

Summer Fringe
(page 36)



My Summer of Occupation

ALSO INSIDE

The Truth about Modern Money (page 7)

Breaking Gay Rules: The Samuel Delany Story (page 27)

September 2013

<http://gcadvocate.com>

advocate@gc.cuny.edu

CUNY Graduate Center

Room 5396

365 Fifth Avenue

New York, NY 10016

(212) 817-7885

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Michael Busch

MANAGING EDITOR

Christopher Silsby

LAYOUT EDITOR

Mark Wilson

CONTRIBUTORS

Meredith Benjamin

Karen Gregory

Uğur Güney

Clay Matlin

J.A. Myerson

Lavelle Porter

Dan Venning

PUBLICATION INFO

The *GC Advocate* is the student newspaper of the CUNY Graduate Center. Publication is subsidized by Student Activities Fees and the DSC. The *GC Advocate* is published six times a year, in September, October, November, February, March, and April. Copies are distributed near the end of the month.

SUBMISSIONS

The *GC Advocate* accepts contributions of articles, illustrations, photos and letters to the editor. Please send queries to the email address above. Articles selected for publication will be subjected to editorial revision. Writers who contribute articles of 1,000 words will be paid \$75 and those who submit longer articles requiring research will receive \$75. We also pay for photographs and artwork. Please email for details.

Never Submit. Contribute!

The *GC Advocate* newspaper, the only newspaper dedicated to the needs and interests of the CUNY Graduate Center community, is looking for new writers for the upcoming academic year. We publish six issues per year and reach thousands of Graduate Center students, faculty, staff, and guests each month.

Currently we are seeking contributors for the following articles and columns:

- ▶ Investigative articles covering CUNY news and issues (assignments available on request)
- ▶ First Person essays on teaching at CUNY for our regular "Dispatches from the Front" column
- ▶ First person essays on life as a graduate student for our "Graduate Life" column
- ▶ Feature "magazine style" articles on the arts, politics, culture, NYC, etc.
- ▶ Provocative and insightful analyses of international, national, and local politics for our Political Analysis column
- ▶ Book reviews for our regular Book Review column and special Book Review issues
- ▶ Local Music Reviews and Art Reviews

To view recent articles and to get a sense of our style, please visit the *GC Advocate* website: www.gcadvocate.com.

Payments for articles range between \$75 and \$150 depending on the length and amount of research required. We also pay for photos and cartoons.

Interested writers should contact Editor Michael Busch at michaelkbusch@gmail.com.

CUNY in the Kelly Era

The fall semester marks not just the start of a new academic year, but the true beginning of the Bill Kelly era at the City University of New York. Though he officially took the helm from his predecessor, Matthew Goldstein, in July, the past two months have served more as a grace period of transition for Kelly and his crew as they settle into CUNY headquarters than anything else. The real action begins now. Students are returning to school, classes have begun, and there are a whole host of unresolved university-related issues around which students, faculty, and staff are organizing.

But before we discuss any of this, some brief background for new students at CUNY (not to mention a refresher for those of us returning from long and blissfully detached summer recesses). Bill Kelly, until this summer the president of the Graduate Center, took over the CUNY chancellery from Matthew Goldstein—City University's answer to Darth Vader—who had held the position for nearly fifteen years. Goldstein bequeathed to Kelly a poisoned legacy, despite plaudits from the *New York Times*, the *Post*, and other questionable authorities. Under his stewardship, academic standards were weakened, Black and Latino enrollment declined, academic freedom was under constant threat, student tuition almost doubled, and part-time faculty became responsible for nearly half of the total teaching load across the system.

Not only that, Goldstein ran roughshod over CUNY's tradition of faculty governance, security became increasingly coercive on campuses, and the chancellor, meanwhile, got rich. Even his departure was a moment to cash in. Despite pulling in hundreds of thousands of dollars from his affiliation with JPMorgan Chase, a \$90,000 annual housing allowance, and nearly half a million dollars for his labors on behalf of CUNY, the Board of Trustees orchestrated a golden parachute for Goldstein that will allow him to continue collecting a salary for years to come. Why? Because "I think he was underpaid as chancellor," said Board Chairman Benno Schmidt. This, at the same time that students are being told they need to fork over more tuition dollars because there's no money in the budget.

So, in some ways, the transfer of leadership from Goldstein to Kelly is cause for some hope. As the *Advocate* reported at the end of last year, the two men could not be more different. If Goldstein was a dull businessman,

getting on in years, and widely disliked by those in the CUNY community, Kelly is comparatively young, charismatic, an academic by training, and generally liked and well-regarded. In this sense, the Bill Kelly era marks a welcome break from the past. But Kelly still faces a formidable agenda of loose strings left hanging by Goldstein as he retired, and not a few messes still in need of cleaning-up.

The first major challenge to Kelly's chancellorship is coming quick. At the end of the month, the Board of Trustees will hold its first meeting of the 2013-14 academic year. The meeting promises to be a point of convergence for student and faculty activists from around the CUNY system, who plan to protest the Board gathering over a menu of items. The continuing controversy over Pathways will be front and center. In May, the Professional Staff Congress (PSC) organized a massive "no confidence" vote across the CUNY system. Some 4,000 full-time faculty—nearly 92 percent of all of CUNY's full-timers—voted against Pathways.

It is important to note here that the union's handling of the vote wasn't without controversy. When it organized its campaign of no confidence against Pathways, the PSC leadership did so by excluding adjunct faculty members, Graduate Teaching Fellows, Higher Education Officers, and other contingent labor in the system from participating in referendum. For many part-time and contingent faculty and staff in the union, this exclusion represented a hurtful undermining of the solidarity that supposedly serves as the glue holding the union together.

A protest letter that circulated in response to the PSC's decision to only allow full-time faculty to participate in the vote voiced "Our outrage at the PSC's marginalization of the majority of CUNY faculty and workers, including those who teach the overwhelming share of the general education courses affected by Pathways," and rejected the PSC's claims that the exclusion of part-timers was based on the fact "that matters of governance regarding Pathways fall, in terms of workload, to full-timers; and, given that the audience for this vote, CUNY administration, disregards the opinion of the majority University workers, the PSC should not feel compelled to include them either in the name of 'smart tactics.'"

Nevertheless, the vote went forward, and the Board's response was predictable, if enraging. Board Chair Benno Schmidt dismissed the "poll" taken by the PSC, referring

PSC President Barbara Bowen to a letter by Goldstein to Robert Kreiser of the American Association of University Professors, dated June 21 of this year, in which the ex-chancellor basically rejects any and all criticisms of Pathways on the grounds that they aren't in support of Pathways, and that anyways, the thing has already been implemented across the CUNY system, so there.

While it's true that the implementation of Pathways has already begun, there is quite a bit more that will play out before this crisis is resolved, a mess that will land squarely at the feet of Chancellor Kelly. Not only did full-time faculty resoundingly reject Pathways—an open rebellion against CUNY brass unprecedented in the university's history—but there are two outstanding lawsuits against the reform that are still pending. While court proceedings are expected to begin later this month, no one thinks for a moment that the Board will allow pesky legal challenges to block its efforts at implementing the Pathways proposals.

Another issue that will serve as a point of contention is the contract. Or, perhaps more accurately, the fact that CUNY faculty are effectively working without one. As PSC President Barbara Bowen reminded constituents in a recent letter to union members, there has been some progress in negotiations with the city despite the mayor's crappy stance towards municipal employees, especially with respect to adjuncts. "The PSC and CUNY have negotiated several important new contract provisions since the contract expired: phased retirement as a pilot program, paid parental leave as a permanent part of the contract, programs for donating and receiving extra sick leave days, additional funding for PSC-CUNY awards, a rational approach to adjunct workload waivers, and a more competitive salary scale for part-time faculty in certain professional schools.

Most importantly for adjuncts, Bowen writes, the PSC "pushed the chancellor's office to secure funding from New York State for adjunct health insurance, an effort that resulted in millions of dollars in dedicated funds." The fact remains, however, that while CUNY administrators are more than happy to throw money at each other and themselves, they've been far more reticent to lavish spending on the backbone that holds CUNY together—the teachers and staff—full-time and part-time—who do a great share of the heavy lifting across the system.


And then there's the matter of David Petraeus—the disgraced former director of the CIA who is being paid \$150,000 to teach a couple days a week this coming year at the Macaulay Honors College. The Petraeus hiring, beyond being offensive to many throughout the CUNY community, has proved a continuous embarrassment to university administrators. There are few signs that it will

let up anytime soon. If early indications give any glimpse into the future, student protests will meet and greet General Petraeus each day he is scheduled to teach in the fall. The first such protest took place just before the *Advocate* went to press for this issue, and "counter-classes" are being organized to follow each meeting during the semester of Petraeus' course, "Are We on the Threshold of the North American Decade?," that promise to give an alternative perspective on the topic.

Needless to say, it's going to be a busy semester, and the *Advocate*, as always, intends to be in the thick of things. Much about the paper will stay the same. In addition to continuing to cover CUNY politics and issues related to public higher education in the United States, the *Advocate's* commitment to showcasing the writing, cultural criticism and political analysis of Graduate Center and other CUNY students remains firm. Even a brief glimpse through this issue should give you a sense of what Grad Center students have to offer—an on-the-ground report from the Occupy Gezi protests in Istanbul, updates on CUNY news that unfolded during the summer, and fabulous long-form reviews of current art exhibitions, theater and dance performances, and recently published books.

In this vein, we are also proud to welcome aboard Karen Gregory to the paper as a monthly columnist in the *Advocate's* pages. Those of you who are already familiar with Karen's work—academic and otherwise—know that the paper will be benefitting tremendously from her sharp insights and wonderful writing. We couldn't be more pleased. We are also happy to be welcoming back J.A Myerson, whose political analysis and reporting added tremendous depth and energy to the *Advocate*, and which contributed to our increased online readership over the year.

Speaking of the website: this is one area where the *Advocate* really fell down last year. It's taken much longer than anyone anticipated to rebuild a new website from the ruins of our previous home which was decimated by denial of service attacks and other assaults. We're still working on reestablishing a robust website in place of our current, temporary site (which, while function, leaves much to be desired). We thank our readers for their patience.

The coming year promises to be as eventful—positively and negatively—as the last. Whatever plays out, the *Advocate* intends to remain fully engaged, serving as an information resource, a forum for discussion, and a tool and platform for student activism. In order to keep building and strengthening the paper, we need and welcome participation from the entire CUNY community in the form of feedback, criticism, suggestions, and hopefully contributions. The door is always open. 

'Academic Freedom,' Benno Style



Former Chancellor Goldstein's Golden Parachute Revealed

This past April, Board of Trustees Chairman Benno Schmidt announced that the Board would “Craft a special package for Matt,” since Schmidt considers Goldstein to have been “underpaid as chancellor.” Over the summer, the details of that “special package” were made public. Goldstein will receive a year sabbatical at his current salary (\$490,000), five months of compensation for unused sick leave, and then take on the newly created rank of Chancellor Emeritus, which comes with a \$300,000 per year salary. Underpaid Chancellor Goldstein, as Chancellor

Emeritus, will have to do without the \$90,000 annual housing stipend that he held as Chancellor. But things are looking up for our dearly departed leader, since he will still be pulling in at least \$500,000 in his continuing position as chairman of the JPMorgan Funds board.

