security companies. According to Richard Ramos, executive director of the Puerto Rico Commerce Department, only 20% of the government’s employees have been able to return to work. The situation is made even more dire by the fact that the government’s budget is almost empty. Only certain analog and satellite telephones managed to survive the hurricane. Six million Puerto Ricans have no power and no cell service.

The principal players in the bankruptcy process under PROMESA are Puerto Rico’s largest creditors and their legal representatives. The federal court is required to review all cases and make recommendations to the court. The federal bankruptcy court is responsible for reviewing all cases and making recommendations to the court. The federal court is responsible for reviewing all cases and making recommendations to the court. The federal bankruptcy court is responsible for reviewing all cases and making recommendations to the court.

SECOND FRONT

The debt restructuring process under PROMESA is complex and requires the involvement of many parties. The federal court is required to review all cases and make recommendations to the court. The federal bankruptcy court is responsible for reviewing all cases and making recommendations to the court.

IRA CIRCLING

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TIME IN SAND

The CAM is the last refuge for those who have lost power since the hurricane. The first one appeared in the city of Caguas, the group’s philosophy is to encourage communities to stand and become self-sustaining. "The CAM is the first place where they can manage their community," said a group member, "and the CAM is the last place where they can manage their community."

A PEOPLE’S RECOVERY

By Juan Carlos Distella

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico — After Hurricane Maria made landfall in Puerto Rico on Sept. 20, 2017, telecommunications services collapsed, particularly cell phones and internet providers. People struggled for days to contact their loved ones, and although there have been some improvements, making a call, sending a text message, and connecting to the Internet is still a challenge in many parts of the island.

In San Juan, most authorities and government agencies were out of reach. Only a few of the larger hotels had electricity. In the town of Utuado, they did not have water, electricity, or internet access. In the town of Caguas, they had only received one FEMA meal box that contained two bottles of water.

The situation is made even more dire by the fact that the government’s budget is almost empty. Only certain analog and satellite telephones managed to survive the hurricane. Six million Puerto Ricans have no power and no cell service.

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STORM MORE SEVERE
Continued from Page 12

As for the Electric Energy Authority, it could be subjected to an accelerated rate of privatization, while the hedge funds that hold government bonds may turn into investors in the reconstruction of the country’s infrastructure. A mass exodus of multinational corporations, wary of future hurricanes, is also expected.

Given that Puerto Rico was expected to need 10 years to recover from its ongoing economic crisis even before the storm, I asked economist Caraballo Cueto how much further Hurricane Maria has set it back.

“It can set us back further,” he said, especially if the current debt payment blueprint and commercial restrictions, such as the Merchant Marine Act of 1920, remain in place. Also known as the Jones Act after the law’s author, the Merchant Marine Act mandates goods traveling on and off the island be transported by U.S.-owned, -built and -operated vessels. It drives the cost of everything from food to medicine up to 20 percent above prices on the U.S. mainland or on other Caribbean Islands.

If the Jones Act is eliminated, “economic recovery can move forward,” Cueto said. “The same happens if the local government decides to create a development plan that is not based on its current ‘laissez-faire’ model. That too, can bring us closer to a recovery.”

Joel Cintrón Arbasetti is a reporter at the Center for Investigative Reporting in Puerto Rico. This article was translated from Spanish by Georgia Kromrei.

PEOPLE’S RECOVERY
Continued from Page 13

from Monday through Saturday.

But the Common Pot should not be mistaken for a cafeteria, as Scott Barbés Caminero, coordinator of the CAM and member of the SALP, emphasized when addressing residents of Río Piedras before breakfast, “The Center of Mutual Support is not a cafeteria. It is a space where we come to help each other in light of a situation where the government collapsed after Hurricane Maria,” Barbés Caminero said. The Common Pot operates under an egalitarian system, which organizers call Sistema de Aportación (Contribution System). And while all comers are welcome to have breakfast, the objective is that everyone becomes involved with the project by volunteering for work, donating food items or contributing money, “If we all are doing this, Puerto Rico would be advancing” said one man as he waited in line for breakfast.

