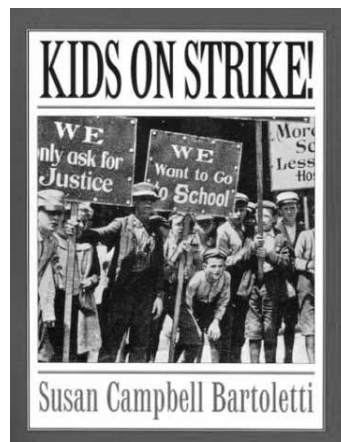


Kids on strike!

The cover photo pulls you in – earnest faces of boys in caps with picket signs bearing their message: “We only ask for justice;” and, “We want to go to School.” Susan Campbell Bartoletti, the author of another award-winning book for children, *Growing Up in Coal Country*, set out to answer a question: were children the silent victims of harsh working conditions, or did they ever fight back? *Kids on Strike* is her inspiring answer to that question. Based on years of research, the author



includes a chapter on Mother Jones and her “Industrial Army” – the children’s march to Oyster Bay in 1903; another on garment workers’ strikes

(in Chicago, New York City and Philadelphia); the 1899 strike portrayed in film and on Broadway of messengers, bootblacks and “newsies” in New York City; and coal strikes at the end of the 19th century, among others. Harriet Hanson was only 11 years old when she played a major role in the Lawrence, Massachusetts textile strike of 1912. Economic exploitation led Harriet to make common cause with the other mill girls in what was to be an historic “turn-out.” The book documents the conditions and treatment that drove Harriet

and other working children to strike. It includes a timeline of federal child labor laws, a bibliography, more than one hundred photographs, and copious illustrations from newspapers and journalists. Highly recommended!

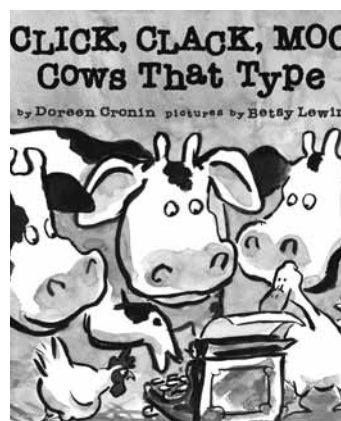


Summertime labor picture books for the small set

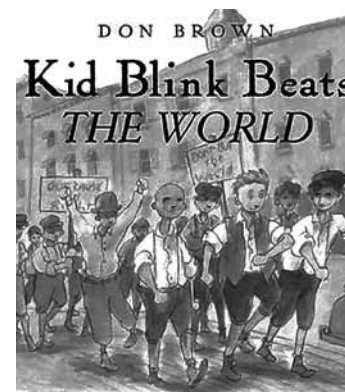
In the June 2015 issue of the *Public Employee Press*, Librarian Ken Nash, at the District Council 37 Education Fund Library, writes about picture books to start working class children off on the right foot. His recommendations follow:

“Joe Van der Katt and the Great Picket Fence” by Peter Welling is set in the town of Litterbox in New York’s Catskill Mountains. The fat cats have all the money until the poor cats get organized and demand fair pay and better working conditions.

Next, in “Click, Clack, Moo,” the cows learn to type and demand better working conditions by going on strike. And in “The Last Stop on Market Street,” by Mataat de la Peña, poor children wonder why they don’t have the things that children on the other side



of town enjoy. Ali Bustamante explores property and labor rights in “Manny and the Mango Tree,” a story about children who water and care for



trees but cannot enjoy the fruits of their labor.

Going back in time, Don Brown’s “Kid Blink Beats the World” retells the David vs. Goliath story. The real life story featured in the film “Newsies,”

of thousands of newsboys who went on strike when the World Newspaper lowered their pay. And in “Bobbin Girl,” Arnold McCully tells the story of the 1830 Lowell Mill Strike by thousands of young girls and the conditions they revolted against.

A book to bring the struggle up to date is “Sí Se Puede, Yes We Can,” a real life bilingual story of the janitors on strike in Los Angeles. The strike lifted thousands of workers out of poverty. Finally, there is Frances Ruffin’s “Martin Luther King Jr. and the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom.”

Picture books are great for readers of all ages and these are some of my favorites. But there are many books more on labor and other political issues, as well as books and films for older children.

Work History News

New York Labor History Association, Inc.

A Bridge Between Past and Present

Volume 32 No 2 Summer | Fall 2015

A ringing voice for social justice

By Bette Craig

New York Labor History Association played host to Eugene Victor Debs on May 13th at New York City’s beautiful Lithographers Hall. The occasion was NYLHA’s spring history event. Sixty people attended the screening of the documentary film, *Eugene V. Debs and the American Movement* with speakers Noel Beasley, President of Workers United, SEIU, and also of the Eugene V. Debs Foundation, and Lisa Phillips, Associate Professor of History at Indiana State University.

Gail Malmgreen, former NYLHA secretary and current board member, set the stage for the evening in celebration of the famed labor leader and five-time candidate for President of the United States, with a tale of her four years of working on the Debs papers at Indiana State University in Terre Haute while being the live-in curator of the Debs home there.

Malmgreen said that during those four years, “Debs became my hero. He was a great labor leader and a ringing voice for social justice. He had a great magnetism and universal appeal, literally offering something for just about everyone.”

Organizing across craft lines

“In the early 1980s someone from the history department at Indiana State University invited Amiri Baraka to speak, and I was dispatched to pick up him up at the airport. On our way to the campus, he asked me what I was doing in Terre Haute, being from Newark, like him, and I told



Eugene Debs (front right), Martin J. Elliott (center rear) and other A.R.U. board members in prison together after Pullman strike.

him about my work with Debs’ papers and he said, ‘Oh, Debs. Yes. He was the one who said pick up the gun.’”

“Well, what Debs actually said in 1906 when he and the Socialist Party were leading the defense of Big Bill Haywood, Charles Moyer and George Pettibone against their frame-up for the murder of Idaho Governor Frank Steunenberg was ‘Should the Capitalists try to hang the men, a million revolutionists would meet them with guns.’ So, as I said, something for everyone.”

Lisa Phillips did research at Wagner Labor Archives/Tamiment Library for her book about District 65, *Renegade Union*,

published by University of Illinois Press in 2013. Now that she’s based in Debs’ home town of Terre Haute at ISU, she is devoting scholarly attention to him. She told us that Debs quit school at age 14 to work in the train yards. He was a charter member of the Terre Haute chapter of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen, but after a few years realized there was more bargaining strength in an industrial union organizing across craft lines and helped to found the American Railways Union (the ARU) in 1891.

Drawn into the Pullman Strike of 1894, Debs defied a court injunction against the

Continued on page 9

Workers Unite! Film Festival

By Andrew Tilson

The 4th annual Workers Unite! Film Festival included 35 shows within the span of three weeks, May 3-27, with over 2,400 attendees. Topics included new global portraits of mine workers, textile workers, steelworkers and job loss, home health workers, all locked in struggle with their employers. From food workers to “girls in the band,” the film festival served up a smorgasbord of films and discussions in venues across the five boroughs. The finale at the Anthology Film Archives was a smashing success. Co-sponsored by the Sierra Club and co-hosted by the AFL-CIO, it featured the world premier of *Blood on the Mountain*, about economic and environmental injustices that have resulted from industrial control in West Virginia.

Activists connect to audiences

Other programs that attracted full houses included *A Day's Work*, documenting the abuses experienced by the ever-growing ranks of temp workers; *Poverty Inc.*, a documentary about global inequality; *She's Beautiful When She's Angry*, a feature film about the founding of the women's movement, from 1966 to 1971; and *Every Fold Matters*, a multi-media



Still from *Blood on the Mountain*.

presentation on New York City's Chinese-American laundry workers. This year's festival branched out into an Activist Filmmakers Boot Camp, with twenty-two new and emerging documentary filmmakers learning from five pros in the field about how to go out and make political and issue-oriented films. The festival organizers brought global activists from Ireland who helped to kick “blood fruit” from South Africa out of their country in what became a world-wide fight

against apartheid, and matched them with leaders from the Fight for \$15 movement here in New York City, for a great evening of film and discussion at the Murphy Institute of Labor Studies. The program for 2016 is shaping up with a global labor film festival scheduled for the fall and a symposium on activist film festivals in partnership with the United Kingdom-based Radical Film Network, scheduled for next May. Stay tuned!

Bibliography of material on New York Labor History

THE NEW YORK LABOR HISTORY ASSOCIATION is compiling a bibliography of works in any medium on New York Labor History that can be posted on our website. To do so we are appealing to our members to suggest titles that you would recommend. Please include a complete title, author(s)' name, publisher, date of publication, and any comment you would like to make in recommending the title(s). For film or video, please identify the title, the producer, date of release, and distributor (if available).

Please send your suggestions to Steve Leberstein at sleberstein@gmail.com.

Work History News

New York Labor History Association, Inc.

Work History News is published two times per year to keep NYLHA's members informed of labor history events, activities and tours.

For more information and brochures contact:

NYLHA
c/o Robert F. Wagner Labor Archives
70 Washington Square South, 10th Floor
New York, NY 10012
<http://newyorklaborhistory.org>

President	Irwin Yellowitz
Vice-President	George Altomare
Secretary	Abbe Nosoff; Regina Olf
Treasurer	Philoine Fried
Editor	Jane LaTour
Contributors	

Cy A. Adler, Rachel Bernstein, Bette Craig, Miriam Frank, J Kelsey Harrison, Staughton Lynd, Donn Mitchell, Ken Nash, Robert Parmet, Andrew Tilson

BASEBALL HISTORY AND CIVIL RIGHTS HISTORY

The importance of Dodgertown

“Haven of Tolerance”:
Dodgertown and the Integration
of Major League Baseball Spring
Training. By Jerald Podair

If you were an African American and lived in most parts of the American South in 1948, you could not do the following things with whites: Go to school with them. Eat in restaurants with them. Stay in hotels with them. Sit next to them in theatres and on buses. Drink out of water fountains with them. Go to the bathroom with them. Play golf with them. Live in the same neighborhood with them. The reason, of course, was the entrenched system of racial separation known as “Jim Crow,” which had defined social and political life in the South for three-quarters of a century. But things were about to change in one part of the region, thanks to a Major League Baseball team that had already made civil rights history by bringing Jackie Robinson to the big leagues: the Brooklyn Dodgers. Seeking a permanent spring training home, the team

leased an abandoned World War II Naval Air Station from the east coast Florida town of Vero Beach, and rechristened it “Dodgertown.” Beginning in 1948, and for six decades thereafter, Dodgertown would serve as a “college of baseball” for the entire organization, imparting what became known as the “Dodger Way” to generations of young prospects, some of whom would go on to populate All-Star teams, capture pennants and World Championships, and in a few instances enter the Baseball Hall of Fame.