The rest of CUNY's faculty and staff will still be operating under their salaries and hourly pay rates from the 2010 contract. Students, however, will be coming up with 31 percent more for tuition costs over the next five years of Chancellor Emeritus Goldstein's exemplary tenure.

Given how much Goldstein has helped boost the student loan industry with these CUNY tuition increas-

es, perhaps J.P. Morgan Chase should take a cue from Schmidt and also craft a “special package” for our underpaid Chancellor Emeritus.

CUNY Board of Trustees Chairman Redefines English Language

Benno Schmidt published a letter in the *Wall Street Journal* on July 30 that attempted to clarify how he interprets “Academic Freedom.” While the chairman sees “demanding retaliatory funding cuts” as violation of Academic Freedom—violations he neglects to mention have been seen at CUNY campuses in retaliation for faculty votes against

curriculum changes—the main thrust of his letter is that “It's time that college and university trustees, presidents and faculty made a concerted effort to ensure and engender a culture of academic freedom—and responsibility.”

A broadly defined bromide with which any CUNY faculty member, staff, or student would agree. The letter, however, conveniently forgets the existing methods of ensuring responsibility that already exist within an institution of public higher education like CUNY: faculty governance structures and open meetings laws. Perhaps the chairman did not wish to remind readers of the times that his own board has overridden faculty

governance and prematurely shut down public comments CUNY board meetings.

PSC/CUNY Pathways Vote of No Confidence that Excluded Part-Time Faculty

After a year marked by numerous departmental and college faculty governing organization votes to reject the top-down curriculum overhaul by the administration known as Pathways, the Professional Staff Congress/CUNY, the union representing faculty and instructional staff at CUNY, held a vote on Pathways in May. Only full-time faculty members were allowed to vote, which excluded graduate students, adjuncts, and other contingent part-time faculty. Of the full-time faculty who were allowed to have their votes counted, an overwhelming 92 percent voted “No Confidence” in the administration’s Pathways initiative.

Following this referendum result, PSC/CUNY president Barbara Bowen sent an open letter to CUNY Board of Trustees Chairman Benno Schmidt demanding a fair, impartial, and comprehensive review of Pathways. Bowen states that “faculty, staff, students and administrators must be free to speak openly; there can be no repetition of the use of threats and coercion by CUNY administrators that we witnessed last year.” The 2011 Board resolution that instituted Pathways calls for a mandatory review of the system in 2013, so the CUNY Board of Trustees has four months to conduct this review and adhere to its own resolution.

Mayoral Candidates’ Plans for CUNY

By the time you read this issue of *The Advocate*, the 2013 NYC mayoral primaries will have already occurred, and we will either have our general

election candidates or a slate for run-offs. But over the summer, the mayoral candidates were busy courting CUNY votes in various ways.

Democratic primary mayoral candidate Bill de Blasio promised to restore funding to CUNY that the city cut using austerity budget scare tactics. His plan for CUNY includes investing \$150 million in our system by recouping tax funding that was given away in tax breaks to corporations. When questioned on the “No Confidence” vote by the PSC full-time faculty, de Blasio also hinted at the possibility of stepping in to “evaluate the effectiveness of a curriculum that has been rejected so dramatically by faculty.”

Other candidates’ also had plans for CUNY. Christine Quinn announced plans to use CUNY as a job training system for NYC students. Bilingual CUNY students could work for the city as translators in order to have half of their tuition paid. Bill Thompson announced one-year of tuition to all NYC high school graduates with a B average. The funds for this \$35 million idea, Thompson proposes, would come from the sales of new taxi medallions, and therefore would not rely on the CUNY Board of Trustees or Albany to enact the plan. His plan, however, does not mention what would happen to CUNY students’ funding after their first year. John Liu’s plans for CUNY include marijuana. He plans to regulate and tax marijuana in order to cut both violent crime rates and CUNY tuition.

Republican primary candidate, former MTA CEO, former Deputy Mayor to Giuliani, and current CUNY Trustee, Joe Lhota has mostly spoken publicly about elementary and secondary schools, rather than CUNY, by saying he was willing to take on the teachers’ unions and strongly supporting shifting public


funding to charter schools.

The Choice of the New Generation: Pepsi or Pepsi

CUNY signed a ten-year, system-wide exclusive contract with Pepsi. The CUNY Board of Trustees claims it did not make this choice for humanitarian reasons—despite Coke’s horrible environmental record and possible ties to the murder of labor activists in South America. Rather, the Board says the decision came down to money. CUNY received a \$20.75 million offer from Pepsi that Coca Cola did not beat. This new centralized Pepsi contract supersedes agreements made by individual campuses. The money will be shared with campuses based on how much Pepsi product the campuses consume.

New Institute at CUNY

The founding of the Science and Resilience Institute was announced in August. A collaboration between CUNY and the Department of the Interior, the new institute will be initially housed at Brooklyn College before moving to a location in the Rockaways. CUNY will work with many other local and national research organizations and universities—including Columbia, Cornell, and NASA—to study urban ecosystems. The Institute will work to protect urban ecosystems from the dangers of climate change and over-development. While the Institute has been in the works since 2011, recent flooding and the aftermath of hurricanes in our city have given new urgency to this research.

The first event hosted by the Institute will be a symposium at Kingsborough Community College, called “Urban Resilience in an Era of Climate Change: Global Input for Local Solutions,” on October 17 and 18. 

'It's Exactly The Opposite!': Modern Money Theory versus 'Reality'

J.A. MYERSON

"These guys are in the dark.

Owls can see in the dark."

—Stephanie Kelton,

September 25, 2012

Stop Worrying And Love Fiat Money

"Oh man, you have to look them up online," Tim Fong told me on our tour of Oakland's gentrification. "If I lived in New York, I would go to every one of those things." He sounded as though he were talking about some massive First Friday blowout, rather than a lecture series on monetary, fiscal, and economic policy at Columbia Law School. Fong, a Bay Area real estate lawyer and former member of the finance committee at Occupy Oakland (motto: "Timothy Y. Fong, Attorney At Law, Sues Banks") is a convert to Modern Monetary Theory, or MMT, which is the most boring name for a thing people actually get excited about. He told me I needed to get excited about it, too.

What had hooked Fong was MMT's explanation for why the dollar has value, which he encountered on the heterodox economics blog Naked Capitalism. Stephanie Kelton, professor in the economics department at University of Missouri–Kansas City and a leading MMT-er, describes the dollar as "a tax credit." If the only thing the government will accept in tax payments is the U.S. dollar, anyone living or doing business in this country has to try to earn dollars, and dollars are therefore valuable. "When I started reading about MMT, it was like a lightning bolt," Fong said, "Like, 'Oh, that's why.'"

The lecture series he recommended me > is organized by the Modern Money Network, a group of students from various fields who, like Fong, have been struck by the MMT lightning and want to transmit it as widely as possible. Wouldn't you know it: I watched the videos and got totally sucked down a hole.

MMT basically says that our understanding of money needs to catch up to the conditions we've had in place since August 15, 1971, when President Nixon severed the

dollar's final connection to gold, making ours a fiat currency, which we are incapable of exhausting. As a result of this turn of events, the federal government's taxation does not in any way finance its spending. All of our political rhetoric—talk of "spending tax payer money" or the question "How are we going to pay for it?"—still reflects pre-fiat thinking, the MMT-ers say, and this conceptual misorientation is the primary impediment to full employment and equity.

The federal government's relationship to money is the mirror image of mine or yours or that of a city or a corporation or any other entity that uses dollars. For us, the users of dollars, our spending comes either from income or loans. Without first getting or borrowing dollars, we don't have any dollars to spend on stuff. The federal government's relationship to money is exactly the opposite, because it doesn't use the currency like we do. It *issues* the currency. Dollars only come into existence because the federal government spends them into existence. It has to spend them before it can tax or borrow them, since there are no dollars to tax nor none to borrow except for the ones the federal government has already created.

Professor Kelton and other MMT-ers differentiate themselves from deficit hawks ("Austerity Now!") and deficit doves ("Austerity Later!") by describing themselves as "deficit owls." The only reason for Austerity Ever would be to drain the economy of excess spending power, lest there be runaway inflation. With as much capital and labor unemployed as we have, we don't need to worry about inflation, and we never need to worry about the deficit, except that it may get too small, such as now.

The implications of this topsy-turvy approach are extremely seductive to people who, like me, believe in the social provision of goods and services. If, unlike households and firms and states, the federal government is not constrained by revenue in its spending, then it can and will always be able to afford any expenditure that a "public purpose," a useful MMT catchphrase, should require. As long as the expenditure is in US dollars, on whose creation the federal government has a monopoly, we can afford it. The bullet trains and solar panels and comfortable public housing and health care and education and pensions and

all the rest of it. If we can marshal the real resources to meet everyone's needs, we have enough dollars to afford them.

Fiat currency is like magic socialism dust.

• • •

"That's not tax money. . . we simply use the computer to mark up the size of the account."

—Ben Bernanke,

60 Minutes, March 15, 2009

That One Rad Zillionaire Finance Guy

The theory was developed in what L. Randall Wray, Kelton's colleague at UMKC, recalls was "the first internet discussion group I ever heard of," one devoted to Post Keynesian Thought (PKT). Along with Wray, one of MMT's main authors was "this strange profane guy," Bill Mitchell at Australia's University of Newcastle, "who swore like a drunken sailor." Wray and Mitchell found they agreed "on Kalecki, on Marx, on fiscal policy, and especially against the Austrians that were slowly but surely killing PKT." Opposing an advancing hegemonic view is the perfect occupation for leftist economists.

Lamentably, with the occasional exception, leftist economists and their heterodox departments don't typically hold the greatest sway over professors, bloggers, and especially investors and policy-makers. But a banking whiz kid-turned-hedge fund manager with a penchant for sports metaphors—this is harder for the mainstream to ignore. In this respect, the professors are in luck; they have Warren Mosler.

A veteran of the PKT discussion group, Mosler lives in St. Croix, largely for purposes of taxation, and has basically retired from finance (and political campaigning and car manufacturing, neither of which was among his core competencies), to pursue a full-time career as an MMT evangelist. One suspects this entails contributing a Jackson or two to MMT's two main bastions: UMKC's Center for Full Employment and Price Stability (CFEPS: already, in its name, fending off inevitable questions about inflation) and Newcastle's Centre of Full Employment and Equity (rendered and pronounced as "CoffEE").

But over and above his deft public speaking and considerable wealth, Mosler contributes something just as valuable: his credibility on monetary operations. His longtime ground-level proximity to money creation makes it extremely difficult to refute him when he explains that

the government does almost all its spending by merely crediting bank accounts. Congress, via the Treasury Department, instructs the Federal Reserve to increase the size of a balance, by a keystroke. An alteration is made to a spreadsheet, and the government has spent. Taxation happens by the same wizardry. To levy a tax, the government simply debits bank accounts; i.e., it decreases the sizes of balances. It doesn't collect a mound of dollars and store them in a vault, to be spent later. It sucks them right out of existence. The balance drops, and the money is gone.

