

# THE Nation.

MAY 1/8, 2023

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**Jonathan Lethem**

on the Palo Alto System

**Jennifer Wilson**

on Emma Cline's pool parties

**Daniel Bessner**

on Francis Fukuyama's discontents

**Sarah Jaffe**

on Jenny Odell and clocking out

**Gerald Horne**

on C.L.R. James, man of paradox

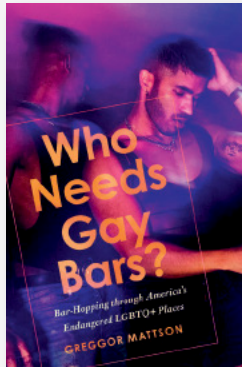
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**DONALD TRUMP,**  
LAWLESS THUG  
ELIE MYSTAL





REDWOOD  PRESS

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*Bar-Hopping through America's  
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Greggor Mattson

*A gimlet-eyed love letter to gay bars  
and a journey to rediscover their role in  
America today*

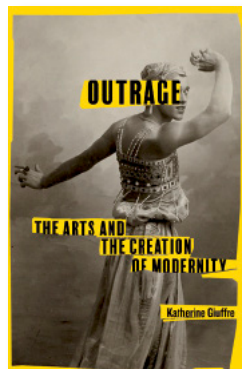
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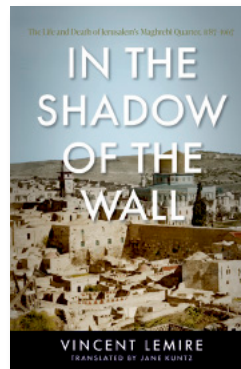
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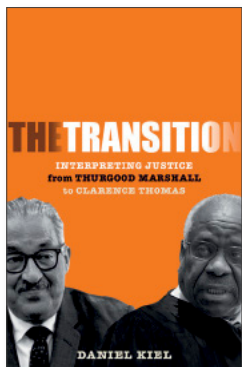
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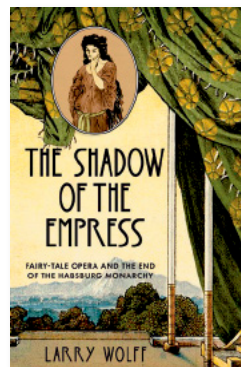
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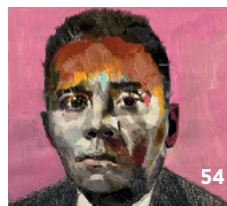
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EDITORIAL/ELIE MYSTAL FOR THE NATION

# A Lawless Thug

**E**VER SINCE MANHATTAN DISTRICT ATTORNEY ALVIN BRAGG INDICTED DONALD Trump on 34 felony counts of falsifying business records, Trump has responded by attacking Bragg as well as the district attorney's wife; Juan Merchan, the judge presiding over the case; and the Biden administration, all while exhorting his supporters—some of whom attempted to violently overthrow the government—to rally to his defense again.

In other words, Trump has chosen to fight the charges against him like a lawless thug.

It's tempting to allow ourselves to feel inured to Trump's authoritarian antics, but we should never lose our ability to recoil at what he's doing. Trump isn't attacking the law; he's attacking the rule of law. Instead of availing himself of the process afforded to every citizen who is accused of a crime, he's calling for Bragg's arrest. Instead of using his overwhelming resources to fight the charges, he's using his platform—and an endless supply of free media coverage—to spread lies and misinformation about the entire justice system.

Trump's strategy stands out because he is doing this by *choice*. He has perfectly legitimate legal defenses he could rely on.

Even so, the fact that Trump has defenses doesn't mean Bragg was wrong to bring the case. I don't know anybody who is not a grifter or a cultist who reasonably thinks Trump is innocent of these charges. We know he paid actress Stormy Daniels \$130,000 in hush money to cover up an alleged affair; we know he lied about it; and, if we believe his former attorney Michael Cohen—who has already gone to prison in connection with this matter—we know that Trump improperly coded those payments as legal expenses. That's a crime, albeit a misdemeanor, and with the right documentation, Bragg should easily be able to prove Trump's guilt.

But that's far from the end of the legal story. To make these crimes felonies, as Bragg claims they are, the prosecution needs to show that Trump not only falsified these records, but did so with the intent to cover up some other, more serious crime. Bragg's theory is that Trump falsified the documents in furtherance of campaign finance violations and tax evasion. He also accuses Trump of engaging in a "catch and kill" conspiracy with the *National Enquirer* and its former publisher, David Pecker, in a long-term scheme to suppress harmful stories about Trump during his 2016 run for the presidency, which would also be a campaign finance violation.

All of that might be true, but the astute reader will note that Trump hasn't been charged with campaign finance violations, or tax evasion, or conspiracy. Trump can reasonably argue that he simply kept sloppy books, that he had no intent to defraud, and that if he was involved in any of these more serious crimes, surely

someone would have charged him with it by now, including Bragg's own office. He can further argue that these charges are time-barred: The statute of limitations on filing false business records is five years, and the allegations against Trump mainly concern 2017 records.

I'm not saying that Trump is going to win. I'm saying that this is how the process is supposed to work: A person is charged with a crime, they present a defense, we have a trial, and a jury renders a verdict. This is a process that has been good enough for everybody from former vice presidential candidate John Edwards (who was charged with basically the same crime as Trump and acquitted) to Gwyneth Paltrow. But

Trump, apparently, doesn't have the same strength and toughness as Paltrow. He is afraid to justify his actions in a court of law. A normal politician might welcome the opportunity to beat back ticky-tacky bookkeeping charges in a public hearing. But Trump

would rather threaten violence outside of a courthouse than make a reasonable argument inside of one, even when he has reasonable arguments to make.

If he didn't commit these crimes, Trump should beat the charges. If Bragg's case is weak or on shaky legal ground, Trump should beat the charges. And if Trump doesn't think he can beat these charges, he should plead guilty and pay a fine.

That would all be normal. Making excuses for Trump to do anything else plays into his authoritarian narrative and places him where he least deserves to be: above the law. **N**

**Trump would rather threaten violence outside of a courthouse than make a reasonable argument inside of one.**



COMMENT / JEFF FAUX

# The Dogs of War

*Biden has committed us to a global crusade against our perceived enemies—a crusade that threatens our future.*

**T**WO YEARS AGO, JOE BIDEN'S AGENDA SIGNALLED that the Democratic Party wing of our governing class was finally ready to face the long-accumulating economic, political, and social crises facing the country. It was never going to be easy. The costs of transition to a secure and prosperous future are enormous—and it is a task of decades.

In his first year in office, Biden took some important steps: investments in infrastructure, technology, clean energy, social programs, and workforce diversity. He withdrew us from the quagmire in Afghanistan, forswore regime change, and promised a foreign policy for the middle class. A year later, we Americans can kiss tomorrow goodbye.

With bipartisan support from establishment politicians, plutocrats, and pundits, Biden has now committed us to a four-front global crusade against Russia, China, Iran, and a continually shifting terrorist hit list.

None of these “enemies” threaten the survival or well-being of Americans. And the record of the United States in coddling dictators and torturers, violating international law, and invading other countries mocks the claim that we are fighting for universal human values.

The core conflict in each theater of war is over the United States' control of other nations' geographic alliances. US armed forces are present in 750 bases in 80 countries. Analysts on both the left and the right concluded long ago that this “superb” military is bloated, inefficient, and overpriced. The war machine budget just for 2024 is \$842 billion. Add the money for homeland security, the State Department, and the proposed budget for veterans' benefits, and you reach a national security tab of over \$1.3 trillion. Lots of money for a military that hasn't won a serious war since 1945.

And at little political price. By abolishing the draft in 1973, Richard Nixon virtually wiped out the anti-war movement. A decade later, Ronald Reagan showed politicians how they could borrow money from the rest of the world to finance the military, muffle domestic discontent, and cut taxes while still calling themselves “fiscal conservatives.” Because the dollars we print were in demand as the world's reserve currency, we wouldn't have to pay them back.

So long as these forever wars were limited to distant places most Americans couldn't find on a map, and Pentagon contracts were deftly allocated among congressional districts, it was all politically manageable. Protected by distance and dollars, Americans could root for Team America on their infotainment channels. Insulated from their constituents, politicians could play and profit from the “great game” of global geopolitics.

But this new Cold War is rapidly raising the stakes. The adversaries are formidable, and the conflicts will be much harder to exit.

We have already reached the limits of our productive capacity supplying weapons to Ukraine. Ukraine has used up a 13-year supply of Stinger anti-aircraft missiles and a five-year supply of Javelin anti-tank missiles. The US produces 14,000 155-mm artillery shells a month;

Ukraine burns through that much in two days. Neither we nor our NATO allies can deliver what Ukraine needs for the “victory” we are promising it.

At the same time, Washington is openly preparing for a war with China over Taiwan. War game simulations have shown that we would run out of long-range naval missiles a week after the shooting started. The Air Force is short 1,650 pilots; the Navy says it needs several hundred new warships; and the Army plans to reduce its troop count by 10,000 because it can't get enough recruits. Biden has pledged to make Taiwan a “porcupine” of missiles aimed at China. Yet we have a \$19 billion backlog in weapons previously promised to Taipei.

The long-term, cost-plus contracts are cascading out of the Pentagon in a corporate feeding frenzy. The defense sector is bidding up the price of technical talent and essential components. One casualty will be Biden's CHIPS Act, meant to increase our competitiveness by subsidizing the semiconductor industry. He is locking the military-industrial complex into a booming market whose principal customer doesn't care much about the price. The new cutting-edge technologies will inevitably go into supersecret weapons, not competitive products for commercial markets.

Not to worry, say the pundits: The US can afford it all. The national security budget is only 3 to 5 percent of our GDP. Even if it doubles, so what? But abstract accounting is not the right measure of whether we have enough financial and political capital for both war and the metastasizing problems at home.

As he escalated the Vietnam War, Lyndon Johnson also assured us that we could have “guns and butter.” Later, a broken and bitter Johnson told his biographer that “that bitch of a war” had killed the Great Society.

Today, our 15 percent share of global GDP is slightly less than China's. Two-thirds of the world's countries trade more with China than with the US. We run chronic trade and fiscal deficits. The dollar still dominates but has slipped from 70 to 60 percent of global reserves in the past 20 years. And our aggressive confiscation of a growing list of foreigners' assets is making investors nervous.

Our political capital has shrunk even more. The share of Americans who trust that their government will mostly do the right thing fell from almost 80 percent in the early 1960s

**The new Cold War will further feed the militarism that has pervaded our political culture.**



to 20 percent today. And the once conservative Republican Party has become a wrecking ball of nihilism. Reflecting this, the president's latest budget proposal is visionless and defensive: cutting the federal deficit while asking to protect—not expand—domestic programs with a dead-on-arrival tax increase on the rich.

Biden opened his global crusade against Russia by promising the world that Americans would sacrifice for others: “America stands up to bullies.... This is who we are.” Rather, this is who we say we are. Public support for our Ukraine adventure seems to be following the pattern of Vietnam, Iraq, and Afghanistan: an initial rush of jingoistic flag-waving and outrage at the enemy, then second thoughts. Support for sending weapons to Ukraine declined from 60 percent last May to 48 percent in January. A majority oppose sending troops—some of whom are already there as “inspectors.”

The new Cold War will further feed the militarism that has pervaded our political culture with increased government surveil-

lance, weapons of war for local police departments, and the AK-47 as a sacred civilian icon. In a 2021 poll, 40 percent of Americans said they would accept a military coup. Charges that war skeptics are disloyal have begun to permeate the mainstream media; a whiff of McCarthyism is in the air.

The main opposition to Biden's Ukraine policy is from the radical right and will disappear if the GOP wins in 2024. Left Democrats talk wistfully of “diplomacy.” But since Biden is currently their only prospect for 2024, Democrats who disagree with him have shut up.

If their agenda has any chance of being revived, progressives will have to build on the public's “second thoughts,” challenging the bipartisan war party over where America is headed.

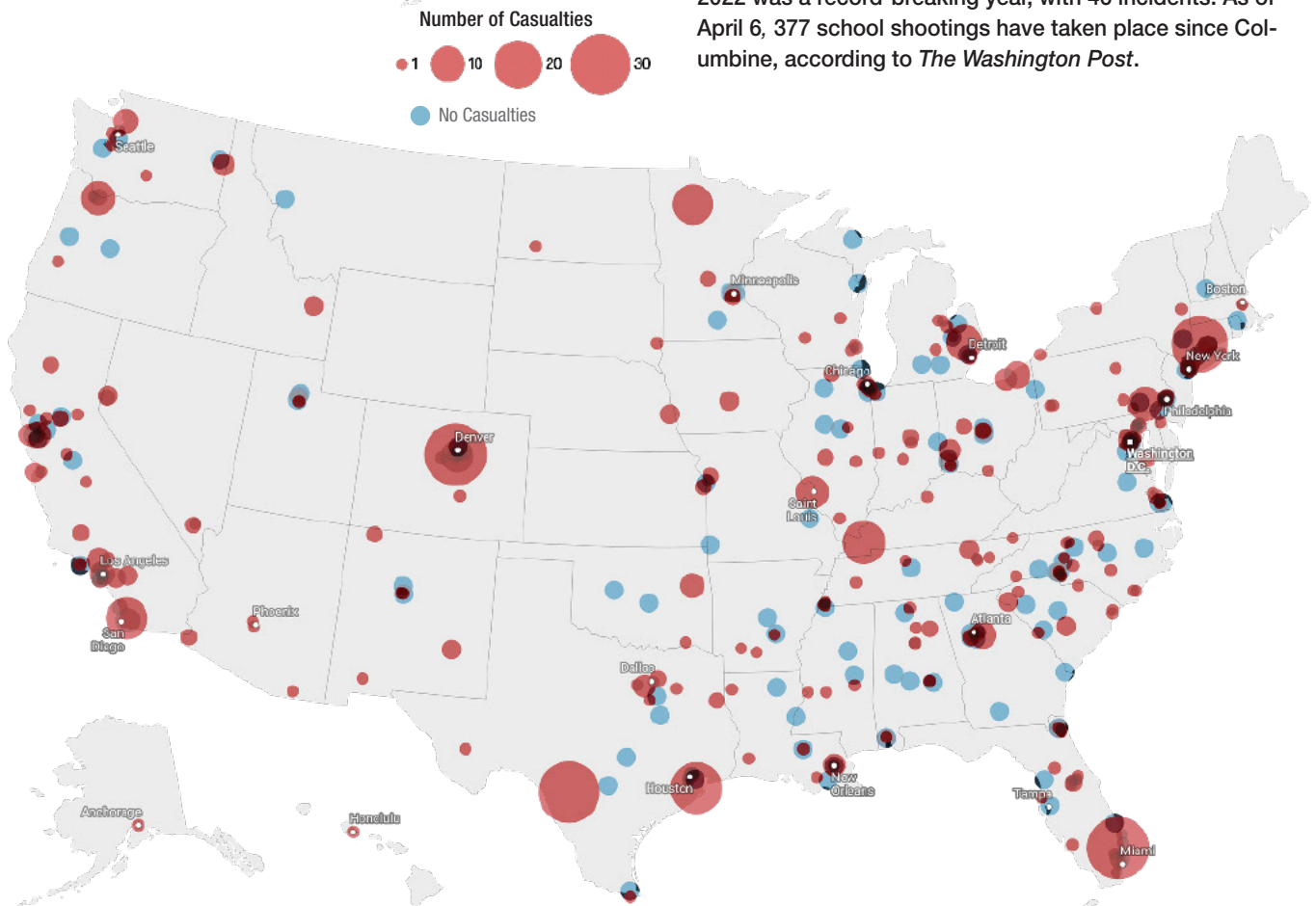
The dogs of war may be unleashed “over there,” but they will feed here at home. And devour our future. **N**

*Jeff Faux was the founding president of the Economic Policy Institute. His books include The Servant Economy.*

## An Epidemic

*More than 300,000 students have experienced gun violence in their schools since the Columbine High School massacre of April 20, 1999.*

The school shooting in Columbine, Colo., 24 years ago should have marked a turning point for gun policy in the United States. But as the nation reels from yet another deadly attack in 2023—this time in Nashville, leaving six dead—it's clear that when it comes to the safety of our children, the US is headed in the wrong direction. In fact, 2022 was a record-breaking year, with 46 incidents. As of April 6, 377 school shootings have taken place since Columbine, according to *The Washington Post*.





# Back Talk Alexis Grenell



## Civil Standards

*Don't fall for Cuomo and company's talking points: Sexual harassment is a civil, not a criminal, offense.*

**I** SWORE THAT I WAS DONE WRITING ABOUT ANDREW Cuomo. But the problem with shameless psychopaths is that they can easily cow a weakened media into reporting their nonsense as actual, relevant fact. And that's where we find ourselves today. Cuomo, like Donald Trump and other serial abusers, continues to insist that the lack of criminal charges against him is proof of innocence. Rather than just quote him, though, reporters are now uncritically repeating his spin, ostensibly in the service of journalistic "context." A recent *Daily Beast* article read: "Cuomo, who resigned in the wake of numerous allegations of sexual harassment or misconduct—which he still denies, and never faced any criminal charges over—remains one of only three New York governors without a portrait on display." These kinds of caveats are meaningless drivel. Sexual harassment is simply not criminal. Period.

We have two tracks of law in this country, criminal and civil, and sex-based discrimination—like discrimination based on race or religion—is firmly within the civil code. The 11 women involved here, whose claims of sexual harassment were substantiated by the New York attorney general in a meticulously documented 168-page report, experienced proven violations of the civil rights law. Two of them have filed lawsuits against Cuomo, his enablers, and the state itself, for which the media continues to describe them as "accusers," despite their having already been vindicated by the state's highest law enforcement officer. And yet there's no mention of their civil cases in any of the horse-race reporting on Cuomo's future. Nor do these facts appear to dissuade *The Daily Beast* from regularly running mediocre opinion-writing from the addled mind of Melissa DeRosa, Cuomo's chief enabler, who was also named in the suits against him. This isn't just about a washed-up ex-governor and his band of ghoulish idiots, though; it's about what it means for women's rights when the standard for public legitimacy creeps from civil to criminal.

Abusive men are not in fact lobbying to make sexual harassment a criminal offense. Neither are victims' rights advocates. Physical abuses already fall within the criminal code, which, in Cuomo's case, includes a young woman's account of forcible touching, which various district at-

torneys found "credible." The only reason the DAs declined to pursue charges was that they did not think they could prove them in court. That's par for the course: Criminal court is an absolute wasteland for women, with only 20 percent of reported sexual assaults ever leading to an arrest, let alone prosecution (4 percent) or conviction (2 percent). The women whose cases do make it to trial have no control over a process that usually involves their being torn to shreds on the witness stand by a team of character assassins for the defense. As the civil rights lawyer Alexandra Brodsky explains in her book *Sexual Justice*, "The intent of prosecution is to vindicate the state's interests, not to assure the survivor's well-being." Survivors function as witnesses for the prosecution, rather than as partners in a process of which they're only incidentally at the center. And getting a jury to unanimously find guilt "beyond a reasonable doubt" usually demands a fictitious perfect victim. Even after *everything*, the jury in Harvey Weinstein's second criminal trial found him guilty of raping only one of the four victims in the case, citing her composure on the stand, her comparatively few tears, and the fact that she never had subsequent contact with Weinstein. Victims are always on trial for the crimes against them, but they have a better shot in civil court, where they need only prove that a "preponderance of the evidence" supports their case. And they don't have to convince everyone; only a majority of the jurors need to believe that what is being charged is more likely to have happened than not.

It's easy to see why Cuomo et al. would prefer to play to the public's lazy, TV-driven, cop-and-courtroom-based understanding of the legal system, in much the same way that Republican outrage about free speech depends on widespread ignorance of the First Amendment.

Civil court isn't a slam dunk for women, however, and the actual history is grim, as the ACLU's Gillian Thomas explains in *Because of Sex*, her book about Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, which bans sex discrimination. Congressman Howard Smith, the 80-year-old segregationist who jokingly proposed the amendment, did so accompanied by peals

of laughter from his mostly male colleagues. Republicans and Southern Democrats ultimately supported it so as not to give Black women more rights than their own wives. Even the first chairman of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission—created specifically to

**The media continues to describe the women as "accusers," despite their having already been vindicated by the state.**



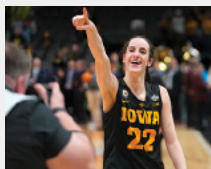
enforce the 1964 act—didn't take it seriously, responding "I'm all for it" when asked about sex. With the EEOC's support, the Supreme Court later enshrined what's known as the Faragher-Ellerth affirmative defense, which allows employers to argue that the mere existence of an anti-harassment policy, and the victim's failure to avail herself of it, shields them from liability. That's currently what the New York State Police are arguing in response to the sex discrimination case brought by a female trooper that Cuomo harassed repeatedly, including in the presence of her immediate boss, who told her to stay silent about it. So weird that she didn't report the abuse! Arguing Faragher-Ellerth

**Victims are always on trial for the crimes against them, but at least they have a shot in civil court.**

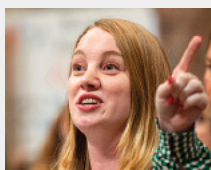
This is only a fraction of the relevant context people need to understand how our legal system does and does not work. But when reporters deep-fake readers by leaving out any reference to the entire body of law that governs the issue they're reporting on, it's more than just a journalistic failure: They're perpetuating misogyny itself. **N**



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DAVE ZIRIN



**> Democrats Can Win on Trans Issues—but Only if They Fight**  
JEET HEER

## Framing the Choice

### Jane McAlevey



## A Win Against the Odds

*How open negotiations—and a refusal to let management set the ground rules—helped a long-shot local ride to victory.*

**L**OUISVILLE, KY., IS BEST KNOWN FOR BOURBON, BASEBALL bats, and horse racing. The races can sometimes surprise you. Just last year, an unknown horse named Rich Strike—with the second-longest odds against him in the Kentucky Derby's entire 147-year history—finished ahead of an elite field. In another upset, in this right-to-work state where only 7.9 percent of the workforce are covered by union contracts, the members of Local 1447 of the Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU) beat back racist divide-and-conquer proposals by management last November to win a great contract. But their victory relied on method—not luck.

"I had just been elected the year before the negotiations started," Lillian Brents, the 47-year-old president of the local, tells *The Nation*. "Everything was a lot of firsts for us, including the approach called 'open negotiations.' We welcomed all members to come to hear for themselves what management was saying."

Brents's father was an active union member—and a Marine. "You don't make excuses—you make adjustments," she remembers him saying. "I was raised with three brothers, and I learned to have a can-do attitude. I don't take no for an answer." Even before the start of negotiations, the Transit Authority of the River City (TARC) sent a proposal for ground rules, which included a gag order prohibiting the union's negotiations committee from discussing the talks with anyone not on the committee.

"I was so taken aback," Brents says. "I said no to the ground rules. And no ground rules at all." As the second woman president of a local in the union's history—and the first in more than 20 years—she was determined for all of its members to experience the negotiations. The timing of her election was perfect: The national leadership was preparing for its 60th annual convention, and the agenda included a resolution to make open negotiations the official policy of the entire ATU. "I wanted help, and when I called my [national] union's offices, they helped me understand how I could open the negotiations to all members," she says.

Passed unanimously at the convention, "Resolution X, Strengthening Collective Bargaining and Contract Campaigns" is a clear embrace of open negotiations. It states, "The ATU encourages local unions to expand the use of open and transparent collective bargaining techniques...to mobilize a majority of the membership in campaign activities...and establish special defense and strike funds to improve their leverage in collective bargaining." Brents was already moving full steam ahead with this approach. Because she had refused management's ground rules, she was

## Scientific Discovery Stuns Doctors

# Biblical Bush Relieves Joint Discomfort in as Little as 5 Days

*Legendary “special herb” gives new life to old joints without clobbering you. So safe you can take it every day without worry.*

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, more than 54 million Americans are suffering from joint discomfort.

This epidemic rise in aching joints has led to a search for alternative treatments—as many sufferers want relief without the harmful side effects of conventional “solutions.”

Leading the way from nature’s pharmacy is the new “King of Oils” that pioneering Florida MD and anti-aging specialist Dr. Al Sears calls “the most significant breakthrough I’ve ever found for easing joint discomfort.”

Biblical scholars treasured this “holy oil.” Ancient healers valued it more than gold for its medicinal properties. Marco Polo prized it as he blazed the Silk Road. And Ayurvedic practitioners, to this day, rely on it for healing and detoxification.

Yet what really caught Dr. Sears’ attention is how modern medical findings now prove this “King of Oils” can powerfully...

### Deactivate 400 Agony-Causing Genes

If you want genuine, long-lasting relief for joint discomfort, you must address inflammation. Too much inflammation will wreak havoc on joints, break down cartilage and cause unending discomfort. This is why so many natural joint relief solutions try to stop one of the main inflammatory genes called COX-2.

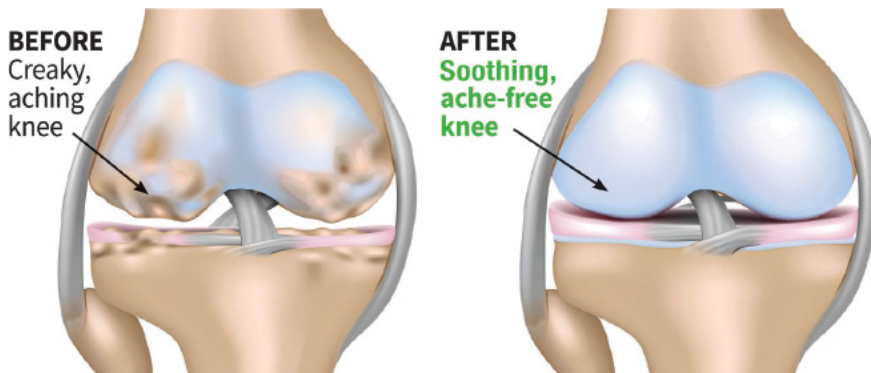
But the truth is, there are hundreds of agony-causing genes like COX-2, 5-LOX, iNOS, TNK, Interleukin 1,6,8 and many more—and stopping just one of them won’t give you all the relief you need.

Doctors and scientists now confirm the “King of Oils”—Indian Frankincense—deactivates not one but 400 agony-causing genes. It does so by shutting down the inflammation command center called Nuclear Factor Kappa Beta.

NK-Kappa B is like a switch that can turn 400 inflammatory genes “on” or “off.” A study in Journal of Food Lipids reports that Indian Frankincense powerfully deactivates NF-Kappa B. This journal adds that Indian Frankincense is “so powerful it shuts down the pathway triggering aching joints.”

### Relief That’s 10 Times Faster... and in Just 5 Days

Many joint sufferers prefer natural solutions but say they work too slowly. Take the best-seller glucosamine. Good as it is, the National



*The active ingredient in **Mobilify** soothes aching joints in as little as 5 days*

Institutes of Health reports that glucosamine takes as long as eight weeks to work.

Yet in a study published in the International Journal of Medical Sciences, 60 patients with stiff knees took 100 mg of Indian Frankincense or a placebo daily for 30 days. Remarkably, Indian Frankincense “significantly improved joint function and relieved discomfort in as early as five days.” That’s relief that is 10 times faster than glucosamine.

### 78% Better Relief Than the Most Popular Joint Solution

In another study, people suffering from discomfort took a formula containing Indian Frankincense and another natural substance or a popular man-made joint solution every day for 12 weeks.

The results? Stunning! At the end of the study, 64% of those taking the Indian Frankincense formula saw their joint discomfort go from moderate or severe to mild or no discomfort. Only 28% of those taking the placebo got the relief they wanted. So Indian Frankincense delivered relief at a 78% better clip than the popular man-made formula.

In addition, in a randomized, double blind, placebo controlled study, patients suffering from knee discomfort took Indian Frankincense or a placebo daily for eight weeks. Then the groups switched and got the opposite intervention. Every one of the patients taking Indian Frankincense got relief. That’s a 100% success rate—numbers unseen by typical solutions.

In addition, BMJ (formerly the British Medical Journal) reports that Indian Frankincense is safe for joint relief — so safe and natural you

can take it every day.

Because of clinically proven results like this, Dr. Sears has made Indian Frankincense the centerpiece of a new natural joint relief formula called **Mobilify**.

### Great Results for Knees, Hips, Shoulders and Joints

Joni D. says, “**Mobilify** really helps with soreness, stiffness and mild temporary pain. The day after taking it, I was completely back to normal—so fast.” Shirley M. adds, “Two weeks after taking **Mobilify**, I had no knee discomfort and could go up and down the staircase.” Larry M. says, “After a week and a half of taking **Mobilify**, the discomfort, stiffness and minor aches went away... it’s almost like being reborn.” And avid golfer Dennis H. says, “I can attest to **Mobilify** easing discomfort to enable me to pursue my golfing days. Definitely one pill that works for me out of the many I have tried.”

### How to Get Mobilify

To secure the hot, new **Mobilify** formula, buyers should contact the Sears Health Hotline at **1-800-462-1815** TODAY. “It’s not available in retail stores yet,” says Dr. Sears. “The Hotline allows us to ship directly to the customer.” Dr. Sears feels so strongly about **Mobilify**, all orders are backed by a 100% money-back guarantee. “Just send me back the bottle and any unused product within 90 days from purchase date, and I’ll send you all your money back.”

Use Promo Code **NATMB423** when you call to secure your supply of **Mobilify**. Lines are frequently busy and due to heightened demand, supplies are limited. To secure your supply today, call **1-800-462-1815**.



free to rally the membership against management's divisive, 3-2-1 tiered wage proposal—which would have given the smallest group of mostly white workers (the engineers) a 3 percent raise, the next-largest group (the bus drivers, mostly Black women, like Brents) a 2 percent raise, and the largest group (made up largely of Black men, including cleaners and non-maintenance workers) a 1 percent raise. When management, after upping the 2 percent to 2.5 percent, said this was its last, best, and final offer, Brents led the workers to vote the proposal down resoundingly. “Management was showing different treatment to different workers, but we are one union,” she says. “When we forced them back to negotiations, keeping our momentum up throughout, we won a two-year contract with a 6 percent raise across the board for all workers in year one and a 4 percent raise in year two. It was hard. But we are never going back to closed-door negotiations, because this new way worked.”