But Dodgertown was more than just an incubator of talent. Its significance extends beyond the playing field into the social and racial history of Florida, the South, and America as a whole. By offering an integrated and egalitarian workplace, one in which players were judged not by who they were but what they did, Dodgertown was unique not just among Southern spring training facilities, but among Southern institutions generally. Between 1948 and the early



1960s, one of the most virulent phases of the Jim Crow era, it stood, in the words of historian Jules Tygiel, as a “haven of tolerance,” one of the very few racially integrated institutions of any kind in the state and region. [1] At a time when African Americans could put their lives in danger by attempting to eat, drink, play, travel, or live with or among whites, Dodgertown stood as an example of interracialism that rebuked those who counseled caution, patience, and delay. Legendary sports columnist Sam Lacy wrote in the Baltimore Afro-American in 1974, “It was, without doubt,

the first crack in the wall of prejudice that continued to plague baseball for the next 15 years.” Like the story of Jackie Robinson to which it connects, Dodgertown represents a milestone in American civil rights history.

As has often been the case in our national history, Dodgertown's advances toward racial justice were the products of both pragmatism and principle. Dodger management wished to build a team-controlled complex in which player development would be (Continue reading this blog at <http://historicdodgertown.com>.)

Marvin Miller

Continued from page 18

life in its historical context, and in explaining how this frail man from Brooklyn with a bum arm was able to reshape the landscape of our national pastime.” —Andrew Zimbalist, author of *In the Best Interests of Baseball? Governing Our National Pastime*.

“The Baseball Hall of Fame is not a hall of fame without Marvin Miller. As Robert F. Burk and others have written, Miller belongs on baseball's Mount Rushmore. In *Marvin Miller: Baseball Revolutionary*, Burk has

written a book worthy of Miller the man, the communicator, the strategist, the labor leader, and the baseball visionary. Every big league player and baseball fan should read it.” —Brad Snyder, author of *A Well-Paid Slave: Curt Flood's Fight for Free Agency in Professional Sports*.

“Burk knows the business of baseball inside and out, making him the ideal person to write about Miller. His research is impeccable and his writing is straightforward. The compelling aspect

of the book is the story of Miller's role in transforming Major League Baseball, and that Burk tells with confidence and focus.” —Randy Roberts, author of *Joe Louis: Hard Times Man*.

Robert F. Burk is an emeritus professor of history at Muskingum University and the author of *Never Just a Game: Players, Owners, and American Baseball to 1920* and *Much More than a Game: Players, Owners, and American Baseball since 1921*.

Manfred on deck

For Robert D. Manfred Jr. Cornell class of 1980, the road to the top of America's pastime has been a lifetime in the making.

He stepped up to the plate, taking the reins as commissioner of Major League Baseball on January 26.

It begins a new chapter in a life and career shaped by labor relations.

Manfred grew up in the small city of Rome, N.Y., the 'Copper City,' once an industrial hotspot that manufactured many of the country's copper products.

During his upbringing in the 1960s and early 1970s, he witnessed the erosion of regional and state manufacturing bases.

At home, he was surrounded by a blend of labor and employment relations. His mother was a union member as a schoolteacher. His father was an executive for Revere Copper and Brass – a company that had a difficult relationship with its unionized workers.

It is understandable that, from a young age, Manfred became familiar with the complex relationship between labor and executive management, and was able to see



both sides of sensitive issues, according to MLB.com.

Transferring into ILR as a junior, he studied a variety of labor and employment topics, while building skills crucial to his future success.

He credits his Cornell ILR School education with preparing him for MLB's management pinnacle.

"The single biggest skill I gained at ILR is the ability to negotiate," Manfred said during a 2013 ILR interview shortly after being

promoted to MLB's chief operating officer.

"I have been an effective negotiator because I was well trained in how to get ready to bargain – not only collectively bargain, but negotiate generally. And I am very rigorous to this day about that kind of preparation."

After graduating from ILR, Manfred received his law degree from Harvard Law School and joined the Morgan, Lewis and Bockius law firm. He became a partner in its Labor and Employment Law division where one of his roles was as an outside counsel to MLB – an organization affected by labor disputes throughout its history.

Joining the commissioner's office full-time in 1998, Manfred's knack for diplomacy can be seen throughout his 15-year tenure as MLB executive vice president of labor relations.

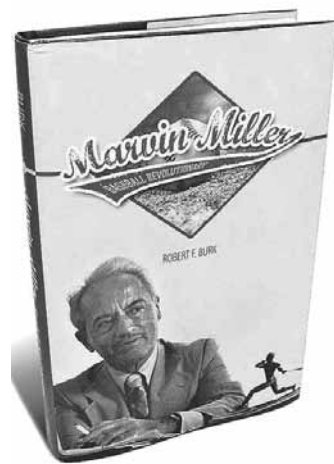
The New York Times reported that during this time, "...he proceeded to maintain relative harmony between the owners and players..." while he led negotiations resulting in three new collective bargaining agreements.

Manfred most recently served as the league's chief operating officer, a role in which he continued to oversee labor relations and serve other executive functions.

Marvin Miller – Baseball revolutionary

The story of how one man shaped professional sports' modern era, Marvin Miller changed major league baseball and the business of sports. Drawing on research and interviews with Miller and others, *Marvin Miller, Baseball Revolutionary* offers the first biography covering the pivotal labor leader's entire life and career. Baseball historian Robert F. Burk follows the formative encounters with Depression-era hard times, racial and religious bigotry, and bare-knuckle Washington and labor politics that prepared Miller for his biggest professional challenge – running the moribund Major League Baseball Players Association.

Educating and uniting the players as a workforce, Miller embarked on a long campaign to win the concessions that defined his legacy: decent workplace conditions, a



pension system, outside mediation of player grievances and salary disputes, a system of profit sharing, and the long-sought dismantling of the reserve clause that opened the door to free agency. Through it all,

allies and adversaries alike praised Miller's hardnosed attitude, work ethic, and honesty.

Comprehensive and illuminating, *Marvin Miller, Baseball Revolutionary* tells the inside story of a time of change in sports and labor relations, and of the contentious process that gave athletes in baseball and across the sporting world a powerful voice in their own games.

"A must-read for anyone interested in how MLB salaries went from an average of \$11,000 in 1966 to \$3,386,212 in 2013."—Library Journal

"Burk writes gracefully and insightfully, chronicling the life of one of baseball's most significant figures. He succeeds admirably in illuminating the evolution of Marvin Miller's intellect as well as his soul, in placing Miller's

Continued on page 19

The whole world is watching

By Jane LaTour

Wisconsin came to New York City on May 21st at Litho Hall, as part of the Workers Unite! Film Festival. Two films depicted the organizing energy present in the Badger State, and two speakers, David Newby and Jackie DiSalvo, both with strong ties to Wisconsin, delivered remarks, and engaged in a discussion with the audience. The program, sponsored by the New York Labor History Association, provided an opportunity to examine the anti-union campaign mounted successfully by Governor Scott Walker, labor's response to it, and what the next steps might look like as Walker gets ready to launch a campaign to go national with his destructive program.

The first film, a six-minute short, provides light – literally, and rays of optimism, as union members take to overpasses with signs bearing messages: "Reject austerity; Stand up / Fight back" "Raise the wage"...messages about money doesn't equal free speech; income inequality; and the anti-union agenda of Gov. Walker and his Koch brothers/conservative backers. An ironworker talks about the project, and experiencing solidarity, "You see the same beliefs you have in another person's head." Another activist sharing a post on the bridge says, "the most powerful thing is the community of activists the project has built."

This is our moment

Long-time activist Bill Henning summed up the substance of the second film, the



105-minute documentary, *We Are Wisconsin*: "What happened in Wisconsin early in 2011 as depicted in the film signals the strategy of right wing Republicans across the country to strip unions of any ability to fight on behalf of their members. Using a budget issue as a subterfuge to attack the very institution of collective bargaining, Gov. Scott Walker and his allies hope to convince public workers that there is no benefit to joining and supporting unions, since only unions can bargain over narrowly proscribed issues.

Like New Jersey's Governor Chris Christie, Walker also successfully played a 'divide and conquer' game.

Like New Jersey's Gov. Chris Christie, Walker also successfully played a 'divide and conquer' game, promising unions in the private sector this would not affect them. In the aftermath of the attack on public sector unionism in Wisconsin, however, this year Walker signed a bill that outlaws union security clauses in contracts between unions and private sector employers (cynically called a 'right to work' law)."

Jackie DiSalvo spoke about

the campaign she took part in to organize the Teachers Assistants Association, the first union of college teaching assistants in the country. "In order to win recognition, the organizers had to shut down the University of Wisconsin for three weeks – and they did. In Madison, in 1970, there was a real break-through in the level of solidarity. It was such a leap – to see that labor could be the voice and to understand the common interests. The TA strike changed things. There was a high level of consciousness about the

different issues," she said. "The whole community organized around it."

David Newby, also an early TAA organizer, and former President of Wisconsin AFL-CIO, was a leader of labor's fight back against Gov. Walker's anti-union Act 10, and mobilized support for that struggle. "Given the determination of Gov. Scott Walker, you should be very afraid if he should ever become President of this country," he

said. "He would try to take what's happening in Wisconsin onto a national level." Newby provided a synopsis of the march rightward in the state from its roots in the Progressive Movement; the budget's wage cuts and cuts in government health care payments, and a look at what's on the agenda for the Governor and his allies. "This is our moment," he said, and compared it to that moment in 1981, when President Ronald Reagan fired the striking members of the Professional Air Traffic Controllers Organization.