So says Warren Mosler. To hear him tell it, even the most important figures in economics can't convincingly deny it. His illuminating, free e-book, "Seven Deadly Innocent Frauds of Economic Policy" could justly be subtitled "arguments I have won with famous geniuses."

Like this one with Lawrence Summers:

I opened with a question: "Larry, what's wrong with the budget deficit?" He replied: "It takes away savings that could be used for investment." I then objected: "No it doesn't, all Treasury securities do is offset operating factors at the Fed. It has nothing to do with savings and investment." To which he retorted: "Well, I really don't understand reserve accounting, so I can't discuss it at that level."

I, for one, can't summon enough regard for "Larry" to doubt the story. Team Warren.

• • •

"And here's the truth—there are no gimmicks that create jobs. There are no simple tricks to grow the economy."

—Barack Obama,

Amazon Chattanooga Fulfillment Center, July 30, 2013

The Political Project

MMT proper consists of positive statements on how money behaves and why. But for most MMT proponents, the conceptual reorientation corresponds to similar normative proclivities. Specifically, the Holy Grail is full employment.

The way the owls propose to achieve this is by hiring the unemployed. The government should guarantee a job for everyone who wants it, doing one of the useful things that people want done. Mitchell, the foul-mouthed Australian professor, is credited with articulating a job guarantee as a buffer stock: just as you might keep a store of a commodity to insulate its price from fluctuations in supply and demand, the government should keep its workforce ready



SAID IS DEAD. LONG LIVE SAID!

FRIDAY SEP 27 // 7 PM—9 PM

SPITZER SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE,

CITY COLLEGE OF NEW YORK, CUNY

141 CONVENT AVENUE (@ 135th ST)

Ten years after Edward Said's passing, the financial and ideological crisis in higher education has caused the academy to increasingly retreat into itself. Ten years after Edward Said, it is difficult to find an academic who moves so seamlessly between world, text, and critique; who resists trenchant disciplinary specialization while insisting on the social responsibilities of scholars in an unequal world; who is as passionate a reader of the Western canon as a critic of its historic entanglements; who insists on reminding us, again and again, that knowledge and power cannot be thought apart. Said is dead, his loss is acute, and his absence tangible. Yet we are also surrounded by a range of creative and forceful engagements with the world: the struggle for open access scholarship, online communities fighting for privacy and advocating for basic rights, innovative art that grapples with a world of war and terror. This panel brings together individuals working in a range of contemporary activist-intellectual forms—art, music, poetry, journalism, social media, and academic scholarship—to consider their own practice in relation to the legacy of Edward Said. It looks anew at our worldliness and sees, alive as ever, the thought and will of many who carry on the work of Edward Said in music, in words, and in actions.

Featuring:

Martín Espada (poetry)

Chee Malabar (music)

Kade Ellis (law/social media)

Anjali Kamat (journalism)

Daisy Rockwell (art)

Robyn Spencer (academia)

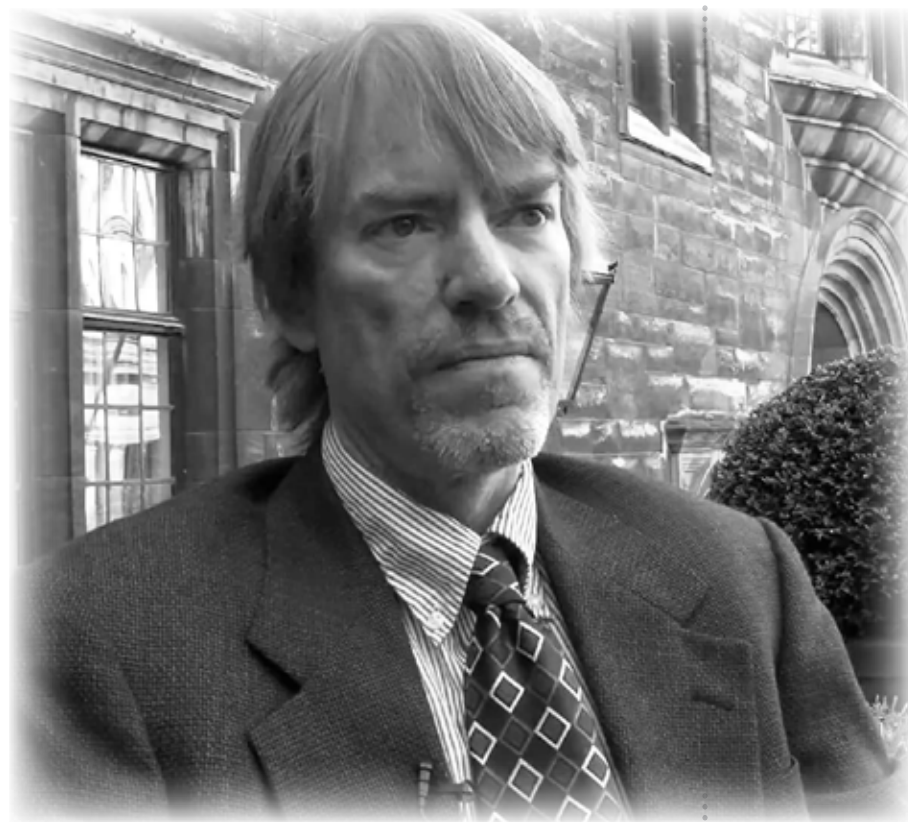
Moderated by: Manan Ahmed

Co-sponsored by the Institute for Comparative Literature and Society (Columbia), the York College African-American Resource Center (CUNY), The New Inquiry, and the Asian American Writers' Workshop. With generous support from the Center for International History (Columbia), Center for Palestine Studies (Columbia), Department of Anthropology (Columbia), and Committee on Globalization and Social Change (CUNY).

For more information please visit <http://blogs.cuit.columbia.edu/saidevent/>

to re-enter the private labor market, when the cycle comes around again. This is where the “price stability” piece comes in, and what the owls offer as a bulwark against inflation.

As someone who wishes everyone could work a lot less, not a lot more, and as someone who permanently prefers public sector employment to private, some of this vision makes me uncomfortable, not least its reproduction of neoliberalism’s treatment of human labor as a commodity. The idea of keeping the national worker-asset base liquid—or whatever—does too much to accommodate the private sector’s wildly destructive apprehension about hiring the unemployed.



More enticing is Bard College professor Pavlina Tcherneva’s articulation of “the job guarantee through social entrepreneurship,” a model wherein the employer isn’t the government, but the nonprofit sector.

It is centered on community-based and community-proposed programs that can be implemented at all phases of the business cycle and that can address different levels of unemployment and community need. This is a bottom-up approach in the trust sense of the phrase—powered by communities, localities, and individuals themselves.

If you can identify a community’s need and propose a credible way of addressing it, you can obtain funding.

Fong thinks the idea shakes the foundations of capitalism. “If you set a job guarantee wage significantly above

today’s minimum wage,” he says, “that would severely disrupt the low-wage service economy that exists now.” When competing with a living-wage-paying public employment option, McDonald’s and Wal-Mart would have to change their entire business models in order not to lose employees, says Fong. “Who would subject themselves to that treatment?”

For Wray, the job guarantee as the central economic strategy is simply the original purpose of the monetary system: “to mobilize resources for the public purpose.” Why would a democratic government spend money into existence and make it valuable by demanding some of it back in taxation, if not so that the money could support the general enterprise?

It sounds good to me. After all, someone’s got to install the smart energy grid and bullet train infrastructure and fiber-optic telecommunications network and. . .

• • •

“The process by which banks create money is so simple that the mind is repelled.”
—John Kenneth Galbraith

The Problem

Mass theoretical reorientations are not cheap and easy. The owls face a huge foe: the repulsion of the mind. The full MMT program is digestible for the type of people who are excited to hear from friends which economics lectures

they should spend hours watching on YouTube. But for people with lives, “Your tax money is irrelevant to financing the government’s spending” is a bitter pill to swallow. This claim, which as far as I can tell is irrefutable, just sounds like it is not in keeping with reality. It challenges not just a statistic, but an entire conceptual framework that has been consistently cultivated by politicians for longer than most people have been alive.

On the Right, the myth of a revenue-constrained federal budget is an indispensable rhetorical device in the ongoing effort to cut social services and privatize governmental functions. This is apparently out of an ideological obligation to legislate as though there were still a gold standard because they wish there were still a gold standard, like a

pedestrian pretending to be swimming out of a desire to swim.

But the Right has not been alone in reinforcing the idea. Franklin Delano Roosevelt himself acknowledged that the reason to devote payroll taxes to a social security trust fund was political, not economic. “With those taxes in there, no damn politician can ever scrap my social security program,” he said. “Those taxes aren’t a matter of economics, they’re straight politics.” In the modern era, the government doesn’t need your FICA taxes in order to credit the accounts of social security recipients. Even if the social security trust fund’s balance were negative, every recipient’s bank would accept a check from the federal government. As long as there are adequate real goods and services for retirees to subsist on, the federal government will be able to afford to purchase them, and there will be no pension crisis.

Roosevelt’s political maneuver has been judo-ed over the past few decades by the Austrian free marketeers, who have elevated above all other social goals the mobilization of resources to the private sector.

Now, lo and behold, the distended, cocaine-addled Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate sector is greedily licking its chops and giddily stroking its flanks at the prospect of eating up the retirement money we’ve socially been “saving up.” If we’re lucky, progressives will try all manner of rear-guard actions to insure that the savings stay in the public sector. But the owls hoot: we don’t have to “save” dollars at all. We will always be able to afford the amenities that constitute a dignified retirement.

In fact, we should “suspend FICA taxes.” As Mosler points out,

All agree that FICA is a highly regressive punishing tax on people working for a living, ideologically unacceptable to the “left”, and, of course, the “right” is against any tax.

I’d locate the greatest hope for widespread political conversion in this point. What better way to “simplify the tax code” than to stop unnecessarily withholding a significant cut of everyone’s wages?

Internal coherence and easily articulable benefits for working people furnish MMT’s political program with a lot stronger gut-punch than the doves’ incoherent position: we need to deficit spend now, but not too much, be-


cause we still have to keep the deficit in check, if not now then definitely later. We have to be for deficits before we’re against them—the political appeal of this is self-evidently dead on arrival.

Fong finds hope in what he observes as a “great hunger for an alternative.” Five years into the post-Lehman economy—with none of the debts canceled, none of the wealth restored, none of the quality-wage job creation resurgent, and none of the political will to reverse any of it—it isn’t hard to see why. “I think what MMT offers people is a reason why it doesn’t have to be this way,” Fong says.

Thanks in part to the energetic diligence of the internet’s large and expanding community of owls and owlets, more public economists are coming to wrestle with, and appropriate concepts from, MMT. Even Paul Krugman, who has consistently been dismissive for years, admitted recently that the owls might be right, but we won’t know “until we get out of the slump, because standard IS-LM and MMT are indistinguishable when you’re in a liquidity trap.”

Intriguingly, Americans displayed an eagerness to use



fiat currency as a devious workaround to the ludicrous debt ceiling debates: the trillion dollar coin, first articulated in by a commenter on Mosler’s blog, was actually a thing people were discussing on the subway! I found the trillion dollar coin moment a really exciting episode in American politics. If you did too, I’ve got a lecture series to tell you about. 