Mama called
from somewhere
near the sun,
where dying begets
rainfall and the ground
is made of the wrong earth.

there is a woman
in her home who threatens
to tear her roof off, to dismember
the body she labored
to remember.

i remind her
we come from a lineage
of shrapnel and stone,
an assemblage of aftermaths —
we will always
find one another.

she cries over
haunted sugarcane,
conversations
with the moon, trees
who offer survival.

i have heard
this song many times
but today, she taught me
the importance
of rain and bone,
on some days,
tears suffice.

— Vallerie Matos
From Sandy to Maria, the climate crisis is real. NY should be a model of a just transition. Our elected officials must act now!

Mayor de Blasio: do right by Sandy survivors; divest NYC’s pensions from fossil fuels; fix polluting buildings.

Gov. Cuomo: commit NY to 100% renewables; make corporate polluters pay.

Sen. Schumer: fully fund the EPA; support legislation for 100% renewable energy; support a just recovery for Puerto Rico.

For the full list of demands and participating organizations, visit SANDY5.ORG
COLOMBIA’S PRECARIOUS PEACE

By Mario Murillo

BRICEÑO, Colombia — Mauricio Quiróz has always had a plan. The 38-year-old farmer and entrepreneur lives with his wife and three kids on a small ranch on the lush, steep mountainside that surrounds the municipality of Briceño, in the department of Antioquia in northwestern Colombia.

Orphaned at a very young age, he was always forced to figure out for himself how to move forward in life. And despite growing coca for over 15 years on his 10-hectare parcel of land (about 25 acres) in the heart of Antioquia’s coca-growing region, Quiróz had been anticipating a time when the lucrative crop would no longer be able to sustain his household. Farms like his are the entry point of the supply chain to the international cocaine trade, which has been the target of U.S. and Colombian officials for generations.

So several years ago, he began to cultivate coffee, coca, bananas, avocados and other licit products. Today, he plans on farming and marketing tilapia in a small pond he’s converting from the enclosed area where he once maintained his processing lab for coca paste.

“It’s going to be tough, because we’re used to getting every two to three months anywhere between three to four million Colombian pesos (about $1,500-$1,600) for our coca paste, whereas with the other products we grow, like coffee, that’s our take for the entire year,” he says, smiling broadly as we make our way through the remaining coca fields on his sloping property. “But I knew this day would come and now it’s a matter of working with all the people in the community to make the difficult transition as painless as possible.”

That transition is the radical overhaul of the local economy that is occurring as a result of the peace deal signed last year between the government of President Juan Manuel Santos and the leftist rebels of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC).

The coca-substitution program is one of the most complex aspects of the peace agreement that is aimed at putting an end to the country’s 53-year armed conflict, and it has already become the flashpoint of a recent wave of violence by state security forces participating in eradication efforts as they confront the coca farmers, particularly in the southern department of Narino. As an armed group, the FARC had maintained considerable territorial control for many years in several regions of the country, serving as the de facto state in coca-growing territory. This history is at the crux of the first and fourth points of the six-point agenda that the FARC and the government signed and have been in the process of implementing since January.

Point one relates to comprehensive land reform and investment in and development of the countryside, which the FARC had emphasized in its decades-long insurgency. Point four relates to the issue of illicit crops, specifically how to wean the countryside from its dependency on coca. The rush is on in the government’s attempt to eradicate coca through the National Comprehensive Program for the Substitution of Illicit Crops, known by its Spanish acronym, PNIS.

The challenge is trying to reconcile the two points — comprehensive land reform and rural development on the one hand, and crop eradication and substitution on the other — in a way that is economically and socially sustainable and will not be too disruptive for the vast majority of the poor peasant farmers in just about every region of Colombia.

Given the history of government neglect, lack of infra-structure, a total absence of any level of technical support for the communities and ongoing threats from paramilitary groups operating in the area, the prospects do not look so good. The implementation process is laced with profound contradictions, as the government’s policy involves both voluntary and forced eradication. That has already created tensions with the communities most affected by the program.

“Officials focus on the number of hectares eradicated to show success. But there is very little preoccupation with the people, the families, the agricultural workers,” said Pedro Arenas, director of the Observatory for the Cultivators and Cultivations Declared Illicit (OCCDI).

The Observatory, as it is more commonly known, has worked for the last few years to support and defend the rights of the thousands of peasant farmers and their families who have been involved in coca cultivation. The organization rejects the forced eradication of the coca fields and the U.S.-backed aerial fumigations that have gone on for years throughout the countryside — now on hold. It denounces the criminalization of the peasant farmers, arguing that they are honest, hard-working people with families who have had no other choice, given the economic conditions facing rural Colombia for decades.