The segregated wage proposal wasn't the first time that management revealed its racial bias. In an e-mail to union leadership, it had proposed holding talks at the local zoo, highlighting the view the 90 percent Black workforce could have of the orangutan enclosure. The contract victory also included the adoption of Juneteenth as a holiday, increases for necessities such as uniforms and tools, and more.

“Why wouldn't we enable rank-and-file union members to be part of their negotiations?” asks ATU International president John Costa. “Each member can contribute uniquely and meaningfully because they understand the job better than anyone, and they can advocate for their passengers and riders. Open bargaining is not just democratic

**“You don't  
make excuses—  
you make  
adjustments,”  
Brents  
remembers her  
father saying.**

but produces the best and strongest contracts.” Brents firmly believes this new approach of encouraging all the members to attend and watch management's shenanigans is what helped them build solidarity and achieve big wins.

Brents has been sharing her local's all-in approach with two other Louisville-based unions that have big negotiations coming up this year: a Teamsters UPS local and a United Auto Workers local. In her own union, she hardly had to do any education

about the contract during the ratification process; most workers already knew everything that was in it because they had taken part in the negotiations. “We've started something here, and I'm very proud of it,” Brents says. “I'm proud of my international union supporting me and giving me the information, the knowledge, and the experience to do so. History has a way of repeating itself: The labor movement's bigger than myself. It's escalating and it's making a comeback.”

With the Writers Guild of America currently balloting members on a possible strike against film and television studios and negotiations upcoming for two national unions with new reform leadership—the Teamsters and the UAW—all unions can learn from the ATU's success. Open negotiations start with radical transparency—and then actively engaging all workers to directly participate. Every legacy union has the chance to use contract talks to rebuild into a fighting force—the kind American workers are desperate for. A union local led by a Black woman bus driver in the heart of Mitch McConnell country made history. We all need more negotiations like this. **N**

## By the Numbers



**71**

Average number of tornado-related deaths in the US per year

**63**

Number of tornado-related deaths so far this year

**1.2k**

Average number of tornadoes reported in the US each year

**367**

Number of confirmed tornadoes in the US since January

**9**

Number of states that had 20 or more tornadoes

between January 1 and April 5

**\$51.1B**

Amount in the Biden administration's proposed FY 2024 budget allocated to tackling climate change

**\$2.5T**

The cost of weather and climate disasters since 1980

**\$165B**

The cost of weather disasters in the US last year, the third-most-costly year on record

CALVIN TRILLIN

## DeadlinePoet



### Democracy in Tennessee

Three Democratic lawmakers were cited for breaching the decorum of the Tennessee House of Representatives by participating in a demonstration for gun-safety measures on the House floor. The two Black lawmakers were ejected by a Republican supermajority; the white lawmaker survived the vote.

—News reports

Since decorum was breached the two were kicked out,

Though supporters made sure they'll be back.

And perhaps the infraction that gave such offense

Was, in fact, legislating while Black.

# Town Called Malice

CHRIS LEHMANN

## Zombie Populism

*The right's crass appropriation of anti-elitist rhetoric makes less sense than ever. That doesn't mean it's going away.*

**F**OR ALL THE ELITE HAND-WRINGING WE'VE SEEN over the scourge of right-wing "populism" these past seven years, the awkward fact of the matter is that populism has never aligned very closely with the long-term goals of American conservatism. Originally an uprising among the self-styled producing classes of the early industrial age, Populism sought to broaden and deepen the fundamental precepts of American democracy via the direct election of senators, popular ballot initiatives, and a new system of currency designed to reward labor over the speculative accumulation of capital.

Contemporary centrist thinkers, following the lead of mid-century anti-populist scholars like Richard Hofstadter, have overlooked the historical roots of capital-P Populism in favor of an all-purpose definition of "populism" as anti-elite bigotry. This conflation permits the blurry, quick-and-dirty depictions of urban real estate scion Donald Trump as a raging populist and the misconstrual of the white Christian nationalist movement behind him as a byproduct of equally diffuse "economic anxiety."

But as Trump mounts his third candidacy for the presidency—and faces the opposition of hard-right ideologue Ron DeSantis in the GOP primaries—something strange has happened. The always-errant specter of right-wing populism has lost a clear reason for being. The US economy is performing at something close to full employment, with robust, ongoing job growth unpleasantly surprising the austere financial elite captained by Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell. Inflation is cooling even as Powell continues, needlessly, to hike interest rates to dampen it further. Even immigration, Trump's pet demagogic crusade, seems unlikely to stir much passion in the GOP base, since President Biden is regrettably deporting people at a Trumpian rate, instituting an asylum ban, and weighing his own version of Trump's grotesque family detention policy.

The theatrics of right-wing populism may lack a plausible outlet, but as Trump and DeSantis well know, they represent a first-order demand of the conservative base. The rivalry for the 2024 Republican nomination seems likely to become a populist pantomime twice removed, as both candidates market a resentment-fueled politics more divorced than ever from prevailing economic conditions.

But in view of the broader class dynamics of conservative politics, that may be a feature, not a bug. In 2016, Trump did score some early

primary success in "the white misery belt," says Joe Lowndes, a political scientist at the University of Oregon. "He brought a bunch of people in who had not been Republican voters before, and who were not interested in the neoliberal platforms of Jeb Bush, Ted Cruz, or Marco Rubio." But by the time of the Republican National Convention, Trump's campaign had also brokered extensive elite buy-in. "I was at the 2016 convention and talked to a ton of delegates there," Lowndes recalls. "There were lots of people who had not originally been Trump supporters but who were still hard-right opponents of Hillary Clinton, and they all moved into the Trump column pretty strongly. They were people from all kinds of class positions, so the narrative that it was always working-class authoritarianism...was never quite true."

A curious feature of the politics of pseudo-populism is that it's often untethered from conditions of economic distress—again in contrast to historical Populism. The authoritarian agenda of Ron DeSantis has taken hold amid an economic boom in Florida, as the governor himself is the first to remind voters. "I think that's the reason DeSantis won [reelection] so convincingly," Lowndes says. "The state was doing fine economically because of a continuous development boom. There's no income tax, and continual construction, continual job growth, tons of funding for education and the university system"—assets that DeSantis has converted into

blunt instruments of a rolling purge of state-funded schools. "It's almost a lack of economic crisis that's allowed the Florida Legislature and DeSantis to steamroll this agenda through," Lowndes notes.

This could render the primary cycle a proving ground for candidates straining them-

selves toward the most reality-averse versions of populist campaigning yet developed. Trump would seem to enjoy a host of advantages, particularly since DeSantis prides himself on policy competence and focused messaging—two traditional electoral constraints that mean nothing to the former president. In his latest policy video, Trump introduced his sponsorship of a nationwide competition to build model "freedom cities" that repackages his pet causes as shiny objects of mogul-friendly innovation, from a proposal to jump-start the development of flying cars to a system of "baby bonuses" to fund a fascist-style plan to expand the national breeding stock.

Whatever else this Randian wish list might represent, it's the antithesis of populism. The

**The always-errant specter of right-wing populism has lost a clear reason for being.**



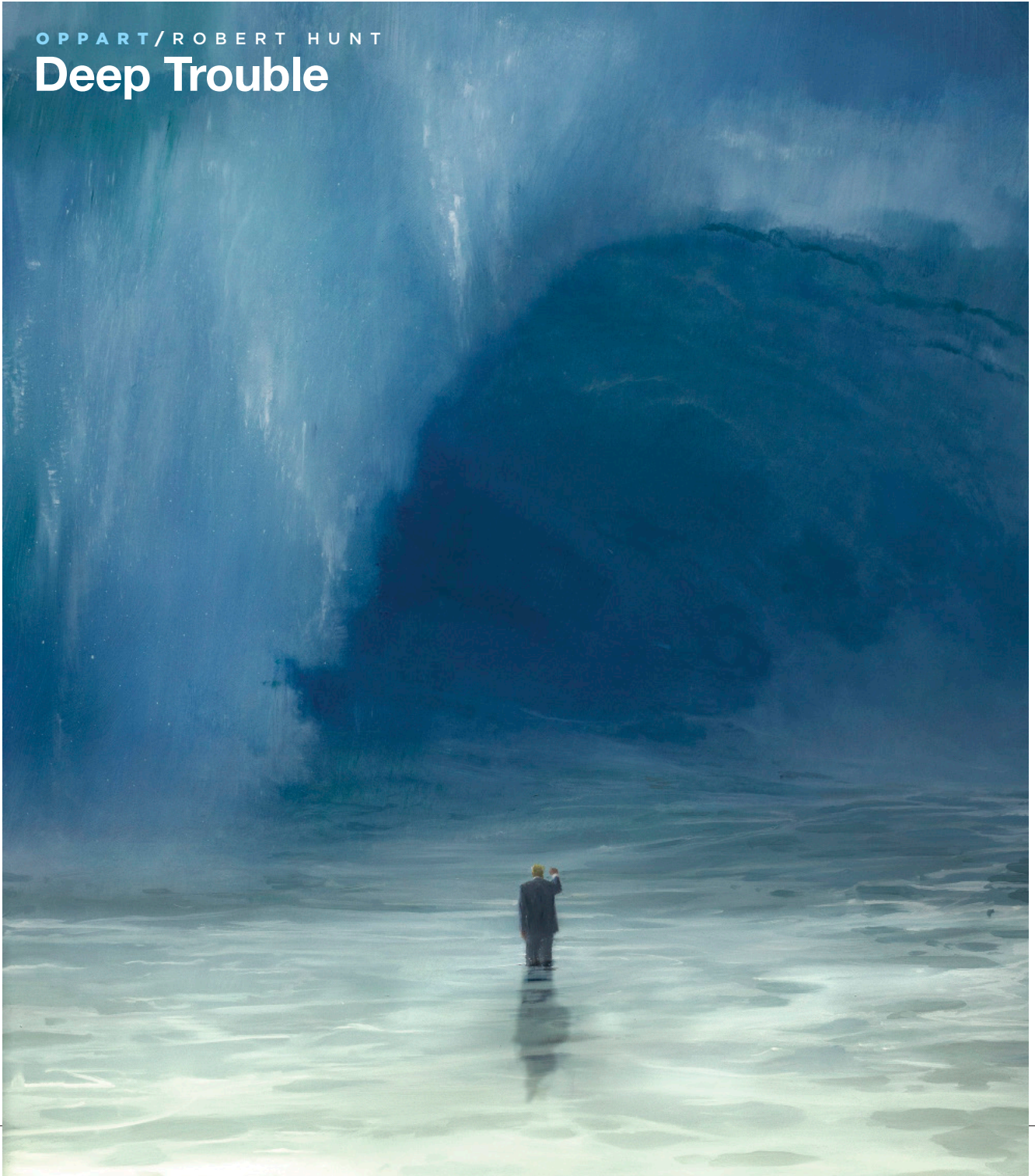
Populist movement was launched by a network of rural cooperatives, and its key organizing weakness was a distrust of urban America as a forcing bed of vice, luxury, exploitation, and corruption. Populists also rejected the concentration of economic power among industrial-age robber barons who built up trusts to control transportation technologies like the railroad—and yet here Trump is touting government support of the same ownership structure.

You'd think such proposals, over and above the question of their seriousness or practicality, would represent a breaking

point in the pundit caste's infatuation with the skybox populism of the American right. But you would be wrong. The press will witlessly record every unhinged Trump pronouncement as populist gospel, while DeSantis desperately tries to mimic Trump's world-building hubris in the confines of his own far more schematic political imagination. While the first stage of the Trumpian revolution oversaw the rise of an anti-elitism without identifiable elites, its new baroque phase presides over the consolidation of a new brand of populism without the people. **N**

OPPART/ROBERT HUNT

## Deep Trouble



# Should Courts Be Able to Mandate Psychiatric Care?

## Yes!

SASHA ABRAMSKY

**I**N THE CITIES OF THE AMERICAN West, the number of homeless people is at near-historic highs. California is the epicenter of this crisis; fully half of the nation's unsheltered homeless live here. Once restricted to well-known skid rows, tent encampments are now everywhere: in parks, along thoroughfares, on residential side streets, in parking lots, along freeways and riverbanks, behind restaurants, and near schools and businesses.

There are roughly 170,000 homeless people in California. Upwards of 115,000 of them, according to the latest counts, are unsheltered.

The state has thrown billions of dollars at the problem, yet the number keeps spiraling upward. What California is experiencing is partly the legacy of the 2008 housing market collapse. But there are other reasons: thousands of homes lost to fires and floods; a rethinking of the criminal justice system, which has resulted in tens of thousands of people being released from prison only to find the housing market largely closed to them; the opioid crisis; unaffordable rents; the economic and psychic dislocation of the pandemic; and, at least as important as any of these, a decades-long mental health crisis that has been met by a shambolic public health and legal response.

Last year, California Governor Gavin Newsom persuaded the state Legislature to fund a CARE Courts system, which requires counties to provide mental health services for poor unhoused residents and forces residents to participate in that treatment.

The policy divided the mental health and civil rights communities. The ACLU, Human Rights Watch, and Disability Rights California opposed the legislation, arguing that the element of compulsion was discriminatory and ineffective, while the state affiliates of the National Alliance on Mental Illness supported it.

I generally agree with the ACLU, but on this issue it is off base. If you live in a California city—or, for that matter, in any major city in the West—you are exposed to shantytowns that are effectively outdoor public bedlams. You see and hear floridly psychotic people screaming and shouting, hitting people and objects, and having conversations with themselves that bear no relation to reality. Many are clearly too sick to make rational choices. Lacking options, they bounce

## No!

STEFANIE LYN KAUFMAN-MTHIMKHULU  
AND RUTH SANGREE

**T**HE US MENTAL HEALTH SYSTEM IS akin to the prison-industrial complex. It is built around the idea that if you do not act the right way or comply with the authorities, someone in a position of power, usually a doctor or judge, can decide where you go, what you eat, and what medical treatments you must receive. This practice is often couched in soft language—like the “care” in California’s CARE Court plan. But gentle words should not distract us from the underlying intention of state-mandated treatment: to remove those the government deems undesirable and dangerous from our communities. These programs essentially intertwine punishment and treatment, criminalizing disabled people—particularly Black and brown disabled people. In California, New York, Massachusetts, and elsewhere, schemes to expand involuntary “care” are proliferating, but they only harm the patients they’re supposedly trying to help.

As psychiatric survivors, we are part of a long line of people who have been abused, neglected, or tortured by psychiatric practice. Although many people believe that court-mandated treatment is a compassionate alternative to incarceration (“They just need help, not criminalization!”), psychiatric facilities share much with prisons, including restricted access to technology and the outside world, limited visitation, the use of solitary confinement, sedation of individuals without their consent, and high rates of sexual violence.

California now allows broad categories of people—including police, family members, even roommates—to refer someone to a CARE Court if they think that person is dangerous or unable to care for themselves. If the individual refuses or is unable to comply with a “treatment” plan, a judge can force that person into care or a conservatorship. CARE Courts are not outliers: We see this coercion inside nursing facilities, residential treatment centers, and assisted outpatient treatment (AOT) programs, where a court requires an individual to receive treatment—often involving medication—outside of a hospital. Black and Hispanic patients, according to one study, are disproportionately subject to AOT.

There is ample evidence that psychiatric incarceration does not work. In addition to oral histories and personal narratives that explain why these “solutions”

The Debate



between encampments and local jails or state prisons.

CARE Courts are a way to help vulnerable sick people function better and reach a place of greater safety and dignity. They are a way to limit the chaos and costs of thousands of extremely ill individuals with no place to live.

Since the 1960s, when California and then the country at large turned against the idea of holding the severely mentally ill in psychiatric facilities, the story of mental health care provision for the poor has been one of repeated failure. The original promise was to replace inpatient treatment with outpatient resources. But the money never materialized, and the infrastructure for comprehensive, timely assistance for those whose families weren't affluent was never developed. In place of psychiatric facilities, prisons and jails became de facto mental health care providers.

Then, beginning in the late aughts, when voters started to react against the costs and futility of mass incarceration and when courts declared that California's prisons were so overcrowded that they constituted cruel and unusual punishment, the prison population was reduced by tens of thousands. And again the seriously mentally ill, following a bout of deinstitutionalization, were left at risk.

Ex-prisoners face an array of employment and housing restrictions. If they suffer from serious mental illnesses, those problems are magnified. Roughly 70 percent of California's unsheltered homeless population report having been incarcerated. Many of these residents suffer debilitating overlaps of mental illness and addiction, as well as

a host of physical ailments. Only when they are ill enough for someone to call an ambulance, and for that ambulance to transport them to the emergency room, do they get some temporary, and very expensive, help.

That's a dysfunctional way to provide care. It is far better to mandate that people too mentally ill to make rational decisions go into treatment. Far better to use that time in treatment to link them up with supportive services like housing. Mandating psychiatric care isn't a panacea, but it is a crucial part of the package of policies needed to tackle homelessness.

The idea that someone in psychosis is somehow "free" if they are left to live in a shanty with no access to running water or bathrooms, with no source of heat in the winter or cool air in the summer, and with no regular supply of food is nonsense. Other states should also mandate that local governments provide mental health services and then find ways to link the seriously mentally ill homeless to those services. The CARE Courts aren't perfect, but at least they are trying to respond to one of the great moral challenges of our age. **N**

*Sasha Abramsky is a Nation contributing writer and the magazine's West Coast correspondent.*

ABRAMSKY

KAUFMAN-MTHIMKBULU AND SANGREE

## Why The Debate

cause suffering, research shows that the risk of suicide increases after psychiatric hospitalization. The work of Nev Jones, an assistant professor in the School of Social Work at the University of Pittsburgh, demonstrates how police response, transport, and restraint can be traumatic and make young adults feel as though they've done something wrong.

The psychiatric care system in this country is erected around and reinforced by police power and the criminal legal system. Officers are typically the first point of contact before a hospitalization or court involvement, and their enormous discretionary power can be deadly. In one study, more than a third of Americans killed by police between 2013 and 2015 had a disability. In 2016, an NYPD officer fatally shot Deborah Danner, a 66-year-old Black woman, after a neighbor called 911 complaining of her "erratic" behavior. Only a few years earlier, Danner had written an essay detailing her experience with schizophrenia and the stigma that accompanied it. She wrote, "Is that a delusion, I ask myself, my belief that I am worthy of respect and a 'normal' happy life?"

When looking at encampments, we should remember that mental health care alone will not change the structural conditions of a person's houselessness. Safe shelter is a prerequisite for any effective psychiatric care. Being in a "delusional" state can be a form of self-protection for people living in survival situations, where full cognitive awareness may be too painful. What we call mental illness is rarely the source of the problem.

Genuine care and relationships should be at the core of addressing mental health crises.

We know from history, personal experience, and research that this type of care is not possible under government mandates. We also refuse to accept the argument that it must be one or the other: incarceration in a prison or forced treatment. Many people receive meaningful care and get access to resources at voluntary, short-term, nonclinical spaces such as Afiya House, Karaya Peer Respite, Retreat @ the Plaza, and Soteria House. Though these facilities, known as peer respite centers, often lack reliable funding, research shows that respite guests are much less likely to be hospitalized than patients elsewhere.

Investing in carceral solutions has stunted our capacity to imagine other systems of care—but community-led organizations like HEARD, Project LETS, BEAM, MH First, the Fireweed Collective, and the Wildflower Alliance demonstrate what is possible when psychiatric survivors have the resources to create and lead. These organizations model noncarceral healing that emphasizes self-determination and the dignity of those society claims to want to help. **N**

*Stefanie Lyn Kaufman-Mthimbulu is a community organizer, psychiatric survivor, and the director of Project LETS. Ruth Sangree is a second-year law student at New York University School of Law.*

**Mental health care cannot change the structural conditions of a person's houselessness.**

**Mandating psychiatric care isn't a panacea, but it is a crucial part of a package of needed policies.**



# Letters

## A Higher Bar

🗨️ In “The Governing Gap” [March 20/27], Chris Lehmann considers why public opinion hasn’t caught up with Joe Biden’s economic achievements. Any president who would veto Medicare for All, stopped a proposal to give paid sick leave to rail workers, and doesn’t push for a negotiated settlement in Ukraine needs more negative—not positive—PR. We know Biden is better than Donald Trump and the Republicans, but that’s not good enough.

PATRICIA BLOCHOWIAK

## Impeding Our War Machine

🗨️ “Why Protest Matters,” by David Cortright [February 20/27], started out with an anti-war message, but then it turned out not to be really anti-war at all, at least when it comes to Ukraine. What is needed now is an immediate cease-fire, not protracted negotiations that may lead nowhere as the death toll and destruction continue to mount. While Putin certainly bears responsibility for starting the war, the US provoked Russia over many years. Both sides are at fault in this conflict, which much more closely resembles a pointless World War I stalemate than World War II. Without a permanent cease-fire in place, followed by negotiations that do not assign blame, this war could easily go nuclear.

CALEB MELAMED

“Why Protest Matters” raised the question for me of whether a peace movement can arise that is capable of impeding our mighty war machine. According to Cortright, the George W. Bush regime won public sup-

port for the Iraq War by falsely claiming that Saddam Hussein had weapons of mass destruction. But when it emerged that WMDs were a deception, Cortright reminds us, public support for the invasion “began to erode.” The lesson we need to learn from this experience is that it’s hard for a peace movement to win adherents until the public begins to realize it’s been deceived. However we interpret the painful picture in Ukraine, a peace movement can only hope to recruit people when it rips away the curtain of deceit that typically covers up our country’s countless armed interventions and that now hides our country’s role in fueling the war in Ukraine.

IRWIN SHISHKO  
DELRAY BEACH, FLA.

## Corrections

“The Empire Returns,” by Walden Bello [March 20/27], included a photo caption that misidentified Navy Shore Patrol personnel as officers.

“Heavy Is the Head,” by Gary Younge [February 6/13], included references to George V; these should have been to George VI. It also incorrectly referred to the fifth season of *The Crown* as its final one.

“The Experiment,” by David A. Bell [November 28/December 5, 2022], inaccurately referred to members of the POUM during the Spanish Civil War as anarchists. The Partido Obrero de Unificación Marxista was a revolutionary Marxist party, not an anarchist group. The major anarchist organization was the Confederación Nacional del Trabajo.

🗨️ Comment drawn from our website [letters@thenation.com](mailto:letters@thenation.com)  
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IN AUGUST 2020, THE MEMBERS OF SAG-AFTRA, THE UNION THAT represents roughly 160,000 actors, broadcast journalists, stunt performers, dancers, and, more recently, influencers, were stunned by a bombshell revelation. Several months into the pandemic-induced work hiatus, union leadership announced that residual earnings—the checks that actors receive whenever the work they’re featured in airs—would no longer count toward qualifying for the union’s health care plan for nearly all members over 65.

The restructuring, which included a hike in the earnings threshold to qualify, stripped health insurance from almost 12,000 people—many of them older actors, for whom residuals can make up an entire paycheck. Nineties icon Sharon Stone announced that she’d lost her health care coverage after coming up \$13 short; Ed Asner, the former president of SAG, filed a class-action lawsuit anticipating the same. It all seemed like a sign that something was seriously awry. “That is a very, very bad headline for a union to have,” said Kate Fortmueller, an entertainment and media studies professor at the University of Georgia.

*Abbott Elementary* costar and recent Emmy winner Sheryl Lee Ralph was incensed to learn that one of her coworkers would be stripped of his insurance at a time when he needed a hip replacement. Ralph, who remembers learning about the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory fire in grade school, values her SAG-AFTRA card. “It was a huge deal for me, as a

**Fran Drescher was once network TV’s working-class darling—but does she have what it takes to marshal the collective power of a deeply divided union?**

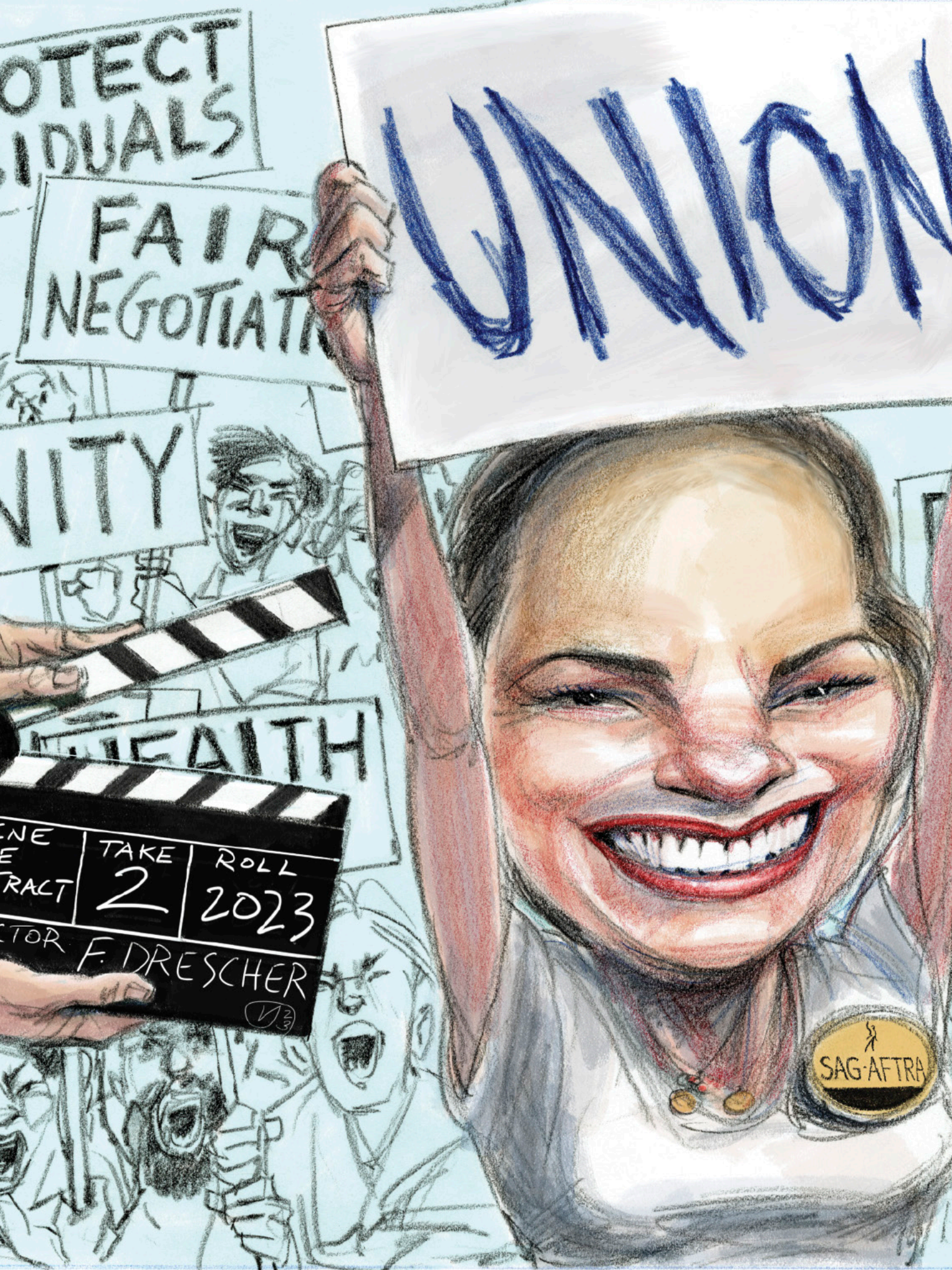
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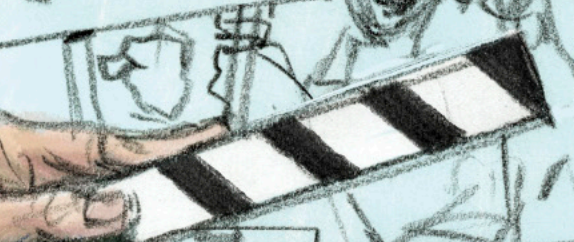


PROTECT  
INDIVIDUALS

FAIR  
NEGOTIATIONS

UNITY

UNION



TAKE 2 ROLL 2023

DIRECTOR F. DRESCHER





## "It was a huge deal for me as a young Black person to be in the union."

—Sheryl Lee Ralph,  
first vice president of  
SAG-AFTRA's LA local



Piper French is a writer living in Los Angeles.

**Another Fine mess:** Fran's decision to stand with striking workers in *The Nanny* results in embarrassing headlines for her boss, Mr. Sheffield.

Despite these crushing external pressures, the health care debacle was immediately interpreted as yet another battle in the internecine war raging within the union. To Membership First, the smaller of SAG-AFTRA's two main factions, the blame lay squarely with Unite for Strength, the ruling party, whose leadership had negotiated the changes—and who had originally pushed for the merger between SAG and AFTRA that arguably created the first cracks in the health care plan. (Asner's lawsuit alleged that the union's trustees had said combining the two unions' plans would only bolster their strength; instead, it did the opposite.) "Saying that we cannot do it means, quite simply, we do not want to do it," said Ralph, who successfully ran for the Los Angeles local's board on the Membership First ticket as a result of the health care changes. "And that's not right."

The fallout was far-reaching. In the summer of 2021, Gabrielle Carteris, the union's embattled president, announced that she would not be seeking reelection. The factions put forward their own candidates for her replacement: *The Nanny*'s Fran Drescher on one side, *Full Metal Jacket*'s Matthew Modine on the other. Though Drescher staked her platform on unity, she had to choose a side—it's virtually impossible to get elected otherwise—and she chose Unite for Strength. Her campaign was duly met with skepticism by the followers of Membership First, who highlighted the actor's lack of labor experience; people felt that she'd been recruited because of her name recognition rather than her negotiating chops. Nonetheless, in September 2021, Drescher emerged victorious in an election rife with what Fortmueller described as "ridiculous mudslinging."

young Black person, to be in the union, to work the way that I have worked, doing the roles that I have done," she told *The Nation*. "You had to fight for that." To Ralph, the news was a betrayal of those who had paved the way for her achievements. "We cannot sit by and act like it's OK," she said. Meanwhile, SAG-AFTRA's leadership argued that these modifications were unavoidable after Covid's work disruptions triggered an existential financial crisis at the union. "This was the result

of a perfect storm," said Duncan Crabtree-Ireland, the union's current executive director and chief negotiator.