Mahadya Mary, a member of District Council 37 Local 1407, provoked an exchange with audience members after she described how the labor history course she is taking at Cornell with instructor Gene Carroll, has awakened her to the potential of trade unionism, while at the same time, it seems late in the game for the unions to be waking up to what is happening.

"The documentary, got the audience thinking and talking about the rise of social movements that might meaningfully challenge the moloch of capital in the U.S. It was well worth seeing and discussing," said NYLHA board member Steve Leberstein.

Foot soldiers of democracy

By Jane LaTour

Listen to the BBC, NPR, pick up *The New York Times*, or tap into any other news source, and you are instantly immersed in the woes of the world. On March 4th, LaborArts and the New York Labor History Association combined to offer an alternative take on the news through the eyes of political cartoonists, via a film, “Cartoonists – Foot Soldiers of Democracy,” and a speaker – Jeff Danziger. Danziger has earned his place in the long line of illustrious political cartoonists who provide their take on current events via a pen and an ever-present sense of pointed humor.

A democratic medium

The documentary jumps about from country to country among 12 cartoonists, Danziger included, and nationality and disparate sensibilities unite to provide a global perspective. The audience at Brooklyn College’s Center for Worker Education included Professor Joanna Herman’s class on political cartooning and the graphic novel. “My students were very receptive to the message of risk-taking in the artistic life,”

Herman said. LaborArts organizer Rachel Bernstein added that these CUNY-CWE students “resonated to the scenes of cartoonists actually drawing and explaining

Using irony and humor, a good cartoonist can make political truths accessible to everyone.

the way they use simple lines to evoke emotion and character.”

“It was an important program,” said Professor Steve Leberstein. “The Tunisian woman cartoonist, Nadia Khiari, summed up the value of political cartoons best when she said, ‘les caricatures dérangent le pouvoir’ to challenge power.” Trade unionist and climate change activist Gary Goff thought that the film succeeded in portraying “cartoons as a great, democratic medium. A point of view can be conveyed with a simple drawing and a few words. Using irony and humor, a good cartoonist can make political truths accessible to everyone.”

Bill Henning, noted that he “thoroughly enjoyed hearing from Jeff Danziger, one of the world’s foremost cartoonists, about his processes and the mechanics of boiling some rather

complex issues down into clear visuals with limited text. His comments about *Charlie Hebdo* were especially timely.”

While Henning found the film very well done cinematically, he also thought “it could have focused more laser-like on cartooning rather than delving into other issues. Likewise, it posed some interesting questions in my mind about the relative value systems of cartoonists (e.g. the ‘opposition’ cartoonists in Venezuela, Russia, and Tunisia).”

Questions posed to Danziger ranged from technique to

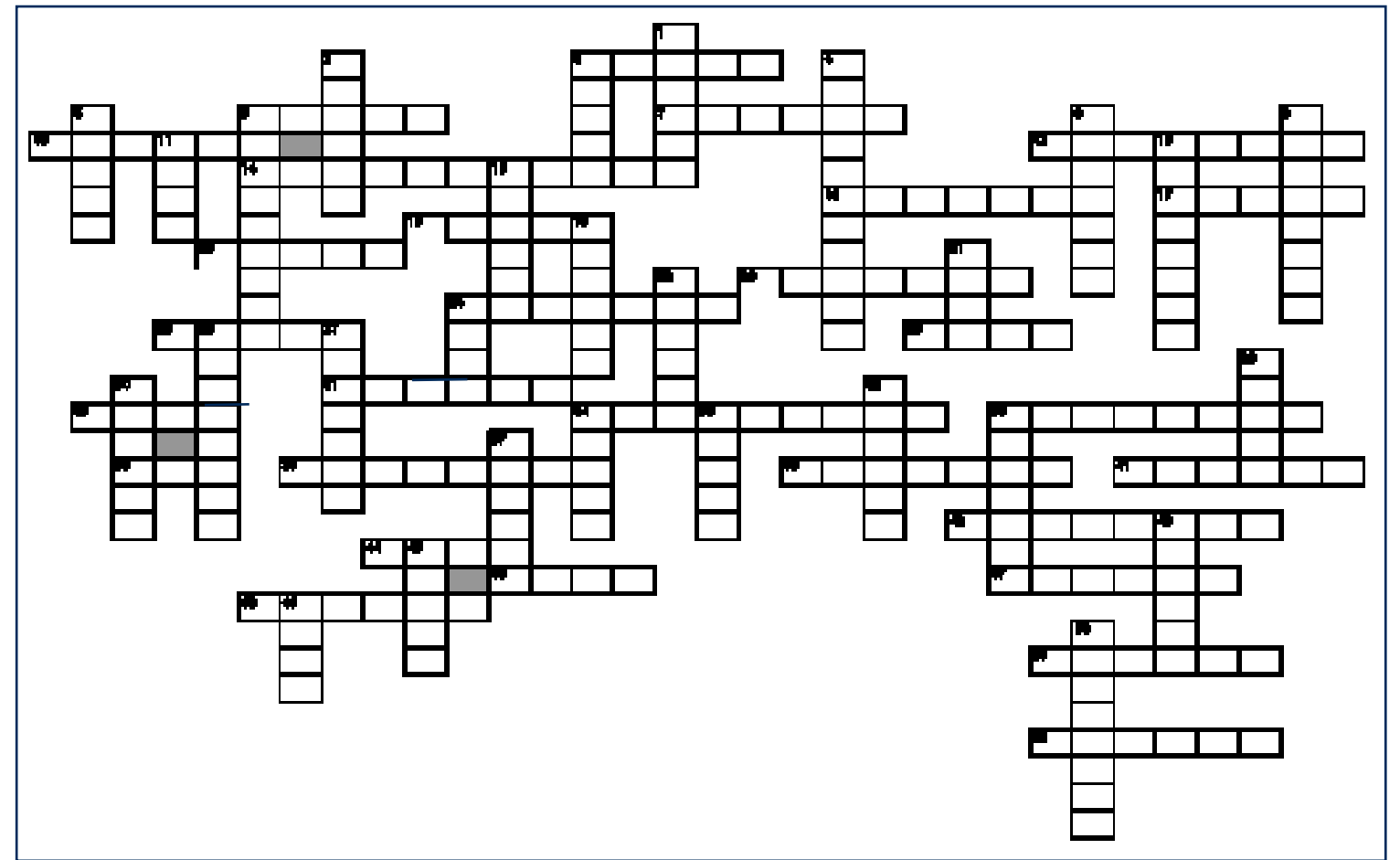
editorial content and the risks from the wrath of editors and the public. He noted that “you only have five seconds of a reader’s attention...fewer words is better...Images jump the language barrier.” As the French cartoonist, Plantu, said in the film: “They know where they should plant the grenade.” Nadia Khiari, the Tunisian cartoonist, who writes under the nom de plume Willis, put it another way: “A pencil can be a wonderful weapon.”

The French film is timely and provides a provocative entrée into important issues that deserve debate. The 2014 documentary, directed by Stephanie Valloatto, is available on DVD and Blu-ray.



Labor Crossword Puzzle

By Kelsey Harrison



Events at Botto House, American Labor Museum

83 Norwood Street, Haledon, NJ 07508 ♦ 973-595-7953 ♦ labormuseum.net

► MAY 1, 2015 - AUGUST 29, 2015

Got Work? *The New Deal/WPA in New Jersey* – presents a portrait of the experience of New Jersey residents and the Works Progress Administration during The Great Depression.

► SEPTEMBER 6, 2015

23rd Annual Labor Day Parade – co-sponsored by the American Labor Museum/Botto House National Landmark, the Borough of Haledon and the City of Paterson, took place on Sunday, September 6th, 2015. Step-off happens at 1:30 PM at the Botto House in Haledon. The parade finishes at the Great Falls Historic District.

► SEPTEMBER 6 - DECEMBER 31, 2015

Workers and Their Parade by Gary Schoichet. An exhibit presenting over fifty contemporary black-and-white and color photographs of workers on the job and workers with their families and friends at the annual Labor Day Parade.



RX for a new kind of labor movement

Only One Thing Can Save Us: Why America Needs a New Kind of Labor Movement, Thomas Geoghegan, New York: The New Press, 2014.

Review by Robert D. Parmet
York College, CUNY

“UNION ROLLS declining,” a Long Island newspaper recently reported, in bold letters across the top of a page. The accompanying story told of a statistical decline in union membership in New York State, which was “part of a long-term trend.” In smaller print, across the bottom of the page, the newspaper announced, “New data: Average LI weekly wages inched up,” referring to a 1.6 percent increase during the second quarter of 2014. At a glance readers might readily infer that labor unions are not needed when wages can rise without them.

In his latest book, veteran Chicago labor lawyer Thomas Geoghegan contends that a labor movement is indeed necessary, to restore the disappearing middle class as well as raise wages. It is “the *only* way” to end the public and private debt that threatens national unity, “and stop the growing inequality that in thirty years could bring the whole Republic crashing down.”

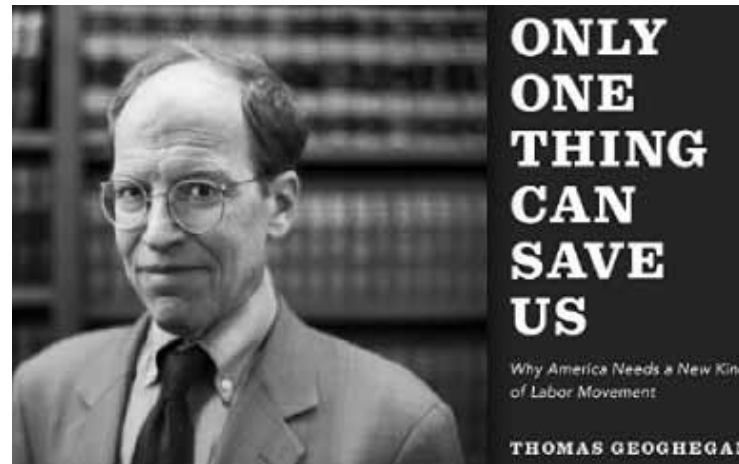
How can this be done?