Obama and Putin: Time for Diplomacy

AMY GOODMAN

“Never has the use of violence brought peace in its wake. War begets war, violence begets violence.” So said Pope Francis, addressing the crowd on Sunday in the Vatican City’s St. Peter’s Square. He was speaking about the crisis in Syria, as President Barack Obama ramped up a planned military strike there. “I exhort the international community to make every effort to promote clear proposals for peace in that country without further delay, a peace based on dialogue and negotiation, for the good of the entire Syrian people,” the pope said.

The distance from St. Peter’s Square to St. Petersburg, Russia, parallels the gulf between the pope’s hopes and the president’s plans. Obama, attending the G-20 meeting in St. Petersburg, will lobby world leaders to support a military strike against Syria so that the U.S. is not acting alone. What a squandered opportunity for doubling down on diplomacy, with this global summit set in Russia, the Syrian regime’s main sponsor.

Diplomacy prospects were diminished from the outset, when Obama canceled a planned bilateral meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin that was to take place immediately after the G-20.

Obama was enraged by Russia’s decision to grant temporary political asylum to National Security Agency whistleblower Edward Snowden. This G-20 meeting is the first major gathering of world leaders following Snowden’s revelations of massive spying by the United States. Many G-20 members have been targeted by the NSA’s myriad spy programs.

With the decision by the British Parliament against supporting the military strike (the first time the House of Commons voted against a prime minister’s request for military authorization in more than 150 years), Obama will be isolated in his quest. You could say he is up against a wall of “BRICS,” as the planned strike is opposed by the five member nations of the BRICS coalition: Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa.

On the home front, President Obama surprised many when he said he would seek congressional approval to strike Syria, though he said he is not bound by its decision. Obama’s front man for the effort is Secretary of State John Kerry. Before both the Senate and House Foreign Relations committees, Kerry made the case for a “limited” military authorization. One consistent concern voiced by

congressional members of both parties is the possibility that U.S. troops would be drawn into the civil war.

But Kerry undermined his own assurances that there would be no U.S. “boots on the ground” when he reflected, “In the event Syria imploded ... and it was clearly in the interests of our allies and all of us—the British, the French and others—to prevent those weapons of mass destruction falling into the hands of the worst elements, I don’t want to take off the table an option that might or might not be available to a president of the United States to secure our country.”

But what could happen with a “limited” attack? Earlier this summer in Aspen, Colo., David Shedd, deputy director of the Defense Intelligence Agency (the Pentagon’s CIA), made a rare public appearance. Shedd predicts “ongoing civil war for years to come” in Syria. He thinks the conflict could spill over into Iraq and Jordan, and was “most concerned about Lebanon falling.”

There are now 2 million Syrian refugees living just beyond its borders, in Turkey, Iraq, Jordan and Lebanon, putting enormous pressure on these countries. More than 4 million Syrians are internally displaced. Many more are fleeing Syria in anticipation of a U.S. attack. After touring the crowded camps this week, Raymond Offenheiser, president of Oxfam America, said on the “Democracy Now!” news hour that he is opposed to a U.S. attack: “Our concern is that a military strike ... offers the potential of widening the conflict, turning it into a wider regional conflict, inflicting the potential for more civilian casualties.”

Why would the U.S. risk killing innocent Syrian civilians to punish the Syrian regime for killing Syrian civilians?

What if a military strike was not an option? Obama could spend his time in Russia lobbying the G-20 world leaders to pressure Putin to use his influence to convince Syria to negotiate. Iran, another Syria ally but not a member of the G-20, has a new president, Hassan Rouhani. There are openings. All parties agree that, ultimately, the solution to the Syrian crisis will be political, not military. Why not start now? **A**

Denis Moynihan contributed research to this column. Amy Goodman is the host of “Democracy Now!,” a daily international TV/radio news hour airing on more than 1,000 stations in North America. She is the coauthor of “The Silenced Majority,” a *New York Times* best-seller.

RIVBEA REVISITED
NEW DIRECTIONS IN MODERN MUSIC

LOFT JAZZ

RETURNS TO NYC

THE CHARLES TOLLIVER ^{RESIDENCY}

EVERY WEDNESDAY NIGHT

OCTOBER 2 - DECEMBER 11



SETS AT 8 AND 10PM

the cell *A Twenty First Century Salon™*

338 WEST 23RD STREET. NEW YORK CITY.

\$25 AT THE DOOR | 646.861.2253

TICKETS \$20 AT BROWNPAPERTICKETS.COM

rank and file

What's at Stake in Graduate Organizing?



KAREN GREGORY

If you happen to visit the most recent updates to the CUNY Graduate Center's website, you'll be greeted by the rather kind words from the President, Chase Robinson: "A graduate school of arts and sciences, a center for applied and theoretical research, and a platform for performance, conversation, and public debate, the Graduate Center is a community of students and scholars committed to the idea that learning is a public good." For new students arriving, as well as those of us "roaches" who have perhaps

overstayed our welcome (Flaherty, "Closing Down the Roach Motel," *Chronicle of Higher Education*), the words are a lovely sentiment. We are a community of students and scholars committed to learning as a public good. In a time when "the public good" seems in short supply and even shorter social support, being welcomed into such a community might even feel life-affirming. If we listen to President Robinson, we have found a place, maybe even an intellectual home, which will nurture and support our development as students, scholars, theorists, research-

ers, activists, and writers. And, ideally, this home won't force us to choose between the roles, as we imagine that such multifaceted development is more or less essential if we are going to carry on the noble mission the Graduate Center has outlined.

What the president has omitted in his albeit brief but nonetheless branding remarks is any mention of the role that many of us will play during our time at the Graduate Center—the role of educator. Or, we might say the role of teacher and worker. For some, this role comes with the slightly problematic distinction of “teaching fellow,” which makes it sound like you have been selected for your unique abilities and may be engaged in a professionalizing fellowship. Others come to this role through adjuncting, picking up courses here and there, both during and after your studies (sometimes serially at one or two campuses for several years. Teaching fellows may also find themselves adjuncting if and when their contract allows.) For students who rely solely on adjunct work to make ends meet during graduate school, it is not uncommon for them to teach four courses a semester, each semester, in addition to summer work. While there may exist a certain fantasy world in which the word “teaching” conjures images of the community of practice alluded to by President Robinson, in reality teaching as either a fellow or an adjunct is to step into the heart of the modern University's rather pernicious labor conditions. While adjunctification is by no means a recent development, it has now become the case that the majority of teaching in “the university” is done by us—graduate students and part-time faculty who are being cast off the ever-elusive tenure track. As Rebecca Burns reports, “tenure-track faculty positions today constitute just 24 percent of the academic workforce.” Sarah Kendzior has labeled these conditions “indentured servitude,” and Marc Bousquet (2008) has famously referred to graduate students as a form of systemically harvested “shit.” Bousquet writes, “they know they are not merely treated like waste but, in fact, are the actual shit of the system—being churned inexorably toward the outside: not merely ‘disposable’ labor, but labor that must be disposed of for the system to work.” If you haven't read Marc Bousquet's book *How the University Works*, I encourage you to do so. Excerpts from the book can be downloaded for free on his website.

Indeed, these labor conditions are irrevocably tangled in what has regularly come to be referred to as the “crisis in higher education”—a crisis that reaches across the national terrain of education, assembling an array of “disruptive”

Simply calling for students to “get aware” and “get involved” is really not enough. We also need to embrace a basic sense of solidarity while we are here.

forces aimed at recasting the university as a corporation to be run according to a rather boggling “discourse of excellence.” As Aaron Bady has written on his blog, and what many of us discover we move through graduate school, is that to “qualify for a job as a university professor basically requires you to spend your twenties working ninety hour weeks for poverty wages, often without health insurance, provision for maternity leave, or all sorts of things that make it possible to live in life.” Teaching, in this regard, is

miles away from “a community of students and scholars committed to the idea that learning is a public good.”

And perhaps this is why the role is overlooked in the branding soundbites culled on the CUNY Graduate Center's website. Who wants to call attention to the mess? Or call attention to what some have called “zombies” in the academy? The undead probably don't make for the kind of brandable affect University leaders are paid top-dollar to

inspire. Yet, given what I think is at stake in the recognition of graduate students as teachers and, by extension, workers—perhaps a slightly different understanding of a “public” and a “good”—I think it's worth tracing out a more honest description of our institution, particularly for incoming students, many of whom will be conducting their graduate studies in a newly “restructured” five-year program, which as Gluck, Tomas, and Spurgas (“You Wanna Restructure What?”, *CUNY Advocate*) report will grant some incoming students “\$25,000 per year for five years along with a one course per semester teaching load during years two, three, and four.” Restructured or not, you will find yourself teaching, often without the designation of worker. While it may be tempting to see these five-year programs as an attempt on the part of the administration to curb both the time and debt demands graduate school can make, in reality these students will be no more protected from the broken job market that adjunctification and casualization has produced when they graduate in reduced time. While it now seems quite popular to tell people that going to graduate school is a loser's game (I'll let you search out those stories and sites), I'd like to suggest that if you have found yourself here, restructured or not, there are a couple general principles that might help you find your way through what is, undoubtedly, a rather difficult time to be a graduate student.

The first is a very simple, basic principle: you work. Not only do you work as a student, a researcher, and a scholar,

but whenever you step into a classroom you are working. Please don't fall for the trap of believing that graduate school is a passion project to be completed only by those most committed to their general immiseration. As Bousquet writes in his essay "We Work":

Despite the injustice and impracticality of the arrangement, large number of young people present themselves to the meat grinder of doctoral study. Most fall away, but a sufficient number persist, of the persisting few, only the tiniest fraction take advantage of tenure to refuse steadily mounting demands. These are questions that corporate managers had been examining for decades with a keen sense of envy. How to emulate the academic workplace and get people to work at a height of intellectual and emotional intensity for fifty or sixty hours a week for bartenders' wage or less? Is there any way we can get our employees to swoon over their desks, murmuring 'I love what I do' in response to response to greater workloads and smaller paychecks? How can we get our workers to be like faculty and deny that they work at all?

Identifying your time, attention, scholarship, and teaching with valuable labor, rather than a gift to be perpetually offered in hopes of a future reward of stable work, is essential to realizing that you are not delaying your work experience. Rather, if you are here, you are part of CUNY and you are entitled to certain workplace protections, a grievance process, and benefits through the Professional Staff Congress, which is the exclusive collective bargaining unit for instructional staff. I will leave a more detailed analysis of the relationship between the CUNY/PSC and graduate students to a future *Advocate* column because that relationship should be outlined, clarified, and considered. Understanding both the pros and cons of this relationship for students could be a basis of a public forum in the coming months. Still, the presence of the PSC does mark the CUNY experience as somewhat unique. Numerous organizing campaigns are being waged across the country by graduate students and adjunct faculty in hopes of being recognized as workers and having the right to unionize and collectively bargain. This is not to say that the presence of the union solves the issues we're facing nor adequately represents part-time faculty or those designated as "students" rather than "employees." Rather, it is just to suggest that incoming students acquaint themselves with the PSC and the rights and benefits they ensure:

<http://www.psc-cuny.org/>.