"Perfect storm" is an apt summation of SAG-AFTRA's current circumstances. The US labor movement is enjoying a moment of renewed attention and vigor, but the conditions for workers remain dire, and actors—even the very famous ones—are workers. "Labor laws are tilted so much in favor of corporations," emboldening them to "fire people and harass and intimidate them when they want to join a union," said AFL-CIO president Liz Shuler. Though the demand for content has never been higher, the people who make that content have never been more devalued. Since the 1960s, residuals have been an important source of income for actors, and the rise of streaming services, which provide lower and less frequent residuals, has rocked the industry. Meanwhile, a new wave of consolidations has made Hollywood's already behemoth companies even more powerful.



This year, on June 30, the union's contract with the Alliance of Motion Picture and Television Producers expires, and a contentious set of negotiations will kick off in the coming months. Drescher has promised to facilitate a rapprochement between SAG-AFTRA's divided factions and has spoken of "unlocking the shackles" that streaming places on performers. "To recognize a system is broken and to be unafraid to dismantle and rebuild is something I tend to obsess on," she told *The Nation*. To effectively do battle with the studios, SAG-AFTRA needs to heal the wounds of years past and recover a measure of solidarity. Otherwise, it risks ceding critical ground on streaming residuals, AI, and more—with repercussions for generations of working actors to come. "This union...has the possibility of great strength," Ralph said. "And we're going to find it as soon as we put egos aside and see the much bigger picture."

**B**EFORE RUNNING FOR PRESIDENT OF SAG-AFTRA, Drescher was best known for her role as the creator and star of the beloved 1990s sitcom *The Nanny*. The show is a dramedy of class relations: *Upstairs, Downstairs* on laughing gas. Over the course of six seasons, stuffy Brahmin widower Maxwell Sheffield (played by Charles Shaughnessy) falls in love with heroine Fran Fine and her chatty, rambunctious charm. An early episode, in which Fran and Mr. Sheffield unwittingly step into an active picket line, makes the class divide explicit. Sheffield, a Broadway producer, breezes past to attend the after-party for his show, but Fran refuses to go inside. Standing with the workers on strike, she protests that if she did, her aunt "would roll over in her grave—which was paid for by her union."

Drescher based many elements of *The Nanny* on her own life, even fighting the network and its sponsors to keep the character Jewish. (Had they gotten their way, Fran would have been Italian.) Like her character, Drescher grew up in Queens with two working parents. She got her first job, as a supermarket cashier, at 14; met her life partner a year later; then dropped out of college to pursue acting while enrolled in cosmetology school. And like Fran Fine, Drescher is staunchly pro-union. "[Sheffield] was management and willing to cross the line," Drescher said. "Fran was raised to always support labor."

Drescher's background always made her feel



self-consciously different from her Hollywood peers—like a “gefилte fish out of water,” she has written. In *Enter Whining*, her first memoir, she recounted how the prospect of a ménage à trois with Warren Beatty and his then-girlfriend Isabelle Adjani triggered her sense of “the provincial, awkward, unsophisticated Flushing schlub who lived right beneath the surface of my Hollywood-actress veneer.”

It’s this sort of everywoman spirit that has wooed the Internet. After several of her emoji-laden posts (“We R all pawns of th ruling class”; “The only enemy is big biz greed! 🍌 The election has awakened the revolutionaries! STOP CAPITALIST GREED NOW 🚫 AND DON’T LET THEM DIVIDE OR DISTRACT US EVER AGAIN!”) caught the attention of bloggers in 2017, Drescher doubled down, denouncing the rapaciousness of “the big-business ruling-class elite,” expressing sympathy with the Green Party, and implying that Bernie Sanders was a sellout for running as a Democrat in 2016. She was promptly anointed an “anti-capitalist icon” by *New York* magazine’s *The Cut*. In 2020, after she tweeted support for a general strike, it happened again—as one headline put it, “An Ode to Fran Drescher, My Lifelong Semi-Problematic Leftist Crush.”

“Anti-capitalist icon” may be overstating it, though. In reality, Drescher is more of a left-libertarian, leavened with some boomer liberalism and New Age spirituality—plus some old-school working-class values. The actor decries Monsanto and big-business elites, supports

gun ownership and Israel, and has a wellness guru’s mistrust of vaccines. In 2015, she voiced approval for Hillary Clinton, then in 2016 called Sanders a “shill 4 Hillary” and went on to support neither. Years of uterine cancer misdiagnoses instilled a deep skepticism of authority in her. She learned from her former partner, tech entrepreneur (and anti-vax campaigner) Shiva Ayyadurai, that “all the woes of the world have one common denominator, GREED.” (Ayyadurai’s election conspiracy claims are merely the latest in a long line of provocative statements).

For the most part, though, Drescher’s public-facing political work has been more mainstream. In 2005, she successfully lobbied Congress to get a gynecological-cancer education bill signed into law, which led to her appointment to public diplomacy positions under the Bush and Obama administrations, as well as the launch of her nonprofit, Cancer Schmancer, in 2007. She soon realized she had a knack for politics, and in 2008, she let it be known that she wanted to be considered to serve out the remainder of Hillary Clinton’s Senate term after Clinton left to become secretary of state. “My political ambitions have been long developing,” she said. Or, as she put it to SAG-AFTRA members while making her bid to be their next president: “My life has prepared me for this position.”

#### Strength in numbers:

The many actors who picketed as members of SAG or AFTRA included (clockwise from left) Ed Asner and Dennis Weaver; Ronald Reagan; Jack Klugman, Ricardo Montalban, Loretta Swit, and Ralph Bellamy; Charlton Heston; and Patrick Duffy.

**T**HE UNION WHOSE HELM Drescher took over in 2021 is still in its messy infancy, but the two unions that merged to create it—the Screen Actors Guild and the American Federation of Radio Artists—were founded in the 1930s. (The “T” in AFTRA came later, with the advent of television.) Drescher is now part of a lineage that includes the likes of Jimmy Cagney,

**Drescher based many elements of *The Nanny* on her own life. Like Fran Fine, Drescher is staunchly pro-union.**



# SAG•AFTRA



Charlton Heston, and another actor with political aspirations: Ronald Reagan.

When the rise of digital technology obliterated any last hopes of distinguishing between SAG's and AFTRA's shares of the television market, forcing them into direct competition, the bloc within SAG that would eventually become Unite for Strength, Drescher's party, decided that the two unions would be better off negotiating with one voice. Otherwise, said Jonathan Handel, an entertainment and labor lawyer and journalist who has covered the union extensively for *The Hollywood Reporter*, "you're going to have a race to the bottom; you're going to have competition between the unions that the producers [and] studios can take advantage of." (Handel has served as outside counsel to SAG-AFTRA in the past; he is quoted here in his individual capacity.) Many disagreed. There was a failed merger attempt in 2002, followed by a grueling attempted joint contract negotiation in 2008, which ended with the two unions breaking their agreement and the Membership First-led SAG holding out for a better contract. SAG would end up working without a contract for months, losing the vast majority of new TV deals to AFTRA. "Militancy only takes you so far if you don't have a Plan B," Handel said.

**A more perfect union:** Drescher at the Screen Actors Guild Awards in 2022.

As a result, Unite for Strength won control of SAG later that year, leading to a successful, if fraught, merger in 2012. At the vote, members sang "We Shall Overcome," replacing the titular invocation with "SAG and AFTRA as one." This togetherness wouldn't last. Membership First supporters never forgave

AFTRA for, in their view, capitulating during the 2008 contract negotiation—or Unite for Strength for embracing AFTRA. "There's very little trust between the two sides," Handel said. Membership First, which controls the LA local's board, tends to dismiss Unite for Strength as insufficiently militant and obsessed with PR. To Unite for Strength, which has been in power nationally since 2008, Membership First's modus operandi is ill-considered and self-sabotaging—

look no further than the 2008 negotiations. The result: an interminable contretemps. "I was ready to quit after every [national] board meeting—like, this is untenable, just as a human being," said LA local president Jodi Long.

These divisions still rankle, even as many elected members I spoke with expressed a desire to transcend them. "We have a lot of the same people in leadership today that were part of all of those traumatic experiences, and they cannot and refuse to communicate with each other," said Shaan Sharma, a self-described independent who runs on the Membership First slate and who created the grassroots group Solidarity. "We have kind of a running joke that there are more Middle East peace conferences between the Palestinians and the Israelis than there are between the opposing sides within our union."

This squabbling can be especially irksome to the many SAG-AFTRA members who are far from LA and barely scraping by. Zinnia Su, a Seattle local board member, has earned good money from commercial work in the past, but these days she doesn't make anywhere near enough from acting to qualify for union health insurance. Though she and others she knows remain members because they "really believe in the values of organized labor," Su said, she doesn't have the sense that there's much focus from SAG-AFTRA's leadership on the union's struggling members or the particular plight of actors in areas with fewer opportunities.

To Su, it's very clear who has benefited from SAG-AFTRA's factionalism—and it hasn't been SAG-AFTRA. "When you look at who's trying to bust up a union, it's not usually the workers involved in the industry," she said. "It's the

**"I was ready to quit after every [national] board meeting. This is untenable, just as a human being."**

—Jodi Long, president of SAG-AFTRA's LA local

bosses, right?... And so, in our industry, the bosses are the studios. The bosses are the big distributors and media conglomerates.”

**W**HEN DRESCHER WAS ELECTED president of SAG-AFTRA in September 2021, she went from playing one of television’s working-class darlings to helping one of the world’s largest entertainment labor guilds. But not without a fight. During the election, the two factions faced off once again, sometimes in petty ways—at one point, Charles Shaughnessy (*The Nanny*’s Mr. Sheffield) publicly endorsed Matthew Modine, which felt barbed. Unite for Strength accused Membership First of “harboring” board members linked to the NXIVM cult as well as some who’d threatened to shoot supporters of vaccine requirements. “We have no response to this bullshit,” a Membership First spokesperson told *Deadline*. “Let them name names, and they better start putting all of their properties in trust.”

Meanwhile, a Membership First representative was elected as the national secretary/treasurer, resulting in a split ticket. A subsequent round of elections ushered in a wave of Unite for Strength leadership—people with too much baggage, in Sharma’s eyes. “[Drescher] had very little time to try to get up to speed on how everything works before some really important positions were gonna be filled,” Sharma said. “She didn’t realize—or she wasn’t knowledgeable enough at that particular moment to know—how it would be seen by so many of us. The people that she’s been relying on, many of them are part of this old ruling regime.”

But in the years since the ugliness of the 2021 elections, something unlikely has transpired: The ice has begun to thaw. Long, Sharma, and Ralph, all of whom supported Drescher’s opponent, have been pleasantly surprised by her performance thus far. Perhaps more important, they seem willing to give her a chance. “Fran is fresh,” Ralph said. “Fran is not going to be a puppet. Fran has her own mind; Fran is going to take her time to figure things out. And how do you not at least try to help her do that?”

It boils down to something simple and impossible to fake: People like her. “She’s a connector,” Shuler said regarding Drescher and the AFL-CIO, which has worked closely with SAG-AFTRA on labor and technology issues in recent years. “Being a labor leader, it’s so important to be able to build relationships and

find points of unity and get everybody on the same page.... I think she’s uniquely positioned to do that.”

“For me, the only true opposition in a labor union are the employers,” Drescher said. “I always say: Don’t tell me the histrionics and the ‘he said, she said’ of years past. It’s difficult for some people to let go of past conflicts, but...there is opportunity in that.”

**D**URING THE WRITERS Guild’s most recent above-the-line negotiations, which took place in 2020, people thought a strike was imminent. Then the pandemic hit. As sets closed down, the negotiations were cut short and contracts were quickly finalized. By the time SAG-AFTRA commenced virtual contract talks in late April, the industry was at a standstill. “You don’t have strike power if you’re not working,” Fortmueller said. With so much unresolved tension, and with the writers likelier than ever to walk off the job this year, she predicted that the coming contract negotiations would be “especially fraught.”

In the intervening years, streaming has only become more dominant, while box-office profits are down billions from the industry’s pre-pandemic earnings. Last summer, a separate contract negotiation with Netflix acted as a trial run for this spring, including how to handle residuals. To Sharma, the Netflix results showed that Drescher has made good on her promises of unity. “For the first time in many years, the negotiating committee, led by Fran, and with people from both factions on it, worked together very well,” he said. “It was the most harmonious contract presentation I can remember in a national board meeting.” He was frustrated, however, that the deal itself seemed to focus more on successful actors than on aspiring ones.

The writers’ and directors’ guilds are also negotiating this spring, the only time they’re permitted to walk off the job. “All three unions—with a slight

two-month delay for the writers—could go on strike at the same time,” Handel said. “That would be enough to bring crushing pressure on management to get all sorts of improvements.”

Such solidarity is in short supply these days, but it might be the only way to face off against an increasingly powerful studio system. “The last time the unions got something huge, it didn’t take a strike; it took two strikes concurrently,” Handel said. Established writers and actors gave up on the possibility of earning residuals from nearly all films made before 1960. In return, they got their pension plan, the health care plan, and the agreement that movies played on television would also generate residuals. Those actors didn’t just achieve a huge contract victory; they inspired a new generation of labor leadership. “The people before me in the ‘60s, the James Cagneys and the Connie Stevenses who gave up their residuals...that’s the only reason why I ever got involved with the union,” Long said.

After the election, Long and Drescher took their dogs for a walk on the beach. “We have to fight for what is right for our members. I don’t care about appeasing the other side,” Long said. “I really don’t. And I think Fran’s that way too.” Long pondered a diplomatic way to phrase what she wanted to say on the record. Laughing, she settled on: “We’re both from Queens.”

**“For me, the only true opposition in a labor union are the employers.”**

—Fran Drescher



**Uncrossable lines:** “Fran was raised to always support labor,” Drescher says of her signature character.



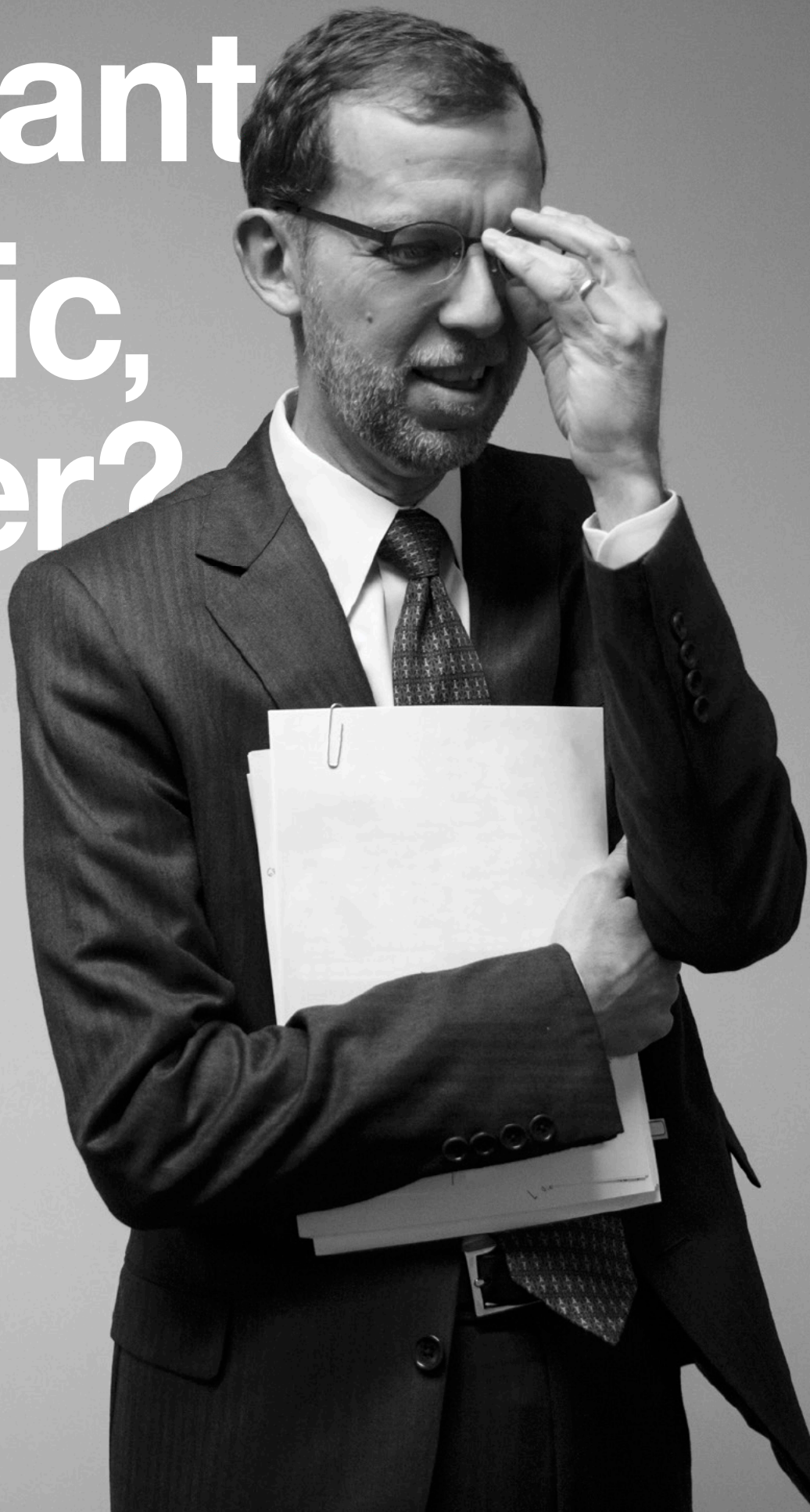


# Servant of the Public, or of Power?

The Harvard Kennedy School may have reversed course on Kenneth Roth, but its deep ties to Wall Street and Washington remain.

BY MICHAEL MASSING

**An about-face:** Dean Douglas Elmendorf re-invited Kenneth Roth, but dodged questions about his original decision.





ON JANUARY 5, JUST HOURS AFTER *THE NATION* POSTED MY ARTICLE revealing why the Harvard Kennedy School had rescinded its offer of a fellowship to former Human Rights Watch director Kenneth Roth, I received an e-mail from Roth saying that *The Guardian* had already contacted him for an article. “Maybe the

Kennedy School will re-invite you,” I jokingly wrote back. “Fat Chance!” he replied.

Two weeks later, the Kennedy School did re-invite Roth. The reinstatement followed a wave of protest and media coverage directed at Dean Douglas Elmendorf, who had vetoed the offer from the Kennedy School’s Carr Center for Human Rights on the grounds that Human Rights Watch has an “anti-Israel bias” (as a faculty member described it to me). On January 7, Mathias Risse, the center’s faculty director, sent around a letter observing that “Ken is articulate and really quite brilliant, and never shies away from debate,” and noting that his conversation with him to explain the dean’s decision “was one of the lowest moments in my professional life.”

PEN America issued a statement expressing “dismay” at the dean’s decision, saying it “raises serious questions about the credibility” of Harvard’s human rights program. More than 1,000 Harvard students, faculty, and alumni signed a letter criticizing the “shameful decision to blacklist Kenneth Roth” and calling on Elmendorf to resign. Among the faculty members protesting his decision was Larry Summers, who tweeted that while he loathed Ken Roth’s views on Israel, he thought that preventing a leading human rights advocate from joining a leading human rights center “on the ground of the person’s views/modes of expression is not consistent w/ profound commitment to intellectual diversity that should be a bedrock value in universities.”

The controversy was covered by not only *The Guardian* but also *The Harvard Crimson*, *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, and *The Boston Globe*, which, in a scorching editorial, chastised the dean for sending “a chilling message that there are significant limits at Harvard on which ideas count as acceptable. In this case, it seems that if someone criticizes the Israeli government too harshly, it could lead to consequences for their career.... That’s why Elmendorf owes Roth and, more important, Harvard’s students and faculty a proper explanation—lest he risk contributing to an environment of self-censorship.”

Roth himself ran a tireless campaign against the dean, applying the same tactics he had used against autocratic rulers while directing Human Rights Watch. In dozens of interviews and talk-show appearances, he demanded that Elmendorf reveal the reasons behind his decision. “Being denied this fellowship will not significantly impede my future,” he wrote in a *Guardian* opinion piece. “But I worry about younger academics who are less known. If I can be canceled because of my criticism of Israel, will they risk taking the issue on?”

A few scattered voices did express support for Elmendorf. Gerald Steinberg, the founder of the vocally pro-Israel NGO

Monitor, congratulated the dean on not being fooled “by the moral façade granted to Roth and HRW.” And Jonathan Greenblatt, the director of the Anti-Defamation League, charged me in an article in *The Times of Israel* with going down “the antisemitic rabbit hole” and feeding “antisemitic tropes” about “Jewish control, power, and financial influence.” It’s all part of the ADL’s campaign to tar critics of Israel—including Jewish ones—with the brush of anti-Semitism in a desperate bid to intimidate them into silence. Not only will it not work—it also discredits the ADL at a time when the fight against anti-Semitism is as urgent as ever.

At a January 17 faculty meeting called to discuss the matter, the sentiment expressed against Elmendorf was nearly unanimous. Pressed to disclose the reasons behind his decision, the dean declined. Two days later, however, he sent an e-mail to the Ken-

edy School community insisting that his decision to rescind the invitation to Roth “was not influenced by donors” but rather “was based on my evaluation of his potential contributions to the School.” He added, though, that he was going to create a faculty committee to develop a process for evaluating the appointment of future fellows. As for Roth himself, “I now believe that I made an error in my decision not to appoint him as a Fellow,” Elmendorf wrote, adding that the invitation to him would be reinstated. “I am so sorry that the decision inadvertently cast doubt on the mission of the School and to our commitment to open debate in ways I had not intended and do not believe to be true.”

In early February, Roth spent several days taking a victory lap at the school—giving talks, appearing in classes, meeting with Elmendorf himself. At every opportunity, he called on the dean to explain his initial decision. “It clearly looks like this is donor influence undermining intellectual independence,” Roth told *The New York Times*. To me he said, “I think it’s all about Israel.”



**“It clearly looks like this is donor influence undermining intellectual independence.”**

—Kenneth Roth

*Michael Massing is writing a book about money and influence.*



**I**S IT? WHILE IT'S IMPOSSIBLE TO PEER INTO THE DEAN'S MIND, A CLOSE EXAMINATION of the Kennedy School's operations can help illuminate Elmendorf's decision while also suggesting some deeper, structural problems at the nation's wealthiest and most esteemed school of public policy.

A good place to begin is the large Israeli presence at the school. At its core is the Wexner Israel Fellowship. Since 1989, the Wexner Foundation has sent nine or 10 mid-career Israelis to the school every year, underwriting their tuition, air fare, lodging, even textbooks. An analysis of the program's 300-plus alumni shows that the overwhelming majority are Jewish Israelis. The 20 percent of the Israeli population that is Arab and the nearly 5 percent that is non-Arab Christian or does not otherwise identify as Jewish account for only a tiny percentage of the fellows. Even within the Israeli Jewish population, the range of fellows is narrow. Mizrahim (Jewish Israelis from Arab or North African countries) constitute nearly 45 percent of Israel's population but make up only a handful of Wexner fellows. The great bulk of the fellows come from the same sociological stratum and are not even representative of Israeli Jewish society.

That stratum consists mostly of professionals and civil servants who are being groomed for higher positions. About 10 percent of the alumni have worked in education, philanthropy, or social justice. Another 10 percent have worked in health, medicine, or hospitals, and a similar proportion have worked in academia, journalism, and the arts. About 20 percent have been attached to government ministries—from transportation and energy to finance and foreign affairs. Most of the rest have worked in the military, intelligence, law enforcement, or criminal justice. Of the 250 fellows whose occupations can be identified, about a dozen have worked for the police or domestic intelligence, including three openly affiliated with Shin Bet, Israel's domestic intelligence service. The largest contingent—about 40—have worked for the Israel Defense Forces or the Ministry of Defense. Three of the Wexner fellows are identified as members of the Mossad, Israel's foreign intelligence service, but there are no doubt many more, including a number vaguely listed as working for the prime minister's office, a sprawling administrative structure whose nearly two dozen subdivisions include the spy agency.

Applicants for a Wexner fellowship must first be accepted by the Kennedy School, but the Wexner Foundation has substantial say over who is chosen. It has a sizable office in Jerusalem that works closely with Israeli officials in determining who will get the privilege of attending Harvard. It's remarkable that the Kennedy School would allow an outside organization to have such influence over its admissions process—espe-

cially when so many of those admitted work for the security services of a foreign government.

In addition to the Wexner fellows, the Wexner Foundation funds a senior leadership program that offers Israeli executives four weeks of training at the Kennedy School. Since it began, in 2015, more than 250 have participated. On graduating, they join the foundation's extensive alumni

networks in Israel and the US, helping to reinforce the privileged status of the Israeli elite. (The Wexner association may have lost some of its luster, however, after revelations about Leslie Wexner's long involvement with Jeffrey Epstein.)

Many Wexner fellows are engaging students whom the faculty say they enjoy teaching. But they're coming to Cambridge not simply as individuals but also as part of a program to strengthen the Israeli state.

A Palestinian graduate of the school told me how "scary" it is to be a Palestinian there. The Israeli presence "is extremely visible—there are the donors, the names on buildings. And your classmates are literally from the army, the military, the prime minister's office—Netanyahu. They're surveilling you. It can have direct consequences for your well-being and your family's well-being. When Palestinians go back to Palestine, they have

to go through border crossings and checkpoints. They have files on everybody. You can be questioned for hours at a time."

In the wake of the Roth affair, much has emerged about the difficulties that Palestinians have had holding events at the Kennedy School. Joseph Leone, a recent graduate of the school, described in an article in *Jewish Currents* how its administration has used "red tape and long delays" to "shut down speech, demoralizing Palestinian students into forgoing the school as a venue for discussing important topics." In 2020, for instance, the school's Palestine Caucus sought to schedule an event featuring Sa'ed Atshan, a Kennedy School alumnus (now at Emory) who has a PhD in anthropology and Middle Eastern studies from Harvard. Fifty-five days before the event was to be held, the caucus filed a request with the administration to reserve a room. Usually, the school approves such requests within days, but six weeks later it said it would not approve this one until the students agreed to restrict attendance to holders of Harvard student IDs and arrange for security. The administration also demanded that Tarek Masoud, the director of the school's Middle Eastern Initiative, serve as the sole moderator. The students eventually gave up and moved the event to the law school. Sofiya Cabalquinto, a spokesperson for the Kennedy School, says that all of its 117 student organizations must follow university guidelines for campus events, including "prior approval from the school and a review of safety considerations."

The Roth affair "was the hair that broke the camel's back," Atshan told me. "People are fed

**Demanding accountability:** Kenneth Roth has continued to press the Kennedy School's dean to explain himself.



**It's remarkable that the Kennedy School allows an outside organization to have such influence over its admissions process.**

up. They said, ‘Oh my God—if someone like Ken Roth is getting canceled, then we have to get organized.’” The Palestine Caucus has since been holding Zoom sessions, issuing statements, and meeting with school officials.

Every year at spring break, hundreds of students—many of them from the Kennedy School—go on a Middle East “trek,” one group to Israel and the other to Palestine. When they return, they’re excited, filled with impressions—and often suspicious of those who went on the other trek. Amid the contention, some trekking students have sought a form of debriefing at the school, and to lead it, they have approached Timothy McCarthy. An affiliate of the Carr Center for 13 years and the school’s first openly gay faculty member, McCarthy—a vocal supporter of Palestinian rights—was eager to help, seeing an opportunity to create a dialogue between the two groups, but at every step he faced resistance from members of the administration, who, he says, “felt that I was trying to stoke some kind of fire.” They are “afraid” of the issue and have made it clear that the school “doesn’t want anything to do with it.” He considers the school’s lack of engagement on the issue to be an “abdication of moral responsibility” that reflects a more general “blinkered” attitude that can help explain how “an unforced error” like the Roth decision could occur.

That experience reinforced McCarthy’s sense of being a “misfit” at the school, and his status as the school’s only openly gay faculty member for so many years contributed to a feeling of being “very alone.” So when the Harvard Graduate School of Education asked him to join its faculty, he accepted without hesitation. The “amazingly supportive” atmosphere there, he says, has made him realize how “toxic” the workplace at the Kennedy School is. The school “is not a place that welcomes people like me. They saw me as a constant problem, a thorn in their side. I had to get out of there—it was slowly killing me.”

**T**HE KENNEDY SCHOOL IN general is not hospitable to misfits. Those who too sharply question the established ways or stray too far outside the accepted parameters of thought can find themselves pushed to the sidelines, marginalized, and denied tenure or influential posts. The school’s close ties to Washington and the heavy presence of generals and admirals, intelligence officers and geo-strategists, diplomats and thought leaders, create a climate unsupportive of those who are too outspoken on human rights, the Israel-Palestinian issue, or US foreign policy.

On February 21, the Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs—the school’s main foreign policy hub—named a new director: Meghan O’Sullivan. The Jeane Kirkpatrick Professor of the Practice of International Affairs, O’Sullivan served as a special assistant to President George W. Bush from 2004 to 2007, including two years as the deputy national security adviser for Iraq and Afghanistan. She spent a year in Baghdad, becoming a top aide to Paul Bremer, the head of the Coalition Provisional Authority, whose policies helped plunge Iraq into years of sectarian violence. Upon her departure from the administration, Peter Baker wrote in *The Washington Post* that O’Sullivan “has been at the heart of the most important project of the Bush presidency—the invasion, occupation, and continuing war in Iraq—from the beginning.” Larry Diamond, a Stanford University professor who worked for the CPA and became a strong critic of Bush policy in Iraq, was quoted in the *Post* as saying that this policy “has been a tragic failure, and she has been a central element of our policymaking” (though he said that most of the blame had to be directed at higher officials, especially Bush).

A year after leaving the administration, O’Sullivan joined the Kennedy School. On her Kennedy School web page, she lists among her “outside professional activities” Capital Group (investment management), CEO Academy (training chief executives), Citigroup (banking), the Hess Corporation (oil), Linklaters (corporate law), Macro Advisory Partners (strategic consulting), McKinsey (management consulting), PIMCO (investment management), and Raytheon Technologies.



arms sales to the Saudis, but their efforts were blocked by the Trump White House, largely at Raytheon’s urging.