Shake up the Democratic Party. Even possibly split it and create a new labor movement “to give people more rights to determine the way we work.” It can be accomplished through “more explicitly political strikes” and a “1968-style” conflict within the Democratic Party, which would be compelled to revise corporate law so that workers could be elected to corporate boards or somehow “provide a

check on the workplace” before robots replace all of them.

Geoghegan’s call is for a society that is democratic as well as productive. Among his heroes are Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., John Dewey, and John Maynard Keynes. In discussing them, he proposes what might serve as model for a society respectful of human decency and equality. For example, ordinary people should be taught skills to enhance their position in the workplace. Such could be accomplished by following the German model of management that includes “a massive amount of job training *that the companies themselves provide*,” and worker membership on company boards of directors.” With reference to Keynes’s *General Theory of Employment*, he argues that a highly trained workforce with decision-making responsibilities is a key to staying out of public, private, and external (trade) debt.

As a lawyer who had represented the Chicago Teachers Union before it went on strike in September 2012, Geoghegan remains a staunch supporter of public school teachers. Accordingly, he is appalled at the current attacks on teacher tenure. In addition, he opposes the closing of allegedly “failing” public schools, which he claims has a disruptive effect on minority neighborhoods. Allegedly superior charter schools he regards as “a form of busting teacher unions.” In a world where schools are run according to a business model, he says the aim is to staff schools with teachers who are low-paid rather than highly qualified. “All we need are teachers who will work at will



and want to make \$15,000 less a year” Geoghegan sarcastically observes, adding that “then we will start lifting children out of poverty!” Such an achievement would occur without taxing the wealthy to benefit the poor.

A loss for the union

As noted above, Geoghegan suggests the German management model as an alternative to traditional trade unionism. Accordingly, he describes a continuing dispute in Chattanooga, Tennessee, where, in February 2014, the United Auto Workers lost a representation election at the Volkswagen plant. Several months later, the company adopted a new rule by which it would meet regularly with an organization backed by 45 percent of its employees.

The UAW then organized a new local that allegedly had support in excess of that figure, and therefore met the stated condition. Significantly, the UAW also expressed interest in joining the company’s Global Works Council. However, in February 2015 (following the publication of *Only One Thing Can Save Us*) VW announced

that it had recognized another group of employees, who were both blue-collar and salaried, the American Council of Employees. The ACE’s membership claim was only 15 percent, much less than that of the UAW. Though the UAW appears to have been defeated, it will continue to talk with VW, and accepted the works council concept. What remains to be seen is how well the UAW and the VW employees will fare in Chattanooga, and whether the German model will spread to other American workers and benefit them.

With the ranks of organized labor shrinking, Geoghegan’s plea for an alternative approach to labor organization cannot be ignored. Something must be done to avert disaster. The idea of a decimated middle class should disturb anyone interested in economic, political and social stability. Current efforts to raise minimum wages and organize low-wage employees likewise reflect efforts to rescue the labor movement by means that are untraditional. The road to recovery is decidedly uphill, but as a matter of national as well as worker self-interest it must be followed.

Alinsky tradition falls short as model

People Power: The Community Organizing Tradition of Saul Alinsky, ed. Aaron Schutz and Mike Miller (Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 2015)

Review by Staughton Lynd

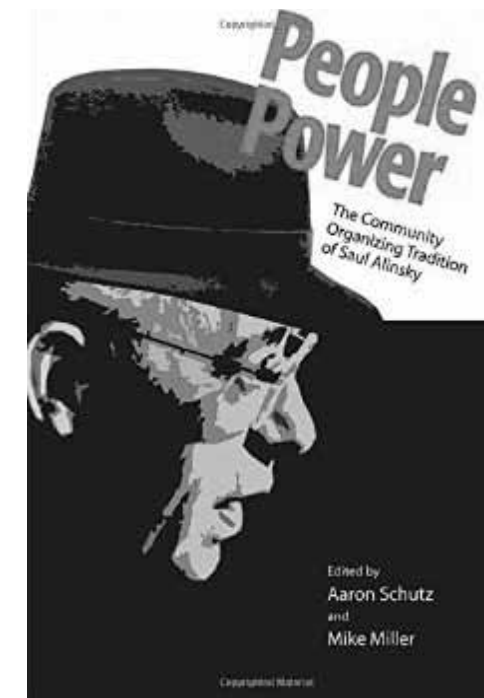
It was an evening late in August, 1968. I was in the bathtub. Believing that the critical issue at the national Democratic Party convention would be whether First Amendment activity could be carried on outside the building where the delegates were meeting, I had organized a march from the lakefront to the convention site in southwest Chicago. Several of the demonstrators, including myself, had been arrested. All tension past, I was luxuriating in the hot water of the bath.

The phone rang. It was Saul Alinsky. He wanted to talk with me about becoming a member of the faculty, along with Ed Chambers and Dick Harmon, at the new Industrial Areas Foundation Training Institute.

Two things made me want to accept. First, I needed a job. I had been blacklisted by academia. At five institutions of higher education in the Chicago area (Chicago State College, Northern Illinois University, Roosevelt University, the University of Illinois Circle Campus, Loyola University) the chairman of the history department offered me a full-time, tenure-track job, and I accepted, only to have the contract overridden by the trustees or Board of Governors. The Lynds were surviving on the “sweat of my Frau” and a regular paycheck was inviting.

Secondly, I was curious. The central organizations of the New Left, the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) and Students for a Democratic Society (SDS), were in the process of destroying themselves. Although I shared criticisms of Alinsky’s work common to members of these two organizations, I wondered what I might be able to learn from Alinsky organizers. I conjectured that becoming a so-called teacher might be a good way to be a student. So I said yes.

And I did learn some very valuable things. The modus operandi of the New Left was



that if you were incensed about an issue, you tried to do something about it. Mr. Alinsky advised newcomers to the Institute to spend some time in a target neighborhood in order to discover what issues were already “there” in the minds of residents. Also, in my experience Alinsky did not emphasize coalition building with the principal figures in existing organizations. He challenged us to discover the informal leadership of a community: the persons to whom neighbors went for help if they had problems. The next step was to bring these informal leaders together and to stress to those gathered that all structural arrangements (who would be chairperson, for example) would be preliminary and tentative. This gave the organizer an opportunity to observe who seemed to take a natural leadership role, and who followed through on what he said he would do. These were important insights.

Three of us were assigned to organize an Alinsky-type community organization in Lake County, Indiana, which includes the city of Gary and is dominated by U.S. Steel. We did so, baptizing our creation the Calumet Community Congress. There was an impressive founding convention, in which the picket line captain at the 1937 Memorial Day Massacre (George Patterson) and a district

director of the Steelworkers who would run for national union president later in the 1970s (Ed Sadlowski) played prominent roles.

After the founding event, however, the organization fell apart. One of my colleagues was persuaded by a Catholic dignitary on the East Coast to use the convention as a personal jumping-off credential and leave town. His replacement as lead organizer was my second colleague.

I had developed the issue of the minimal taxes paid by United States Steel on its Gary, Indiana steel mill property. I had talked with Ralph Nader and he had publicly supported that concern. The Gary newspaper had run an issue with a headline about the tax controversy all the way across the front page.

Colleague No. 2 decided not to pursue the tax issue. Instead he guided the new organization to take on a local pornographic bookstore. Within a matter of months the Congress slowly sank from sight, never to reappear.

At the same time that I lost out on how to build an organization for those who “cared about democracy and social and economic justice” (p. xiv), I was asked by Colleague No. 2 to withdraw from all activity on behalf of the new community organization because I was too radical.

Cardinal sins

Because I was so intimately involved, and inevitably approach the subject with a strong personal bias, I prefer to let the editors of the book and the organizers quoted in it express their own critique of the Alinsky organizing tradition. I have no reason to believe that the shortcomings described have been corrected.

To begin with, we might consider Cesar Chavez. Chavez was the one human being whom I can recall Alinsky speaking of with love. It is likely, the editors write, “that by the mid-1970’s more people knew his name than Alinsky’s.” Yet, according to this account, within the farmworkers’ organization that Chavez created and led, [i]nternal purges eliminated from the staff many talented and dedicated organizers, while others quietly resigned in protest. The boycott became the

Continued on page 8

Class in the USA

Daddy, What's the Middle Class? Pat LaMarche, (Charles Bruce Foundation, \$14.95)

Review by Kelsey Harrison

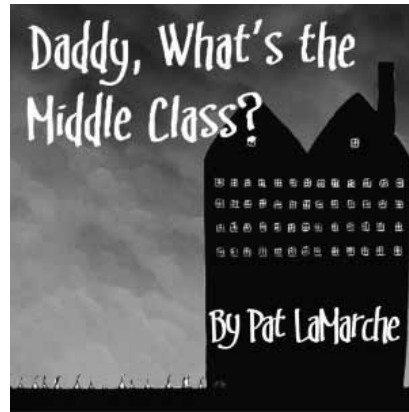
THIS BOOK GETS an “A” for effort but only a “B” for implementation. Former Teamster truck driver Rick Smith decided to take his family on the road for one month in

2013 to cross the country back and forth in a recreational vehicle. He also broadcast his labor radio show (www.ricksmithshow.com) from the vehicle and stopped at labor history sites. One of the goals of this 9,800-mile trip was to teach his children who really built this country and overcome their labor-less education in the school system. He also cites poor cable TV coverage of labor, especially on the History Channel, and their focus on the robber barons and fat cats as the people who built this country.

Unfortunately the book reads like a lighthearted travelogue by author and co-traveler Pat LaMarche, who ran for vice-president as the Green Party candidate in 2004. The excellent title of this book promises to focus on the goal of the book, to educate his children, but there isn't much about the children's interactions. Ms. LaMarche focuses on too many mundane details of the trip and then gives very lightly-researched information about the specific sites. Though coverage of the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Fire and the fight in Blair Mountain, West Virginia in 1920 were more detailed, the book mainly meanders from site to site with no compelling narrative. While those with more than a rudimentary knowledge of labor history will already know much of what is written here, those who don't know much labor history will not feel inspired to learn more. This is unfortunate, especially since Mr. Smith's radio show is so full of information expressed in a very energetic manner.