“This is a complex network we are talking about — not only the coca farmers and the coca collectors, but the women who work on the farms, the small merchants in the area, the small-scale transporters that move products and services into and out of the veredas, or small villages,” Arenas said.

In the first six months of the PNIS coca-substitution program launched earlier this year, more than 90,000 families agreed to eradicate more than 115,000 acres of coca crops manually. Up to 40 coca-growing communities in 13 departments have signed collective agreements for voluntary coca eradication. The government hopes to increase the total number of families participating in the program to over 130,000, responsible for roughly 170,000 acres of coca. That’s an ambitious number by any stretch of the imagination.

In some regions, like Briceño, the government has already made the first payments to families that have signed on. They will receive subsidies to compensate for their initial loss of income, and are expected to receive further payments to help them set up substitution projects, such as Quiróz’s fish farm. Each family can expect to receive a total of about $12,000 in direct payments and technical assistance over the course of two years.

The problem is that once the farmers begin receiving those subsidies, they have to eradicate their crops completely — pulling them out by hand — within 60 days, or they will be put out of the program and be held criminally liable. This ultimatum has put intense pressure on the farmers and the communities they live in, without addressing many of the other issues that affect their economic condition.

Things came to a head on Oct. 5 when rural farmers gathered in Tumaco, Narino, to protest the forced eradication being implemented by the security forces. Up to a thousand local farmers were protesting the government’s refusal to address the local conflicts that clearly affect how to best to implement the PNIS substitution program. Eyewitnesses reported that highly armed special forces police fired indiscriminately on the protesters, resulting in at least eight reported deaths and over 50 wounded. The government initially claimed that the demonstrators had been forced to protest by so-called FARC dissidents that are filling the vacuum left by the guerrilla demobilization process, and that they were responding to an attack initiated by these dissidents. But eyewitness testimony overwhelmingly rejected that claim, a charge that was reminiscent of the discourse used by the government...
 whimsical of social movements protests during the years of the insurgency.

“The government first has to focus on changing its attitude towards us,” warns Quiróz, who has committed himself to the crop substitution program. “They need to provide us training and infrastructure in order to make the people aware of the options regarding the substitution of crops. We need support and assistance from the government for this to happen.”

Given right-wing Colombians’ vocal resistance to almost every aspect of the peace process with FARC, it’s unlikely that the government will even appear to backpedal on the eradication program. President Santos and his allies, many of whom are now actively campaigning for the 2018 presidential elections, do not want to appear weak in the face of non-stop attacks by members of the right-wing opposition, which are readily echoed in Colombia’s mainstream corporate media.

Things got complicated in July, when the U.N. Office on Drugs and Crime reported that coca cultivation in Colombia had increased by 52 percent, from 141,000 acres in 2015 to 215,000 hectares in 2016. Critics of Santos, including the Trump Administration, pointed to the U.N. report as evidence that the peace agreement with the FARC was a failure.

The White House is taking a hard line against any tolerance of gradual eradication. President Trump threatened to decertify Colombia as an ally in the drug war in September, demanding a heavier hand in dealing with the coca growers and continuing to reject any cooperation with FARC, still considered a terrorist group by the State Department.

In response, the Observatory argues that Colombia’s history shows that violent, forced eradication works in the short term by reducing coca acreage, but that it is not sustainable in the long term, as it does not provide concrete solutions to the economic and social conditions that led these farmers to grow coca.

For Wilmar Moreno, a longtime community organizer in Briceño, the problem is the government’s single-minded focus on total acreage eradicated. He says the vast majority of people in the area are committed to the substitution program, as long as the government fulfills its commitments — which up to now, it has not.

“Despite the many problems [coca] brings with it, it is an economy that has given us food to eat, for our families, for our kids. And it’s not simply about replacing a coca plant with a banana plant, as President Santos did recently when visiting the area,” he says. “The government has to create the conditions for us to be able to make this transition into a new economy.”