From 2020 to 2022, O’Sullivan received more than \$900,000 in compensation from Raytheon for her board service. Last October, about a dozen activists invaded her classroom to protest her ties to the company and her role in the Iraq invasion. In an editorial, the *Crimson* called her connection to Raytheon “a stain on our institution.” While condemning the protesters’ disruption of her class, the *Crimson* said that by “continuing her involvement with Raytheon, O’Sullivan has demonstrated extraordinarily bad judgment at best and frank, dark immorality at worst,” and it urged her to resign. The Kennedy School nonetheless decided that she was the best person to lead its top center on international affairs. (O’Sullivan

**The school creates a climate unsupportive of those who are too outspoken on human rights or US foreign policy.**

**Lucrative sidelines:** New Belfer Center director Meghan O’Sullivan lists Raytheon, McKinsey, and Citigroup among her outside ties.

Raytheon, on whose board O’Sullivan sits, is one of the five largest US defense contractors. Its top customers include Saudi Arabia. Since the start of Saudi Arabia’s war with Yemen in 2015, Raytheon has made at least a dozen major arms sales to the kingdom and its partners valued at more than \$5 billion. Raytheon ordnance has been connected by human rights groups to at least a dozen attacks on Yemeni civilians. According to *The New York Times*, on three occasions several US officials, both Democratic and Republican, tried to put a halt to the killing by ending



## The Kennedy School has long been concerned about appearing too liberal and so losing its credibility in Washington.

**Conflicts of interest:** Larry Summers is one of many leaders at the school who has profited from his connections to financial service institutions.

says she plans to step down from Raytheon's board in May.)

As my interviews made clear, the Kennedy School has long been concerned with appearing too liberal and so losing its credibility in Washington; it's always on the lookout for good moderate Republicans. A similar dynamic seems to have been at work with Roth: Elmendorf was worried about a backlash from those who think Israel is unfairly criticized.

The concern about appearing too liberal extends beyond international affairs. On domestic policy, too, the Kennedy School is dominated by solidly establishmentarian views—especially when it comes to such urgent matters as inequality, the concentration of wealth, corporate governance, and the influence of finance. The main place at the Kennedy School where you might expect to find such matters addressed is the Mossavar-Rahmani Center for Business and Government. Established in 1982, it was renamed in 2005 after receiving an endowment gift from Sharmin Mossavar-Rahmani, the chief investment officer for Goldman Sachs's private wealth management group, and her husband, Bijan, the chair of two oil and gas companies in the United Arab Emirates and Norway. "The 2008 recession and the global surge in populism have highlighted deep divisions between Main Street and Wall Street," the center's website states. "How do we create a growing economy and rebuild elements of shared and sustainable prosperity for our societies?"

**T**HE CENTER'S DIRECTOR IS LARRY SUMMERS. HE IS ONE OF ABOUT TWO dozen University Professors at Harvard, a distinction that allows him to pursue his research free of the usual academic encumbrances. But he faces constraints of other kinds, including a thicket of outside ties extending from Washington to Wall Street. After Summers was forced to resign as Harvard's president in 2006, he was hired as a managing partner by the New York-based hedge fund D.E. Shaw, receiving \$5.2 million in salary and other compensation over a period of two years. He also earned \$2.8 million in speaking fees from such financial institutions as JPMorgan Chase, Citigroup, Merrill Lynch, and Goldman Sachs (which paid him \$135,000 for a single speech).

Those paydays earned Summers a mention in the 2010 documentary *Inside Job*, which discussed the many economists who had testified to the soundness of the financial system in the run-up to the 2008 crisis while receiving payments from banks, hedge funds, and insurance companies. In an accompanying article in *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, Charles Ferguson, the film's director, wrote of how, over the previous 30 years, the economics profession "has become so compromised by conflicts of interest that it now functions almost as a support group for financial services and other industries whose profits depend heavily on government policy." Ferguson cited Summers's career as illustrating an "extraordinary and underappreciated" convergence of "academic economics, Wall Street, and political power."

*Inside Job* prompted much soul-searching in the academy about the propriety of the lucrative sidelines many professors pursued. Since 2012, the Kennedy

School has required faculty members to disclose annually their outside activities and encouraged them to post them on their websites. From those listings, it's clear that serious conflicts remain. For instance, Richard Zeckhauser, a professor of political economy at the school since 1972, is a partner and senior adviser at Equity Resource Investments, a private equity firm specializing in real estate; according to his bio on that firm's site, he has also been "a principal in two investment-banking firms and a director of a number of high technology companies[,] two of which were sold to Fortune 500 companies."

In 2012, Iris Bohnet, a professor of business and government who served as the Kennedy School's academic dean from 2011 to 2014 and 2018 to 2021, joined the board of Credit Suisse, Switzerland's second-largest bank. Since then, the bank has been repeatedly embroiled in scandals, including the manipulation of foreign exchanges rates (2013), conspiring to help US clients hide offshore assets and income from the IRS (2014), the looting of 1MDB in Malaysia (2015), secret loans including kickbacks and bribes in Mozambique (2017), the violation of the US Foreign Corrupt Practices Act (2018), the collapse of both Greensill Capital and Archegos Capital (2021), and money laundering for a Bulgarian cocaine-trafficking ring (2022), culminating this March in a decline in its stock price so steep that the Swiss government forced the bank's sale to UBS, its longtime rival. For years, Bohnet sat on Credit Suisse's compensation committee, approving large executive pay packages despite the bank's egregious

record of mismanagement; she herself received nearly \$3.5 million in compensation for her board membership. In an e-mail, Bohnet wrote that "my research and teaching as a behavioral economist at Harvard Kennedy School are not related to banking or financial markets. I have disclosed my outside activities and am compliant with the Kennedy School's policies, which like the policies of most universities, allow faculty members to spend a specified amount of time on outside activities, including serving on boards of public companies."

Larry Summers sits on the boards of Block Inc., a fintech company, for which he received \$1.2 million in compensation from 2018 to 2021 while also holding 201,019 shares valued at about \$20 million; Doma, a real estate technology company, in which he holds 1,236,351 shares valued at nearly \$1 million; and, since May, Skillsoft, which offers "corporate digital



learning” to the *Fortune* 1,000. He also continues to consult for D.E. Shaw as well as for Citigroup and Atlas Merchant Capital, a global investment firm.

Of the 45 members of the Mossavar-Rahmani Center’s advisory council, 33 work or have worked for financial institutions; four are corporate executives; and two work in luxury real estate. Its members include Steven Rattner, a former *New York Times* reporter who became a private equity partner until he had to pay millions of dollars in fines and face a multiyear ban on some Wall Street activities for (according to the SEC) delivering special favors and conducting sham transactions when seeking investments from New York State’s retirement fund, after which he created an investment house to manage billionaire businessman and three-term New York City mayor Mike Bloomberg’s money; Michael Klein, a prominent behind-the-scenes dealmaker who ran Citigroup’s investment banking division for more than two decades before starting his own boutique firm, which has handled more than \$1.5 trillion in deals for clients, including Aramco, the Saudi national oil company; and Thomas Healey, the council’s chair, who formerly taught at the Kennedy School while also serving as a partner at Goldman Sachs.

According to Summers, the main concern at the Kennedy School as an institution is that “the perspectives of only half the political spectrum are represented, given that 90 percent of the faculty are Democrats.” In general, he says, “universities are places where people go to work if they don’t like business, so the worry is much more in the anti-business direction than in the pro-business direction.”

Among those faculty Democrats, however, the tight triangle of ties between Washington, Wall Street, and Cambridge allows little room for heterodoxy. For years, the school had only one faculty member who consistently challenged the prevailing pro-globalization, pro-trade-liberalization, pro-deregulation consensus: Dani Rodrik. Since the 1990s, Rodrik has produced a series of books with titles like *Has Globalization Gone Too Far?* (1997), in which he has examined the gap between winners and losers in the global economy. In 2022, he and his colleague Gordon Hanson received \$7.5 million from the Hewlett Foundation for a “Reimagining the Economy” project aimed at freeing political and economic discourse from what Rodrik calls the “prison of ideology” favoring market-centric approaches. That project is housed at the Kennedy School’s Malcolm Wiener Center for Social Policy, which in recent years has expanded its research on the causes of and remedies for inequality. Rodrik now worries about what he sees as the obsessive concern among the



school’s national security specialists about China’s growing economic power and their conviction that the United States must retain its dominance.

**I**N 2019, THE KENNEDY SCHOOL FACULTY MOVED TO BROADEN ITS IDEOLOGICAL range by voting to recommend Gabriel Zucman for tenure. A French-born assistant professor of economics at the University of California at Berkeley, Zucman, then 32, had gained global notice for his work on inequality, wealth, and taxation. While earning a PhD from the Paris School of Economics, he helped his adviser, Thomas Piketty, gather the data for Piketty’s 2014 bestselling book *Capital in the Twenty-First Century*. The following year Zucman published *The Hidden Wealth of Nations*, in which he estimated that about 8 percent of the global financial wealth of households—at least \$7.6 trillion—was held in tax havens, three-quarters of it undeclared. In 2016, he teamed up with his fellow Frenchman and Berkeley colleague Emmanuel Saez to produce a paper on wealth inequality in the United States since 1913, which became the basis for their book *The Triumph of Injustice: How the Rich Dodge Taxes and How to Make Them Pay*. In it, they proposed a tax on wealth, a version of which was later adopted by both Elizabeth Warren and Bernie Sanders. In 2018, Zucman was named the best young economist in France.

Zucman was an active and sometimes contentious presence on Twitter, vigorously engaging critics and defending his positions with statistics, emojis, and scorn. At the Kennedy School faculty meeting on his tenure bid, some expressed reservations about this. Still, his candidacy was endorsed and sent to Harvard president Lawrence Bacow and provost Alan Garber for approval. In June 2019, the provost announced that Zucman’s tenure bid had been rejected. Almost simultaneously, Berkeley granted him tenure.

As was the norm, no explanation was offered for the decision. *The New York Times*, in a 2020 story about Zucman and Saez, noted that his candidacy had been rejected “partly over fears that Mr. Zucman’s research could not support the arguments he was making in the political arena.”

(continued on page 32)

**Closed ranks:** The Kennedy School’s choice of its students, faculty, and fellows reinforces an establishment worldview.

**The tight triangle of ties between Washington, Wall Street, and Cambridge allows little room for heterodoxy.**



# Racing to

For 14-year-old Adam, who is waiting at a Libyan shelter for



Asylum seekers from Sudan at a camp in the desert near Agadez, Niger.

# A

DAM WAKES UP AT DAWN, BEFORE everyone else, and goes for a run, circling the house he shares in Libya with other migrants, most of whom, like him, are in their teens and from the Horn of Africa. The 14-year-old is always dressed in brightly colored sportswear. After his run—a time when you might catch a rare glimpse of his smile—he jumps rope a few times before returning to the house to do some cleaning. Once the others get up, they play foosball and table tennis. Adam is considered the best table tennis player

in the house, having learned it in Ethiopia, where it's popular.

During my short visit to the house in the fall of 2022, those were the two main games the residents played. There wasn't much else to do; mostly, Adam and I talked.

Adam doesn't dare walk beyond the walls surrounding the house. Since 2011, when the NATO-supported Libyan revolution ended the 42-year rule of Moammar Gadhafi, there has been a constant threat of new fighting breaking out between rival governments and militias over control of the Libyan state. Yet the country seemed calm while I was there. When I visited the historical site of Leptis Magna,



# Freedom

a clear path to safety, running might be his only way to escape.

BY JÉRÔME TUBIANA



the birthplace of the Roman emperor Septimius Severus, tourist guides and donkey hirers welcomed Libyan families as well as NGO staff and Texan oil businessmen, all there to enjoy the ruins and the view of the Mediterranean.

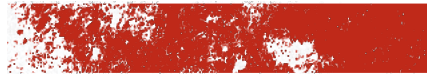
But for migrants, many of whom are undocumented, it's another story. Some who are just passing through are stopped at checkpoints and asked for papers that they don't have. Even the ones who have jobs nearby cleaning roads and buildings or working construction or at gas stations could be arrested by anyone with a gun and have their passports or refugee certificates torn up. In some cases, a kind local employer

might get them released, sometimes by paying a ransom. For those without such protection, and without documents, it's worse: Forced to travel on back roads in taxis that charge hundreds of dollars for journeys that would cost a Libyan a couple of dollars, they can be pulled over at any time. They may then be held in detention centers, some of which were once part of Gadhafi's system of controlling migration flows

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*Jérôme Tubiana is a researcher and journalist who has covered conflict and displacement issues across the Sahara and the Horn of Africa for 25 years.*





## It was 2018, and Adam, now an orphaned 10-year-old, had found a place to live and train alongside other athletes.

**Athletes training in Agadez, Niger, which is home to a football club run by a self-proclaimed former smuggler.**

from Libya to the European Union. The law still says that “foreign illegal immigrants shall be penalized by detention with hard labour”—in effect, legalizing forced labor.

**A**DAM, WHO WAS BORN in Eritrea, doesn’t remember when he left it—he was just 2 or 3 years old. I imagine him in his father’s arms, being carried across the border into

Ethiopia at night. His father was a soldier in the Eritrean Army who, he later told Adam, decided to leave the country after Adam’s mother died of disease. Adam’s only image of his mother comes from a photo ID that his father kept.

As of 2019, Eritrea had an army of more than 200,000 soldiers, whose length of service became indefinite after the country lost a border war with Ethiopia in 2000. In 2017, the United Nations’ special rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Eritrea testified that its conscripted national-service program was “arbitrary, extended, and involuntary in nature, amounting to enslavement.” This is the main reason why nearly 15 percent of Eritrea’s population fled the country between 1998 and 2018. Eritreans have continued to flee since then, and those who leave cannot return, for fear of arrest or torture.

Adam and his father settled in Addis Ababa, the Ethiopian capital. His father painted houses whenever there was work, and Adam went to school and worked as well, starting at the age of 7, washing cars and selling “softs” (handkerchiefs) at traffic

lights after school. “You have to run quickly when the traffic restarts,” he told me. “I was not playing like other kids. From a young age, I learned to do everything.”

He also discovered at age 7 that running wasn’t only a way to escape. One Sunday, Adam and his father climbed the hill up to the Entoto Maryam Church, which was built by Emperor Menelik II in the 19th century on the ridge overlooking his future capital. There Adam discovered the training ground of the great Ethiopian runners. “I watched athletes running and fell in love with that sport,” he said. From then on, whenever he felt “sad or lonely,” he ran. For 15 Ethiopian birr (less than \$1), he bought jellyfish sandals, known locally as “Tigray shoes” after the sandals famously worn by rebel fighters of the Tigray People’s Liberation Front, who took power in Ethiopia in 1991. “[They feel] amazing if you wear big socks inside,” Adam said.

He used to wake up at 5:30 AM to run from his hot and polluted Bole neighborhood, which sits at an altitude of 7,545 feet, to the fresh air of the Entoto Mountains, at over 9,800 feet. Then he would catch a taxi to be on time for school. After school, he worked on the streets or cleaned shops and hotel restaurants, where he was paid in small change. He could also take leftovers from the hotel, which he shared with his father. “My dad didn’t prepare my lunch box like other kids had but heated hotel leftovers and put them in a bag. It was a shame for me, so I ate alone in a corner at the school,” Adam said. “I thought I needed good food to run.”

In the Entoto Hills, he saw famous runners visiting—Haile Gebrselassie, the godfather of Ethiopian running; his heir, Kenenisa Bekele; and the British

Somali champion Mo Farah. He also met a coach, Seyoum, who offered him a place at the Ethiopian Youth Sports Academy. But Adam and his father could not afford the entry fee of about \$1,000.

His father said the only solution was to return to Eritrea to sell a house he owned there. “[He] was afraid of going back to Eritrea, yet he decided to go,” Adam said.

They walked six hours in the direction opposite the one that they and so many Eritreans had previously traveled and entered the country at night. Adam was reunited with his grandmother, who hadn’t seen him or his father since they’d fled and cried a lot. He asked his father to show him Asmara, the beautiful Eritrean capital. But his father refused, scared of what would happen if he were recognized.

Four days later, the family awoke to a loud knocking at the door. “There were four soldiers with a car saying they had questions for Dad,” Adam said. His grandmother told the soldiers that she wouldn’t allow them to take her son at night and that they should return in the morning. But his father told her not to worry, that he’d be back the next day. Neither Adam nor his grandmother were able to get back to sleep that night. His grandmother made frantic phone calls to anyone she could. Eventually, Adam fell asleep. He woke up late, at around 9 or 10 AM. When he went outside to wash his face with a small water jerrican, he found his father’s dead body in front of the door. A crowd began to gather, and his grandmother hurriedly gave Adam about \$60 and told him a man would escort him

out of town. Adam and the man drove and then walked a full day. When they arrived at the border with Sudan, Adam gave his money to a *samsar* (a smuggler or smuggler’s agent) to take him back to Ethiopia. He traveled alongside Ethiopian migrants returning from a few years of working in Lebanon. At a river crossing on the border, they met still more Ethiopians, Somalians, and Eritreans traveling the other way, to Libya. On the other side, Adam and the rest of the

migrants in his group were well received by the army and driven to the capital in a bus.

Back in Addis Ababa, Adam went to the academy and told Seyoum what had happened and that he couldn’t pay the entrance fee. A handball coach ended up offering to pay it for him. It was 2018, and Adam, now an orphaned 10-year-old, had found a place to live and train alongside other athletes, some already adults. Every day, they rose at 5 AM, watched footage of Kenya’s Eliud



Kipchoge, considered one of the greatest marathon runners of all time, and of Ethiopia's Abebe Bikila, the first Black African to win an Olympic medal, running the marathon barefoot in Rome in 1960. Then they took a bus to the mountains of Addis Ababa, running in secondhand sneakers or a pair they'd bought as contraband.

**I**N 2020, AFTER TRAINING for two years, Adam, now 12, was selected for a local 5,000-meter race and came in first, with a time of 17 minutes and 22 seconds. "I won for my father," Adam told me. "If he had been with me, he'd be very happy."

The winner was supposed to get more training and then represent Ethiopia in an international competition. But Adam would again have to pay a fee—this time nearly \$10,000, 15 times more than what he'd been awarded in prize money. It seemed like a scam, but Seyoum told him it was a "guarantee" that the young Eritrean would remain loyal to Ethiopia and not join a foreign team.

Adam decided to leave the academy and suddenly found himself homeless. "I thought my only choice was to leave," he recalled. "I slept on Bole Michael Church's benches [and] asked taxi drivers how to go to Libya. Ethiopian, Eritrean, Somali brokers—you find them all in that [area]." He ultimately wanted to go to Europe, but he was told that a journey to Italy would cost \$3,500, to be paid when he reached Libya.

Adam had only a small portion of the money from his race, but like many others traveling that route, he hoped that once he made it to Libya, he could escape without paying. He crossed back to Sudan with a group of migrants that included the first refugees from the war that had just broken out between the Tigray People's Liberation Front and the federal government in the Tigray region of northern Ethiopia.

At the Sudanese border, the migrants were given big plows so they could pretend to be farming. Later, those headed to Libya boarded pickup trucks for a 10-day desert ride. They survived on water that tasted of gasoline because it was kept in a fuel jerrican. Once in Libya, they were taken to a trafficking hangar where more than 100 migrants were being held. It was time to pay. Adam was told he'd have to come up with \$6,000 or he'd be killed. If he paid, the smugglers promised to deliver him to Italy.

Every day until Adam and his fellow prisoners

paid up, they were beaten on the soles of their feet, a common form of punishment known as *falanga*, or tortured with electricity. "Still today, sometimes I wake up at night and see myself in that place again, when they woke us up at night to bring us phones," Adam said. While they were being tortured, the traffickers would call the prisoners' relatives or friends on WhatsApp, with the idea that the live video call would persuade them to transfer the money.

It took Adam a year to pay the ransom, thanks to an old school friend who succeeded in collecting the money bit by bit in their Addis Ababa neighborhood. But Adam wasn't released. He was sold instead to another smuggler—a "pushman"—who launched boats from the coast. Adam was asked for money to board a boat—\$2,000, to be transferred to an account in Turkey or a broker in Sudan. As an example for the others, the smuggler cut two of the Eritreans with a knife; all of them were threatened with death if they didn't pay. "All paid, except me," Adam told me. "For three days, I didn't sleep.... It looked like it was 50-50 whether I would die or not."

Then Adam managed to escape. He ran until he reached a checkpoint, where the soldiers forced him to smoke a hash joint at gunpoint. After that they let him go, and he succeeded in reaching a slum, where he was sheltered by an Ethiopian. "He cut my hair, which I hadn't cut for a year," Adam said.

But the area wasn't safe. Armed men were arresting migrants and taking them to detention centers. "I was too scared to work," Adam said.

He managed to get an appointment with a staff member of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, a Tunisian woman who looked angry while questioning him. When she asked why he'd left his country and Adam told her what he'd been through, her only reply was "This is not a reason," he recalled. He nevertheless succeeded in getting registered by the UNHCR as a "person of concern."

**Eritrean children** walking along the streets of the port city of Massawa.



**"Still today, sometimes I wake up and see myself in that place again," Adam said—the place where he was tortured and held for ransom.**



**W**HAT'S NEXT FOR ADAM? WHEN IT COMES TO SECURING ONE of the UNHCR's rare settlement slots (between 2018 and 2022, only some 2,000 people, on average, were evacuated or resettled by the agency each year), Adam has a few things working in his favor: Eritreans have a relatively high success rate for asylum claims in the Global North, and he is still young. Adults or even older minors (16 or 17 years old), or nationals from less predatory dictatorships (such as Cameroon, whose current strongman, Paul Biya, took power 40 years ago, 11 years before Eritrea's Isaias Afwerki), have less of a chance to be resettled. But the catchall humanitarian concept of "vulnerability" is slippery: The criteria for it are pretty subjective, especially in a context where every migrant can be arrested or kidnapped, and where the small number of resettlement slots are limited to those most at risk.

Like the nearly 43,000 other registered refugees and asylum seekers in Libya, 33 percent of whom are minors, Adam is waiting for a phone call. The best-case scenario is that he will be flown to one of the few European countries willing to accept "unaccompanied minors." More realistically, if he's lucky, he'll spend a few months or even a year in a transit center in Niger or Rwanda waiting to be accepted by a resettlement country. If he's unlucky, Adam may join the tens of thousands of registered refugees for whom there are no slots. He may be hosted by a settled migrant family, who will turn out to be either friendly or abusive, in a program paid for by the UN. Or the UNHCR may give him a onetime cash allowance so that he can try to survive by himself in one of Libya's many shanty migrant shelters, some of which were destroyed in October 2021 after a mass roundup in which at least 5,000 migrants were arrested over concerns of illegal migration and alleged drug trafficking. He may also, like others before him, try to take to the sea—and, like nearly one-third of those who attempted the crossing in 2022, he may be intercepted by the EU-funded Libyan Coast Guard and then jailed in a detention center. "I don't know if I'll try to cross the sea," Adam said, "but I know it's better to die at sea than be caught" and sent to a detention center.

In the past decade, at least 20,000 migrants have died or disappeared while attempting to cross the Mediterranean. In 2012, it happened to another runner,

Samia Yusuf Omar, who at the age of 17 carried Somalia's flag and ran the 200-meter sprint at the 2008 Beijing Olympics. Then, dreaming of taking part in the London Olympics but unable to get a visa, Omar took to the road. The lack of visas and the shortage of resettlement slots are key reasons that asylum seekers head to Libya, even knowing that safe and legal pathways to Europe are extremely limited.

Among Eritrean migrants, more and more "unaccompanied minors" are leaving for Europe. Not all of them are potential Olympic athletes, although in Libyan detention centers, in rescue boats on the Mediterranean, and on makeshift or proper sports fields along the routes, it's not uncommon to meet skilled football or basketball players who have competed in Liberian, Cameroonian, or Somali clubs. Some feel compelled to hide their talents and dreams, as if refugees need to abandon their past. But the motivations of these migrants and refugees are as diverse as their journeys. Some flee war and poverty; others simply have dreams they can't pursue at home. And often, as Adam taught me, flight and dream are intertwined. **N**

(continued from page 27)

Larry Summers had publicly stated such fears. In an April 2019 *Washington Post* op-ed, for instance, he and Natasha Sarin of the University of Pennsylvania criticized Zucman and Saez for overestimating by two and a half times the amount that a Warren wealth tax would likely raise. "Common-sense revenue estimates by economists who are not very deeply steeped in revenue estimation tend to be overly optimistic," they giped. On Twitter, Zucman dismissed their revenue estimates as "unserious."

In the *Times* article about the Berkeley economists, Summers was quoted as saying that "most serious professionals in the tax policy area think that the polemical urge at some points has gotten the better of Gabriel and Emmanuel, especially when Gabriel starts to tweet." But Summers also called Zucman highly talented and said that he "was among the economists who argued strongly in favor of his hiring at Harvard." It nonetheless seems highly improbable that the president and provost, in making their decision, would not have been influenced by Summers's very public clashes with Zucman. (Some members of the economics department also expressed concern about Zucman's high public profile.)

The parallels between the rejection of Zucman's candidacy and the veto of Ken Roth's fellowship are hard to overlook. Both were vigorous advocates who could disrupt the smooth and seamless functioning of the school and complicate its ties to donors, policy-makers, and other powerful figures.

In recent years, economic policy-making has been freshened by an infusion of new thinking—about trade and taxation, antitrust and labor rights, dividends and buybacks—that has shaped the Biden administration. Very little of that has come out of Harvard, whose influence with the administration is small when compared with past Democratic administrations. Instead, the new ideas have emerged from such institutions as UC Berkeley (Zucman, Saez, Robert Reich), Columbia (Joseph Stiglitz, Lina Khan, Tim Wu), MIT (David Autor), Princeton (Cecilia Rouse), the New School (Heather Boushey), and the Roosevelt Institute. (Dani Rodrik also belongs on the list.) Raj Chetty's Opportunity Insights team at Harvard has produced some worthwhile studies of poverty and social mobility, but it generally steers clear of larger, systemic issues.

Measured against its prestige and resources, the Kennedy School seriously underperforms. Thanks to its revolving door with Washington and Wall Street, the lucrative sidelines of its professors, the weight of its donors, the allure of the Harvard name, and the many status seekers eager to be associated with it, the school has become so wedded to the system that it is unable to offer an independent critique of it. Though it's a school of public policy, the Kennedy School has confused serving the public with serving power. It's so wealthy—why would anyone want to change how things work? **N**



**"I don't know if I'll try to cross the sea," Adam said, "but I know it's better to die at sea than be caught" and sent to a detention center.**

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Use this pill to supercharge your brain and think better than ever.

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"There's a little-known NASA nutrient that multiplies the number of new power generators in your cells by up to 55%," says Dr. Al Sears, owner of the Sears Institute for Anti-Aging Medicine in Royal Palm Beach, Florida. "Science once thought this was impossible. But now you can make your heart, brain and body young again."

"I tell my patients the most important thing I can do is increase their 'health span.' This is the length of time you can live free of disease and with all your youthful abilities and faculties intact."

Medical first: Multiply the "power generators" in your cells

Al Sears, M.D., recently released an energy-boosting supplement based on this NASA nutrient that has become so popular, he's having trouble keeping it in stock.

Dr. Sears is the author of over 500 scientific papers on anti-aging and recently spoke at the WPBF 25 Health & Wellness Festival featuring Dr. Oz and special guest Suzanne Somers. Thousands of people listened to Dr. Sears speak on his anti-aging breakthroughs and attended his book signing at the event.

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The mice with the strongest mitochondria showed no signs of aging — even when they were the equivalent of 80 years old.

## Science stands behind the power of PQQ

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"I noticed a difference within a few



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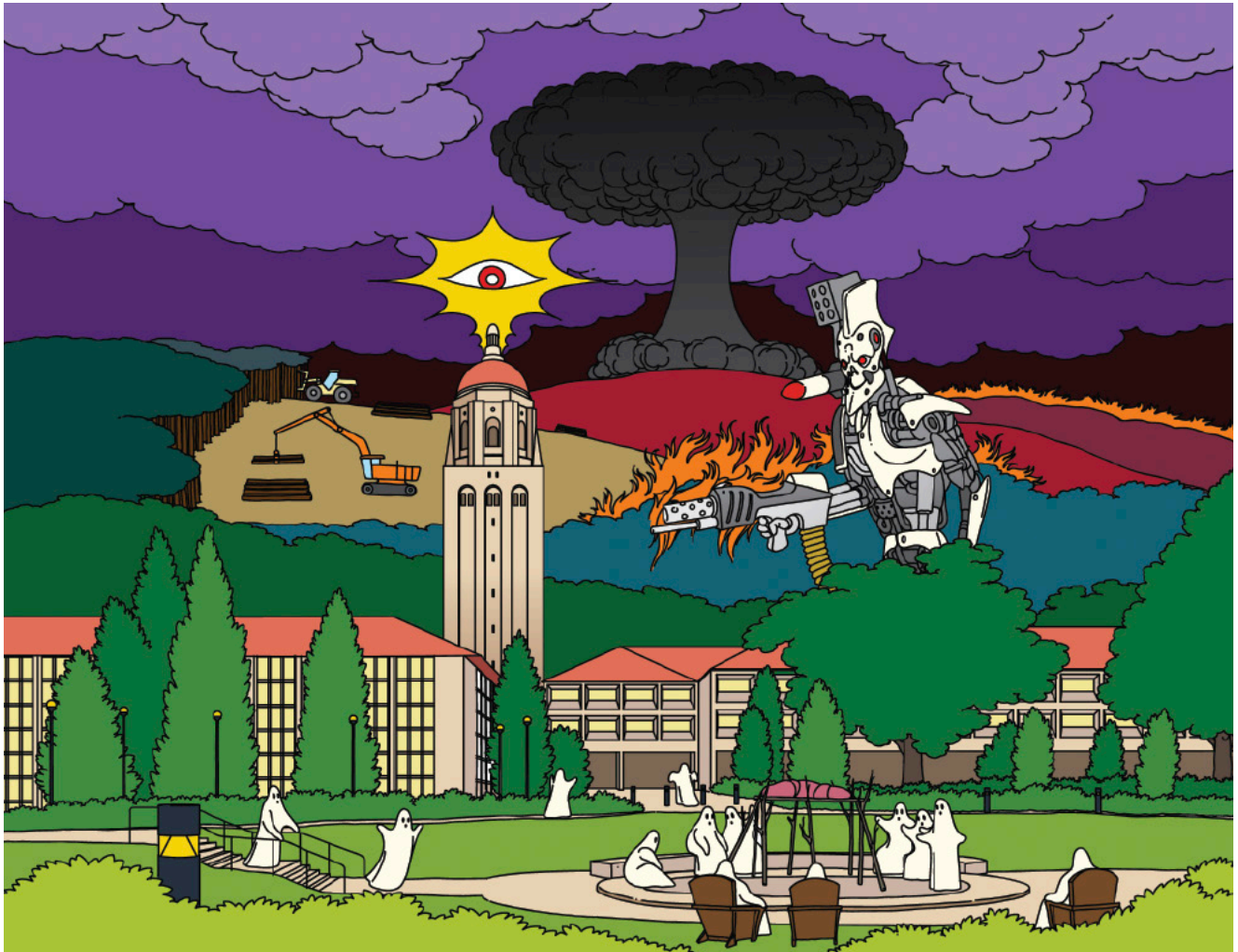
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## System Failure

*The world Palo Alto made*

BY JONATHAN LETHEM

**I**MET MALCOLM HARRIS ONCE, BACK IN 2011. He was part of an escort of young activists who helped me navigate making a brief address, by means of a “human megaphone,” to the crowd at the People’s Library in Manhattan’s Zuccotti Park. I’d been living in California, and it was the first time I’d visited the park. Harris and some others steered me in, and afterward we ate Vietnamese food. I was able to place Harris as part of the crowd around a magazine called *The New Inquiry*. He made an impression.