In addition, students should be aware of the CUNY

Please don't fall for the trap of believing that graduate school is a passion project to be completed only by those most committed to their general immiseration.



Adjunct Project, which seeks "to organize its resources for graduate students around two areas: 1) labor issues and concerns, and 2) teaching resources and pedagogy." The Adjunct Project holds monthly meetings, coordinates students across campuses, and regularly hosts labor-related events. As bargaining for a new PSC-CUNY contract takes place, the Adjunct Project aims to be an effective liaison between students and the union, providing both information to students, as well as considering new models for organizing.

Still, understanding that both time and energy become limited commodities in graduate school, simply calling for students to "get aware" and "get involved" is really not enough. We also need to embrace a basic sense of solidarity while we are here. While I intend to write more about the challenges of graduate student organizing and the labor market as this *Advocate* column unfolds, I would like to conclude by emphasizing that what is most at stake in embracing the designation of worker—both personally and collectively—is the power of solidarity or the power of standing together to fight for both immediate improvements, as well as to really consider what our role is in the future of academics. As I write this column, I plan to speak with faculty, particularly junior faculty, across campuses who have been involved in organizing campaigns in order to understand how this experience has shaped not only their perceptions of academic work, but relations of solidarity across and beyond the university. I am hoping to find that solidarity is a better form of care than careerism.

If you are a new student to CUNY and are reading this, I am going to assume that you came not just for the five-year package or the degree, but also for the vibrant community of students, scholars, teachers—and workers. Welcome. **A**



WARSCAPES

A magazine of literature, art and politics

WARSCAPES, a magazine of literature, art and politics—Warscapes is an independent online magazine that provides a lens into current conflicts across the world. Warscapes publishes fiction, poetry, reportage, interviews, book, film and performance reviews, art and retrospectives of war literature from the past fifty years. The magazine is a tool for understanding complex political crises in various regions and serves as an alternative to compromised representations of those issues.

www.warscapes.com

Twitter @warscapes

Notes on My Summer of Uprising

UĞUR GÜNEY

Last May when the protests began, the planned gentrification process called “Taksim Pedestrianization Project” was just another familiar act of corruption in Turkey’s rapidly changing political landscape. Gezi Park—the main site of the action and about the size of New York’s Bryant Park—was defended by hundreds of encamped people who came out to save trees that were scheduled to be torn down. Their tactic was playing the children’s game kitty-in-the-corner with construction vehicles.

Police attacked the protesters’ camp on May 30 at 5:00 a.m. and burned down their tents. The excessive force was not designed to evacuate the park. It was meant to hurt, punish, and teach the protesters a lesson. I still remember watching video of my friends climbing up one of the park’s walls (because all entrances were being gassed) to escape, and seeing the wall collapsing on them. I was pissed off and selfishly scared for the safety of my friends.

The following day, more people gathered.

If the country’s Prime Minister had intervened at this point with soothing words for the angry crowds, there likely would not have been any uprising. But the government refused to admit even the smallest defeat. The PM continued publicly disdaining any dissent, after which the point of no return was quickly passed. The government managed to turn a protest to save a public space into a full-fledged uprising to protect elementary rights and dignity.

May 31 and June 1 were wonderful days that I regret having missed. Demonstrations spread throughout the country. According to my friends’ stories, the whole neighborhood around Taksim Square, an area as big as Central Park, was packed with demonstrators.

In response, police did not hesitate to use violence. Security forces liberally used tear gas and rubber-bullet riot guns, which they aimed directly at people’s faces. Unlike previous generations who saw the ugliest face of the state, we younger Turks had not yet received our own educations in state violence. But we learned. Together we passed

through a threshold of fear, and tear gas, batons, water cannons, plastic bullets were suddenly not intimidating. Waves of humor and solidarity blossomed on all fronts. Some shouted “Stop it! I’m Going to Call the Police” while being assaulted by rubber bullets, laughing in the face of danger because they knew that if they were wounded, another protester would carry them to receive medical support. Thankfully, the number of people who lost their lives was not higher than six, though the police did what they could to hurt us.

My other Turkish friends in United States and I were fixed to our computers, reading and watching everything and re-tweeting relevant updates from and about the protests. With disrupted sleep cycles and sagging productivity, we scoured Twitter timelines all day long.

The flow of information quickly intensified. Visual evidence of police violence, locations of medics, information about businesses who supported the protesters and those who supported the government, blood type announcements, infograms on what to do against tear gas and water cannons, what to do when arrested, where the riot vehicles were spotted, wifi passwords of nearby cafes. . . it was incredible.

But witnessing thousands crossing between continents by foot on the Bosphorus Bridge at dawn (because public transport had been halted due to linger tear gas) was the moment I first shed tears and realized I had to go, that I had to be there. If my friends were getting beaten and gassed, I, too, had to go and receive my share. But there was one problem: my expired passport.

While I waited for my new passport to be processed, the protests gained momentum demonstrators regained the Park and the so-called “Gezi Commune” that was going to last for two weeks started.

Here in New York City, as well, people took to the streets and returned to Zuccoti Park (thanks to support from Occupy Wall Street), protested at the Turkish Consulate, and rallied in Union Square. In those demonstrations, similarly-minded Turkish people, who otherwise normally wouldn’t have met, connected.





Until I finally made it to Turkey on June 10, I served as a social media hub and anxiously participated in demonstrations. I was also envious of those in Turkey—a natural reaction, I think, when a resistance is forming in your home country and you are stuck abroad. Nevertheless, there was work to do. My girlfriend and I wrote a letter to be sent to student organizations and school officials at different universities across the United States to ask their help in increasing public awareness. Here at the Graduate Center, the DSC was incredibly supportive.

Meanwhile in Turkey, the protests became embedded in the everyday routine. People went to the protests after work or school, clashed until morning, and then went back to work or took their exams covered in bruises.

There was virtually no media coverage in Turkey. We watched the events from CNN International (seeing CNN

on your side is kind of awkward, I should say), the Russian station RT, and a Norwegian TV channel. A small group of fed-up media outlets began airing penguin documentaries to stoke the public's anger at such a critical moment. It worked well: thousands were suddenly gathering around media centers demanding an end to the censorship.

The day I finally left for İstanbul, a friend I recently met at a NYC protest asked me if I had enough space in my luggage to carry cameras to Gezi Park. Then, several hours before my flight a Global Revolution member gave me four smart phones to bring to Revolt İstanbul. It was hard not to cry when having a total stranger call you their brother, while helping your cause.

After deplaning in Istanbul, I immediately went to Taksim. It was dream-like. Taksim Square, with the huge black smoke rising from a burning vehicle, pits and



mounds everywhere due to construction, looked post-apocalyptic. A destroyed van that belonged to a TV channel was still smoldering. The facade of the cultural center was covered with hanging flags of various political groups. It was a temporary autonomous zone. No police, no violence, no money, no looting, no harassment. It was the most secure place in Istanbul. All the services in the park, including shelter, food, and health care were free.

I gave the phones to an international activist who helps local counterparts build wifi networks and broadcast live stream systems. For the first time, I began to understand that the resistance, while perhaps not as strong as the methods of

international oppression, has gone global as well.

The number and scale of the barricades in the Taksim area indicated the intensity of the first days' clashes. The captured police bus that turned into a "museum of resistance" at the park was my favorite item. Just imagine that all the streets leading to Times Square are closed with barricades and NYPD is nowhere in sight.

When I posted a photo of myself on a captured construction vehicle as my Facebook profile picture, my family worried that this would later be used as evidence against me. But mothers whose initial reactions were protective began preparing anti-tear gas solutions at home and would deliver them to the park.

Soon, the first public forums were initiated to answer the question what to do next. Everyone was speculating on how things would converge and play out. We felt the

revolution in the unpredictability of the future and in the diversity of the groups that came together. Before Gezi, many assumed that fans of rival soccer teams, anti-capitalist Muslims, LGBT groups, feminists, Kurds, minorities, secularists, Kemalists, unions, Turkish nationalists, anarchists, and socialists would be unlikely to partner in anything, much less form a social movement. But there we were, all of us singing together to Klavierkunst's piano concert in the middle of Taksim Square.

I didn't buy a real gas mask with a filter because I was not going to stay for a long time. And besides, those masks are expensive. One piece of graffiti I saw summed things up: "Rich protesters have better masks. We envy them." Having just a dust mask and goggles didn't help much when the police initiated a simultaneous tear gas attack all over the Taksim Square to disburse a peaceful crowd (which included babies and people in wheelchairs). Their excuse to gas and disperse us was that we were blocking traffic. But they didn't stop there; they gassed bars and restaurants far away from the square. The effect was to kill neighborhood nightlife.

Being gassed is simply awful. For half a minute after being exposed to the chemicals you feel paralyzed with fear of death. In Taksim, though, there was help. Fear gave way as the voices of experienced activists rang out with directions. Suddenly, your senses return. Despite these hideous attacks, the crowds of protesters remained peaceful under such provocation.

The night Gezi Park was evacuated, I was at a friend's wedding. Everyone was checking their cellphones for Twitter updates instead of dancing. The next morning, I went straight to Taksim Square to meet friends. I had some experience with participating in demonstrations from my days as a college anarchist. But when I reached the park, I realized that my friends, who previously had no political affiliation or experience, had far surpassed what I thought I knew about organizing.

The protesters mostly organized in cells of close friends. My cell comprised my high school friends—including a pilot from Turkish Airlines, a theoretical physicist, an industrial designer, a painter, a printing press manager. It wasn't long before the police began generously sharing their tear gas with us. As a white cloud enveloped the group, an army of photographers with long telescopic lenses took our photos as veteran activists shouted "calm down" to their brothers and sisters in the park in to prevent panic.

Police were everywhere as lines of ordinary citizens walked shoulder-to-shoulder with pavement stones in their hands, marching to reinforce the barricades. After we had collected enough stones to build a small castle, my





cell left the scene as police began tearing the barricades down and arresting hundreds of protesters who weren't able to flee and find shelter.


Getting home was scary. I had been warned about the vigilantes in the neighborhoods, roving bands of angry young men with sticks and machetes conscripted by police to intimidate and control protesters and their supporters. My friends and I encountered one such group who were singing Ottoman Empire army anthems and shouting "We are the PM's soldiers!" as they made their way through the streets. In total panic, we got the hell out of there and made our way home through a maze of side streets and alleyways. Police behavior is generally predictable. However, you never know what an independent band of fascists will do. Fortunately, it began to rain, and many people on the streets, including these thugs, went home.