FILLING THE VACUUM

Security is another problem. As in Tumaco, in Briceño and other parts of the country, the recent incursion of new armed groups is filling in the vacuum where FARC fighters have demobilized. In April, INDEPAZ (Instituto de Estudios para el Desarrollo y la Paz, the Institute of Studies for Development and Peace, based in Bogota) reported that 14 “narco-paramilitary” structures had a visible presence in 149 municipalities, occupying territories that had been controlled by the FARC for decades and intimidating community leaders, social-movement activists and peasant farmers.

Continued on page 22
THE REVOLT THAT SHOOK THE WORLD

WHAT WE CAN LEARN FROM THE TRIUMPH OF THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION AND ITS SUBSEQUENT DEMISE

By Pete Dolack

H istory does not travel in a straight line. I won’t argue against that sentence being a cliché. Yet it is still true. If it weren’t, we wouldn’t be still debating the meaning of Russia’s 1917 October Revolution on its centenary, and more than a quarter-century after its demise.

Neither the Bolsheviks nor any other party played a direct role in the February revolution that toppled Tsar Nicholas II, for the leaders of those organizations were in exile abroad or in Siberia or in jail. Nonetheless, the tireless work of activists laid the groundwork. The Bolsheviks were a minority even among the workers of Russia’s cities then, but later in the year, their candidates steadily gained majorities in all the working-class organizations — factory committees, unions and soviets. The slogan of “peace, bread and land” resonated powerfully.

The time had come for the working class to take power. Should they really do it? How could backward Russia, with a vast rural population still largely illiterate, possibly leap all the way to a socialist revolution? The answer was in the West. The Bolsheviks were convinced that socialist revolutions would soon sweep Europe, after which the advanced industrial countries would lend ample helping hands. The October Revolution was staked on the prospect of European revolutions, particularly in Germany.

We can’t replay the past, and counterfactuals are generally sterile exercises. History is what it is. It would be easy, and overly simplistic, to see the idea of European revolution as romantic dreaming, as many historians would like us to believe. Germany came close to a successful revolution, and likely would have done so with better leadership and without the treachery of the Social Democrats who suppressed their own rank and file in alliance with the deeply undemocratic German army. That alone would have profoundly changed the 20th century, and provided a hint at the uprisings going off across the continent.

Consider the words of British Prime Minister David Lloyd George in 1919 as he discussed his fears: “The whole of Europe is filled with the spirit of revolution.”

Two images of the future of the world 1917. For one, the looming environmental and global-warming crisis of today gives us additional impetus to transcend the capitalist system. Unlike a century ago, we need to produce and consume less, not more. We need the participation of everyone, not bureaucracy, and planning from below with flexibility, not personal gain is an affront.

The march forward of human history is not a gift from gods above nor a present handed us by benevolent rulers, governments, institutions or markets. It means the time has come to try again and do it better. Pete Dolack is the author of It’s Not Over: Learning From the Socialist Experiment (Zero Books, 2016), which includes a study of the Russian and German revolutions after World War I and the development and fall of the Soviet Union, with a focus on retrieving this history for emerging and future movements that seek to overcome the political and economic crises of today.
WOMEN & REVOLUTION

Free love, universal child care, paid maternity leave, free abortions on demand — in 2017 America, these might seem like goals for a distant feminist utopia, but nearly a hundred years ago in Bolshevik Russia these reforms were real. Check out our special web feature on women who led and shaped the Russian Revolution at indypendent.org.

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ALL ALBUMS TO LISTEN TO THIS FALL

Losing
By Bully
Sub Pop

Lotta Sea Lice
Courtney Barnett & Kurt Vile
Matador

All American Made
Margo Price
Third Man Records

Sunnyvale Gardens
Antwon
Self-released

What In The World
The Professionals
Metalville Records

By Brady O’Callahan

All brings with it a sense of endings. It makes us consider the ephemeral nature of life. But it is also a time for new beginnings, new school years, fresh elections. We see a change in weather as the leaves start to fall, even if climate change seems hell bent on robbing us here in New York of that pleasure. If your record collection seems as bare as the season, consider giving a few of these autumn releases a spin.