This was a time of a kind of collective awakening for the US left. It was for me as well. A politically depressed 47-year-old carrying in his body a family

ILLUSTRATION BY EDWARD CARVALHO-MONAGHAN

legacy of revolutionary disappointment, I was at that time closer to an inactivist. My own awakening was to the simple thought that if the left could wake up, I might be foolish to be depressed. The moment made me vulnerable, and those who'd invited me to experience it with them were kind. They indulged my playing the role of mentor, but really I was there to learn.

After Occupy, Harris became a prolific journalist, one who rapidly diversified his venues from *The New Inquiry* and *Jacobin* to legacy outfits like *The Nation* and *The New Republic*. He became something of a generational spokesperson with his 2017 book debut, *Kids These Days: Human Capital and the Making of Millennials*. Read as a bid to become his cohort's Chuck Klosterman, the book might suggest that Harris had lowered his revolutionary ambitions. But *Kids These Days* featured a galvanic thread of anger at all the right neoliberal suspects, and it worked as a bait-and-switch: Come for the generational hand-wringing, stay for the call to the barricades. Harris's quicksilver colloquial wit helped seal the deal: "For the nonprofit sector and its volunteers to force a fundamental change in direction for corporate America...would be something like a magician's bunny devouring him alive: It would be a stunning reversal in character, for one thing, but more important, a rabbit's mouth is way too small."

Harris's 2020 follow-up, *Shit Is Fucked Up And Bullshit: History Since the End of History*, was a collection of essays (including one killed by *The New York Times*) and originally self-published manifestos like "Lego Marx" and "The Singular Pursuit of Comrade Bezos." Better than a holding action, the book squared Harris's circle: from Occupier and millennial defender to a theorist of a robust, nonsectarian 21st-century Marxism. He offered a class-based analysis that was capable of binding to contemporary social justice uprisings and eluding woke-controversy traps, without chewing off its own leg in the process.

In "Lego Marx," which takes its inspiration from Christine Delphy's "A Materialist Feminism Is Possible," Harris declares his project: "The answer to problems with Marxism is more, better Marxism." If that was inspiring, even more so is the way that, in his third and latest book, Harris has dug deep into the task. The scheme here is history as microcosm: *Palo Alto* works outward from scrupulous specifics to an epic panoramic recasting of our whole dire situation. The book should be of urgent interest to anyone living inside its ambit—that being, according to its subtitle, California, capitalism, and the world.

**S**ometimes the best way to start is by assuming nothing about a subject. "Palo Alto is nice," Harris begins, and it serves as a mirror: We come in with assumptions, do we

*Jonathan Lethem's 13th novel, Brooklyn Crime Novel, will be published in October.*



### Palo Alto

*A History of California, Capitalism, and the World*

By Malcolm Harris  
Little, Brown.

720 pp. \$36

not? "Palo Alto is haunted," he adds soon enough. Then: "Palo Alto is a bubble." This is more than another instance of Harris's dry, somewhat gnomic humor. The writer's invocation here is of the mystery that lurks inside the taken-for-granted; he asks the reader to park all the wearisome junk we believe we already know and to suspend any doubts that one city's history can serve as a container for all the sorrowful and outrageous implications that he will methodically, hypnotically unpack from it. Harris grew up in the place, and he plainly takes it personally. But *Palo Alto* isn't a memoir. After laying claim to our attention with a brief personal overture, the author ducks into the wings.

The book begins before Palo Alto has even been awarded its name, painting a sweeping view of the special violence and velocity of settler colonialism on the West Coast, and how it worked in tandem with national mandates. For Harris leaves no doubt that by the time the frontier imperative reached California, it was hardly fumbling Pilgrims in boats who carried it forward.

The first of what will be dozens of cameo portraits scattered throughout the book is of Amadeo Giannini, a first-generation Italian American who, at the turn of the century, cartelized the Bay Area's disparate truck farmers to form the

Bank of Italy—shortly to be renamed the Bank of America. We are also introduced to Leland Stanford, railroad baron, future governor, and university namesake. At the end of the first chapter, Harris pauses to offer us a statement of general purpose so candid and definitive that I want to quote it at length:

What interests me is not so much the personal qualities of the men and women in this history but how capitalism has made use of them. To think about life this way is not to surrender to predetermination; only by understanding how we're made use of can we start to distinguish our selves from our situations. How can you know what you want or feel or think—who you *are*—if you don't know which way history's marionette strings are tugging? In the following pages you'll meet characters who find ways to tug back, who pit themselves against the way things are and come to personify the system's self-destructive countertendencies. People aren't puppets, and to pull a person is to create the conditions for rebellion. Maybe we're more like butterflies, pinned live and wriggling onto history's collage.... If, as I have been convinced, the point of life and the meaning of freedom is to make something with what the world makes of you, then it's necessary to locate those places where history reaches through your self and sticks you to the board.

This paragraph is more than a throat-clearing aside; it illuminates a basic tension that energizes his book. Harris is terrific at character sketches. Following Stanford, on through a cascade of names I'd never heard of or had known only as brands or caricatures—David Packard and William Hewlett, Arthur Rock, William Shockley, Allard Lowenstein, and many more—Harris animates a frieze of predominantly deplorable white men of power, influence, and ego in his detailed prose. But at the same time, he has a larger vision, one in keeping with his Marxist analytics: A system like capitalism finds the villains it needs. Many of these guys were simply in the right place at the right time and sufficiently willing to function as exalted cogs in the machine of various genocides,



conspiracies, corporations, weapons research projects, and coups. A few might truly have been ingenious scoundrels, but most of them played parts that could easily have been taken up by others had fate—or, rather, the irresistible systemic necessities of capital accrual, commons enclosure, and empire-making—dealt the cards a little differently.

Look no further than Leland Stanford himself. Despite his well-advertised interest in photography and horses (and his sponsorship of the pioneering English motion photographer Eadward Muybridge), Palo Alto's foundational great man emerges in Harris's book as a garrulous but incurious pampered son and brother of sharper men, someone with a flair mainly for fiduciary partnerships and glomming credit. The genius resides in the systems themselves: suprahuman forces converging rapaciously on the opportunities that the nexus of landscape, technology, and ideology in California's expansion represented.

These forces, Harris reminds us, relied on a series of nonwhite labor populations regarded as disposable: Indigenous Natives and Mexicans, Chinese laborers, migrating Blacks, traded one for the next. To maintain such a labor regime, as the book illuminates, the laws were aligned with crackpot science, from bionomics to bell curves, to enable what Harris calls "bifurcation": the spoils of progress accruing primarily to white populations, precisely because of their willingness to mercilessly legislate nonwhite working-class people into a limbo of categorical exile from the fruits of their own labor.

The cradle of such notions was the new Parnassus of scholarship founded on the railroad baron's private land. Stanford University made itself home to such figures as Lewis Terman, the man who put the "Stanford" in the Stanford-Binet IQ test and a eugenicist who believed that the "inherent" deficiencies of Mexican and Black people justified not only segregation but population control. Terman and his cohort specialized in dubiously scientific research in which the "gifted" white children—including Terman's own—were given every advantage. As Harris writes:

For the bionomists, there was no reason not to lane children [i.e., sort out those who scored exceptionally well on intelligence tests] as soon as they could be

found. Their IQs weren't going to change. Just as the Palo Alto System did, Terman assumed that the adult's potential was always already observable in the child. The environment could, however, determine whether they lived up to that potential. And for the researchers, that was a question of national security. Though it ruined the scientific validity of what was already a dubious experiment, Terman couldn't help intervening in the lives of his subjects, helping them along and writing recommendation letters scientifically certifying their immutable genius.

Harris's revulsion here is infectious.

**A**s the mosaic that Harris builds in *Palo Alto* accumulates its pieces, readers jonesing for dirt on Peter Thiel, Jeff Bezos, and Elizabeth Holmes will not be disappointed. They will, however, be made to sit on their hands for a while. Not until page 439 does the curtain rise on a more contemporary parade of deplorables. Harris first wants to chart the system through which Silicon Valley produced itself, a system long predating the silicon chip. We need to know something about the consolidation of the railroads; the growth of electronics engineering and the invention of the semiconductor; and the origins of "venture" capital speculation. All of these are precursors and models for the Silicon Valley moment. All of these, yes, plus the partnerships between tech innovators and a military-industrial-research complex geared to a eugenicist fantasy. The goal: win World War II while keeping elite, young, white specimens off the battlefields and behind dashboards and consoles, where they'd survive to achieve the careers for which they were preordained.

Waiting for the dork titans Steve Jobs and Bill Gates to appear, readers may find, in fact, that they've been reading about them all along. What Harris calls the Palo Alto System, with its unholy alchemy of racism, technology, and capitalism, is nothing if not breathtakingly continuous and consistent. Chinese railroad laborers and Mexican orchard pickers are more than premonitions of Apple's suicidal Foxconn factory workers in China, just as Leland Stanford's combine benefiting from the "uncompensated expropriation"

of land around his railroad by the US government is more than a premonition of Bill Gates's bold seizure via copyright of what had once been open-source hobbyists' code; they're exactly the same thing. Harris's voice rises thrillingly as he lays out the stakes and begs us to understand them: "Competition and domination, exploitation and exclusion, minority rule and class hate: These aren't problems capitalist technology will solve. *That's what it's for.* In the proper language, they are features, not bugs."

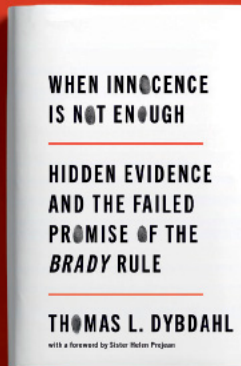
**P**alo Alto's cover design appears to be based on a tie-dyed T-shirt, teasing an approach to this regional account that centers the allure of the Grateful Dead, the *Whole Earth Catalog*, and the Burning Man festival. Did Harris's publisher hope for a different book? More likely, I suspect, they're on board with their author's somewhat puckish willingness to bait expectations—the spirit of an organizer who once pranked the Internet into believing that Radiohead was about to play a free concert for Occupy in Zuccotti Park. It's also the case that boomer and Gen X vanities alike might be stung to discover how uninterested Harris is in repeating any self-flattering, pop-countercultural explanations for the ascent of the digital start-ups.

Sure, some of these fool billionaires grew up reading a lot of science fiction, which, taken literally rather than as allegory, may have caused them to be genuinely confused about their prospects for life extension, space migration, and the uploading of consciousness into the ether. But neither Ken Kesey's "Acid Tests" nor *Wired* magazine's 30-year (and counting) premature victory lap for virtual reality explains how Microsoft, Apple, Google, Amazon & Co. have made so many thousands of rich people richer and so many billions of poor people poorer, while shamelessly embracing Ayn Rand-style libertarian capitalist directives to frack both our commons and our privacy.

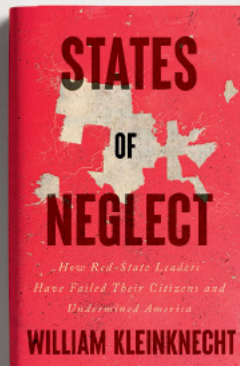
Harris declines to waste time debunking the counterculture smokescreen—Stewart Brand and John Perry Barlow don't appear in this book. Instead, he sets his sights on an unexpected historical supervillain: Herbert Hoover. This is the most revelatory portrait in *Palo Alto's* pantheon. One of Stanford's first graduates, Hoover is the US president that may social

# SPRING BOOKS FROM THE NEW PRESS

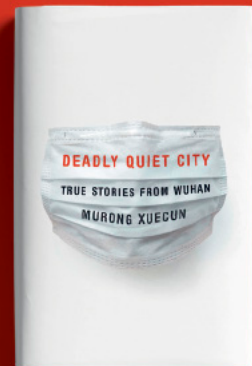
## (THAT THE RIGHT WING DOESN'T WANT YOU TO READ)



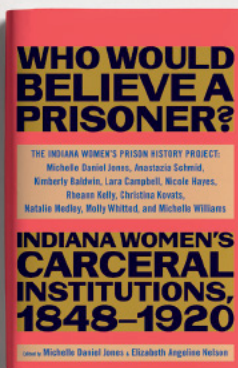
"A well-researched, impactful account of the inequities in the legal justice system."  
—*Library Journal* (starred review)



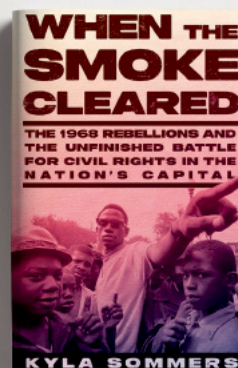
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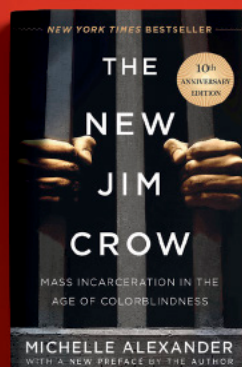
"An ambitious and frequently disturbing history. . . . A forceful critique of the roots of the carceral state."  
—*Publishers Weekly*



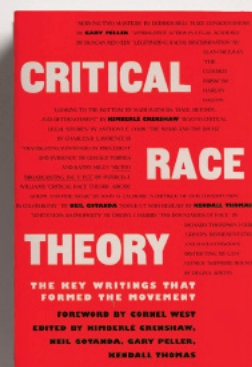
"With lucid, compelling prose, Sommers challenges the reductive, conventional narrative around the 1968 rebellions in DC."  
—*Michael Eric Dyson*



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studies teacher (and yours too, I'd bet) encouraged us to believe had been made to stand in history's corner with a dunce cap on his head while Franklin Roosevelt swept in and fixed the Great Depression.

Harris destroys the notion that Hoover's story ended with his electoral defeat. With chilling precision, he demonstrates how Hoover's innovative mashup of international capital partnership and close collusion between the state and corporate interests—beginning in the future president's private business enterprises, then extended into his government service—set the paradigm for the century that the planet is still trying to survive. Though his popular reputation was in tatters during and after the Depression, Hoover didn't sulk; he watched as his recipes for marrying tech and capital to deregulation, for strike-breaking and securing state-supported fortunes for shareholders, were cooked in plain sight at Stanford's Hoover Institution.

The think tank's many operatives fueled and then were buoyed by the fever of Cold War anti-communism, and they helped inspire a right-wing student movement in the 1960s. Hoover himself lived just long enough to offer support to the Goldwater presidential campaign in 1964.

Hooverilles or San Francisco's current tent cities—again, it's all one thing. While it may take you a while to accept the square-headed Quaker as one of history's real winners, Harris renders this the most gripping of his many gripping tales, and a persuasive one. Hoover endured my social studies teacher's contempt very nicely, it turned out, just as Thiel, Bezos, and Musk will endure yours and mine. These people are playing the long game; our admiration isn't required.

**I**n the case of Silicon Valley's better-known figures, Harris lingers just as long as his distaste can bear (we're informed three or four times of Steve Jobs's noxious body odor). Fortunately, his book isn't merely a rogues' gallery. Instead, it's enlivened by a counternarrative: one of resistance and rebellion, spurred by proximity to the site of the Palo Alto System and

its exponential disasters for the human species. Harris supplies fond cameos of a handful of dissidents in the book: the union organizer Karl Yoneda, the poet Bob Kaufman, the Indigenous activist Rosemary Cambra, and the heretic Stanford English professor H. Bruce Franklin, whose canny anti-war and prison reform organizing drew on both his intimate experience as a commissioned officer in the Air Force and his quick study of Marx while visiting Paris in 1966. (Previously, I'd known of Franklin as the great left critic of US science fiction and the debunker of Ronald Reagan's "Star Wars" defense fantasies, with their dependence on right-wing space opera.)

Harris also nimbly traces the factions of the Bay Area '60s left, from the Black Panthers to various Maoist groups to the Third World Liberation Front. He points out that while homegrown protests generated a lot of sentimental lore—"student militants could

hardly throw a rock on Stanford's 8,000-plus acres without hitting some piece of Cold War military infrastructure"—the deeper organizing legacies were founded by theoretically informed internationalists, not self-actualizing hippies:

Positioning the personal revolution against the state is based on a deeply confused set of coordinates, a special kind of convenient distortion native to the United States that involves forgetting that the rest of the world exists.... There is no single line that connects California to the world anticolonial struggle; they are embedded in the same history.... It was *colonial exploitation* that linked these conflicts in the first place, not the spread of doctrines or encounters between individuals.

Harris is up to more here than just owning the boomers. Linking the Panthers, the Chicano-led multinational militant organization Venceremos, and the Alcatraz-seizing Indians of All Tribes to the Algerian and South African uprisings is typical of his framework-broadening approach. In one stroke, Harris cinches the meaning of the '60s rebel-

**Readers will relish  
*Palo Alto* for its scope  
and precision, but also  
its pugnaciousness.**

lions to the book's early chapters on the origins of white rule on the West Coast. When a population of settlers disenfranchises other populations while exploiting them as a disposable workforce—not haphazardly, but with guns, laws, and institutions—in what sense is this not a colony?

**R**eaders will relish *Palo Alto* for its scope and precision, for its pugnaciousness, and for its sardonic amazement at an emperor who couldn't be strolling down the avenue any nakeder. There's a brute glee in Harris's version of historical materialism; even the book's title eschews metaphor and abstraction. Harris has done the hard work, and he has done it in a cause: to urge us to awake from our capitalist-technological inertial dream state. The truth may sometimes hurt, but the lies are in bed with collective death.

There's another form of glee in Harris's recommendation in his last chapter: that the powers that be, under the guidance of their consciences or our coercion, revert Leland Stanford's original plot of

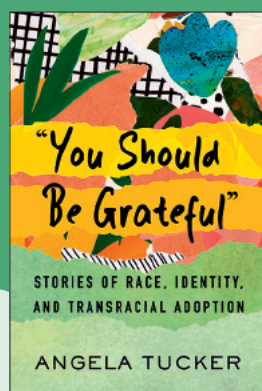
land to the original Indigenous stewards of the peninsula. It may seem, at first, as though Harris has driven his mighty prose vehicle away to reveal a "Let's Kill All the Lawyers" bumper sticker on the rear, but this proposition is as well-worked-out as the rest of the book:

Stanford does not need to wait for the U.S. federal government to recognize the Muwékma Ohlone's sovereign claim. The university has already demonstrated that: In 1989...Stanford worked with [Rosemary] Cambra to return hundreds of Ohlone skeletons to the tribe for reburial. It was a voluntary move made under student-activist pressure.... History already judges Stanford authorities ahead of their time on this count relative to their peer institutions. By recognizing the Muwékma Ohlone, the university set a precedent.... Let's also assume the courts recognize that Leland and Jane Stanford's injunction against transferring the land is less legitimate than the ancestral

rights of the people they took it from.... If the creatures of the earth are to have a medium-term chance, then at the very least we need some space right now to develop, practice, and deploy new modes of production, distribution, and reproduction—social metabolism. As a fortuitously located, substantial piece of land to which hundreds of identified Indigenous people have a specific claim and where, contrariwise, no individual settler holds a property deed, the acres known during the long twentieth century as Stanford present a unique opportunity for the human race.

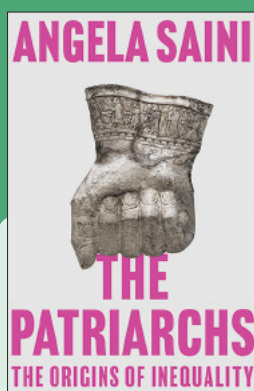
Well, why not? As Harris demonstrates relentlessly, the enemies of our flourishing have been willing again and again to alter reality with the boldest of strokes. Why not try to match their impunity? Permit me, then, if you will, with all the bogus authority vested in me as the paid reviewer of his book, to second this excellent proposal. I'll meet you at the ribbon-cutting ceremony. **N**

## NEW BOOKS TO CHALLENGE ASSUMPTIONS AND IGNITE CHANGE



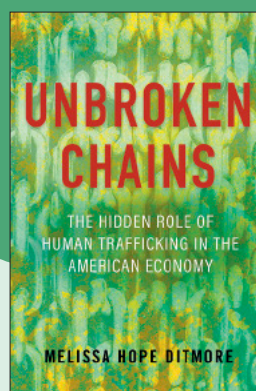
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—Elan Mastai, writer and co-executive producer of *This Is Us*



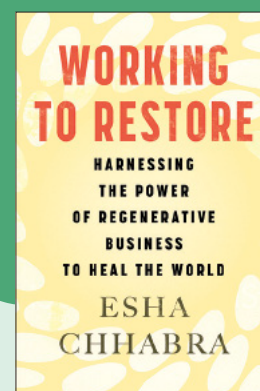
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—Rafia Zakaria, author of *Against White Feminism*



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—Ryan Gellert, CEO, Patagonia







# Sink or Swim

*Emma Cline's novel of pool parties and class conflict*

BY JENNIFER WILSON

**E**MMMA CLINE'S NEW NOVEL, *THE GUEST*, OPENS WITH Alex, a 22-year-old woman, getting ready to dive into the warm waters of the Atlantic Ocean. First though, she turns and scans the beach for a moment, taking it in: the "immaculate" sand, the light that "made it all look honeyed and mild," the infectious yawns of the leisure class, their bodies "tanned to the color of expensive luggage." Can they tell, she wonders, out there in the land of "unattended bags" and "cars left unlocked," how hard she's pretending to be used to all of this? Alex turns back and starts swimming. "In the water," she decides, "she was just like everyone else." In the sea, every body relies on the same center of gravity. It is only on land that some swim and others sink, for no discernible reason except that this is how we have ordered things.

*The Guest* is Cline's first novel

since 2016's *The Girls*. Another story of intruders, *The Girls* was inspired by the Manson cult and follows a 14-year-old named Evie, whose parents' divorce and the new urges that come with being a teen have filled her with an almost painful emptiness. Evie might have followed anyone anywhere, but it's a black-haired girl named Suzanne and her unkempt friends in the park, dumpster-diving for

food and pulling at one another's dresses, who catch her eye. In Northern California, surrounded by adults on macrobiotic diets, raving about the benefits of gestalt therapy, the girls and their reckless disregard for their own well-being make them look, in Evie's eyes, like the best kind of outsiders, "royalty in exile." Evie goes on to spend the last summer before she's shipped off to boarding school in and out of "the Ranch," a commune controlled by a charismatic psychopath and sexual abuser named Russell. Evie steals from her parents and breaks into the homes of her neighbors in Petaluma to steal things for Suzanne and the other girls on the Ranch—innocent preludes to the novel's final, deadly home invasion.

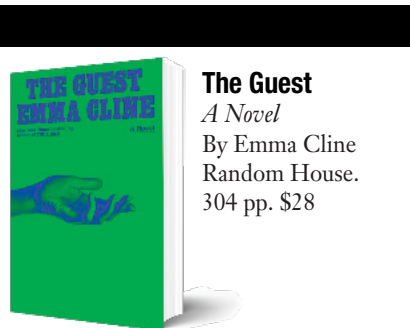
Unlike those teenage girls under Russell's spell, *The Guest*'s Alex is old enough

not to trust men to take care of her. Instead, she takes care of herself by using men. There's a difference. That's how she winds up on Long Island for the summer: She is staying with an older wealthy man named Simon in exchange for being young, pretty, and not having any baggage. She just has to keep up the lie about the last part a little longer. It's August, and summer is almost over. By now, everyone has been dehydrated for months. Surely they won't be sharp enough to notice a homeless sex worker with only a few hundred dollars to her name in their midst. Yet the consequences if they do are dire enough to keep the reader feeling tense. In *The Guest*, Cline has written a thriller about trying to get by, a summer read for the precariat. It's a novel driven by the suspense of what it takes to survive—a suspense that can take the pleasure out of anything, even a day at the beach.

**A**lex arrived in New York City when she was 20. After a few years of working as an “escort,” she is already feeling expired. The late nights and pills are wearing her out, just as she has worn out her welcome in the city. First there are the hotel and restaurant managers who recognize her and threaten to call the police. Then there are the clients who stop calling “for whatever reason—ultimatums eked out of couples therapy and this new fad of radical honesty.” Alex is a quiet heroine—almost like a mist of a person, barely there. That's what makes her appealing to men. She is also growing desperate, but—well trained in suppressing her interiority—this is something we can observe only externally, by the changes in her behavioral patterns. To keep up with the cost of living, she starts waiving references, no longer requiring a photo ID; she also pays huge fees to get her ad featured and undergoes laser treatments meant for women twice her age.

Hope starts to feel all but lost until, one day, a little American ingenuity saves her. She doesn't need to alter the product, she decides; she simply needs a different marketing strategy. Alex realizes that she doesn't have to put herself up for sale to survive. She spies Simon, 50-ish, in a hotel bar and decides to become a recent

college grad from upstate New York, someone raised by religious parents, a sweet, naive girl in the big city looking for a father. This whole time, it suddenly occurs to her, “she'd been overlooking the protection a civilian could offer. Something more permanent.” Not long after, Simon invites Alex to spend August with him, to stay through the month until his annual Labor Day bash. A wave of relief washes over her: “She had disappeared herself—it had been easy.”



### The Guest

A Novel

By Emma Cline

Random House.

304 pp. \$28

One wonders how much of Alex was really left in the first place, though. At one point, she compares herself to a ghost in the land of the living. She is, after all, a woman who has trained herself to be a blank canvas, someone capable of morphing into whatever her clients wish her to be: “Wasn't it better to give people what they wanted? A conversation performed as a smooth transaction—a silky back-and-forth without the interruption of reality.” In many ways, Alex functions this way for the reader as well. We regard her as Simon does: She is attractive in a very American way, adaptable to market demands. Indeed, she is as American as summer barbecue—appetizing and dead inside.

There is one fleeting moment early in the novel when Alex bursts off the page, when she stops trying to survive and lets herself live. Toward the end of August, Simon takes her to a party at the home of a wealthy woman named Helen. The mansion overlooks the ocean, but by now Alex knows “not to compliment the house, not to indicate unfamiliarity with these places.” For reasons wholly illogical, self-destructive, and thrilling, Alex decides to flirt with Helen's husband. She compliments him on his patience, referring presumably to his marriage with Helen. Afterward, “a look passed between them—and there it was, the barest shift of energy, of recognition.” They sneak off together and jump, fully clothed, into a

swimming pool. Simon finds them before things can go any further, but the next day he tells Alex, “You might go back to the city today.... There's a train in an hour and a half.”

It would be a train to nowhere, though: Alex has been evicted from her apartment. New York City might as well be the bottom of the ocean. With no home to return to, Alex has to come up with a plan. After Simon's assistant drops her off at the station, she makes her decision: She will stay in Long Island for the next six days, until the big Labor Day bash. She imagines walking into Simon's party, where he “would take her back, because that was the whole game he'd set up, both of them hitting their marks, and all would be well.”

The rest of the novel details Alex's quest to survive these next six days, in the most literal sense: She needs to secure food and shelter. She will do so by blending in, by passing herself off as someone who never has to think about food and shelter. Though race is never explicitly mentioned, it is obvious that she relies on being a young, white female who looks like she belongs among the moneyed Hamptons set. She successfully manages to pass herself off as someone's old acquaintance looped into a house share, as a rich son's preppy new girlfriend, as a family friend of people with the last name Spencer. This week is stressful, possibly more so for the reader than for Alex, who maintains a steady diet of painkillers to numb herself. Each day plays out like a thriller in which she must invent a new backstory and a new set of reasons why she needs to crash at someone's guesthouse or stay for lunch.

The chapters make for nail-biting episodes of class subterfuge that play out on a minefield of social codes. Don't stop for security guards, Alex reminds herself. Don't be surprised that people leave their shoes at the beach. This is how one behaves in “a system that existed only because everyone believed they were among people like themselves.” On one day, she sneaks into a private club by convincing a little boy's nanny that she knows the kid. “We're going to the pool,” the boy says. “If that's okay with you,” Alex politely asks his minder. Her story is that she's a family friend and hasn't seen him for ages. Alex spends the rest of the day inside the clubhouse, charging beers and a cheeseburger and the kid's ice cream to someone else's tab. It works. Of course it works. The hired help, from the

*Jennifer Wilson is a contributing writer at The Nation and the recipient of the 2022 Nona Balakian Award.*



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nanny to the barman, don't ask too many questions. They can't risk being wrong; they can't chance offending the Spencers of the world.

The wealthier her interlocutors, the less suspicious they find Alex. Whereas a maid gives her a look that seems "to contain everything? Knowledge of exactly what kind of person Alex was," the rich are slower to see through her charade. These are people so used to the affected friendliness of their service staff that they can't tell that Alex is there only because she has to be. When one of

her marks—Jack, a young man she meets on the beach—gets into a fight with his father at a restaurant, she knows to disappear into the background, to not insert herself into the argument or even consider taking a side. "She was used to this," Cline writes, "the politeness of pretending that things that were happening were not, in fact, happening." It is only later that Jack, who is not quite at peace with the wealth around him (he totes around a copy of Hermann Hesse's *Siddhartha*), finds it "weird" that Alex doesn't look at her phone, that she doesn't say much. "How come you don't tell me anything?" he asks. It's his first hint that she might, in fact, be working.