However, the book does a good job of covering race with its description of the 1968 Memphis, Tennessee sanitation strike where Martin Luther King, Jr. was killed and the integration battle in Little Rock, Arkansas in the 1950's. Native American history is covered well and good analogies are generally made between past battles and terrible conditions today in the same industry.

One of the things that would have brightened up the book would have been photographs. Mr. Smith's wife is a professional photographer who took thousands of pictures but there are none in the book. This is very unusual for a travel/history-site book. To somewhat remedy this there are almost 200 references cited in the back of the book, most of which are internet sites. The problem with this is that some of the sites have already expired and in a couple of years most will probably be gone as well.



Class Lives: Stories From Across Our Economic Divide. Chuck Collins, Jennifer Ladd, Maynard Seider & Felice Yeskel, eds. (Ithaca, N.Y.: ILR-Cornell University Press, 2014, \$19.95)

Review By Steve Leberstein

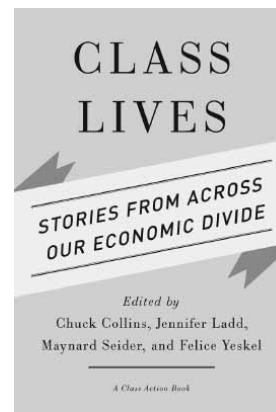
CLASS LIVES: *Stories From Across Our Economic Divide* raises some important questions about the nature of class in American society. There are about 40 personal stories of individuals who experienced what the editors describe as “class awareness.” Few of them shed much light on issues of the economic and political roots of class, or on the possibility of social rather than personal transformation.

This small volume is the product of a non-profit organization called, not surprisingly, Class Lives. A clue to how the personal stories included in this volume were elicited comes from two of the group's founders, Felice Yeskel and Jenny Ladd. Yeskel, who grew up in NYC came from a working class family, experienced class difference when she went to Hunter College Elementary School, one of NYC's elite public schools, and then onto an unnamed private school. She tells us that “...Jenny Ladd, who comes from an owning-class background, and I decided to start a cross-class dialogue group.” Of the 8 founders of the group, “...four came from owning-class backgrounds, each with a million dollars of assets or more.” The eight engaged in what she describes as a “laboratory for understanding the dynamics of class” for 5 hours monthly over a period of 6 ½ years.

The stories in the volume are grouped by such categories as “Poor and Low Income,” “Working Class,” “Middle Class,” “Owning Class,” and “Mixed Class.” came from the laboratory process she describes class awakening through “feeling,” “breaking down barriers” through a “cross-class dialogue group.” The aim of the project, the editors say, is to end “classism” while avoiding any hint of collective action to change the power relations that define American society. It is telling that they acknowledge that “No one from the corporate or political elite felt comfortable sharing his story, or her story.”

Many of the personal stories recount the rough edges and hurt feelings that accompany social mobility, especially the insecurity or shame of the young women here who become the first in their families to go to college. Yet they seldom reveal much about power relations or show a sense of class as a collective identity. Those who do talk about class relations, especially at work, are a small minority – Timothy Harris, Jim Bonilla and Michaelann Bewsee – are worth a look at in this regard.

At least this volume does remind us that the United States is still a class-bound society, one becoming more so in our own time, but leaves the reader to ponder why and what the prospects are for social transformation.



Blue-Collar take on books

By Jane LaTour

Tim Sheard, author, publisher, and National Writers Union organizer, led a fascinating conversation on May 26th with three working-class men – all first-time authors of books that provided an outlet for their passion for writing and insights into New York, back when it was a blue-collar town. The book party / discussion took place at the offices of the New York Chapter of the National Writers Union, which served as host and co-sponsor, along with the New York Labor History Association and the Metro New York Labor Communications Council. Family and friends joined in as the authors reflected on a series of questions posed by Sheard.

Voices from the ranks

Walter Balcerak, former 30-year editor of the *Public Employee Press*, spoke about his book, the novella, *The View from Brooklyn*, which includes stories, poems, memoir and essays. Born into a blue-collar family, son of



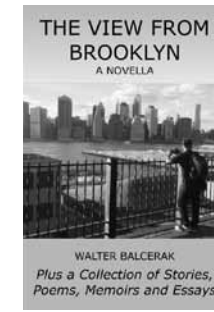
a mechanic / union member, he described the positive responses he's received from various teachers. Bill Hohlfeld, with 32 years as a metal lather and reinforcing ironworker, and 11 years at Local 46 Ironworkers Labor Management Cooperative Trust, said that writing groups were crucial to his career as a writer, as well as teaching English as an adjunct instructor. Hohlfeld's novel, *Ascent to Avalon*, was published under a pseudonym, “Dennis Patrick,” a decision he regrets. “It would be nice to look at it in the library and see my name on it,” he said.

Stan Maron, whose memoir, *New York Hustle: Pool Rooms, School Rooms & Street Corners*, noted that when he really



has something to say, he feels inspired. He remarked on his days of driving a cab on Hudson Street, alongside the noted investigative journalist Tom Robbins, now at the CUNY Grad School, who stopped by to pick up an autographed copy of the book and congratulate the author.

Balcerak noted that it is his job as a writer to compel the reader to keep reading. In response to a question about New York being a city where people come to find themselves and “re-do” themselves, Hohlfeld said, “You don't have to be an out-of-towner to re-do yourself.” His protagonist is re-inventing himself after the system has failed him. He described going to annual conferences in



the Midwest and the amazement of Midwesterners that “New York City is like a small town. People have a lot of the same experiences – a tiny backwater town and Manhattan.” Maron described the difference between his current home in New England and Manhattan. “Perhaps there's a bit more alienation here. People know each other in my town. Everyone you meet in Manhattan will be different.” Balcerak spoke about the levels of social stratification represented in his book.

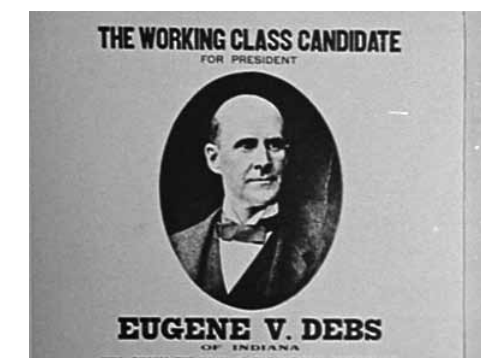
Each of the authors read from their books, and then a lively dialogue took place between the audience and the writers. Questions focused on sources of inspiration, the process of writing, and finding your voice. Hohlfeld said his “voice” was inescapable. “It's an intersection of the working-class voices I know from my own life. These are the wittiest people I've ever met, with the quickest retorts, and the deepest belly laughs. We're all talking about the same thing: the ranks of working people.”

A voice for justice

Continued from page 1

strike and served six months in prison. His prison reading set him on a path to Socialism and he ran for president for the first time in 1900 as a candidate of the precursor of the Socialist Party of America. And, he kept running – the last time in 1920 from the federal prison in Atlanta (where he was serving time for opposing the American entry into World War I). He polled just short of a million votes.

Noel Beasley, who started out in the Midwest in the Textile Workers Union before it became part of what is now Workers United, SEIU, introduced the documentary film about Debs, made in 1977



by Margaret Lazarus and Renner Wunderlich of Cambridge Documentary Films. He tied Debs into the current global movement for a living wage, making the point that activists need to work inside and outside the current

labor movement and be creative in seeking alliances. He pointed out that the Occupy Wall Street movement had made its deposits at Amalgamated Bank, labor's bank, near Zuccotti Park, and that many labor union members were active supporters of it.

Thanks to the Workers Unite Film Festival and the Eugene V. Debs Foundation for co-sponsoring the program. As Eugene Victor Debs said, “Years ago I recognized my kinship with all living things, and I made up my mind that I was not one bit better than the meanest on the earth. I said then and I say now, that while there is a lower class, I am in it; while there is a criminal element, I am of it; while there is a soul in prison, I am not free.”

Telling history – reading fiction

Vera's Will, by Shelley Ettinger, Maplewood NJ: Hamilton Stone, 2014

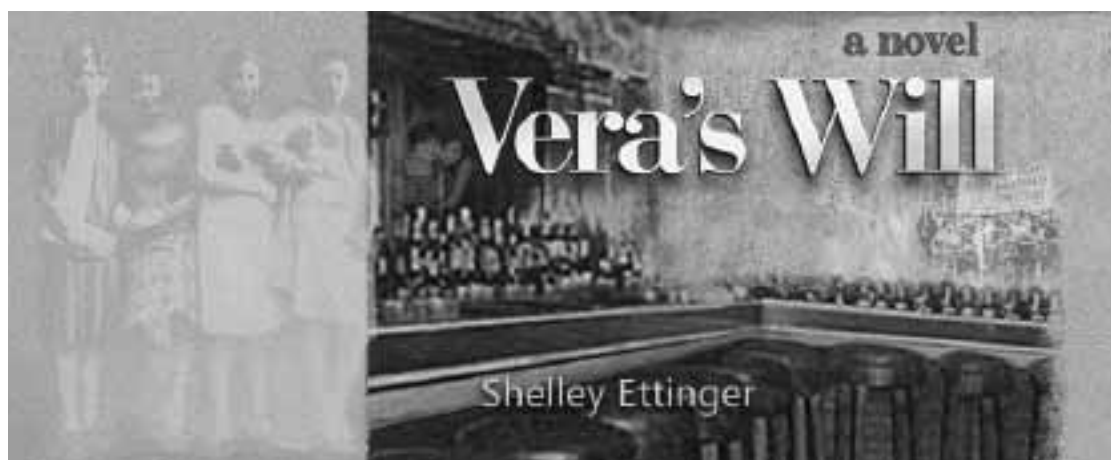
Review, by Miriam Frank

In *Vera's Will*, novelist Shelley Ettinger sets private stories into landmark events of American working class life. The narrative spans the twentieth century and the very different lives of two Jewish women, both of them lesbians: Vera Steiner, whose family escapes the pogroms of Czarist Russia to settle in Passaic, New Jersey; and Vera's granddaughter, Randy Steiner, a college dropout and a radical refugee from suburban Detroit.