Nashville natives Bully follow up their 2015 debut LP with Losing. The album changes from the very start, with singer-songwriter Alicia Bognanno’s powerful howl fully intact. The record would sit comfortably on a shelf next to 90’s college rock stalwarts Sonic Youth, Nirvana, Weezer or Hole. Bognanno’s vocals jump from gravelly roar to tender breaths and back again, adding a powerful dynamism to her personal lyrics — exemplified by the album’s opening track, “Feel the Same.” She lets us listen into a vulnerable moment in a romantic relationship: “SPOKE WITH YOU LAST NIGHT. (DO YOU STILL HATE ME?) BUT YOU WERE UPSET. (I MISS YOU, BUT I HATE ME?)” Bognanno has brought them together for an altogether pleasant album. The pair’s mutually laid-back styles make them a natural couple. It results in sing-along-worthy harmonies (“Let It Go,” in particular, stands out), traded verses and a quirky naturalism — like maybe we’re just listening in on two buddies having fun with rock songs.

With last year’s Midwest Farmer’s Daughter, Margo Price planted herself firmly in the mists of modern country greats, earning her supporting spots for Willie Nelson, Chris Stapleton, Faith Hill and Tim McGraw. Praised for her apt storytelling — reminiscent of classic country legends like Emmylou Harris and current rock scene before calling it quits. They’re back this year with a star-studded album. What In The World features contributions from members of The Clash, Def Leppard, Guns ‘n’ Roses and others. Overall the album is clean without sacrificing edge, precise and fun as hell. It has a spirited energy that could challenge any punk band with members a quarter all these guys’ age, all the while maintaining a clear rock veteran’s approach to songwriting. And country cantatice Margo Price are among a diverse group of artists putting out innovative sounds this autumn.
We need the police?

Brooklyn College sociologist Alex S. Vitale poses that question vividly in his *The End of Policing*: Are the police guarantors of social peace or its disruptors? Is the force’s mandate to serve the public equally and fairly, or to act as social control agents, protecting property and its few owners at the expense of the many?

Vitale traces the origins of the current push for policing as the universal solution to poplarization of the conservative nostrum “broken windows policing.” It promoted “zero tolerance” for surface manifestations of disorder no matter how minor, arguing that if that disorder were allowed to exist, it would inevitably metastasize into serious crime.

He argues that policing is the wrong solution for many issues, particularly those where something’s illegality itself — alcohol in the 1920s, gambling and marijuana — is what makes it a problem. Drug addiction, he insists, is not a criminal-justice issue: As with sex work, it is the prohibition that makes it criminal and allows victimization through exploitation. Even gang violence, he claims, is largely a response to police provocations against black and brown youth. Border policing, when not just deadly, is a dead end. It can’t stop the flow of migrants, nor when free trade destroyed local economies in Central America while U.S. agribusiness requires a seasonal workforce, but won’t pay living wages to Americans.

Even when police practices are based on good intentions, Vitale argues, cops often work with populations better served by specialists, especially those like drug counselors and youth social workers who have emerged from the communities affected by those problems. The law creates a Catch-22 for social services such as drug treatment: Even where special programs exist for treating and housing addicts, the criminal justice system gets to jump the line and displace those with similar needs who aren’t facing criminal charges. In many cases, people not facing charges aren’t eligible for services.

In the case of the mentally ill, Vitale notes how such seemingly salutary innovations as “crisis response teams, specialized courts and improved training can reduce the impact of the criminal system on the mentally ill and on the criminal-justice system, but these are not replacements for a rational, functioning mental-health system.”

The punitive treatment of sordid-looking and often annoying homeless such as aggressive panhandlers may soothe public sensibilities, but has no impact on the overall homeless situation. Without a housing policy that creates stable, well-funded social programs framed with the advice and consent of local people. Above all, jobs or an adequate income flow would be the death knell of urban and rural poverty, the real cause of crime and delinquency, and Vitale says as much. But that requires radical social change, Vitale’s overall point, though he doesn’t press it home. The book is only implicitly an anti-capitalist critique. To do more would mean writing another book.

Short of the average cop having the wisdom of a Talmudic scholar and the patience of a sacristan, nothing can overcome the objective reality of ineffective training, dangerous situations and an ethos that stresses suppressing criminals over community-building and systemic prevention of crime, and often doesn’t discourage thuggery. The end of policing as we know it can’t come too soon.

Much of Vitale’s empirical evidence parallels that in the excellent Truthout collection *Who Do You Serve, Who Do You Protect?* and he acknowledges an intellectual debt to Michelle Alexander’s *The New Jim Crow*: Those are both key works in understanding police and racial repression. But Vitale’s amassing of trenchant faces into an enticing intellectual framework makes *The End of Policing* a must-read for anyone interested in voting and winning the fight for economic and social justice.