**I**n *The Guest*, Cline does a pitch-perfect job of keeping Alex's understanding of herself in sync with the reader's. We are deprived of much of her backstory because Alex is someone who prefers not to dwell. Whenever her past enters the narrative, it does so forcefully and almost supernaturally (an ex texts to say that he knows she's with Simon, but it's not clear how, since she hasn't told anyone about him). Rhythmically, Alex always has to keep moving forward; if she stops, she'll drown. She is like a shark, except that she's the one who could wind up getting eaten. That kind of contradiction is threaded throughout *The Guest*. Cline avoids a simplistic eat-the-rich story on a number of levels. For one thing, her novel is equally attuned to the hostilities that exist among people in service, the "don't fuck

this up for me" instinct that threatens to make enemies out of potential allies.

Cline has Alex observe a similar phenomenon among women. Early on in the

novel, we see Alex watching a reality TV show that sounds like one of the *Real Housewives* franchises: "All the women in the show hated each other, hated each other so much, just so they could avoid hating their husbands." Yet when it comes to what we might call solidarity, the author is far from a pessimist or skeptic. Alex maintains a tenderness toward other people who

work for the rich, and she even threatens to blow her own cover by approaching Dana, an escort she recognizes from the city, out of nothing more than a desire to reconnect and reminisce. Cline's fiction is at its most erotic when she highlights the affection among people from exploited groups. In *The Girls*, little kindnesses between Suzanne and Evie grow into a love that spares the latter the fate of becoming one of Russell's monsters. In *The Guest*, Dana tells Alex, "I really don't care to be involved in your shit anymore." It sounds like an annoyed retort, but what it really means is "Don't worry—I won't tell."

Alex also never tells. She never betrays another service worker to save herself or gets anyone in trouble on purpose. She just eats lunch, smiles, and tries to make everyone feel at ease. She is simply trying to be a good guest. Throughout the novel, Jack is reading *Siddhartha*, but it is Alex who wanders like a monk, swimming in pools of enlightenment and taking only what she needs. Throughout the week, she finds a world full of empty homes and food that has been forgotten. Why, then, the novel pushes us to ask, does she have to work so hard for them? Why does anyone?

By the time Labor Day and Simon's party rolls around, we are exhausted on Alex's behalf, having seen for ourselves all the work, the smiles, the restraint, she succeeded in making invisible. As the sun sets, we feel summer ending. In *The Guest*, Cline has written a beach read for the people who clean up once the party is over. **N**



**Cline's protagonist  
needs to keep moving.  
If she doesn't, she'll  
drown.**

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Number 22—2023

COVER IMAGE: Françoise Gillard as Stella in *Un tramway nommé Désir* (Paris, 2011). Photo by Cosimo Mirco Magliocca.

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# A Bad Breakup

*The discontents of Francis Fukuyama*

BY DANIEL BESSNER

**T**HE END OF THE COLD WAR WAS SUPPOSED TO USHER IN a better world. After four decades of struggle, the great battle between liberalism and Bolshevism had ended in the former's decisive victory. Many in the West hoped that liberalism would now have free rein to shape events around the world. Utopia, at least of a liberal form, was finally within humanity's grasp.

No essay embodied this feeling more than "The End of History?" Published in 1989 in *The National Interest* and written by a then-unknown State Department official named Francis Fukuyama, the piece proffered a simple three-step argument. First, Fukuyama claimed that throughout the world, people had decided that liberal democratic capitalism was superior to the authoritarian communism produced by Bolshevism and Maoism. Second, he argued that liberalism's triumph

meant that "History"—understood as the struggle between rival ideologies—had ended. Finally, he concluded that, over time, many nations that hadn't yet become liberal capitalist democracies would inevitably do so, and that this would be good for humankind.

Today, many critics argue that Fukuyama was naive at best, foolish at worst. Nationalist authoritarianism, they

note, reigns in countries like Russia, China, Turkey, Poland, and Hungary, while Western democracies hardly resemble the tempered utopia that Fukuyama imagined. Inequality has run rampant; people are alienated and depressed; and liberal governments seem incapable of performing basic functions. A hegemonic liberalism has not been able to tame capitalist excesses and as a result many have come to question liberalism writ large.

To take the United States as a paradigmatic example, increasing stratification has sparked a severe backlash against the form of liberalism that seemed destined to rule when Fukuyama wrote "The End of History?" On the left, a new generation, spurred in part by the Bernie Sanders presidential campaigns, has embraced a politics that organizes itself under the banner of socialism. On the right, nationalist reaction is back with a vengeance, as Donald Trump's racist and xenophobic campaign and presidency impelled the resurgence of a right-wing radicalism that has not been seen since the 1990s, when white supremacists carried out spectacular acts like the Oklahoma City bombing. Meanwhile, the so-called center is adrift, unable to address the many problems that bedevil liberal democratic capitalism. To add insult to injury, beyond formal politics, exhaustion and ennui define much of American life. Across social classes, people have given up on the very idea of a better future.

Elite liberals can sense that they are losing ground and are anxious to redeem a tradition that has plainly been unable to deliver on its great promises. Liberalism is in crisis, and for the first time since the Cold War's end, liberal thinkers feel the need to justify liberalism itself. From Adam Gopnik's *A Thousand Small Sanities* to Mark Lilla's *The Once and Future Liberal* to James Traub's *What Was Liberalism?*, writers have begun to man the intellectual barricades, defending and promoting liberalism as the best possible solution to the world's problems.

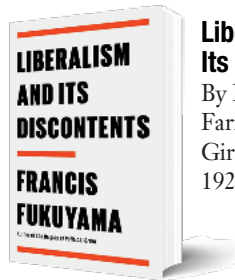
Fukuyama's recent *Liberalism and Its Discontents* is part of this liberal counter-offensive. As a thinker, Fukuyama is the most distinguished of liberal apologists, and if anyone could make the positive case for liberalism, it's him. But *Liberalism and Its Discontents* is not especially illuminating, repeating tired criticisms of the left and the right that don't add much to scholarly analysis or political

conversation. In essence, Fukuyama believes that embracing centrist liberalism was, and remains, the “mature” thing to do. While adolescents and fools endorse politics of radical change, adults accept that the limited reforms of liberalism are the best humanity can hope for. Though Fukuyama is willing to acknowledge many of liberalism’s limitations, he cannot envision a world beyond it.

The tragedy of our times is that he doesn’t really need to, because the argument he proffered in “The End of History?” has proved correct. No ideology has arisen to challenge liberalism, whether in the United States or elsewhere. Fukuyama and the other defenders of liberalism thus don’t actually have to be that persuasive. Liberalism reigns, and it looks set to do so into the foreseeable future. History, for the moment at least, remains at its end.

**T**hough most remember “The End of History?” as triumphant in tone, it was also melancholic, often sounding almost like a breakup letter. There was good reason for this: For the first decade of his career, Fukuyama was in a long-distance relationship with the Soviet Union. It was the lodestar around which he organized his life. The Soviet Union provided Fukuyama with a calling—his professional specialty was Soviet behavior in the Third World—and it also gave him ideological perspective. Whatever the Soviet Union was, the United States (and Fukuyama) was not. The Soviet Union was the Joker to Fukuyama’s Batman. When it went away, he lost far more than a worthy adversary; he lost the object against which he’d defined his own moral and political compass.

From the start of his career, Fukuyama was interested in questions of ideology. When he began writing in the late 1970s as an intern at the RAND Corporation, a materialist realism that focused primarily on power relations abounded, both in the academy and in Washington, D.C. Thinkers like Kenneth Waltz and policy-makers like Henry Kissinger insisted that the Soviet Union was a “normal” nation with “normal” (read: power-focused) interests. Fukuyama disagreed with this consensus. Against his elders, the young analyst maintained that the Soviets were actually ideological enemies of the United States who desired to remake the world in their communist image. Where Kissinger understood geopolitics as a great game of power and interests, Fukuyama centered ideas. He thus spent the early years of his career analyzing Soviet efforts to create “ideo-



### Liberalism and Its Discontents

By Francis Fukuyama  
Farrar, Straus and  
Giroux.

192 pp. \$26

logical states” in places like Afghanistan, Angola, Mozambique, and Nicaragua. According to Fukuyama, ideology—not just power—needed to be taken seriously in international relations.

When Mikhail Gorbachev became the general secretary of the Soviet Communist Party in March 1985, Fukuyama started to notice that communism’s traditional nostrums seemed to hold less sway in both the Soviet metropole and the larger world. Gorbachev, Fukuyama wrote, not only abandoned “the old ideological language of Marxism-Leninism,” he also focused his efforts on working with states like India, which could hardly be described as communist. Furthermore, Soviet developmental economists had begun to argue in favor of modernization efforts that combined “socialist and market-oriented solutions,” while Third World leaders themselves made it clear that they were primarily interested in development and were not especially concerned with the ideological precepts that helped them achieve it. Faith in the communist project, Fukuyama concluded, had seriously diminished.

Despite these transformations, however, Fukuyama remained unable to abandon the Cold War; his attraction to it was that profound. Even as one part of Fukuyama understood that the US-Soviet relationship was entering a new phase, another part of him refused to believe it. As late as 1988, in the last essay he

published before “The End of History?,” Fukuyama affirmed that even if “centrally planned economies and one-party dictatorships are in a bad odor,” the United States needed to make strategy “on the assumption that [it’s] dealing with the same old Soviet Union.” Though Fukuyama couldn’t help but notice that the passion was gone from the relationship, he wanted it to continue. And anyway, things could change. Maybe the old magic would return.

But by the time “The End of History?” appeared in *The National Interest* in the summer of 1989, Fukuyama—who had by then migrated from RAND to the State Department—had come to terms with the undeniable reality: The Cold War was over. In February, the Soviets had begun withdrawing their tanks and soldiers from Czechoslovakia. In April, the Polish trade union Solidarity had been legalized; that same month, Soviet troops had started leaving Hungary. In July, Gorbachev had declared that he would not prevent the ongoing reforms in Eastern Europe. While the final collapse of the Soviet Union was still two and a half years away, not even Fukuyama could deny the facts. The US-Soviet struggle, a struggle that had defined his life and career, was at an end.

**“T**he End of History?” was more than just a piece of commentary; it was a diagnosis, an announcement of victory, and a lament, an explication of where Fukuyama thought the world was as well as an expression of how he felt about it. Fukuyama concluded that the US triumph in the Cold War was an epochal achievement, even as he appreciated that the future would not be as romantic without his old Soviet rival. And that’s why there’s a question mark in the title. Though “The End of History?” makes it clear that, intellectually, Fukuyama knows the answer to his question, emotionally he finds it difficult to accept.

Fukuyama’s argument in “The End of History?” was straightforward but profound. He claimed that the struggle between ideologies that had defined history in the 19th and 20th centuries was, in effect, over—that there were no longer any “viable systematic alternatives to Western liberalism.” From the Soviet Union, where Gorbachev

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had implemented glasnost and perestroika, to China, where Deng Xiaoping had liberalized the economy, communists had accepted liberalism's "democratizing and decentralizing principles." These transformations, Fukuyama insisted, were not merely important; they were epochal. "What we may be witnessing," he ventured, "is not just the end of the Cold War, or the passing of a particular period of postwar history, but the end of history as such: that is, the end point of mankind's ideological evolution and the universalization of Western liberal democracy as the final form of human government." Whether in a year, a generation, or a century, eventually everyone would become liberal.

In Fukuyama's telling, liberalism had proved itself superior to competing ideological alternatives because it was able to resolve all "fundamental 'contradictions' in human life," especially "that between capital and labor." If inequality existed in liberal societies, he asserted, it was not because of their "underlying legal and social structure[s]" but because of "the historical legacy of premodern conditions." Black Americans, for example, were poor not because of liberal democratic capitalism, but because of the "legacy of slavery and racism"—atavisms that more liberalism would cure. The same was true when it came to war. Following the philosopher Immanuel Kant, who claimed that "perpetual peace" could be achieved if every government embraced liberal precepts, Fukuyama avowed that at the end of history there would no longer be "ideological grounds for major conflict between nations." War might thus become a thing of the past.

In these ways, "The End of History?" was triumphalist. But it was also suffused with an intense anxiety about what might come next. While Fukuyama is often considered one of late-20th-century liberalism's greatest advocates, he was always a bit skeptical of the ideology's ability to satiate the innate human desire for connection and meaning. In particular, Fukuyama envied communists, because communism provided its adherents with a profound sense of community, engendering feelings of global solidarity that encouraged leftist governments to aid and make sacrifices for one another, even when doing so wasn't in their avowed national interest.

Unlike communism, Fukuyama explained in an essay from the

mid-1980s, liberalism had little "explicit doctrine" related to "international capitalist solidarity"—the latter, in fact, was almost a contradiction in terms, given liberal capitalism's individualistic ethos. Where communist nations like Cuba and the Soviet Union offered "fraternal assistance...as a matter of principle," cooperation between liberal governments would always "have to be arranged on an ad hoc basis, probably among states... directly affected by a common threat."

Under communism, people believed in a grand project and cooperated to bring it about; under liberalism, neither collective action nor social good will was encouraged. Though Fukuyama, of course, thought Marxist-Leninist beliefs were silly at best and destructive at worst, he nevertheless envied the kinds of solidarities they engendered. Ironically, the only time liberalism could inspire similar associations and feelings was when it was engaged in an epic battle with an existential enemy. Without such an enemy, liberalism was a bit bloodless.

This pessimistic understanding of liberalism helps explain the melancholic notes in "The End of History?" History's end, Fukuyama predicted mournfully, "will be a very sad time," because "the worldwide ideological struggle that called forth daring, courage, imagination, and idealism, will be replaced by economic calculation, the endless solving of technical problems, environmental concerns, and the satisfaction of sophisticated consumer demands." Liberalism may work better than communism, but it couldn't satisfy the human yearning for connection and meaning; as Fukuyama later wrote, the ideology ultimately had a "vacuum" at its center. For this reason, he prophesied that in a liberal world shorn of momentous conflict, many people would not be all that happy. He wasn't wrong.

**T**he strange blend of triumphalism and melancholy that characterized "The End of History?" did not exactly spur a rapturous response from Fukuyama's fellow conservatives. Gertrude Himmelfarb and Irving

Kristol insisted that history was far too dynamic to ever end. The philosopher Timothy Fuller accused Fukuyama of bad dialectics for positing "the victory of one prong of the opposition." Samuel Huntington maintained that human nature was too irrational to permit Fukuyama's predicted end—or as Huntington abrasively put it, "in history there may be total defeats, but there are no final solutions." The right wasn't yet ready to say goodbye to ideological conflict.

But where conservative eggheads rejected Fukuyama's thesis, significant parts of the public embraced it. As *The New York Times Magazine's* James Atlas reported in October 1989, "The End of History?" had rapidly become "the hottest

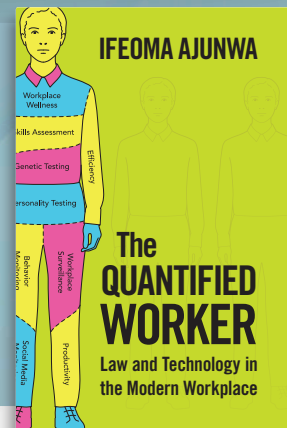
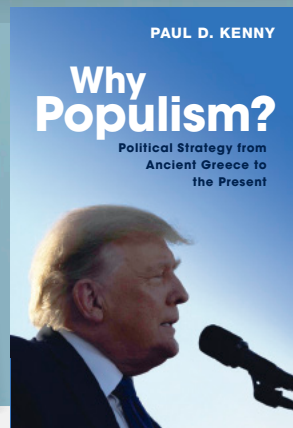
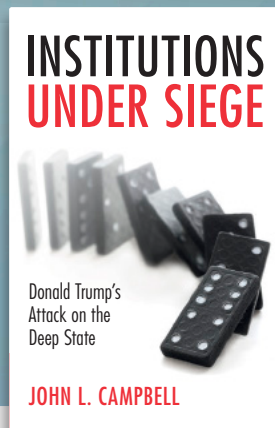
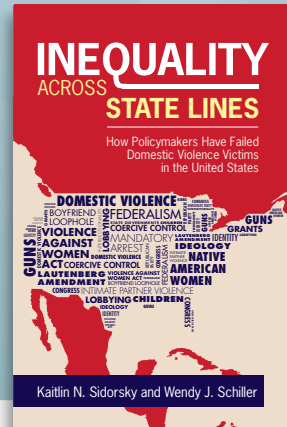
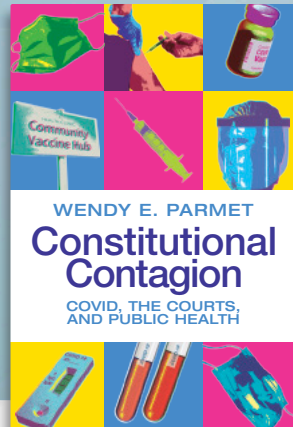
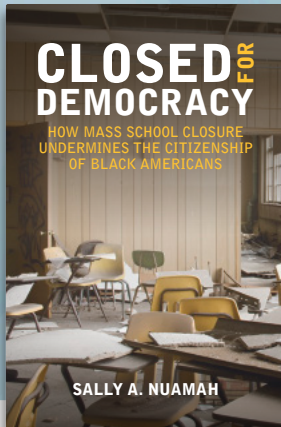
topic around," with one Washington, D.C., newsdealer informing Atlas that *The National Interest* was "outselling everything, even the pornography." Several months after the essay's release, Atlas observed, "you still can't pick up a magazine or a newspaper without stumbling across some reference to Fukuyama." "The End of History?" nailed the zeitgeist, as the end of an era bred an era of ends, from Arthur C. Danto's "the end of art" to Bill McKibben's *The End of Nature*. Fukuyama, in short, did what the best writers do: He gave a feeling a phrase.

Fukuyama became that rare thing: a celebrity intellectual. He left the State Department and embarked on a lucrative career as a thought leader. "The End of History?" and its 1992 book-length expansion, *The End of History and the Last Man* (notice the lack of question mark), were smash hits—according to Google Scholar, the former has been cited around 11,500 times and the latter around 30,000 (and was also a *New York Times* best seller). In the more than three decades since "The End of History?" appeared, Fukuyama has written regularly for *Foreign Affairs*, *Commentary*, and *The American Interest* and has moved among several elite institutions, including RAND, Johns Hopkins, and Stanford, where he is currently a senior fellow at the Freeman Spogli Institute for International Studies. A more successful intellectual career could hardly be imagined.

**Though most remember "The End of History?" as being triumphant in tone, it was also melancholic.**

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As his career took off, Fukuyama ranged widely in his subject matter, writing about everything from biotechnology to identity politics. But throughout it all, he remained best known, and most respected, as a theorist of liberalism. And while he may have had his misgivings about the ideology back in 1989, three decades of eating from the celebrity trough, coupled with the appearance of some apparent anti-liberal challengers, have led him to become a vociferous defender of the creed.

Indeed, defense sits at the heart of *Liberalism and Its Discontents*, a manifesto designed to fend off the attacks of what Fukuyama terms the “progressive left” and the “populist right.” You’ve already heard others deliver arguments similar to the ones Fukuyama offers here, in venues from *The Atlantic* to MSNBC to *The New York Times*. The left and the right are intolerant. The left is anti-capitalist; the right is anti-democratic. Both are bad for liberalism. Et cetera, et cetera.

Unfortunately, much of *Liberalism and Its Discontents* is defined by the false equivalence Fukuyama draws between left and right. In effect, he insists that anyone who rejects liberal centrism is slouching toward authoritarianism. But, as Fukuyama well knows, there is an enormous difference between the left and the right, especially in the United States. While the right wants to overturn some of the institutions of liberal democracy, the left has long since made its peace with them. No major leftist leader, from Bernie Sanders to Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, or institution, from the Democratic Socialists of America to *Jacobin*, questions the legitimacy of liberal democracy as such or rejects core liberal precepts like free speech, free elections, freedom of the press, or freedom of assembly. Joseph Stalin or *Pravda* they are not. The left, if anything, argues that

democratic socialism can be achieved only through democratic means. But for Fukuyama to make his case, he has to clear the decks by equating left and right, even when the two are clearly not equivalent. This approach isn’t especially convincing.

More interesting than Fukuyama’s predictable criticisms is his willingness to confront liberalism’s “discontents” head-on. In particular, and unlike in “The End of History?,” he recognizes that actually existing liberalism has produced an enormous amount of inequality. Yet Fukuyama doesn’t blame liberalism itself for this reality but instead the radical neoliberals who rejected “state intervention... as a matter of principle.”

The solution to inequality is therefore obvious: deradicalize contemporary liberalism and return it to its reformist and centrist roots. Specifically, Fukuyama urges neoliberals to accept that markets “function only when they are strictly regulated by states”; that social welfare is necessary; and that “economic efficiency” is not the be-all and end-all of human life. If minds change, he avows, society will too.

As this suggests, Fukuyama rejects the left-wing argument “that liberalism inevitably leads to neoliberalism and an exploitative form of capitalism.” He points out that for much of the late 19th and 20th centuries, incomes in liberal societies rose, which allowed liberals to “put into place extensive social protections and labor rights.” In Fukuyama’s view, liberalism and social progress historically go together. But is this true? On the one hand, the benefits that the working classes in the liberal West achieved were gained at the expense of the Global South, which was cannibalized for the metropole’s enjoyment. On the other hand, as Fukuyama is aware, the era to which he refers was also a time when liberalism had to do battle with other grand ideologies and thus was forced to temper some of its worst tendencies. Strangely, Fukuyama

doesn’t consider that liberalism at the end of history might be disposed to its cruelest extremes. If the past 30 years demonstrate anything, it’s that absent any genuine ideological threat, liberals will enact maximalist policies, from the broad deregulation of industry to the dismantling of the welfare state. Put another way, reforming liberalism might be an impossible project to realize at history’s end.

**F**or many people, Fukuyama’s earlier prediction that the end of history would be “a very sad time” has turned out to be true. In fact, in *Liberalism and Its Discontents*, Fukuyama sometimes acknowledges as much. For example, he notes that manifold liberal subjects feel “lonely and alienated in their individualism.” Yet at the same time, he affirms that “modern liberal states have dense networks of voluntary civil society organizations that provide community, social services, and advocacy to their members and to the political community more broadly.” What gives? Is the end of history sad or not?

Clearly, when it comes to exploring what it feels like to live at history’s end, Fukuyama the analyst stands in tension with Fukuyama the liberal booster. The former appreciates that life under liberalism is often grim, defined by anomie, precarity, and despair; the latter can’t believe that, and so he doesn’t. Though Fukuyama can’t ignore liberalism’s numerous problems, he also can’t bring himself to imagine that there might be an alternative. To him, accepting the inevitability of liberalism is identical with mature thinking. Liberalism, to paraphrase Winston Churchill, is the worst ideology, except for all the others. It’s what we’ve got, so let’s defend it and make it better.

Today, Fukuyama retains his commitment to the thesis he presented in “The End of History?” As he explained in *The Atlantic* last October, neither China, nor Russia, nor Iran, nor any other authoritarian state poses a real challenge to liberalism. Autocratic governments, he notes, make bad decisions—they invade Ukraine or enact a zero-Covid policy—and most people don’t want to live under them. It’s not a surprise that there are far more migrants to Europe or the United



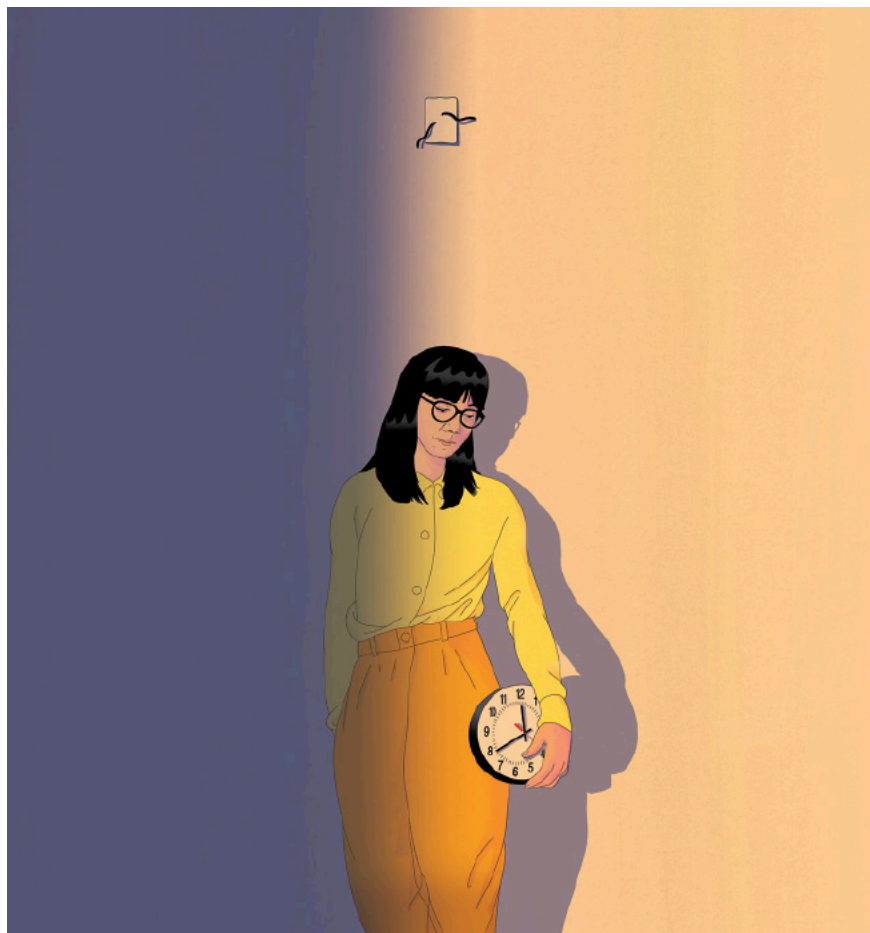
**Liberalism, too, might prove to be another impossible project at history’s end.**

States than to Russia or China. “No authoritarian government,” Fukuyama correctly affirms, “presents a society that is, in the long term, more attractive than liberal democracy.” History remains at its end.

It’s difficult to say that Fukuyama is wrong. Liberalism faces no serious challengers to its domination, either from the left or from the right. But this leads us to a question. Why haven’t liberalism’s failures engendered a more robust ideological backlash? Even clearly anti-liberal rivals to the United States, such as China and Russia, don’t proffer alternative, universally applicable ideological systems to the world. Instead, both countries act like the nationalist authoritarian regimes they are, focusing primarily on improving their relative power positions within their respective regions. At the same time, while President Joseph Biden regularly invokes the notion of a Manichean struggle between democracy and authoritarianism to justify the United States’ foreign policy, the US government, like its enemies, seems far more concerned with military and economic power than ideology. Perhaps there hasn’t been a vigorous ideological response to liberalism because we’re entering a post-ideological age defined more by power politics than by ideational struggle.

The decreasing importance of ideology becomes especially clear when one realizes that most countries, whether liberal democracies like the United States, the United Kingdom, France, and Germany or autocracies like China, Russia, Iran, and Hungary, have one thing in common: They’re all capitalist. Capital, it appears, doesn’t really care what ideology a given state embraces.

So where does this leave us? Unfortunately, in much the same place that we found ourselves 25 years, 50 years, or 100 years ago—struggling for control over our lives. The only difference is that we now know, contra Fukuyama, that liberalism is incapable of making capitalism’s wonders work for most of humanity. But this failure might provide us with an opportunity, at least at some point in the future. When capitalism’s contradictions prove to be too great, it’s possible liberalism’s hegemony will collapse, and we will be able to conceive of ideas presently unthinkable. And with new ideas, history might restart again. **N**



# Clocking Out

*Jenny Odell's search for a new kind of time*

BY SARAH JAFFE

**I**FIRST HEARD THE TERM “KAIROS TIME” FROM THE REV. David Gerth. A minister based in St. Louis, he had seen both his life and his political practice transformed by the Ferguson movement, the rebellion that took over the streets in the wake of Michael Brown’s killing by police officer Darren Wilson. As young Black people faced down the weapons of the National Guard, things seemed to happen within a different time frame. Night after night, Gerth joined the protests, recognizing that “there is something of God present in what’s going on here right now.” His perception of time began to blur: The speed at which events unfolded, and the duration of the days of the uprising, made everything move faster and yet slower than normal. “You’re spending 14-, 16-hour days completely unpredictably,” he told me, “just watching Twitter to see: ‘Are we going, and where are we going?’”

People from outside St. Louis, Gerth said, would ask questions like “What are the demands?” and “What are the goals?” But in the midst of the uprising, such questions were impossible to answer, even ridiculous. Kairos, for him, was a tool to understand both the way that time seemed to expand in moments of protest, and the way that certain moments on the world’s clock acquire a



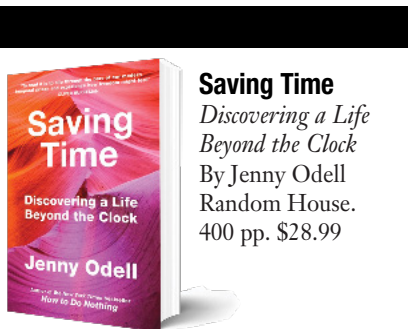
heightened significance. “In the Christian church, we talk about kairos time—God’s time,” Gerth explained. “It doesn’t work on the clock. And a lot of us have felt like there’s something kairos about this.”

In her new book, *Saving Time*, Jenny Odell introduces the concept of kairos time to differentiate it from “chronos,” the kind of time we usually live by. Chronos time is capitalist time: the employee time clock, the relentless pace of work, the “you have the same 24 hours in a day as Beyoncé” memes urging productivity. “Kairos,” Odell writes, “means something more like ‘crisis,’” and it is marked by a feeling of uncertainty, a feeling that time itself is passing in a different way, but also a time that is more hopeful. It is the time in which change—transformation—becomes possible. It is the time in which we become the creators of our own world.

For Odell, too, the Movement for Black Lives was a moment of kairos. In her case, it happened in 2020, “in the weeks following George Floyd’s murder...this time was an unforgettable illustration of the relationship among kairos, action, and surprise. Time took on new topographies, and the author Herman Gray contrasted ‘the slow time of COVID and the hot time of the streets.’” The rebellion of 2020 was an insistence once again on what Gerth had felt in 2015: “There’s got to be a new normal, because the old normal was diseased.”