Historic sweep

The biographies of Vera and Randy develop within historical milieus familiar to labor and social historians: The Paterson Silk Strike of 1913, gay Greenwich Village in the 1920s, boom times in Detroit at the start of WW II, the rise of anti-war protests in the 1960s and 1970s, and the unionization of office workers in the 1980s. Throughout the 20th century these movements were dynamic locations of struggle that nurtured political and social change as well as sexual liberation. Ettinger depicts these radical tendencies as powerful forces that shape Vera's life and times and later Randy's. Within those worlds her narrative explores forbidden love, traumatic loss and both protagonists' enduring quests for dignity and authenticity.

Reading *Vera's Will* was an adventure. Its well-paced narration moves with elegance



and compassion, sometimes sorrowful to tears, other times blazing with righteous fury or bawdy giggles. Ettinger's scope is great, vivid, discontinuous, and skillfully constructed with dramatic revelations, disappointments and discoveries.

I loved Ettinger's sense of history as an elastic force.

Vera comes to her erotic life in her teens, simply, with pleasure and discretion, and eventual loss. Trouble arises only after she marries Peter Steiner and becomes the mother of two sons. She takes a lover, a girlfriend from her single days, and her husband finds out.

Ettinger connects this disaster to early twentieth century sexological theories about queer lives. Her depiction of Peter Steiner's angry ignorance is masterful. At first she finds compassion for his position, as he lectures Vera about the impossible

permanence of her "inversion." Later, his restrictions on her visits tighten. The boys grow older and Steiner moves the family to Detroit.

Vera follows – at a distance. Her wartime Detroit is an attic room on the Jewish west-side.

Everyone is working; but she is no Rosie with a riveting gun. Vera keeps the books at a record shop, dresses smartly, lives with her loneliness. By war's end she has re-united, with one of her sons, only to be rejected – again – by the next generation.

It's a sad trajectory, but Ettinger has bolstered the grimness of these betrayals with early bits in the life of Randy Steiner, Vera's rebellious tomboy grandchild. This new creation is culled from the author's own life as a political activist. Randy Steiner satisfies her lesbian longings in the heyday of Ann Arbor radical culture and directly finds her way into a wider community and an array of causes: gay liberation is primary here but Randy is committed as

well to the labor movement and to all peoples' movements for a better world.

Readers who enjoy rich and layered narrations will find them in the topics of this novel: turn-of-the-20th-century Jewish immigration; the jazz age and socialism. They will see how gay people created ways to find one another long before Stonewall; before World War II in Detroit; and before the growth of political hippy cultures in college towns of the 1970s. Ettinger knows the growing pains of new movements of liberation and also acknowledges, always and with dignity, the old ashes of shame.

Ettinger's rich chapters are carefully researched and laced with witty reflections. She shows us communities we thought we knew, first transforming them with tender compassion, then populating them with families in trouble and with lovers in danger.

I loved Ettinger's sense of history as an elastic force. *Vera's Will* challenges us with the great social themes of the past century's generations: the horrors of war, the throb of class struggles, the pains of betrayal and the saving joys of sexual healing.

Mary Harris (Mother) Jones invades New York

By Cy A. Adler

MARY HARRIS JONES, called "Mother" by the coal miners she lived with, organized and fought for, was born in Ireland in 1837. Her family immigrated to Canada where she attended public school. She moved to the United States and taught school for a time in Monroe, Michigan, but didn't like bossing little children around for low pay.

She moved south and married George Jones, an iron worker and labor leader, in Memphis, Tenn. The couple had four children. In 1867, her husband and children were wiped out by the yellow fever epidemic. She moved to Chicago and opened a dress-making shop. But her home and all her possessions were burned out in the Great Chicago Fire of 1871. Then, nearing 50, she got involved with the Knights of Labor. It turned out she had an extraordinary talent for organizing and raising hell. She felt she had right on her side.

In May 1886, she participated in the first demonstration for the eight-hour workday and saw firsthand the terror of the Haymarket Affair on May 4, 1886. In 1890, she became a paid organizer for the newly-organized United Mine Workers of America.

Mary Harris Jones invaded New York City several times. On Oct. 18, 1902, she spoke to a "great socialist crowd" of men and women at Cooper Union Hall. In 1903, she led a crusade of children, many maimed by the machines they worked on for the greedy mill owners. She led them from Philadelphia to appeal to President Teddy Roosevelt at his mansion on Long Island. He refused to see her. She then took



her children to Coney Island, where she harangued the press. (Excerpt from *Wholly Mother Jones*, Scene 9)

William Sweeney: Where in hell are we marching to, Mary?

Mary: You and I are going to lead a band of these skinny, maimed factory children, from Philadelphia, up through the state of New Jersey, all the way to President Theodore Roosevelt's swank Oyster Bay mansion on Long Island. Then the president will talk to us and the newspapers will listen to us.

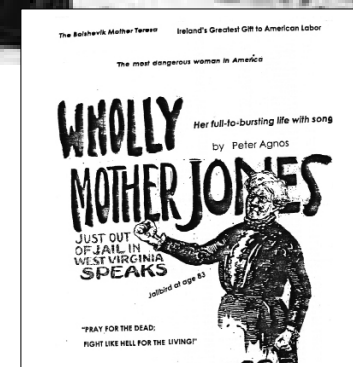
Sweeney: You are seventy-three. Can you do it, old girl?

Mary: Follow me! Get the water wagons ready. I'll handle the reporters.

Narrator B: Mother Jones, like an elderly Pied Piper, led the children through New Jersey. Then they invaded the metropolis of New York. National newspaper reporters flocked to her hotel room.

Newsman: Why do you condemn child labor, Mrs. Jones?

Mary: Child labor is a disgrace to our nation. These kids should be in school. The greed of the mill owners deprives able men and women of jobs. Child labor is a slavery of the weak and the innocent!



Women's Voice: Mr.

President, what shall we tell Mrs. Jones?

President Roosevelt: Tell that crazy old woman that I have no power to help those children. Labor laws are the states' province, not mine. Tell her I am too busy to see her and those kids.

Mary: Okay, children, let's go to Coney Island and have some fun in Luna Park and Steeplechase. A Brooklyn Eagle reporter wants to talk to us there. The boardwalk will be a great spot to blast child labor.

Yes, Mr. Reporter, President Roosevelt, that great lion hunter and philanthropist, was afraid to talk with me. He is too busy chasing wild elephants to care for the children of America. Print that in your newspaper.

Narrator B: Millions of Americans heard about Mother Jones' Children's Crusade, and many more were moved. Several years later, the state of

Pennsylvania passed laws limiting child labor.

In 1913, Mary was thrown into a federal jail in West Virginia for fomenting a strike. She was given a 20-year sentence. She was over 80 years old. She smuggled a letter to U.S. Senator John W. Kern, who read it in Congress. When released from jail, she came to New York City. She filled Carnegie Hall with her admirers.

Mary: I am told that if I return to West Virginia, I will again be arrested by Governor Hatfield. He doesn't understand the forces underlying the great economic conflict in West Virginia, and he is owned body and soul by the mining companies and other capitalist interests of the state. But he does understand that public opinion has been aroused. I am in favor of using the ballot, and in all my career I have never advocated violence. What I want to do is give the nation a more highly developed citizenship. Not like in West Virginia, where they spent \$500,000 on the militia to break strikes, and closed down a number of schools. Many of the children who were robbed of their education will never again be back in school.

West Virginia is on trial before the nation. The military arrests that I and others were forced to undergo were the first moves ever made by the ruling class to have the working class tried by military courts. It is up to the American worker to make sure that it is the last.

Wholly Mother Jones is a musical play by Peter Agnos, with 26 scenes and 13 songs. To get a copy of the script or the CD of the musical version, send \$10 to Green Eagle Press, Box 20329, New York, NY 10025.

Alinsky tradition...

Continued from page 7
principal strategic weapon of the union; on-the-ground organizing of farmworkers at workplaces was shunted to the sidelines. Power increasingly was concentrated in the hands of Cesar Chavez, who brooked no internal opposition “from below” – i.e., from among farmworkers – and vigorously worked to defeat leaders whose views were different from his own (pp. 106-107).

The editors add a criticism that has also been expressed by Marshall Ganz and others, namely, that Chavez insisted on appointing the members of local ranch committees rather than permitting them to be elected, and opposed the creation of local unions of farmworkers with the result that “[e]verything was run from union headquarters” (pp. 108-109). Chavez was also “vigorously anti-Communist, no matter what kind of Communist you happened to be” (p. 111).

The farmworkers’ organization that Chavez created under Alinsky’s guidance hardly appears to offer a desirable template for the future.

Similar caution recommends itself when considering Alinsky’s admiration for John L. Lewis, “one of Alinsky’s major teachers” (p. 19). Lewis crushed internal opposition, a practice from which devoted organizers like A.J. Muste and Roger Baldwin of the American Civil Liberties Union recoiled. From the beginning, the CIO entered into collective bargaining agreements that forbade for the duration of the contract the very strikes, plant occupations, and other direct action tactics that had won union recognition. The CIO undertook organizing campaigns



that were not radical but were militant, and often were made to appear more militant than they really were by a focus on a single personal antagonist. Exactly as in the case of union organizing, a successful Alinsky campaign might end in a congenial sitdown with the principals on the other side. Alinsky never confronted or denounced capitalism as a system.

The most comprehensive critique of the failings of the Alinsky model that I found in *People Power* was expressed by Dick Harmon, my erstwhile colleague at the Training Institute. Dick is quoted as saying that during the mid-to-late 1970s “[s]ome of us, including myself, lost our moorings.” Dick voices the following devastating assessment: our operating assumptions were that you didn’t ask basic questions about the economy because that would label you a ‘pinko,’ an ideologue, and worse. If you raised these kinds of questions, the climate of the time would shut you down, so you had to be pragmatic... We had no ongoing, fundamental analysis of the economy, no long-term diagnosis. No one

was asking about alternatives to all the companies moving to the South, Latin America, Asia. We didn’t have any alternative except, just keep building organizations (pp. 208-209).