**Police, the Problem Not the Solution**

By Alex S. Vitale

Verso, 2017

By Michael Hirsch

"We hope this peace is going to be long-lasting, because tranquility does not have a price," he says, slipping a cup of sugar water on his porch. "But if the government doesn’t provide us with guarantees, doesn’t fulfill its side of the deal and continues treating us as criminals, this tranquility won’t last long."
By Steven Sherman

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ith the Republicans controlling all three branches of the federal government and 26 states, now is a good time to examine far-right ideology. Two recent books, *Democracy in Chains* by Nancy MacLean and the newly revised edition of Corey Robin’s *The Reactionary Mind*, do just that.

*Democracy in Chains*, focused on the life and legacy of little-known economist James Buchanan, makes the case that the far right is fundamentally anti-democratic, because its upper-class elites know that an economic agenda that makes them richer at the expense of everyone else cannot survive normal democratic proceedings.

MacLean begins by looking at John C. Calhoun, who, in the years before the Civil War, argued that property rights—guaranteed by the Constitution—prohibited the federal government from interfering with slavery. Defenders of slavery even questioned whether the principle of government by the people was as legitimate as their property rights.

Buchanan, after studying with libertarian economic philosophers Milton Friedman and E.A. Hayek, began his academic career in Virginia, just after the Supreme Court’s 1954 Brown v. Board of Education decision. Buchanan argued that funding for public education should be converted to a voucher program, in which parents could choose which schools their children attended and the state would pay, saying that he disapproved “of both involuntary (or coercive) segregation and involuntary integration.” This idea dovetailed neatly with some Virginia localities’ attempts to de-segregate by closing public schools.

It was in this context that Buchanan developed his “public choice” theory. Politicians are rational actors, analogous to economic actors in the marketplace. While the latter seek to maximize their return, he wrote, politicians’ primary goal is re-election. Since taxing the wealthy and redistributing funds was likely to be popular, this created incentives for them to entrench the tyranny of the state over property holders.

He passed through the University of California at Los Angeles, where radicals like the Black Panthers helped inspire him to develop ideas about how to empty the universities of critical thought and focus students on careers in business — not least through the promotion of student activists. He advised Chilean military dictator Augusto Pinochet on crafting a constitution that banned labor unions and privatized pensions and health care.

By the mid-1980s, he was ensconced at George Mason University in Washington’s Virginia suburbs. The limits of President Ronald Reagan’s assault on the welfare state left him convinced that Social Security should be attacked through wealth and deception, because there was minimal public support for destroying it. He won a Nobel Prize and crossed paths with Charles Koch, who would fund academic programs that led to George Mason becoming the training ground for a disciplined cadre sent out to reshape U.S. politics in line with extreme libertarian positions.

In the final chapter, MacLean describes those Koch-trained cadre wreaking havoc as they advance their vision of securing property rights against the dream of public governance. In this world, even providing public health services is an overreach of government, and the people of Flint would have drinkable water if they had more “personal responsibility.” If I have a complaint about the book, it is that I wish there were one more chapter detailing the march from George Mason into centers of power. *Democracy in Chains* touches on many subjects the left needs to think hard about. These include the relationship of racial backlash to extreme libertarian economics; the use of state governments as a bulwark against both federal regulation and local insurgencies; the potential for democracy in the United States to become further constrained; and the use of a base in the universities to train a cadre to march through the institutions of the state. One might wonder if the academic left’s emphasis on cultural studies in the last few decades has been a poor strategy, compared to what the Koch/Buchanan cadres have accomplished.

Corey Robin revised his 2011 book for two reasons — first, because some readers told him that after a strong start, it degenerated into a series of essays. Second, he wanted to say something about Donald Trump. The new edition is in some ways more cohesive than the original.

His statement of the theoretical framework remains powerful. The U.S. far right — obsessed with sustaining power and hierarchy — is more reactionary, he says, than conservative (skeptical of change, venerating the free market and tradition, and suspicious of state power). When power relations at work or in the family, typically regarded as private, are unsettled by revolts from below and are no longer taken for granted, the reactionary mind sets to work recasting those hierarchies.