*Saving Time*, Odell writes, was composed “in kairos for kairos.” It is a book written in a period of overlapping crises that seemed to throw time itself into flux; and it is a book about how such periods of crisis can, in their very destabilizing of our perceptions, help us to act and live differently. Even as many of us have been shoehorned back into the old normal—back to the commute and the workplace, the misery and the grind—the feeling that we are in an interregnum remains. Climate change and state violence haunt everyday life, as does the pandemic, no matter how many people insist that it is over. The overquoted—and often misquoted—Gramsci line that “the old is dying and the new cannot be born” is popular right now for a reason: We feel trapped in an endless meantime with the “morbid symptoms” of Gramsci’s actual line, and the “monsters” of the misquote.

Jenny Odell is a creature of meantimes. She came to prominence in 2019 with her surprise best-seller *How to Do Nothing*, which urged readers to literally stop and smell the flowers, to turn away from the apps and screens and notice the birds and, indeed, the other human beings in our day-to-day lives. While that might sound trite, the book was anything but: It was a small, lyrical revolt against the attention economy. Rereading it recently, I found that it retained all the qualities that made it take



**Saving Time**  
*Discovering a Life Beyond the Clock*  
By Jenny Odell  
Random House.  
400 pp. \$28.99

off in the first place. It is both personal and political, existing in that challenging space between critiquing capitalism as it is and telling readers what they can do in their own lives to move past it. And while being told to “do nothing” might seem reassuring when rebellion looks too frightening (which might also have had something to do with the book’s success), Odell does not, in fact, want us to do nothing at all. Rather, she wants us to take control of our time.

For this reason, *Saving Time* feels less like a fully separate book than a B-side, or maybe more accurately the extended version of an album, the additional tracks an artist drops after the finished record, the not-quite-complete thoughts that didn’t make the first cut. What is beautiful about it is largely the same as her breakout hit—loving and meandering descriptions of the natural world. But there was a confidence in *How to Do Nothing* that is oddly missing in the sequel, replaced with a second-guessing of herself that leaves the book feeling less directly political when it seems to aim to be more so.

At the center of the new book is the idea of chronos—the kind of time encapsulated in the ticking clock of productivity, a trap that organizers and radicals can get caught in as easily as capitalists and workers. The world we live in, Odell

argues, moves on this chronos time. It is the time on which capitalism runs and, in particular, on which wage labor works. We sell our time to employers, who get to use it as they see fit, more or less, depending on how much power we have in the workplace, individually or (more likely) collectively. Working time has been at the heart of labor struggles from the beginning of the factory to the most recent strikes and union drives, in which fights over forced overtime, flexible scheduling, and paid sick leave have dominated. Karl Marx, Odell notes, spent a lot of time writing about the conditions of work, the length of the workday, and the way that humans become “nothing more than personified labour-time”—or, in Odell’s phrase, “interchangeable, separate repositories of this usable time stuff.”

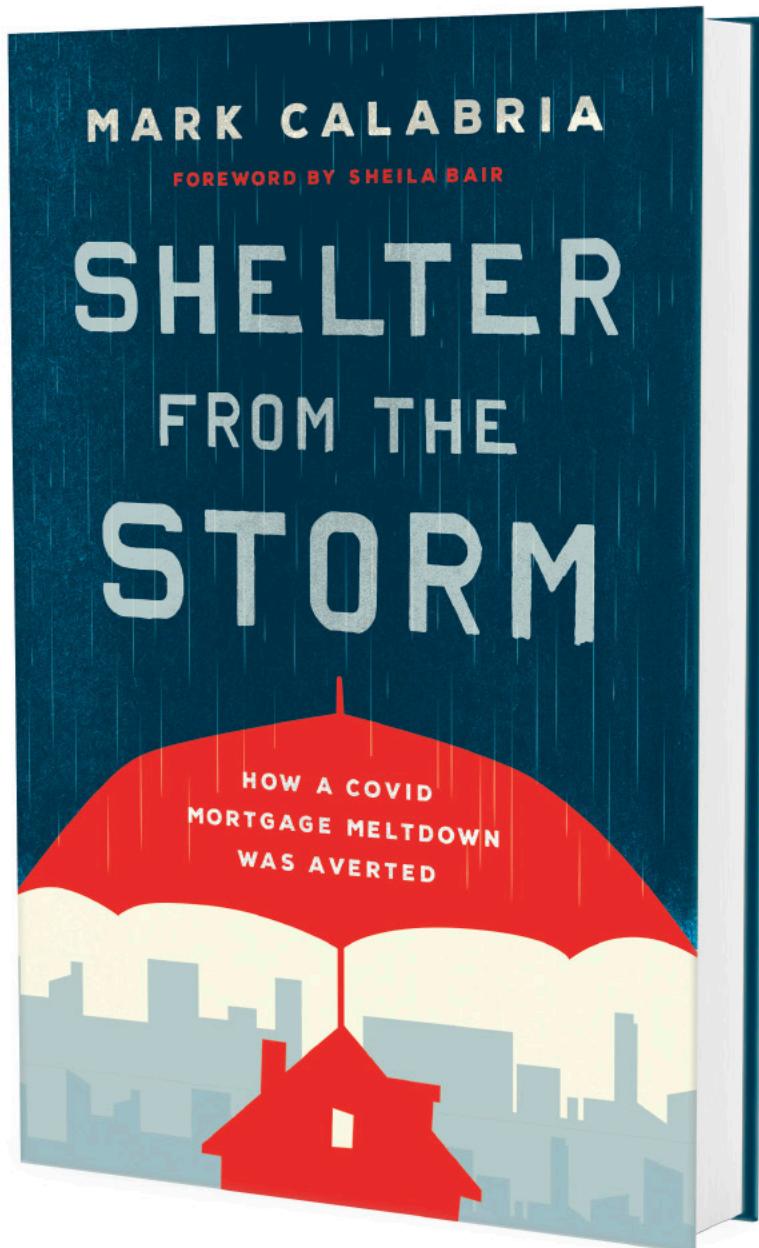
But how does this way of living shape our view and practice of time? Odell gives us a capsule history of the measurement of time, its entanglement not only with capitalism but with Christianity, and its role in colonizing the earth. The technology for timing prayer was eventually used for timing work, a kind of micromanaging Christian capitalist time that feels like the diametric opposite of the way Gerth described “God’s time.” Time zones, which were imposed across the world in order to regularize time, similarly were techniques of empire. “Clocks,” Odell writes, “arrived as tools of domination.”

But the chronos of capitalist time is more than just a measurement tool. It is also the intensification of time, the pressure to squeeze *more* into those neatly clocked hours—the “more” being, of course, more productivity. Even slowness and rest, Odell notes, are mostly touted these days as ways to improve one’s productivity at work. Those who are timed—wage workers—have to make their schedules line up with the demands of those who are doing the timing. And with timing comes many other forms of surveillance, all designed to ensure that the timed are doing the absolute most with their hours. Today’s algorithmic management tech—wearables, cell phone trackers, cameras in delivery vans—have automated the work of watching, but surveillance has been

*Sarah Jaffe is the author of Necessary Trouble: Americans in Revolt and Work Won’t Love You Back.*

“A must-read for anyone interested in regulation, policy, or politics.”

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BROOKINGS INSTITUTION, AND FORMER DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR ECONOMICS,  
U.S. TREASURY DEPARTMENT UNDER PRESIDENT OBAMA



The COVID-19 pandemic caused an unprecedented shock to our economy, including the mortgage and housing markets. While the primary focus of the federal response on public health was appropriate, a critical aspect of that response was the efforts to keep families in their homes. As the director of the Federal Housing Finance Agency (FHFA), Mark Calabria was responsible for leading that response. In *Shelter from the Storm*, he offers readers a peek behind the curtain of government decisionmaking in a crisis and shows how the FHFA managed to minimize housing disruptions at little to no cost to the taxpayer and resist repeated calls for industry bailouts and subsidies.



inherent to capitalism from its very beginnings. Or, in Odell's words, "productivity and policing are two sides of the same coin."

Capitalist time's vaunted efficiency, however, has not freed humans from work. While thinkers for over a century, from Lucy Parsons to John Maynard Keynes, have predicted a future with far shorter workweeks, many people now often end up working longer hours, even with our increasingly automated and surveilled workplaces. As Odell notes, disability-justice thinkers have also shown that the standardized nature of capitalist time is unsuitable not only for disabled people but, in fact, for any human body at all. By forcing us to labor according to standardized ideals of human capability, these endless work metrics treat us more like optimizable machines than thinking, feeling, hurting beings. And it is not only our bodies but our hearts that have been Taylorized, broken into component parts that the boss manipulates. We are supposed to keep our personal feelings to ourselves and indulge in them on our own time, but the smartphone, the gig app, and working from home have erased the boundaries that might once have existed between our time and the boss's time.

Meanwhile, Odell points out, even as today's capitalists attempt to give themselves endless time in the form of actual immortality, there are millions of people from whom time is taken away. Prisons and jails have expanded alongside the tech economy, as Ruth Wilson Gilmore writes, to warehouse the surplus population created by deindustrialization: "What's extracted from the extracted is the resource of life—time." Indeed, "doing time," Odell writes, is "more complicated than paying a certain number of years, if not one's entire life, to the state." Incarceration, too, changes one's relationship to time, and that change is not contained by prison walls—it leaks out to every person who has a loved one in prison, whose relationships are always colored by waiting. A society cannot inflict social death on some of its members without being shaped by that violence.

**T**he constant, relentless drumbeat of pressure to make our time productive would not be necessary if humans really wanted to work constantly. But we do not, and our lives were never meant to fit perfectly into the pages of a calendar or within the hands of a clock. There are moments that spill beyond the bounds of chronos, that seem to reorder the passage of time.

Grief is one of those experiences, and it is one that Odell returns to repeatedly in this book. Despite the common tendency to talk about "stages" of grief, the reality of grieving is that it does not follow a linear path or happen according to the boss's schedule. If we are lucky, we may get a few days off work

for bereavement leave, but those may not be the days when we are flattened by the loss. And this applies only to the forms of grief that are socially sanctioned—the death of a parent, a partner, a child. Yet there are other forms of loss that we are simply expected to metabolize in order to keep working. And so we are left to grieve alone, in whatever time we can snatch back from work.

That isolation is dangerous. It not only leaves us vulnerable; it prevents us from seeing the losses that other people have borne in other times and continue to bear. Odell notes that while many today feel beset and confounded by a wave of new crises, for others, those crises arrived long ago. She quotes the Māori climate activist Haylee Koroi, who observes that the climate crisis arrived for her community with colonization, and they have been experiencing the symptoms for generations. And even today, for so many, climate catastrophe is not some looming, amorphous future, but a constant presence.

For Odell, grief has both moral and political implications: "If aliveness means touching and being touched, being *in* the world, being kept alive—then the scale between living and dead is inescapably social." To recognize the threats to life and the loss of life is to allow ourselves to be changed by the experience, a transformation that will extend into the time we have left and that will give us a greater sense of our collectivity.

The Covid lockdowns inducted so many of us into grief time, shaking us loose from our normal routines and leaving us, suddenly, with time to contemplate the loss happening all around us. It is not surprising that with this different relationship to time came an equally changed relationship to care, to mutual aid, and the explosive rebellion after George Floyd's death.

**W**hat can we do, then, to resist? Strangely absent from *Saving Time* are most of the living, breathing, vibrant struggles over time that are happening right now. While she discusses the idea of a shorter work week, the actual organizing for a four-day week, which as I write has led to the trialing of shorter working hours around the globe, is not discussed in the book; nor are the strikes in 2021 at Kellogg, Frito-Lay, and Nabisco, where workers struggled against a constantly expanding workweek. "The worst is when you work a 7-to-7 and they tell you to come back at 3 a.m. on a short turnaround," said Daniel Osborn, a Kellogg worker and the president of the local union, speaking to a *Rolling Stone* reporter. "You work 20, 30 days in a row and you don't know where work and your life ends and begins." The fair scheduling laws passed in the Bay Area, though closer to home for Odell, also go unmentioned. She gestures toward the importance of unions, observing that a union is, in essence, a social organism for making change that begins with the most basic act of communication. Despite this understanding of the value of worker organizing, examples of such organizing in her book are few.

*Saving Time's* imagined reader, as with so many of the books about work that Odell criticizes, seems to be the office worker, the "achievement subject" who aims for a "dream job." At one point, she admonishes these white-collar workers to see themselves, ultimately, as workers like all the rest, while at other points she chides them for their privilege. Her decision to tell the story of working time largely through management literature and self-help books, even if she is critiquing these texts, winds up reproducing their middle-class focus. When she discusses women who hire domestic help, she still writes in the voice of the employer and not the employee.

**Capitalist time's  
vaunted efficiency  
has not freed  
humans from work.**

*Saving Time* also wavers between individual solutions and the awareness that change must be collective. It is a line that *How to Do Nothing* straddled by pitching itself as a kind of self-help book intended to get us to look past our selves to our interconnectedness, but the new book does not quite succeed at this balancing act. Odell suggests that high achievers could address some of the time crunch they face by “dialing down personal ambition.” Yet when it comes to the workplace, this too is not a solution. The ambitious person did not come up with the idea of working long hours on their own; that expanded workday is the result of power relations as surely as the forced overtime at Kellogg, even if those long hours are less body-breaking spent at a desk.

The other option, for many on the ambition treadmill, is not just marginally less success; it’s a return to the other side of the work inequality that Odell discusses, to service work or something else that many people fought hard to leave behind. It is an inability to pay down the debt acquired in the service of “ambition.” These are conditions, in other words, that are not just worse in these workers’ heads but in their wallets and bodies. The line between white-collar work and the gig economy isn’t as clear as we might like to think, and the middle class is marked always, as Barbara Ehrenreich so memorably wrote, by its not-irrational fear of falling.

Odell is aware that individual life changes will do nothing without a renewed collective struggle constructed on real connections. We require, she writes, “the articulation of a global working class that extends way beyond traditional notions of blue collar and white collar,” and she also argues for “a kind of life extension that reaches outward instead of forward, an increase in aliveness for everyone that begins with mutual regard—a world with living beings in it, not zombies.” The problem is that this is a pretty nebulous program for organizing. I don’t expect concrete policy proposals from Odell—indeed, when she gestures that way, it feels insufficient. But as she herself acknowledges, “the most realistic and expansive version of time management has...to entail a different distribution of power and security.”

If, as Selma James writes, “capital takes who we could be and limits us to who we are. It takes our time, which happens to be our life,” then we need something more than personal transformation to

change course. There are movements today, in the workplace and in the streets, fighting for less work and more pay, for safe housing and care. Organizing is how we make our moments of personal transformation concrete in the world.



different distribution of power, prompted by organizing and action, would lead to a different distribution of free time and of freedom itself. But can free time also be political? Can we value it for its own sake,

rather than simply justify it as a way to enable, in one form or another, more work? Odell cites the philosopher Josef Pieper on the idea of true leisure, something that “exists on a ‘vertical’ axis of time, one whose totality cuts through or negates the entire dimension of workaday time, ‘run[ning] at right angles to work.’” Such leisure requires not simply temporary freedom from work—the ability to clock out, turn off the app, ignore the dings of e-mail alerts—but a stability and security that today’s precarity rarely allows.

It also requires space—a remaking of

## Ohio

Who am I to say that the hawk circling above the deck  
wasn’t really the murdered sister of our host,  
as she insisted? Who says the dead stay dead,  
or even human—for all I know our souls stream out and leap  
into the nearest form, manzanita, termite,  
light pole, to begin the challenges of figuring out  
when to break into blossom, how to find a mate  
or glow softly each evening  
without a single glass of wine. Our host  
was downing grape juice and growing wild-eyed  
about the government, unable to stop reliving the day  
her sister died on the Kent State Commons  
when the Guardsmen turned in unison and fired on the students.  
She was right about politics and false narratives  
but wrong about the winged creatures swarming  
from the eaves as we talked. Those weren’t moths  
but they were sort of lovely until we realized  
they were busy eating her guest house  
on the California coast, in the pleasant weather we were enjoying  
thanks to the drought, grateful that smoke from the wildfires  
had drifted elsewhere. As she kept on  
I felt sympathy leak out of me until all I could think of  
was how to get away, to be alone with my lover  
and forget about my country’s many crimes,  
one of which was killing a college girl. Who, why not,  
might have been coasting the thermals all day  
looking to survive by killing something else. Who am I to say  
a word. It’s not my story. My love and I excused ourselves  
and went inside to make dinner. In the nearby cove the breaking waves  
endlessly bashed themselves against the rocks.

KIM ADDONIZIO



what is often enclosed into public realms of freedom. Enclosure was key to the very beginnings of capitalism, as people were shut out of what had been common spaces and pushed to work for a living, and it is central to still-ongoing colonial projects—look at the matrix of walls, fences, bulldozers, guns, and checkpoints that encroach on the mobility of Palestinians. And one key concern in the pursuit of *kairos* is the space in which it can take place: What is free time, after all, if you cannot choose where and how to spend it? Think of the Stonewall Inn, defended physically against the incursions of police; reclaimed community gardens and squatted spaces; the occupied squares of the early 2010s; and the police-free zone in Seattle during the 2020 rebellions. In these spaces, *kairos* time can prevail.

Odell calls on us to understand that we can, collectively, remake the world only if we understand that it is bigger and stranger than we can immediately comprehend; to think in a sort of planetary time. This suggestion calls to mind the sociologist Bronislaw Szerszynski's writing on "Drift as a Planetary Phenomenon," where he nods to a "middle voice" mostly missing in modern English, somewhere between active and passive. Drifting things are neither exactly doing nor being done to; they are somewhere in between. Not simply a break from activity, yet not complete inertness either. Drift is interactive but gentle, unlike the world of work, ambition, power, and drifting things help us imagine a "planetary ethic," which could help us, Szerszynski writes, "recognize our obligations of care towards all drifting things."

Drifting will not be enough to overhaul the relations of power we're trapped in; that line of thinking would lead to complacency, tiny lifestyle changes, and despair. There are many things that do need to be done, and quickly, in order to avert the worst outcomes. But I cannot help thinking of the crowds in the uprisings in 2014 and again in 2020, insisting that Black lives matter and flowing through the streets like water, ahead of the drifting clouds of tear gas and pepper spray and smoke, splitting and rejoining when faced with obstacles; of the way such movements emerge out of organizing but also cohere out of something ineffable; of how time itself feels different, and the old normal cannot quite take hold again. **N**



## The Dialectician

*The paradoxes of C.L.R. James*

BY GERALD HORNE



**C**YRIL LIONEL ROBERT JAMES WAS A MAN OF PARADOX. The Trinidadian-born revolutionary was a lanky 6-foot-3—"lean as a pole," with "long pianist fingers" that one could easily imagine flying across a typewriter keyboard as well. However, as we learn in John Williams's new biography, *CLR James: A Life Beyond the Boundaries*, he "never learned to type and relied on women to type up his handwritten articles and manuscripts," of which there

was a veritable tsunami. Likewise, while James cared little for money and possessions—other than books and albums—he was a connoisseur of exquisite wine and tasty meals. A fierce "anti-Stalinist," he still collaborated fruitfully in 1930s London with the decidedly Russophilic Paul Robeson, widely suspected of being a member of the Communist Party, and he recommended the writings of US Communist historian Herbert Aptheker and hailed the later work of W.E.B. Du Bois,

even after he joined the US Communist Party in 1961.

Although James is associated in the popular imagination with Trotskyism, when he met with Trotsky during the latter's exile in Mexico before his 1940 assassination, the defrocked Soviet leader was unimpressed, dismissing James as a "freelance bohemian." James's erstwhile Trotskyist comrade, James Cannon, referred to him similarly as an "irresponsible adventurer."



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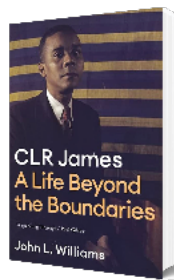
Whatever his fellow Trotskyists thought of him, the fact remains that James was one of the most brilliant thinkers and writers among them, a man whose books, including *The Black Jacobins*, proved to be of staggering profundity. Although for generations, revolutionaries and thinkers of various sorts had championed movements of the dispossessed, James was one of the first to point out the world-historical significance of the Haitian Revolution—a precedent-shattering development spearheaded by unpaid workers. *The Black Jacobins* alone guaranteed James a slot in the Pan-African—and revolutionary—pantheon. As a playwright, he stirred London audiences in the 1930s with his dramatization of the life of Toussaint Louverture. His only novel, *Minty Alley*, published after he arrived in Britain, is a sensitive depiction of the poor—especially poor women—and an adroit evocation of the trickster, with echoes of Shakespeare's Puck and Twain's Tom Sawyer. His fecund *Beyond a Boundary* is not just a memoir of his Caribbean boyhood, a celebration of cricket, and an indictment of colonialism; it also served to inspire the thriving academic field that is cultural studies. As a philosopher, while he was in a self-imposed exile in Nevada in the late 1940s, James grappled adroitly with Hegel and his reverberations in the work of Marx and Lenin. As a literary critic, his excavation of Melville continues to repay attention. Assuredly, James was one of the 20th century's foremost radical intellectuals.



L.R. James was born in 1901, as Queen Victoria's life was coming to an end, and died in 1989, a few months before the fall of the Berlin Wall. At the time of his birth, his homeland—the archipelago of Trinidad and Tobago—was still an uneasy component of the British Empire. James's melanin content represented a legacy of the African slave trade: Apparently, he was partly of French ancestry, which may shed light on why he studied the language of Robespierre and Toussaint, even though English was his native tongue. As a young athlete, James set the high-jump record in Trinidad and Tobago, and would hold it for years after he left the islands—a harbinger of the heights to which he would soar.

James was also a voracious reader from an early age, and it proved to be a lifelong habit: The lengthy list of his frequently consulted journals included *The Nation*, which he pored over in the public library.

By 1932, at the age of 31, James had arrived in Britain. He had left the Caribbean partly to escape an unfulfilling marriage and partly to seek his fortune in a land that offered more opportunities for the budding writer that he had become. In Britain, he was deeply influenced by the atmosphere of intellectual and political ferment generated by a bevy of exiles there, including Robeson and Jomo Kenyatta of Kenya. It was in Britain that James encountered Trotsky's newly published *History of the Rus-*



### CLR James

*A Life Beyond the Boundaries*

By John L. Williams  
Constable.

496 pp. \$32.99

sian Revolution, which inspired his own work on Haiti. By 1933 and '34, he was spending months at a time in France working on his magnum opus. His research assistant was Eric Williams, a former pupil during James's brief time teaching in Trinidad, whose own book *Capitalism and Slavery* would later have an importance comparable to that of *The Black Jacobins* in recovering the history of exploitation and revolutionary resistance in the Caribbean. While in France, James also consulted with Alfred Auguste Nemours, the legendary Haitian general, diplomat, and military historian, and with Léon-Gontran Damas, the poet, politician, and cofounder of the "Negritude" movement.

Evidently, it was James's French sojourn that led him ever closer to the ideas of Trotsky, though in a glaring omission in this otherwise relatively well researched biography, Williams doesn't offer us a clear explanation of why, among the luminous coterie of Black intellectuals and activists in this period—not just Robeson and Kenyatta but James's fellow Trinidadian Claudia Jones; Langston Hughes; W.E.B. Du Bois and his spouse, Shirley Graham; Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana; Nelson Mandela of South Africa; and others—only James failed to be attracted by the then-hegemonic Communist parties and instead remained a

Trotskyist for years. Perhaps this is a result of Williams's own highly skeptical views on Trotskyism, which he calls a "marginal faith" involving "endless splits over points of genuine principle, leading to an array of tiny parties....largely impotent in the face of the great events around them." But if Williams had dug a bit deeper, he might have ascertained that Trotsky had resided in France as early as 1902 and had returned there while James was in the country for his research. The Socialist Party, which has intermittently been a ruling party in France, was also influenced by this Ukrainian's ideas and presence as a united front against fascism developed. (Indeed, the former Socialist Party leader Lionel Jospin, who narrowly lost a race for the French presidency in 1995, had his own Trotskyist ties, and even today, the former Trotskyist Jean-Luc Mélenchon has mounted a credible challenge during the recent presidential elections for the Élysée Palace.)

James's embrace of Trotskyism was paired with an intense survey of European philosophy and social thought. He studied Hegel in these years. He was also drawn to the larger canon of European thinkers interested in the concept of "freedom." Marx in particular captured his imagination; it was in Marx that Hegel's ideas of freedom became a sturdy theory of revolution based on the organization and self-assertion of workers, and it also led James to consider the plight of Black workers in particular.

The unifying thread that runs through James's vast body of work was a focus on this proletarianized "race" and racialized working class whose objective position, he argued, made it the potential locomotive for revolutionary socialism, just as the unpaid workers of Haiti were the true engine of the overthrow of slavery. Adapting Lenin's byword, James concurred that "Every cook can govern," those of African ancestry not least.

Reading these European thinkers, however, James was also struck by the fact that, despite their interest in the political and moral progress of freedom, they had little to say about a deeper expression of this idea as embodied in the Haitian Revolution. This was true not only of Marx but of that icon of the American

*Gerald Horne's next book is Revolting Capital: Racism and Radicalism in Washington, D.C., 1900–2000.*

left, Thomas Paine. As the late Haitian scholar Michel-Rolph Trouillot notes in his trailblazing *Silencing the Past*, this muzzling of the profundity of the Haitian Revolution was an important chapter in a larger narrative of global domination.

*The Black Jacobins* set out to correct this elision. In its riveting pages, James sought to make Africans active subjects of their own history rather than passive objects of others' history. Building on James's pathbreaking book, a new generation of scholars have argued that the Haitian Revolution precipitated a general crisis of the entire slave system in the Western Hemisphere—including in the United States—that could end only in its collapse, which I addressed in my book *Confronting Black Jacobins*. Not coincidentally, the struggle for the eight-hour workday and the drive to organize labor unions both accelerated in the United States post-abolition, suggesting the importance of the victory of unpaid workers in the Caribbean.

*The Black Jacobins* established James's bona fides as an important Marxist and historian, but it also demonstrated the magnitude of this revolution in the Caribbean and departed to a considerable extent from the "orthodox" Marxist evaluations of Haiti that did not engage with its significance. *The Black Jacobins'* account of revolution may also have further solidified its author's Trotskyism in that, just as the Ukrainian Trotsky diverged from the "orthodox" Communist parties, the Trinidadian James diverged from the "orthodox" downplaying of the Haitian Revolution. Trotskyists famously disputed the notion that socialism could be built in one nation and thus posited the idea of "permanent revolution," forever extending its boundaries in order to extend the reach of socialism. Ironically, the debilitated state of Haiti after the revolution—surrounded by enslaving regimes, just as the Soviet Union was encircled, and suffering grievously as a result—arguably served to fortify James's initial embrace of Trotsky's foundational idea.

Like his fellow Trinidadian Eric Williams, James sought to deflate the still-prevalent notion that the abolition of slavery represented a triumph of activism in the metropole rather than a triumph of activism by the oppressed. John Williams

observes further that James "intended his account of the Haitian Revolution to be both a history and a blueprint for revolutions of the future."



After spending six years in Britain barely making a living as a writer, James moved to the United States in 1938—specifically to Harlem in New York City—and stayed in the country for the next 15 years. There he was a popular campus speaker, a tireless writer, and a dedicated (though not altogether successful) organizer.

For a thinker so inquisitive and incisive, James showed a surprising lack of interest in the implications of World War II. As Williams notes, he "paid oddly little attention to either the Bomb or the Holocaust"—unusual for an intellectual who was effortlessly prolific in his writings and concerns and who was surrounded by a left in the United States keenly disturbed by both.

This may have had something to do with James's dour view of the Soviet Union, a US ally during the war. Between 1941 and '45, there was a remarkable decline in anti-Sovietism in the United States, as symbolized by the still-startling pro-Stalin Hollywood film *Mission to Moscow*. Shortly before the war erupted, James had published *World Revolution, 1917-1936*, a bitter philippic assailing Stalin and the Soviet Union in such hostile terms that even

his anti-fascist publisher questioned the book's arguments in view of the emerging pro-Moscow wartime alliance. Williams goes further and characterizes aspects of James's view of the war as "morally bankrupt."

Still, what occupied much of James's attention in the early postwar years—though the seeds had been planted during the war—was the so-called "Johnson-Forest Tendency," which sprouted out of Trotskyist politics but also in some ways broke from it. James was the pseudonymous "Johnson," and "Forest" was Trotsky's former secretary, Raya Dunayevskaya; they helped formulate a position that eventually encompassed dozens of cadres—including Grace Boggs, who diverged from the Trotskyists in the Socialist Workers Party

on a number of crucial matters. Together they sought to establish a base in Detroit, indicative of proletarian aspirations and in the heart of an industrial center then ready to be radicalized.



In addition to being a historian, philosopher, novelist, playwright, and revolutionary, James was also a cultural critic. His memoir *Beyond a Boundary*, which includes a sociopolitical analysis of cricket along with its indictment of colonialism and is often characterized as one of the most insightful books on sports ever written, later became a foundational text for cultural studies, serving as an exemplar of the field's interdisciplinarity and its project of exploring the political dynamics of contemporary culture—especially popular culture.

Strangely, as with many of the books by James discussed in Williams's biography, readers won't glean much about why *Beyond a Boundary* was so important. Instead, we learn more about the author's private life than his public one. Williams tells us how James "spent a lot of energy in the pursuit of women and continued to do so throughout his life," and he depicts at some length "the many young women—always young women," he adds leeringly—"selected to act as his secretary." James was "something of a cult leader," Williams asserts disparagingly, comparing him to a "guru." As a result, we miss some of James's important ideas as well as the twists and turns in his life during this period. Williams offers us a detailed description of James's postwar stay in Nevada, when he was in the process of getting a divorce, but pays scant attention to the fact that this was also when he wrote *Notes on Dialectics*, a meditation on the Hegelian roots of Marx's and Lenin's thinking that James considered among his most important works and that—à la *The Black Jacobins*—further affirmed the transformative role of labor in the making of history.