Local institutions, Dick Harmon also commented, “no longer ask questions about fundamentals such as where corporate capital is taking us.” There is no consideration within the Alinskyian community that “Corporate capitalism is One system, a Whole, assaulting both human beings and the rest of our natural world” (pp. 212-213).

The years in which I was closest to the Alinsky operation were the years in which American service men and women in effect ended the Vietnam war by refusing to fight. They fringed their officers, and refused to go on nighttime patrols or to provide targets for American planes by drawing fire from Vietnamese ambushes. I cannot remember even a comment by Alinsky or his staff that might have led to an organizing campaign directed against the war and the worldview that underlay the war.

I may be mistaken but to

the best of my recollection there was also no staff response to the massacre at Kent State University on May 4, 1970. I do remember intense telephone calls with a student at the Institute. (Zeke, where are you now?) And when the largest student strike in United States history followed the events at Kent State I believe the Institute played no role, initiating or supporting.

I also remember that as the Calumet Community Congress was being planned I questioned whether there should be a “color guard” drawn from the different branches of the military and a presentation of the flag. My concern was brushed aside with a comment to the effect that “we always do that.”

A hope

Like the editors, I mourn the fact that there was no melding of New Left and Alinskyan worldviews in the 1960s. The editors have the candor and humility to recognize the barriers Alinsky traditionalists have put in the way of working with young idealists from the New Left or Occupy. They explicitly recognize [t]he IAF’s macho style, organizational arrogance, dismissal of “movements,” avoidance of any coalition that it didn’t control, unwillingness to look at mutual aid as a strategic organizing tool that could lead to the development of substantial worker – and community-owned cooperatives and credit unions ... (p. 317).

Participants in Occupy needed the help of experienced organizers in making the transition from sitting-in at the downtown public square to beginning to construct what the Zapatistas call “un otro mundo,” another world. We still need that help.



The Debra E. Bernhardt Labor Journalism Prize

Call for entries – 2015

THE NEW YORK LABOR HISTORY ASSOCIATION is pleased to announce this Call for Entries for the First Annual Debra E. Bernhardt Labor Journalism Prize. The deadline for entries is **TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 1, 2015**.

THE BERNHARDT PRIZE IS AN AWARD OF \$500 given to an article or series of articles that furthers the understanding of the history of working people. The work should be published – in print or online – in a union or workers’ center publication or by an independent journalist.

By sponsoring this award we hope to inspire more great writing for a general audience about the history of work, workers, and their organizations.

The award is co-sponsored by LaborArts; Metro New York Labor Communications Council; the NYC Central Labor Council, AFL-CIO; and the Robert F. Wagner Labor Archives at NYU’s Tamiment Library.

The winner will be announced at the Tamiment Library on **OCTOBER 15, 2015**, during a forum about the history of labor journalism.

We are guided by the vision of the late **DEBRA E. BERNHARDT**, who worked in so many different realms to share the hidden histories of working people. As head of the Wagner Labor Archives she reached out to an astonishing number of people and organizations, to document undocumented stories and unrecognized contributions, and to make links between past and present.

GUIDELINES

The prize will be given to insightful work that contributes to the understanding of labor history; shows creativity; demonstrates excellence in writing; and adheres to the highest journalistic standards of accuracy.

The work may be an article or a series of articles, published in a labor or a workers’ center publication or by an independent journalist – in print or online – between January 2014 and August 30, 2015.

Entries should include a cover sheet with name of the author and the place and date of publication. Five copies of each article (with cover sheet) should be submitted, to:

**New York Labor History Association, Tamiment Library, 10th Floor
Bobst Library NYU
70 Washington Square South
New York NY 10012**

Questions? Contact info@LaborArts.org or 212-966-4014 Ext. 1703

ACROSS

2. Michael _____ went *Bowling in Columbine* and looking for Roger Smith at GM in 2 of his many movies.
6. Philip _____ was one of the most prolific labor authors in American history.
7. Daniel _____ was the long-time head of the Socialist Labor Party.
10. Diego _____, radical Mexican painter who lost the battle of Rockefeller Center.
12. The original name of the Chicago-area cemetery where the Haymarket Martyrs are buried.
14. Bruce _____ was *Born in the U.S.A.* and wrote about working-class *Badlands* and dead-end Factory life.
16. Albert _____ was the head of the (U.F.T.) from 1964 to 1986.
17. _____ Joel sang about "... living here in Allentown, and they're closing all the factories down."
18. Clifford _____ was the social-realist playwright of the 1930's.
20. John L. _____ was President of the United Mine Workers from 1920 to 1960.
23. The historic company town south of Chicago named for the famous rail-car company of the late 19th and early 20th C.
24. Harry _____ led the famous 3-day general strike in San Francisco in 1934 as head of the I.L.W.U.
25. Billy _____ is a British singer and political activist known for the albums *Talking with the Taxman About Poetry and Mermaid Avenue*.
28. This federal agency rules on workers' and union's rights (Initials).

31. The 1967 _____ Law banned public employees from going on strike in New York City.
33. _____ dollars a day was the innovative wage established by Henry Ford in 1914.
34. The _____ Detective Agency was an infamous strike-breaking company of the late 19th century.
36. Cleveland _____ was President of District 65 and a Civil Rights Leader.
38. _____ Davis, Jr. was a 2-term Communist Councilman in NYC who later went to jail under the Smith Act prosecutions.
39. Upton _____ wrote *The Jungle* and ran for governor of California in 1934 on a radical working-class platform.
41. _____ Actors Guild.
42. Margaret _____ was the union-busting Prime Minister of England from 1979 to 1990.
44. Irving _____ was a Democratic Socialist and editor of *Dissent* magazine.
46. The _____ School of Social Science was founded in NYC in 1906 by Socialist Party members.
47. Ray _____ started his Corporate Campaign strategy in the late 1970's against the J.P. Stevens & Company.
48. Norman _____ was the presidential candidate of the Socialist Party in the 1930's and 1940's.
51. John _____ directed the films *Eight Men Out*, *Matewan*, *Sunshine State* and *Silver City*.
52. Henry _____ was a progressive advocate of the single tax and mayoral candidate in 1886 in NYC for the United Labor Party.

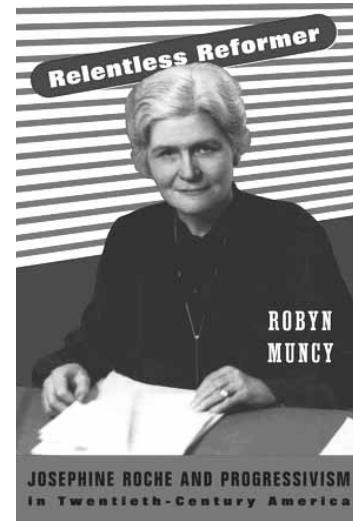
DOWN

1. Before becoming a leader of the I.W.W., "Big" Bill Haywood was a leader of the Western Federation of _____.
2. A.J. _____ was the head of the Brookwood Labor College in the 1920's and early 1930's.
3. Meyer _____ was NY's Socialist Party Congressman from the Lower East Side for 6 years.
4. The 1968 Ocean Hill-_____ strike was led by the U.F.T.
5. C. Wright _____, famed sociologist and author of the very influential "The Power Elite" in 1956.
6. Ralph _____, working-class artist well known for his series of paintings of the Lawrence, Mass. Bread and Roses Strike.
8. James T. _____, author of *Studs Lonigan*.
9. Morris _____, union activist and long-time Socialist Party candidate for N.Y.C. Mayor and Congress.
11. _____ Goldman, famous anarchist, speaker, factory worker and founder of the publication *Mother Earth*.
13. David _____ was the head of the I.L.G.W.U. from 1932 to 1966.
15. Pete _____, one of the greatest folksingers in American history, might object to seeing his name inside Little Boxes in a crossword puzzle.
19. _____ Feldman, President of the U.F.T. from 1986 to 1997.
21. The very first Marxist (first name).
22. This President of the U.S. busted the Professional Air Traffic Controllers Organization in 1981, which had endorsed him for president the year before.

24. _____ Green, President of the AFL from 1924 to 1952.
26. _____, long-running working-class TV sitcom (1988-1997), named for its frequently sarcastic starring waitress.
27. Woody _____, radical folksinger who wrote *This Land is Your Land*.
29. This 1970's song sung by Johnny Paycheck says it all: *Take This Job and _____ It*.
30. _____, Arizona was the place from which over 1,100 I.W.W. members were deported to New Mexico during a copper mining strike in 1917.
32. Over 1,100 police officers went on strike for the right to form a union in this city in 1919.
34. The _____ Commune of 1871 has inspired millions of workers around the globe.
35. _____ Lewis led this teacher's strike against Mayor Rahm Emanuel in Chicago in 2012.
36. Walter _____ was the President of the U.A.W. from 1946 until his death in 1970.
37. Scott _____ is the union-busting governor of Wisconsin.
43. The name of this company lives on in infamy for beating the P-9 union local of the U.F.C.W. in Austin, Minnesota in 1985/1986.
45. Kate Richards _____ was a Socialist Party activist who was jailed under the Espionage Act for her anti-war activism during WWI.
49. Joe _____, I.W.W. activist executed by firing squad in Utah in 1936.
50. Andrew _____ busted the union at his steel works company in 1892, resulting in the deaths of seven workers. Answers on page 5

To right the wrongs: biography recovers reformer's story

Relentless Reformer: Josephine Roche and Progressivism in Twentieth-Century America
Robyn Muncy, Princeton University Press, © 2015. 295 pages. ISBN: 978-0-691-12273-1



Review by Donn Mitchell

What would you do if you inherited a coal company? What, especially, would you do if it was one of the villains in the Ludlow Massacre? Josephine Roche knew, and when she became president of the Rocky Mountain Fuel Company, she immediately invited the United Mine Workers to return to the Colorado coal fields to organize her mines. Thus began a lifelong alliance with John L. Lewis,

who would eventually put her in charge of the union's health and welfare fund.