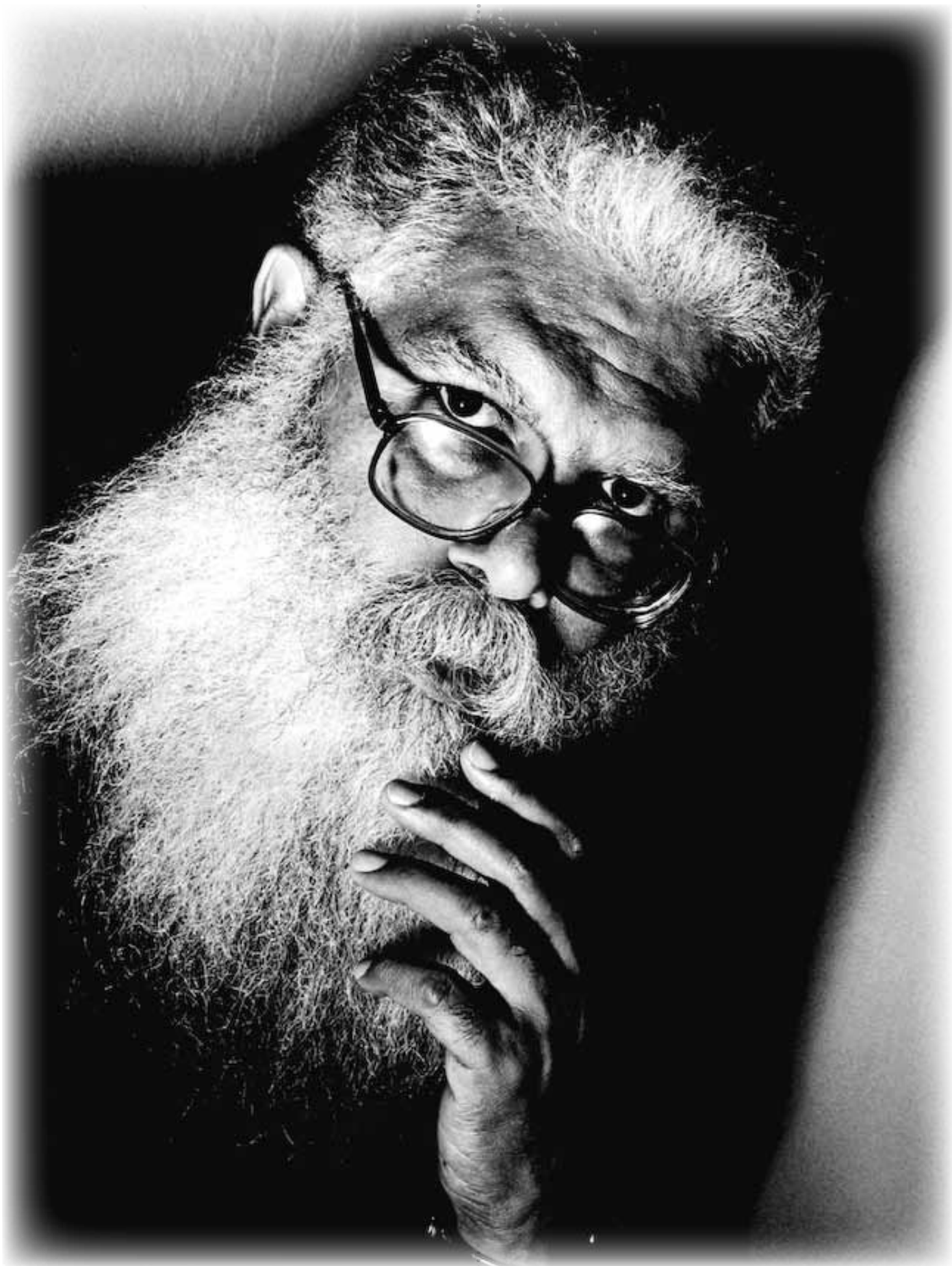
The scale of the events became so big that it was rendered almost incomprehensible. Socialists were suddenly saying they were unprepared for this kind of revolt. Leftist parties didn't play their usual pioneering role, and their attempts at distributing their magazines as well as their calls for everyone to chant under a single flag quickly proved incompatible with the majority of protesters.

And yet there were truly positive features of the chaos. The country experienced the largest LGBT Pride walk in its history during this period. And when the army killed a Kurdish citizen protesting the construction of an outpost in an eastern town, it was the first time that western crowds of citizens publicly declared their support for the Kurdish people. As one person in Taksim put it, "For this time we heard the news about the civil war from the same media that didn't show anything about our resistance."

When I returned to New York City, I experienced a paralysis that sometimes lasted for days. I was angry at the bad news that continued to be reported from Taksim. I was angry at the peacefulness of my neighborhood in Astoria in comparison to the tumult characterizing life back home. And I continued to wonder how so many in Turkey could welcome what was clearly blatant, disproportionate, state-sponsored violence against the people.

The meaning of the Turkish word for "coup," which traditionally was solely used for military coups d'état, was changed in Turkish dictionaries a few years ago to include democratic protests against the government. This redefinition of the word could be seen in the intimidation tactics the government used to scare ordinary citizens. Conservative and religious populations, for example, were terrorized with the threat that the protesters were looking to overthrow the government and that without its protection, citizens would lose their rights. So, perhaps it's fear that allows complacency in the face of state-sponsored abuses. Since coming back to New York, I have been continually looking for new ways to remain active in the struggle, and have begun participating in the Gezi Platform NYC weekly meetings at New School, where different initiatives propose projects and volunteers work on them together. This is the spirit of Gezi, even in New York.

Shortly after I returned to New York, I told my advisor that my time in Istanbul this summer was a "once in a lifetime experience." His response was inspirational: "Who knows?" 



The Strange Career of Samuel Delany

- ▶ *Through the Valley of the Nest of Spiders*. Magnus Books, 2012.
- ▶ *Phallos*. Wesleyan University Press, 2013.
- ▶ *Bread and Wine: An Erotic Tale of New York*. Fantagraphics Books, 2013.

LAVELLE PORTER

Samuel Delany is wrong. Wrong. Wrong. Wrong. His latest novel *Through the Valley of the Nest of Spiders* is absolutely the wrong kind of book for the current moment, an 804-page cinder block of a novel in a digital age where everything in literary culture militates toward shorter forms: one-hundred-page ebooks, or short Scribd documents, or Tweets. And the subject matter of *Through the Valley of the Nest of Spiders* is all kinds of wrong for this political moment in the gay rights movement. The assimilationist liberals at GLAAD and HRC have struggled mightily to disentangle the gay rights movement from the seedier side of gay life, and have done their level best to reassure straight people that gays and lesbians are just normal folks who really do want to settle down with one partner, get married, have children, fight in the military, and go to church.

But along comes *Through the Valley of the Nest of Spiders*, precisely the kind of gay novel that mainstream gays would prefer the vicious homophobes at the American Family Association never found out about. It's a relentlessly nasty book filled with detailed descriptions of some pretty raunchy sex acts involving the consumption of bodily fluids and waste, characters who get off on calling each other racial slurs, and scenes of incest, bestiality, underage sex, promiscuity, polyamory, and more. Television and the Internet are feeding us images of fashionable photogenic young urban homos coming out every other day. Gay couples are happily marrying all over our screens, beautiful A-list queers like Rachel Maddow and Anderson Cooper and Don Lemon now sit "out and proud" at their desks on mainstream news networks, gay couples are adopting children, gay athletes are coming out in sports, and gay soldiers are coming out in the military. But these three Delany books are chock full of all the wrong kind of queers: poor, uneducated, disabled, old, fat, ugly, and promiscuous.

To be sure, Delany has been a staunch advocate of gay rights (as well as an anti-racist, pro-feminist writer). His early science fiction contained subtle expressions of ho-

mosexual desire, most notably in the short story "Aye, and Gomorrah" which won the 1967 Nebula Award for short story science fiction. He wrote one of the first pieces of fiction to address the HIV/AIDS epidemic with "The Tale of Plagues and Carnivals" in *Flight from Nevèrjón* (1985), and he's written extensively about the evolution of gay politics from the vantage point of someone who has lived as openly gay on both sides of the 1969 Stonewall Riots. If there is one thing that defines Delany's writing on sexuality it is that he is thoroughly unwilling to acquiesce to "good gay" conventions. He goes on writing pornographic novels (and cheerfully owns the label of pornography) and talks openly about how he has had sex with over 50,000 people (see the 2007 documentary film *The Polymath*, directed by Fred Barney Taylor), and writes in detail about the medical details of his own sex life, such as in the eye-opening article "The Gamble" published in the 2005 issue of *Corpus*, a journal from APLA (AIDS Project Los Angeles). And altogether, Delany has put together one of the most impressive careers in American literary history. He has published over forty books across a range of genres, including science fiction, fantasy, literary fiction (what he calls "mundane" fiction), literary criticism, and graphic novels. Despite never having finished college himself (after graduating from The Bronx High School of Science in 1959 he attended City College of New York for less than a year), he has taught as a professor at University at Buffalo, the University of Massachusetts-Amherst, and currently at Temple University.

• • •

Several other very capable critics have already written eloquently about *Through the Valley of the Nest of Spiders*, including Jo Walton at *Tor.com*, and Roger Bellin in *The Los Angeles Review of Books*, and Paul Di Filippo at *Locus*, and Steven Shaviro on his blog *The Pinocchio Theory*. But there is something in their analysis that strikes me as all too hip. We get it that Delany can take pornographic material and make it warm, fuzzy and fulfilling rather than violent, degrading or threatening, the way many intellectuals tend to talk about pornography. But there's some seriously challenging material in this novel. Of all the reviews, only Jo Walton's piece came closest to really addressing the ethical challenges that this novel presents, and her review spawned a particularly thoughtful conversation in the comments section about the way children's sexuality is represented in the novel.

• • •

So much of Delany's writing is about cities, the type of people who live in them, the way they function, and the sexual underground that one can find in them. He's written extensively about his hometown of New York City, including 1999's *Times Square Red*, *Times Square Blue*, one of the best books written about the social, political, and economic factors at work in the current gentrification push in New York. In this novel, however, Delany ventures away from the city and into the rural South.

When we first meet Eric Jeffers he's (literally) sixteen-going-on-seventeen, living with his stepfather in Atlanta and preparing to move to the small town of Diamond Harbor in coastal Georgia to live with his mother Barbara. His stepfather Mike is black, a laborer who did a short stint in prison when Eric was younger. Mike met Eric's mother Barb when she was an exotic dancer in Maryland. She has since left the nightlife and now works as a waitress at a diner in Diamond Harbor.

The town where Barb lives also happens to be near a community affectionately called "The Dump," a community founded and financed by a black gay millionaire named Robert Kyle III who grew up in Diamond Harbor. Eric doesn't realize that when he moves there he is about to stumble onto a strange and wonderful paradise that will become his home for the next sixty years.

Shortly after moving to Diamond Harbor Eric meets Morgan Haskell, who never goes by the name Morgan, but by his nickname "Shit." Shit and his dad Dynamite work as the community's garbage men, paid by the Kyle Foundation, and they soon take on Eric as an employee and lover.

After setting up these conditions, the rest of the novel plays out simply, concerning itself with the inexorable march of time. Eric adjusts to his new life in Diamond Harbor, adjusts to his new job as a garbage man, and finds the job meaningful and fulfilling despite the fact that Barb wishes he would go to school and work at something more lucrative. Barb's new boyfriend, Ron, castigates Eric for not wanting to move up into a better job. Ron is a particularly interesting character: black, conservative, a striver, working as a computer technician, and one who loves to have pretensions of upward mobility. I couldn't help being reminded of Wendell Pierce's trash-talking black Republican character in Spike Lee's *Get on the Bus*. Brother Ron is cut from the same cloth. And their interactions do stimulate Eric's ideological perspective, helping him to shore up his own philosophies on life. Ron keeps insisting to

him that he should want to work in a place where he can wear a suit and tie and be around nice people. Eric realizes quickly, however, that he already lives around nice people, and that the "nice people" Ron wants him to be around are the very people who tormented him in high school and who look down on the man he is falling in love with—an illiterate garbage man who lives with his father, and is, frankly, more than a bit of a pervert.