James's fortunes in the United States would wax and wane. Fifteen years after emigrating, James was interned on Ellis Island in 1953 and, facing deportation, left the country. Though his citizenship application was rejected because of alleged visa violations, there

### James's fortunes in the United States would wax and wane.

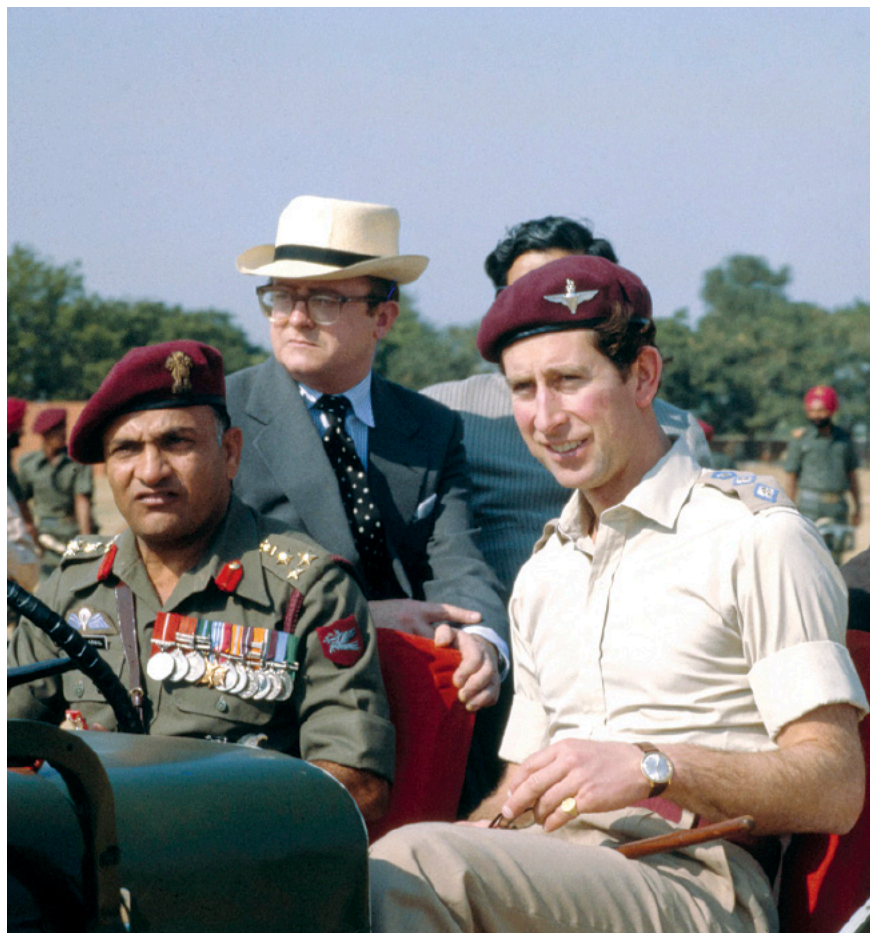


were political reasons as well. This setback led to one of his finest hours, for James returned to London, then worked alongside his former student and researcher Eric Williams, who was then an anti-colonial rebel politician on his way to becoming prime minister and steering his homeland to independence. James served as a spark plug in the creation of a print organ for Williams's new party, the People's National Movement—one that rather rapidly attained a circulation of 12,000 and, as James put it, “the confidence of a large majority of the population.”

After returning to Trinidad and Tobago in 1958, James also served as secretary of the West Indies Federal Labour Party, an ambitious Pan-Caribbean formation that sought to forge a federation out of the region's disparate islands and territories, including the bulwark that was Jamaica. This effort did not succeed, but today's CARICOM—an influential body that liaises regularly with the African Union, headquartered in Addis Ababa—is a proof of James's vision.

Eventually, James was able to return to the United States after his unceremonious ouster in the '50s, teaching at what was then Federal City College in Washington, D.C., for most of the 1970s and serving as an inspiration for a rising generation of Black Power acolytes. Over the years, he consorted with a vast array of African Americans, from Detroit autoworkers to figures like Richard Wright, James Baldwin (whom he referred to as “the outcast little Negro switch,” which was obviously not a compliment), Martin Luther King Jr. (with whom James was impressed), Maya Angelou (less impressed), and Alice Walker (quite impressed). He also continued to be a globe-trotter, spending time in his native Trinidad and in socialist Cuba before dying in Brixton—London's Harlem—in 1989.

Although James saw further than most when limning the epochal implications of the Haitian Revolution, he managed to commit serious errors and lapses of judgment in other spheres. Like many intellectuals, he was a figure of unresolved contradictions. As James the dialectician might have said: These types of contradictions are inherent in all matters, and certainly in politics. No one can escape them, try as they might—not even a radical shouting from the rooftops about revolution and socialism. **N**



## Born Imperial

*The lingering ghosts of the British Empire*

BY PRIYA SATIA



FOR ANTI-COLONIAL THINKERS OF THE LAST CENTURY, decolonization was not a mere transfer of power. It was about reparation, including repair of the self. “Decolonization is the veritable creation of new men,” wrote Frantz Fanon in *The Wretched of the Earth*. As Jean-Paul Sartre made clear in a preface to the book, decolonization was equally required of former colonizers: “Let’s take a good look at ourselves, if we have the courage, and let’s see what has become of us.” But the “new humanism” envisioned by these thinkers could not flourish, as first the Cold War, and then the so-called War on Terror, hindered the emancipation of decolonizing nations, renewing the commitment to the ideas of Western civilizational superiority that had long upheld Western empire.

In recent years, however, calls to reckon with the West’s imperial past

have regained a sense of urgency. The United States, Britain, and other nations in Europe are now the scene of insistent questioning of the public glorification of slavers and imperial “heroes,” the provenance of museum collections, and the inequalities dating from the colonial era that are shaping the impact of the climate crisis.

But as the British journalist Sathnam

Sanghera drives home in his new book, *Empireland*, widespread ignorance about the past has made coming to terms with it exceedingly difficult. Sanghera sardonically proposes an “Empire Day 2.0”—an update to the pro-empire holiday that was part of the British calendar from 1902 to 1958—to promote awareness about an imperial past that continues to elude British consciousness, despite the innumerable quotidian ways in which it infuses the country’s language, economics, food, state institutions, demography (including Sanghera’s very existence as a Sikh Briton), and more. Confronting this past is crucial to contending constructively with the United Kingdom’s public history, racism, relations with Europe, pandemic management, and more.

Sanghera describes his own journey in making sense of the imperial past, which began in 2019 when he visited Punjab—where his family is from—while making a documentary for the centenary of the Jallianwala Bagh Massacre in Amritsar, where British forces killed hundreds of Indians gathered in a city park. Visiting the Jallianwala Bagh memorial, Sanghera learns the true extent of the brutality and injustice of the 1919 massacre and its place in a longer history of British violence toward and racial humiliation of Punjabis—a past entirely left out of his high school history curriculum. What he knew of the British Empire had, if anything, left him feeling vaguely proud as a Sikh—a community he’d long believed had done well under it. The Koh-i-Noor diamond, which had once belonged to the Sikh king, was now among the crown jewels as a symbol of “great British-Sikh relations,” he’d thought, but the scales fall when he learns that the diamond had been seized by the East India Company and that its return has been demanded ever since. Sanghera reflects on his miseducation as he discovers the reality of British rule in Punjab and realizes how colonial racial notions haunt even the psyche of formerly colonized people—including those now living in the metropole.

Sanghera offers his book as an audit on British historical education, revealing the carelessness with which British children are taught their country’s history. Even the world wars are whitewashed, with history lessons ignoring the enormous contributions of Black and brown people to the British war efforts. For Sanghera, this exclusion from episodes central to “our national story” was his education’s “most serious and painful omission.” At a reunion for his grade school, Wolverhampton Grammar, he finds himself newly conscious of the “imperial tone” of Britain’s public schools and how they celebrate empire while avoiding teaching about it. “Education,” he concludes, “can be a tool of colonialism.”

*Priya Satia is the Raymond A. Spruance Professor of International History at Stanford University and the author of Time’s Monster: How History Makes History.*



## Empireland

*How Imperialism  
Has Shaped Modern  
Britain*

By Sathnam Sanghera  
Pantheon.

384 pp. \$29

It may surprise some that a Briton today needs to prove the imperial roots of things like Britain’s racial diversity and racism. But Sanghera shows that such knowledge has been deliberately excised from British society, compelling an adult Sikh Briton to set sail to find the walls of the *Truman Show* world that has shaped his existence. “The idea that black and brown people are aliens who arrived without permission, and with no link to Britain, to abuse British hospitality” has been, Sanghera writes, “the defining political narrative” of his lifetime, even as he endured routine “Paki-bashing” in 1970s and ’80s Wolverhampton, once the constituency of perhaps the most notoriously racist politician in recent British history: Enoch Powell, whose dreams of becoming viceroy of India were shattered with the country’s independence in 1947.

*Empireland* is not a lecturing or hectoring book but rather a generously shared journey of discovery. Sanghera is a journalist in the Orwellian mold, inviting readers to witness his experiment on himself as an example of the conclusions that a decent, acerbically witty, public-school-educated Brit might arrive at after wading through the evidence of what Britain owes to empire. (Orwell himself appears frequently in the book,

as a critic of empire in its heyday.)

A chapter on colonial migration to Britain is followed by an account of the massive scale of white migration out of Britain—a net exporter of people through the 1980s. Sanghera contrasts Britons’ “sense of...entitlement” to move freely about the world and resist assimilation with their resentment toward immigrants to Britain. Using the first-person here (“our tendency as travelers,” “our racism”), he gallantly implicates himself in such habits and mentalities—an assertion of belonging, at whatever cost, that demonstrates what it is to take responsibility for the culture and deeds of one’s nation, however marginal one’s ties to them.

Sanghera grew up wanting “to be more British” than the rest of his family. He is explicit about his love of country, rejecting Paul Gilroy’s description of British national identity as “brittle and empty” and proclaiming his pride in its achievements. He validates those moved by Boris Johnson’s 2016 speech glorifying “British soft power,” while at the same time compelling reflection on what it means to “be British.” For Fanon, decolonization depended on moving “from national consciousness to political and social consciousness,” from rediscovering national culture to *creating* it by collectively constructing a new future. Sanghera calls for something similar in urging Britons to face up to uncomfortable facts in order “to navigate a path forward” and “work out...who we want to be.”

Expressions of patriotism are perhaps also a necessary safeguard against the accusations of “anti-Britishness” inevitably lobbed at those proffering critical views of Britain’s past. By reminding his readers of the long tradition of British dissent about empire—Victorian outrage at the looting of Tibet, for instance—Sanghera is able to frame the return of that loot as perfectly British and also dashes cold water on the argument that we can’t judge colonial activities by today’s very different standards. For good measure, he facetiously throws in a long footnote that fulfills the obligatory demand that nonwhite Britons express gratitude for all that Britain has given them.

Observing how his education had made him view his Indian heritage through patronizing Western eyes, Sanghera recalls the story of Duleep Singh, the abducted



Sikh boy king who was exiled to England and coercively Anglicized after the British conquered Punjab. Singh later reeducated himself and tried, belatedly, to revive the Sikh Empire. Sanghera recognizes that he is similarly “making an effort to decolonize myself”—present tense.

**I**t is difficult to “review” such a personal journey, one that seems to continue the inventory of the self that Sanghera began with *The Boy With the Topknot*, his earlier memoir about growing up Sikh in Wolverhampton. *Empireland*, after all, is not intended for professional historians like me but rather for those who don’t already know that the horror story of the Black Hole of Calcutta—the story of the crowded dungeon where dozens of British prisoners suffocated to death that long served to justify the British conquest of Bengal in 1757—is unreliable. Indeed, while scholars will find Sanghera’s pattern here somewhat nerve-racking—first taking seriously the inaccurate claims typically invoked to deny the realities or the importance of colonialism, then showing how they don’t stand up to scrutiny—he is speaking to a lay audience that has absorbed pieties and fictions about the empire from everywhere rather than facts from today’s actual historical experts.

But *Empireland* does offer a case study in the transformative effects of a self-guided tour of scholarship on the empire. Sanghera dives headfirst into an ocean of dissertations, journal articles, and books from academic presses, citing a roll call of major scholars in the field, albeit with some notable omissions. The historian Kim Wagner guides him in Amritsar and the art historian Alice Procter in museums, but it’s unclear whether anyone has similarly guided his reading. And so, though Sanghera learns about everything from the origins of Britain’s ownership of Manhattan to the genocide of Tasmanians, he arrives at some odd conclusions about the literature itself, such as that “very little about British empire...is certain or knowable”—a claim belied by the rest of his book.

It’s not that our knowledge about the British Empire is uncertain, but that a grasp of historiography is essential to navigating writing about it. Much of the existing litera-

ture was “born imperial”—written by the empire’s scholar-administrators and boosters—as I demonstrated in my book *Time’s Monster*. It was scholarship invested in supporting imperial aims, often verging on propaganda, to assuage continual doubt about the enterprise—explaining devastating violence in India, for instance, as part of a plan of eventual uplift. Moreover, its lasting influence has depended on the destruction of compromising official records, as Sanghera himself recognizes.

In recent years, historians have gone to great lengths to revise this faulty, contrived view of the British Empire. It matters who writes history and which sources and methods they use. Yet despite a wealth of alternative sources, Sanghera often quotes, frustratingly, from works that he knows have been debunked (e.g., Jan Morris’s glorifying *Pax Britannica* trilogy from the 1960s and ’70s). He takes at face value a claim about the “Sikh hatred for Muslims” in the Indian Uprising of 1857 in Lawrence James’s *Raj*, a 1998 pro-empire narrative that was based on British sources.

Scientists have disproved “race science,” but when pseudoscientific racial misconceptions persist, we don’t say the *science* is uncertain. Likewise, historical knowledge about the British Empire isn’t uncertain because of a 2003 popular book written by a historian of finance who didn’t consult the vast literature on the regions and peoples that lived under it and who explicitly sought to offer “lessons for... the United States as it stands on the brink of a new era of imperial power.” Sanghera stresses that history is argument, but there are more and less accurate arguments. To suggest that making historical claims “is almost always a matter of opinion” devalues the careful scholarship that allowed Sanghera to assemble his book’s own quite clear conclusions.

The portrait of an unfathomable literature does, however, play effectively to Britain’s “anti-intellectual” culture, allowing Sanghera to make his case on the very same commonsense grounds on which the Conservative MPs of the so-called “Common Sense Group” oppose any reckoning with the empire. He offers his assessments as those that any rea-

sonable person (that very English legal standard) encountering an imposing literature might reach.

**A**utodidacticism has always been important to anti-colonialism, given the complicity of educational institutions in empire. Fanon and Gandhi engaged in intense study and self-examination, as did the Punjabi revolutionary Bhagat Singh, who read copiously right up to his execution in 1931. Sanghera shows that rigorous independent reading (presumably enabled by institutional access to scholarly literature) produces a fairly solid understanding of imperial history, apart from a few stumbles arising from the undue deference he gives to less reliable works.

Avoiding such stumbles would require a guided tour. When Sanghera concludes, citing P.J. Marshall’s 1976 book *East Indian Fortunes* as well as remarks by a researcher at the Adam Smith Institute (a neoliberal think tank), that scholarly opinion is “divided” on whether empire mattered in Britain’s industrial revolution, one wishes that a mentor had been there to nudge him toward more recent scholarly works, such as Maxine Berg’s *Luxury and Pleasure in Eighteenth-Century Britain* or my own *Empire of Guns*

(on Sanghera’s home region, the Black Country)—or toward the crucial genre of the scholarly book review. Among serious scholars, there’s meaningful disagreement about the diverse ways that empire mattered in the industrial revolution, but not whether it did.

Without such a guide, Sanghera is liable to make too much of a fact like “some of the tax revenue” collected by the colonial government “went to Indian schools,” counting it against the claim that the British drained Indian wealth. But this meager instance of public expenditure was often the result of Indian movements pressing an otherwise uninterested colonial government. Once we consider that indigenous governments might have done more (Baroda, one of the “princely states” that the British ruled indirectly through local potentates, spent much more on ed-

### Sanghera reflects on his miseducation as he discovers the realities of British rule in India.



# US CIVIL RIGHTS: ON THE ROAD TO FREEDOM

*Memphis, Jackson, Little Rock, Selma, Birmingham, and Montgomery*

**OCTOBER 1–8, 2023**

The civil rights movement is one of the most significant chapters in our nation's history. Half a century after the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., we have arrived at a moment to reflect on how far we've come and how much remains to be accomplished. While we confront increasingly racialized violence and emboldened white nationalists, we can look to the victories of the past and to the hundreds of thousands of brave Americans who took part in this history-altering movement, fighting—and too often dying—for the cause of equality.

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ucation), it's difficult to chalk up such expenditures as a net gain for Indians—especially if colonial education aimed to make them docile subjects. It is difficult to overestimate the value of mentorship in the study of history: Sanghera's account of the profound costs of an impoverished historical education appears in the United States at a time of the systematic gutting of social science and humanistic learning.

Still, even unguided, Sanghera arrives at the sturdy conclusion that Britain derived substantial material benefits from its empire (assembling an especially excellent rebuttal to imperial apologists' desperate gesturing at "India's railways"). Time and again, he demonstrates the clarity that comes with acquiring more than "a superficial understanding of imperial history." It is reassuring, as a scholar, to learn both that the literature is sound on the whole *and* that our role as teachers is important.

**A**t times, the determined neutrality of *Empireland* allows Sanghera to clinch the reasonable-person argument: Whether you believe that Britain's relations with its colonies were good or bad, it's clear that "brown people are here because" Britain had colonies. But often, this studied neutrality results in contradiction. Despite chronicling Victorian dissent about colonialism, Sanghera, in a fit of fairness of mind, defends the canard that "You can't apply modern ethics to the past." Despite his astute skepticism of the balance-sheet approach to empire, he nevertheless attempts to "weigh up" its legacies. After proclaiming that reading history as "a series of events that instill pride and shame [is] inane," he ends by affirming his pride in the empire as "the biggest thing that ever happened to us [and] the world." Attachment to the idea of descending from something that mattered on a massive scale is perhaps understandable, but by this logic, Germans might also express pride in that big thing that happened to them, whatever the destruction it caused. It might be better to simply see history (like the Germans, actually) as a means of understanding our humanity.

A zeal for "balance" also leads Sanghera to hasty reproach of some advocates for change. He rebukes an activist's suggestion

that the presence in the Tory cabinet of several prominent British Asians whose families emigrated from East Africa may be rooted in the role of British Asians as "subcolonial agents," describing it as an attempt to ascribe individuals' political views to "ethnicity." But this is an argument about their history, not their ethnicity, akin to Sanghera's own explanation of the historical roots of white Britons' racism. The peppering of criticism of campaigners for change recalls Orwell's efforts to disarm readers against his call for socialism by assuring them of his shared distaste for vegetarians, pacifists, feminists—the "woke army" of his time. Certainly, the culture war around the subject of empire has made it difficult to express curiosity or admit ignorance and thus engage in the learning essential to getting past that past. But it's only comparable to "children fighting in a playground," as Sanghera calls it, if we mean a situation in which one kid bravely speaking the truth is being bullied and silenced by another kid many times his size (in terms of institutional power and resources) who insists that he is actually very small and has never been that powerful. Sadly, steering this middle path hasn't protected Sanghera from torrents of abuse, including death threats.

For many anti-colonial thinkers, autodidacticism strengthened the bonds of community with others seeking change. Upon reading Tolstoy, Gandhi began a dialogue with the author; he also read the *Bhagavad Gita* in the company of London's Theosophists. If distance from today's activists was somehow necessary to Sanghera's book, a sense of connection with the anti-colonial past might have been all the more empowering. But apart from the very late mention of the unlearning that Duleep Singh and Jawaharlal Nehru subjected themselves to, Sanghera doesn't invoke those who made and won the argument about empire—including the role of education in sustaining it—in the past century (forcing him to often reinvent the wheel). While he knows that imperialists like Lord Salisbury acknowledged that the empire enriched Britain, apart from a brief mention of Dadabhai Naoroji, Sanghera omits the long line of brown and Black thinkers who have

made this same argument. He explores the relevance of colonial-era white supremacist notions to Britain today without a sense of the intervening anti-racist struggle that renders this a *question* today. He is delighted when Black Lives Matter suddenly makes his "esoteric" study of the British Empire "mainstream," but colonialism isn't esoteric; masses of people have been thinking about and struggling against it while he was fed public school

babulum. BLM didn't come out of nowhere.

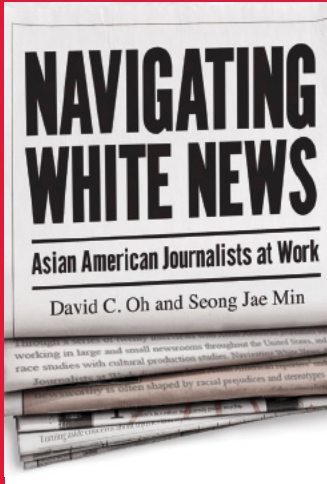
Without awareness of this anti-colonial tradition, Sanghera at times underestimates the suffering that empire caused. He be-

lieves Sikhs took Britain's side in the *ghadar* of 1857, but Punjab only *appeared* loyal because of the devastation of recent conquest and preemptive British counterinsurgency action. Punjabis in California later named their movement to free India the Ghadar Party in homage to the rebels of 1857. Sanghera's obliging concession that he has "had a better life" in Britain than he would have had in India forgets the historical tie between India's relative poverty (if that is the measure of a good life) and Britain's prosperity. He perceives Punjabi migration as a kind of upward mobility facilitated by colonialism, but much of it was a desperate effort to escape colonial policies that caused hunger and landlessness. Many Punjabis arrived in Britain after the traumatic mass displacement caused by the British partition of Punjab in 1947.

It's tragic that adults today must undergo the same process of psychological and cultural recovery that Gandhi and Nehru did ages ago. The historical record is clear; it's just that most people have been assiduously kept ignorant of it, and the current British government wants things to stay that way. Still, I share Sanghera's inspiring optimism about the changes afoot in British education and in museums around the world, thanks to courageous efforts like his and those of movements like Black Lives Matter and Rhodes Must Fall. "Sikh" means student; it is a faith based on trust in teachers (gurus) and in community, on collective service and learning. And so, in fraternity, I wish Sathnam *chardi kala* on his ongoing journey.

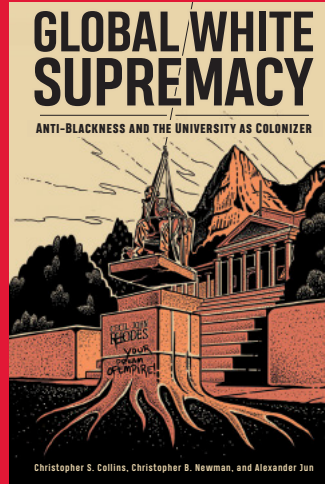
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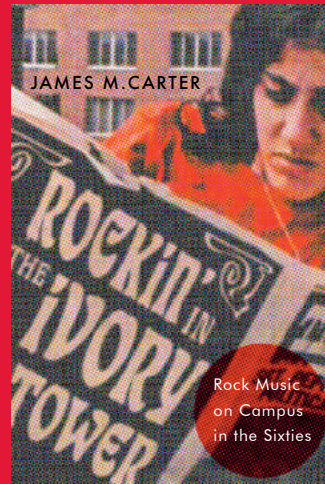
**Navigating White News**  
Asian American Journalists at Work  
David C Oh and Seong Jae Min



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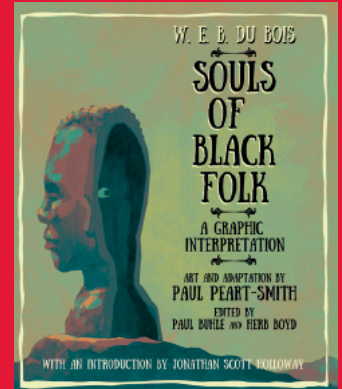
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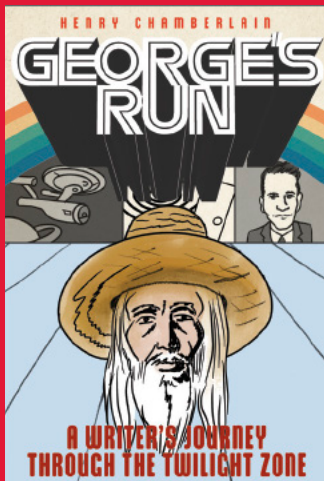
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Rock Music on Campus in the Sixties  
James M. Carter



*"Superb."*

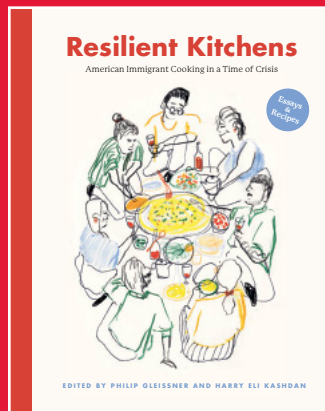
—David Levering Lewis, Pulitzer Prize recipient for *W.E.B. Du Bois: Biography of a Race, 1868-1919*

**W. E. B. Du Bois Souls of Black Folk**  
A Graphic Interpretation  
W. E. B. Du Bois (1868-1963),  
Paul Peart-Smith  
Edited by Paul Buhle and Herb Boyd



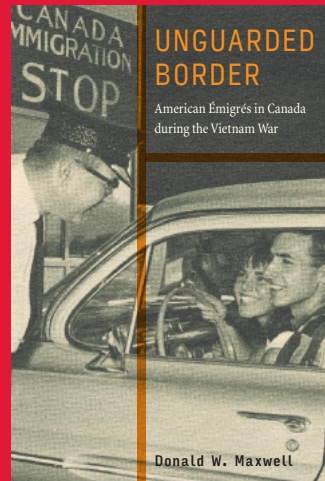
This graphic biography recounts the amazing career of George Clayton Johnson, who wrote memorable episodes of *The Twilight Zone* and *Star Trek*, while cowriting such films as *Ocean's Eleven* and *Logan's Run*.

**George's Run**  
A Writer's Journey through the Twilight Zone  
Henry Chamberlain



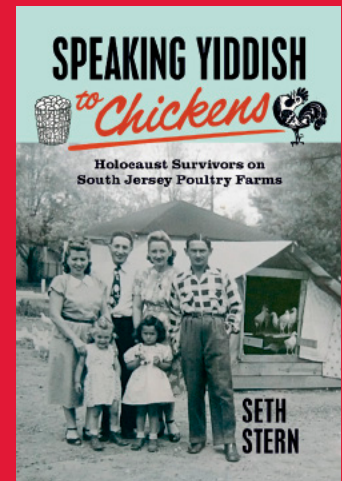
*Resilient Kitchens* is a stimulating collection of essays about the lives of immigrants in the United States before and during the COVID-19 pandemic, told through the lens of food. Includes recipes.

**Resilient Kitchens**  
American Immigrant Cooking in a Time of Crisis, Essays and Recipes  
Edited by Philip Gleissner and  
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*Unguarded Border* tells the stories of the 50,000 Americans who fled across the border to Canada in the 1960s and 1970s, a migrant experience that does not fit the usual paradigms.

**Unguarded Border**  
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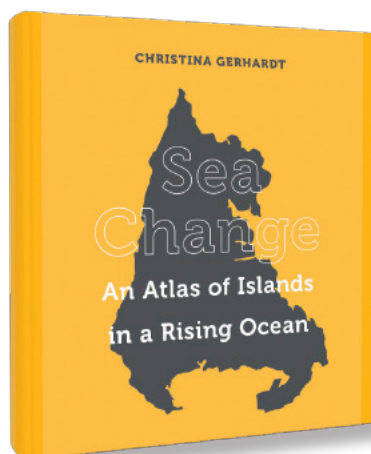
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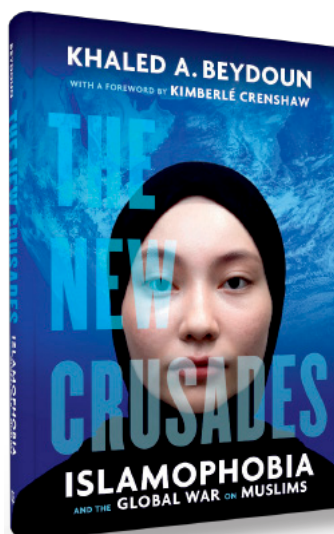


# SPRING BOOKS FROM UC PRESS



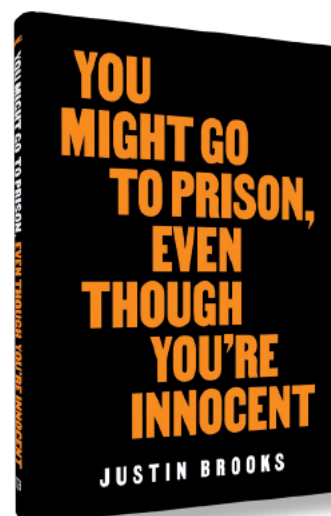
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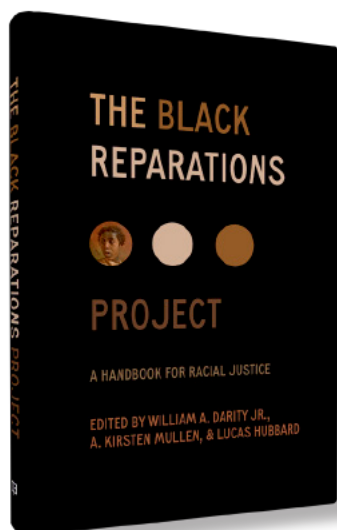
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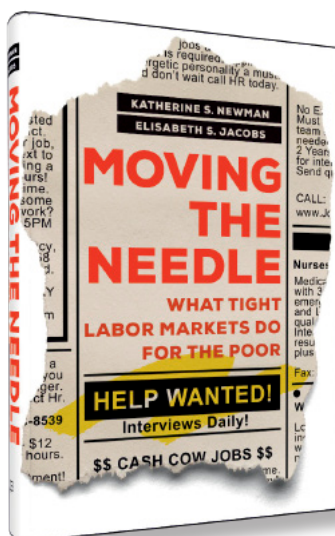
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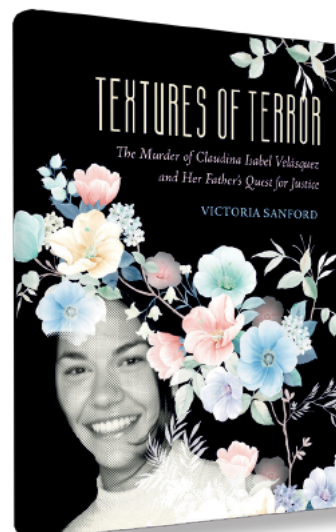
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