Reactionaries thus recognize the threat from the left and rise to the struggle. Robin demonstrates that they can be protean and intellectually daring, and seek regeneration through violence. He devotes a number of chapters to giants of Western political thought, including Thomas Hobbes, Edmund Burke, Friedrich Nietzsche, and F.A. Hayek, to show how this process works. Of particular note is the way they revise economic theories that give labor credit for the creation of economic value — most notably in the work of Adam Smith — and shift that credit to some elite, such as men of capital, entrepreneurs, or taste makers.

When Robin shifts focus to the United States, the narrative loses something. Ayn Rand and Antonin Scalia simply aren’t as interesting thinkers as those mentioned above. More important, he doesn’t really address the question of right-wing populism, the embrace of reactionary ideas of hierarchy by ordinary people. He seems to think it’s cooked up by elites and sold to the masses, rather than allowing for the sort of subaltern agency that might produce it on its own.

All this is prelude to the question of Trump. In power, Robin believes, Trump is not an American Adolf Hitler, as he has repeatedly been checked by opposition within the halls of power and the street. He has done the most damage not through unprecedented authoritarian gestures, but through the ordinary presidential powers of appointing judges and executive-branch administrators.

Robin emphasizes the long-term downward trajectory of Republican electoral prospects, with Trump winning the presidency with a smaller percentage of the vote than Richard Nixon, Reagan, or either George Bush. He sees the splintering of the far right as different tendencies going off in their own ways. Trump has not been an effective leader for this moment, as his rage focuses on his own obsessions rather than resonating with the broader concerns of people outside his cult of personality.

Most strikingly, Robin suggests the real root of the dilemmas of both Trump and the Republicans is the weakness of the left — that the reactionaries are adrift without a genuine emancipatory project to confront. This is a very suggestive idea, but the timing is more complex. When Reagan entered the White House, the movements of the 1960s were mostly in retreat, if not altogether vanquished. George W. Bush had an impressive reactionary presidency without much of a left around at all. During the 2016 campaign, many observers, including Robin, took Trump’s candidacy as evidence of the right’s unprecedented weakness. Is it not possible that Trump is being underestimated again, based on the chaos of his first year?
In 1982, the year Blade Runner was released, climate change was a dimly understood phenomenon discussed by a few scientists. Set in 1999, it followed Deckard (Harrison Ford) as he hunted down rogue replicants that had become discontent with the brief and limited existence they were given by their maker, Eldon Tyrell. The constant rain and gloom of its future Los Angeles gave the film a mysterious aura, the backdrop against which a dark fable about consciousness and freedom was set. Dystopian films were relatively rare back then, and the audience for them was narrow.

In 2017, when a global-warming disaster is looming and droughts, forest fires and hurricanes are ravaging California and the Caribbean, the backdrop of ecological collapse in the sequel doesn’t feel so much mysterious as terrifyingly plausible. Dystopia is no longer a niche-market notion, the speculative setting for a dark fable.

Nearly every preview in the theater is some variation on the theme of near-future doom. For these contextual reasons as much as any flaws in the film itself (and there are several), Blade Runner 2049, the sequel, is unable to quite match the mythic grandeur of its predecessor. It is as though the real world has caught up with the dark imaginings of Ridley Scott and Philip K. Dick, rendering the landscapes and situations of their fictions incapable of fostering the unsettling awe that is needed to create a work of great existential scope. Don’t get me wrong, this is a worthy sequel. The cinematography is breathtaking, the sound overwhelming, the acting is mostly terrific (with the exception of Jared Leto), and the script is very, very good. By most measures it is a tour-de-force. Despite all of its majesty, however, it cannot manage to ascend to the heights of a malevolent, completely inhuman villain. It plays cartoonishly. Leto plays a cartoon bad guy, who, even is how the film posits biological reproduction as the ultimate proof of “real” life. This makes little sense within the world of these characters, the best of whom were not born at all. The miracle of birth is posited as the golden chalice, the holy grail of being, end of story.

Really? Is K really of less value than the biological progeny of a replicant? The film doesn’t appear to be very interested in this question, which, if you ask me, is an insult to replicant-kind the galaxy over. Most of all, it is a profound insult to Roy Batty’s tears, shed in rain at the end of his brief existence, which was no less a miracle than any human boy’s.
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