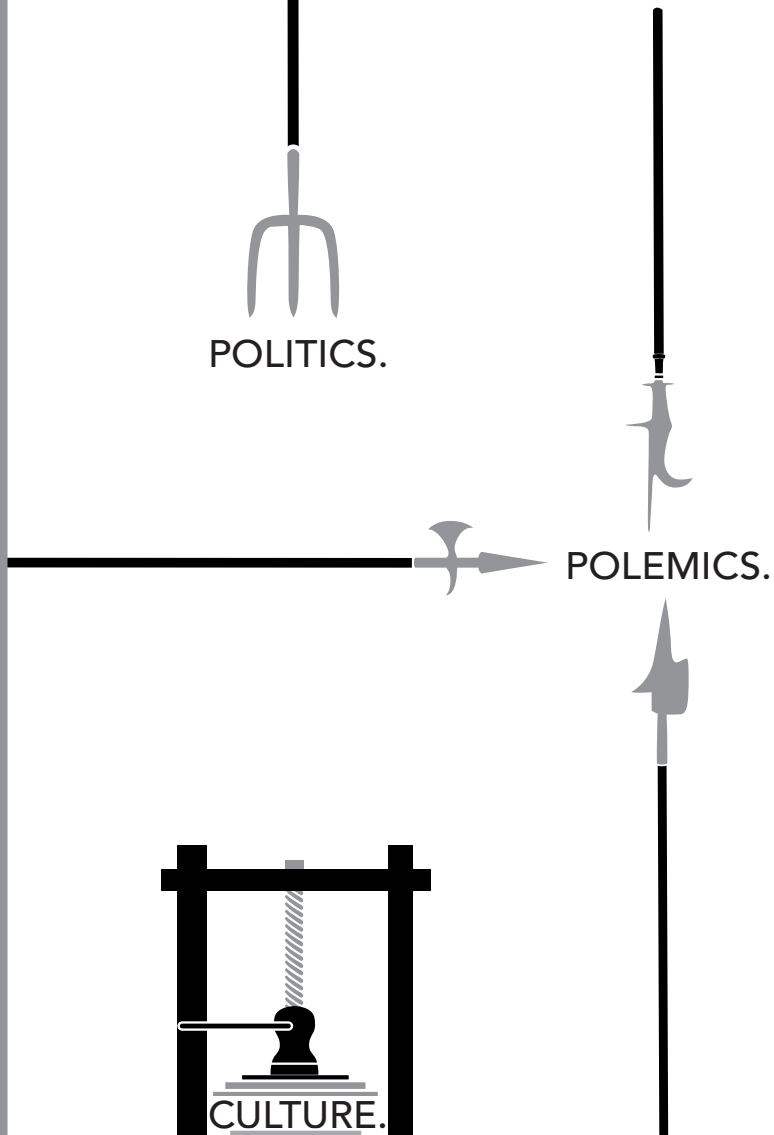
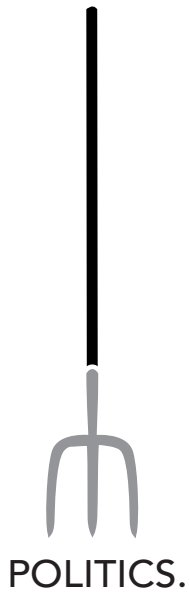
The sexual content of the novel is unrelenting. I suppose I understand what Delany is up to here. This is a novel that is precisely about having sex, about all the ways that a particularly precocious young white gay man with a thing for black guys, and a plethora of kinky desires, can explore the fullest possibilities of his sex life. Most novels are about *not* having sex, about the containment and regulation of sexual desire internally and externally. That said, it gets tedious. Don't just take my word for it; read the other

reviewers. There's even more piss-drinking, snot-eating and shit-eating than in Delany's notoriously raunchy pornographic novel *The Mad Man*, which is saying a lot. But whereas in that book the activity veered toward the excessive, and playfully stretched the boundaries of the reader's tolerance, this one just goes over the line. It's too much, and it begins to obscure what is really a wonderful story that builds and builds in the second half of the novel. I found myself starting

to skip and skim the sexual passages to get back to the narrative of the characters' lives. Having read quite a bit of Delany I want to trust that there is some intent in this, some way that he is manipulating the reader into thinking about language in creative ways. Mostly, though, it was a distraction.

The second half of the novel pushes forward into the twenty-first century, and Delany's particular gift for speculative fiction starts to take over. His description of the 2030s especially resonated with me. He portrays them as a wonder decade, much like the 1960s that defined his own generation, or the 1920s that defined that of his parent's. One doesn't think of them as "wonder decades" as they are happening, only in retrospect. Part of what happens in the 2030s is that humanity finally has its day of reckoning with nuclear weapons as atomic bombs explode in California and Brazil, and the world finds a renewed sense of community in the aftermath of these unspeakable catastrophes. New technologies emerge as well, including wearable nanotech that transforms the way people buy and wear clothes. All the while, the citizens of Diamond Harbor lead some very low-tech lives, at times unbelievably low-tech. Eric shuns the cell phone, and sticks to

www.jacobinmag.com



JACOBIN

reading his physical copy of Spinoza's *Ethics* even though other forms of media are available. "Shit" is illiterate and mostly uninterested in television, reading or computers. But their lives seem implausibly free of the kind of network technology that is already dominating our experiences now, even in the rural South. The narrative works all the same, though I still find it hard to believe that living on the Georgia coast will make it possible to escape the Network entirely (particularly after having just spent a week in Mississippi and Alabama where smart phones and tablets abound even among the poor and semi-literate populations).

As the novel moves on, deaths start to mount, age starts to take its toll on Shit and Eric, and the ending of the novel is heartbreaking and beautiful as we watch their lives wind down to the finish. And in the end, for all its flaws, this is a novel that no other writer could pull off, stamped with Delany's particular genius and sensibility.

In a journal article titled "Clean: Death and Desire in Samuel R. Delany's *Stars in My Pocket Like Grains of Sand*" published in *American Literature* in 2012, Graduate Center Professor Robert Reid-Pharr delivers a rather clever observation about Delany's work:

I would note, however, that this is the point at which Delany's novel becomes most difficult to read. For though on Velm, in Morgre, and at Dyethshome one finds the author celebrating all of the shibboleths of our own self-satisfied liberalism—respect for diversity, freedom of movement and association, humor, generosity, erudition, and a certain easy gentility—Delany does not seem satisfied to leave well enough alone. He insists, that is, on repeatedly sticking those fat and unwashed fingers of his into an altogether well-made pie. He will not allow us to forget, even and especially in the beautiful halls and gardens of Marq's home, the fact that all of these effects, all of these lovely sentences, are underwritten by brutality and violence that are, for lack of a better description, world-shattering.

And that's just it. What strikes me about the sexual politics involved in *Through the Valley of the Nest of Spiders* is that Delany just won't leave well enough alone, especially when it comes to the self-satisfied political gains of the LGBT movement. One of the unique things about Delany's pornographic novel *Hogg* is that it contained all the things that conservatives at the time (this was during the pre-Stonewall years) were saying about pornography. He took their fantasies of violence and murder and played them out in a story about a rapist-for-hire, and the twelve-year-old boy who hangs out with him and becomes his protégée. In a similar fashion, I think in *TVNS*, Delany dares to imagine the very slippery slope that the conservatives have warned us about. Played out in a utopian community on the Georgia Coast, Delany cheerfully

tumbles down that slippery slope. No, there is no one who gets married to a goat, but there is some frank discussion about and acts of bestiality, there's a polyamorous household raising children together, there's Whiteboy and Black Bull, a sadomasochistic couple who live across the road from Shit and Eric and Dynamite, there's public sex, even welcomed and encouraged in the city's infrastructure.

A sign of the times: As I'm writing this review, *Through the Valley of the Nest of Spiders*, published in April 2012 by Magnus Books, is already out of print. Recently a fan on Delany's Facebook page alerted him to the fact that print copies of the novel are being listed by second hand sellers on Amazon for hundreds of dollars. Delany replied:

It's not necessarily a good thing... In this case, it's because the publisher can't afford to go back to press and print more paper copies; this means for the last six months, at every reading I have done, in Boston, in Washington D.C., in Boulder, in Philadelphia, in Atlanta, in Seattle, in L. A., in New York, no books were available to sell to the people who came, nor are any available in bookstores in those cities. And neither the writer nor publisher gets any money at all from those artificially inflated prices you see on Amazon, once a book becomes generally available. THROUGH THE VALLEY OF THE NEST OF SPIDERS is still available on Nook and Kindle (at \$9.99), from which I get a much smaller royalty than I would from a standard priced sale of a paper volume, but that's all.

That's where we are in the world of literature these days.

The good news is some of Delany's criticism is coming back into print thanks to the good people at Wesleyan University Press. *Phallos*, originally published in 2004 by the small press Bamberger Books has been reissued in an "Enhanced and Revised" edition that includes critical essays by Robert Reid-Pharr, Steven Shaviro, Ken James, and Darieck Scott. Likewise *The Jewel-Hinged Jaw: Notes on the Language of Science Fiction*, and *Starboard Wine: More Notes on the Language of Science Fiction* are both back in print in handsome paperback editions, also from Wesleyan.

Technology and change play a significant role in these Delany books, as they always have done in his work. Part of the novel *Phallos* is presented as a print version of a website that features a long excerpt from a mysterious anonymously authored pornographic novel, also called *Phallos*. The story follows the quest of young black intellectual Adrian Rome to figure out the origins of the book. The playful reflexivity of the book-on-a-website-in-a-book form is cleverly represented by the cover of the new Wesleyan edition of the novel, which features a photo of the previous edition of *Phallos*. The graphic novel *Bread and Wine* is another Delany reissue, this one put out by

“Beirut — in Between,” explores and illustrates the multiple identities found in Lebanon’s capital city. After a lengthy civil war, in the 1990s the city and especially the downtown were reconstructed. Politicians and developers aspired to reposition Beirut on the world map again; however, critics alleged that the CentreVille as another DisneyWorld and historical buildings were torn down.

Beirut – In Between

a photo exhibition

by Fadi Asmar



The photographs in this exhibition were taken from 2005 to 2012, a time marked with renewed political instability and escalating sectarian and economic disparities within Lebanese society. Fadi’s photos show that Beirut remains a city scarred by deep contrasts.

Friday, September 20, 2013 6:30-8:30 PM

Room 6304.24

Free & Open to the Public

Fadi’s Photos will be on view from September 2013 to May 2014

Fantagraphics Books. It is the story of Chip, his partner Dennis Ricketts, and their relationship which started on the Upper West Side in the 1980s and is still going strong twenty-five years later.