As president, Roche not only raised wages. She also opened the company's books to the union. The result was increased productivity, respectable profitability, a fierce loyalty from the rank and file, and a concerted effort by her competitors to put her out of business.

Not to worry. Josephine Roche was already a seasoned fighter. An activist on progressive issues while a graduate student at Columbia, she plunged into public life in 1912, when progressives swept the Denver municipal elections. Roche returned to her western roots to become the city's first woman police officer. In Robyn Muncy's words, she quickly transformed the job "into a command post in the campaign against Denver's notorious political machine." Her impact was so great that she was essentially forced out of office little more than a year later.

Although she lost a vigorous fight for reinstatement, her reforming zeal survived unscathed. Accepting an assignment to head Colorado's

Progressive Service, the party's educational wing, she interviewed principals on both sides of the developing conflict on the coal fields. The horrors of the Ludlow Massacre confirmed her initial sympathies for the strikers.

Some 13 years later, Roche inherited her father's stock in the Rocky Mountain Fuel Company, and within a year, she had acquired enough additional shares to take control of the company, immediately ousting its anti-labor management. The rest of her life would be devoted to trying, in her words, "to right the wrongs of Ludlow."

Public health pioneer

Despite this commitment, Roche made an impressive mark on the general welfare of society, too, running for governor of Colorado and accepting appointment as Henry Morgenthau's Assistant Secretary of the Treasury. In this capacity, she was an active member of the Economic Security Council, which hammered out the details of the Social Security Act at Frances Perkins' and Mary Rumsey's kitchen table.

Like Perkins, she was disappointed that health insurance could not be built into

the act, but she was to have two major outlets for her frustration. As Morgenthau's assistant, she oversaw a massive expansion of the U.S. Public Health Service. Then, after World War II, she relinquished her shares in Rocky Mountain Fuel to become the director of the United Mine Workers Health and Welfare Fund, where she developed a string of hospitals in Appalachia and pioneered the concept of pre-paid managed care.

In *Relentless Reformer*, Muncy provides a thorough-going portrait of an astounding woman whose role in labor and women's history has receded from memory. Along the way, she explains progressivism's evolution into Cold War liberalism. She does not paper over the errors and arrogance of progressivism, nor does she shy away from describing Roche's acceptance of secret loans from the union as "shady." Nonetheless, her account is upbeat and colorful, peppered with vivid detail of the many issues Roche addressed in the course of her energetic 90 years. These stories, along with 79 pages of notes, offer a treasure trove of labor and progressive movement resources.

Crossword Answers

29. Shove
30. Bisbee
32. Boston
34. Paris
35. Karen
36. Reuther
37. Walker
43. Hornel
45. O'Hare
49. Hill
50. Carnegie
27. Guthrie
26. Roseanne
24. Bill
22. Reagan
21. Karl
19. Sandra
15. Seeger
13. Dubinsky
11. Emma
9. Hillquit
8. Farrell
6. Fasanella

DOWN

44. Howe
46. Rand
47. Rogers
48. Thomas
51. Sayles
52. George
34. Pinkerton
36. Cleveland
16. Shanker
17. Billy
18. Odets
20. Lewis
23. Pullman
24. Bridges
25. Bragg
28. NLRB
31. Taylor
33. Five
34. Pinkerton
36. Cleveland
1. Miners
38. Ben
39. Sinclair
41. Screen
42. Thatcher
5. Mills
3. London
2. Muste
1. Miners
38. Ben
39. Sinclair
41. Screen
42. Thatcher
23. Pullman
20. Lewis
18. Odets
17. Billy
16. Shanker
14. Springssteen
12. Walldheim
10. Rivera
7. DeLeon
6. Foner
2. Moore
44. Howe
46. Rand
47. Rogers
48. Thomas
51. Sayles
52. George
34. Pinkerton
36. Cleveland
16. Shanker
17. Billy
18. Odets
20. Lewis
23. Pullman

Seven amazing women

By Rachel Bernstein

Clara Lemlich's daughter, granddaughter and great grandson joined the rousing NYC Labor Chorus, Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer and a museum full of energized admirers for the Fifth Annual Clara Lemlich Awards on May 4, 2015. The Awards honor unsung activists, women who have been working for the larger good all their lives, in the tradition of those who sparked so many reforms in the aftermath of the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Fire. In the words of Marge Piercy, these are women who:

jump into work head first without dallying in the shadows... who do what has to be done, again and again.

Hosted by the Puffin Gallery for Social Activism at the Museum of the City of New York (yes – the museum has a permanent gallery about activism!), organized by LaborArts and the Remember the Triangle Fire Coalition and sponsored by the Museum, the Puffin Foundation and the Shelley and Donald Rubin Foundation, the evening celebrated seven amazing women.

WIN ARMSTRONG, introduced by Evelyn Jones Rich as someone who “really knows her stuff,” is an economist, a scholar of Africa, an advocate for African self-rule and a strong presence in the tenants’ rights movement in NYC. She worked for Senator John F. Kennedy and the Foreign Relations Committee on African issues and on the



2015 Lemlich honorees L. Ann Rocker and Winifred Armstrong, flanked by members of the NYC Labor Chorus (left is 2014 Lemlich honoree Barbara Bailey) who provided music to inspire the crowd.

Photo: Ravi Ragbir

creation of the Peace Corps, worked in the mining industry on labor and environmental issues in Africa (long before the environmental movement), and played innovative roles in the Interracial Council for Business Opportunity, the International Society of Ecological Economics and the Environmental Science Committee of the New York Academy of Sciences, among others.

Her advocacy for tenants’ rights, particularly with the Park West Village Tenants’ Association stretches over three decades. Armstrong believes we are “the inheritors, interpreters, and creators of our history.”

JULIE AZUMA came to New York City from Chicago to work in the apparel industry. Introduced by Susan Onuma as someone at the heart of multiple communities, Azuma describes being politicized by

the movement to provide redress for Japanese interned during WWII, and soon being involved in organizations advocating for Asian Americans.

When her daughter was diagnosed with autism she began to focus on resources to help autistic children, and began what became a substantial business – Different Roads to Learning. Lisa Dietlin’s book *Transformational Philanthropy* highlights Azuma’s advocacy work in the autism community and on behalf of Asian Americans.

SYLVIA GUTIERREZ GRANT moved to New York City from Mexico as a youth; by the late 1970s she worked in the business office at Flushing Hospital – soon she was serving as a delegate for the hospital workers’ union SEIU/1199. One of her early successful campaigns was at Our Lady of Mercy Hospital in the Bronx, where she brought 500

workers into the union. Her extraordinary organizing abilities led to more responsibilities within the union, including becoming vice president for new organizing in 1989. Under Grant’s leadership, 1199 organized tens of thousands of new members, including hospital workers, nursing home workers and home health care workers. Minerva Solla introduced her as “Our ‘*si, se pueda hermana,*’ sister Sylvia Gutierrez Grant!”

LILLIAN LIFFLANDER was born on the Lower East Side in 1919, and Toby Emmer described a bit of her life long activism. A graduate of Washington Irving High School and Vassar College, she went to work for the United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers (UE) in 1940, and from there she served in the Women’s Army Corps (WAC). She was a founding member of the Lower East Side Mobilization for Peace

Action, working against the war in Vietnam and also addressing issues such as fair and affordable housing and community control of the schools. She was active in the fight to end the United States’ occupation of Vieques, Puerto Rico, camping out on the beach at Vieques and later being arrested in front of the United Nations. Never slowing her commitment to protesting for peace and justice, in her early eighties she also embarked on an acting career, becoming a member of the Screen Actors Guild.

L. ANN ROCKER is an environmentalist and the founder and president of the North River Community Environmental Review Board. Introducing her, Robert Jackson used a string of

acronyms, including the NYC DEP, US EPA, NYS PD and others, all groups she brought to the table in an effort to moderate the effects on Harlem neighborhoods of the North River Water Pollution Control Plant. Rocker continues her three decades of advocating for cleaner air and water in the area, for better parks and recreation and expanded opportunities for youth, particularly at the park atop the facility.

She continues as well to be deeply involved in expanding recycling borough-wide, and in the efforts to contain hydraulic fracturing (fracking) in New York State and beyond.

GLORIA SUKENICK (90) was introduced with verve by Lena Habtu (10) and Marlena Vega (9), of the Central Park East

elementary school. The girls had been studying the Triangle Fire, and were fascinated when Gloria told them her story about the fire at the Happy Land Social Club, one of her memorable moments as an activist. They were astounded to discover that the fire took place on March 25th – the same exact day as the Triangle Shirt Waist fire 79 years earlier. They told about Gloria being infuriated to learn that the building owner of the Happy Land Social Club was in violation of fire codes and intentionally locked doors that trapped and killed 89 people.

“She and fellow activists created an effigy of the club owner and hung it publicly in order to draw attention to his terrible greed.” Sukenick was an active voice in the women’s movement, working with Redstockings and NY Radical Feminists and organizing early consciousness-raising groups for NOW, and an energetic advocate

for tenants with the Chelsea Coalition on Housing.

MIMI STERN-WOLFE was the only honoree to be introduced with a song, by her daughter, singer/songwriter Laura Wolfe. Stern-Wolfe is founder and artistic director of Downtown Music Productions, presenting socially relevant music in community concerts. Somehow she has combined a life of serious devotion to classical music – she has given piano recitals at Carnegie Recital Hall and Alice Tully Hall – with a life committed to activism. Her concerts served to protest the Vietnam War, to support the Civil Rights movement, and to celebrate Martin Luther King, Jr., Langston Hughes, Harriet Tubman and others.

Her annual Benson AIDS Concerts present music of composers lost to HIV/AIDS, and her series “Composers of the Holocaust” is devoted to music of composers lost to the world in the camps of Europe.

MC Esther Cohen told the crowd this is always her favorite night of the year. Her poem explains why:

We look for hope though we sometimes forget what hope looks like and every year at the Clara Lemlich awards every year when we honor women who continue to fight for what it is they want to change women who won't give up who call us at 11 o'clock on Sunday night even though they're 97 and should probably be in bed women who want to leave this earth knowing they did all they could and I mean all they could.



Henry Foner and Lemlich family, Michael Miller, Jane Margulies, Rita Margulies