In a recent interview with Paul D. Miller, a.k.a. DJ Spooky, Delany warns against over-determined autobiographical readings of his work, particularly when the critics get his autobiography completely wrong. In that interview Delany describes a reviewer who referred to him as a poet (Delany has never published poetry), and made other factual errors. That said, it is obvious that there are pretty specific similarities between some of the biographical details of Delany's life and some of the characters in his work. Reading *Bread and Wine* one can see how there's more than a little bit of Chip and Dennis in the relationship between Shit and Eric in *TVNS*. Delany's academic novel *The Mad Man* also drew on some of the same source material. In that novel, the young black academic philosopher John Marr meets a hefty homeless man named Leaky and starts a relationship with him, with Leaky eventually moving into John's apartment.

Bread and Wine is beautifully illustrated by the artist Mia Wolff. Her renderings of nocturnal New York turn the city into a magical enchanted landscape where these characters find each other on the streets of the Upper West Side, sniff each other out for a while (figuratively and literally) and decide that they get along well together. The story disrupts some of the assumptions of inequality in the relationship between a homeless white drifter, and a black novelist and professor. Dennis was just as apprehensive about the relationship with Chip as Chip was about taking in a homeless man. All throughout, their story is framed by excerpts from German poet Friedrich Hölderlin's poem "Bread and Wine." Removing the book jacket of this hardcover edition reveals some amazing watercolor portraits of Chip and Dennis on the covers, and the back of the book features a new interview with Chip, Dennis and Mia explaining more about the origins and composition of the book.

Despite the fact that *Through the Valley of the Nest of Spiders* is a difficult reading experience, and maybe not among Delany's best fiction, the book also manages to encapsulate everything that Delany is all about. It comes down on the side of kindness over meanness, empathy over indifference, compassion over cruelty. And there's nothing naïve or shallow about it. The characters find ways to be good to each other despite the trials and horrors that befall them and that befall the communities to which they belong.

That's what all that Spinoza stuff in the novel is all about.

To the extent that one wants to believe in an ethical version of a God, then one must think of that God not as a being separate from creation, but a being whose essence permeates and connects all things. That is hardly an original idea, nor is it at all presented as an original idea in the novel. Eric ruminates over the meaning of God as he reads and re-reads his Spinoza book, and the meanings that he draws from the book resonate with Buddhism, Unitarianism, or other spiritual systems.

The difficulty is in seeing the continuities between all things: truly seeing excrement, trash and waste products, and learning to "love" them radically. The novel would be a much less provocative exercise if it were obvious that all this piss drinking and snot eating was just a metaphor. It is the materiality of Delany's writing that makes the reader imagine it as literal. Both literal and metaphorical. To put it in Christian terms, I think of Delany as ol' doubtin' Thomas, who just won't accept the story that the man standing in front of him had risen from the dead, and just has to reach out and stick his hand in the bloody wound to see if it's real

• • •

Bread and wine, bread and wine. It is hard not to see some religious and spiritual themes at work here, even though Delany is an avowed atheist. In *TVNS* Eric's readings of Spinoza's *Ethics*, and his conversations with the ex-seminarian turned drag queen named Mama Grace who gave him the book, help him to make sense of his desire to live a good life and be a good person, and shape his perception of his place in time, space and eternity.

I recently caught up to Tracy K. Smith's Pulitzer Prize winning poetry collection *Life on Mars*. Among the poems in that wonderful book is one called "It & Co." I came across that poem while re-reading some passages from *TVNS* and it beautifully resonated with the spirituality that Eric develops throughout his days in The Dump as he reads and re-reads Spinoza. It also resonated with this big, difficult 800 page novel that I was working my way through, once again:

We are part of it. Not guests.
Is It us, or what contains us?
How can It be anything but an idea,
Something teetering on the spine
Of the number i? It is elegant
But coy. It avoids the blunt ends
Of our fingers as we point. We
Have gone looking for It everywhere:
In Bibles and bandwidth, blooming
Like a wound from the ocean floor.
Still, It resists the matter of false v. real.
Unconvinced by our zeal, It is un-
Appeasable. It is like some novels:
Vast and unreadable. A

Modernism Unmoored

► *American Modern: Hopper to O'Keeffe*,
at the Museum of Modern Art

MICHAEL BUSCH

American Modern: Hopper to O'Keeffe, is a show in search of a purpose. The exhibit, which opened at the Museum of Modern Art last week and runs through January 2014, gathers together some 115 paintings, photographs and sculptural works by American artists between 1915 and 1950, a year before the Ninth Street Art Exhibition inaugurated the age of abstract expressionism and New York School hegemony. Had it been given more careful curatorial consideration the exhibition could have been one of the most important of the year. Disappointingly, it falls short.

American Modern features some outstanding work, almost all of it drawn from the museum's permanent collection. Striking paintings by Stuart Davis, Max Weber and Joseph Stella sit alongside gorgeous prints by Alfred Stieglitz, Man Ray, Paul Strand and Charles Sheeler

(whose "White Barn, Buckstown, Pennsylvania," a masterwork of black and white photography, is the best of the bunch.) Also included are weaker efforts from George Bellows, Peter Blume and John Marin. Not surprisingly, ample room is given to Georgia O'Keeffe—including her stunning watercolor, "Evening Star No. III"—and Edward Hopper, a pair that should ensure the exhibit's box office success throughout the fall. Hopper's "House by the Railroad," better known as the Bates Mansion from Alfred Hitchcock's *Psycho*, will draw the tourist hordes on its own.

All the more remarkable, then, that MoMA's curators were unable to establish a center of gravity to ground their American showcase. The near total absence of text throughout the exhibit suggests they didn't even try. Instead, visitors are paraded past one chunk of work after another—here are the O'Keeffes, there the Marsden Hartleys; Jacob Lawrence's work sits in this corner, Charles Burchfield's is hung in that one across the room. While there is some interplay between the various works as they



Above: *Christina's World* by Andrew Wyeth

have been arranged, it becomes clear pretty quickly that *American Modern* has neither rhythm nor anchor.

Too bad. It isn't for want of opportunity that *American Modern* fails to spark the imagination. A number of points present themselves throughout the galleries in which MoMA's curators could have added heft to their presentation, and developed an argument about the "Americanness" of the modern experience in the United States at the turn of the last century. Take, for instance, Preston Dickinson's snowy "Harlem River," and Sheeler's "American Landscape," depicting Ford Motor's famous Red River automobile factory in Michigan—muscular works, each, treating nature's growing colonization by urban industry.

Much can be said here, not just about the works themselves but about their relationship to the present period of economic uncertainty and industrialization's legacy



of urban ruin in places like Dearborn and Detroit. Easy connections could likewise be drawn from Dickinson and Sheeler to Bellows' astonishing paintings from the same period of New York City's industrialized waterways, and the construction of Penn Station. Instead, visitors are silently given lithographs of Bellows' boxers without reference to his larger body of work, or anything else for that matter. Any logical threads that could have been used to tie together otherwise disparate artists, or connect past and present, are left hanging.

And what about the smoldering eroticism pulsating through a good deal of the photos and paintings on view? Selections of work by Man Ray, O'Keeffe, Hopper and Preston Dickinson simply scream sex, but all of it is presented coldly and without comment by the show's curators. To take but one example, it is almost impossible

to imagine Gerald Murphy's "Wasp and Pear" having its over-the-top suggestiveness neutralized in any setting, but MoMA has managed to pull it off here. Hopper's "Night Windows," with its plump rumps, raging fires and gently breezing curtains feels similarly indistinct, sandwiched between other paintings on a crowded wall.

What's absent from the exhibit—a clear rationale—isn't to be found in the accompanying catalogue, either. The book, slim for a major exhibit, opens with a halfhearted attempt at historical revisionism by the museum's director, Robert Lowry. "Although contemporary readers are as likely to associate an American artist such as Jackson Pollock with the Museum as a Spaniard like Pablo Picasso," Lowry writes, "in the past MoMA was repeatedly accused of an international bias."

Despite Lowry's admission that it is, "no longer urgent," he argues that, "the current exhibit resoundingly challenges that notion," testifying, "to the inclusive vision that has always characterized this institution's programming." Not exactly riveting stuff.

Lowry's closing observations, vapid and inaccurate, can't claim much utility for those looking to make sense of what they've seen in his museum's gallery space. "At a time when national boundaries seem increasingly porous, and when museums strive to expand the international scope of their programming to previously understudied artists and histories," Lowry notes, "many works in *American Modern* may seem like old friends. Now as then, MoMA remains 'deeply concerned with American art,' and this exhibition provides an opportunity for contemporary viewers to reconsider them in their historical context."

The introductory essay by the show's curators, Kathy Curry and Esther Adler, is equally ho-hum. Curry and Adler tell readers what they easily glean themselves from attending the exhibit—namely, that American artists between 1915 and 1950 were concerned with representing the national landscape, except when they weren't, in which case the focus switched to people and things. The curators write:

The continued exploration of a particular subject matter—the American landscape and the people and objects that filled it—over the course of those years suggests a shared though not exclusive approach, one shaped by an acute awareness of that world, and more specifically of the fact that it was changing.

There's a faint scent of intellectual laziness, if not fraud,

Continued on page 35

Explosions in the Sky

► James Turrell at the Guggenheim Museum

CLAY MATLIN

I have always had my suspicions about James Turrell, though they have never bordered on distrustful. I do not think there is anything malicious about his work, nor do I think he is laughing at those who both view and experience it. Rather, my concerns lay with his use of light as an object. His light does not exhibit warmth but shines with deep melancholy.

This is, of course, not a particularly original use or understanding of light. Caravaggio could not escape light's lure; his paintings seem always to find a way to depict the light of Heaven against the gloom of the mortal world. Neither could Frederick Church, who strove to show us that to try to depict the way light enters the world is to marvel at life's mysteries but to be incapable of really touching them. Much later, there was Dan Flavin whose fluorescent light work derived its power from his belief that light is "a matter of fact" and as such is "as plain and open and direct an art you will ever find." In many ways this attitude holds true for Turrell and his Light and Space brethren, Robert Wheeler and, to a lesser extent, Robert Irwin. Yet their concerns are different than the mystics and painters born before the twentieth century.

For these men who grew up in what Albert Camus called the "century of fear," their childhoods unfolded during the Second World War. They lived through the defining moment of the last century: the detonation of the atom bomb. Its tests in the high desert, the mushroom clouds, the black and white images of it falling from the belly of the Enola Gay, its endless heat—all of these things inform their work. I believe, however, that these moments haunt Turrell, the son of peacenik Quakers, more than any other American artist of his generation. The flash of the bomb is the light of creation with both its destructive power and its promise. We find here, to borrow from Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer, the dialectic of enlightenment. They understood implicitly, as did Friedrich Schiller almost two hundred years earlier, that the march of progress, the blinding illumination of the light of reason, leads to the light of ultimate destruction. It is a leveling of the world in order to save it. From this dialectic emerges Turrell's art, though its power lies in his transformation of the light that presages death into the light that tries to bring us into life. If this seems like a stretch, bear

with me.

We must remember that Fat Man and Little Boy, while weapons of mass destruction, were without question tools to reorder the world. They created disorder, yet they also held promise. This promise rested not simply in their capacity to end life, but as Nils Bohr—and later Robert Oppenheimer—believed, it also lay in the bomb's ability to end war itself through the creation of a world in which each country would own the bomb. For when each country had the capability to destroy others, the stakes would be too high. War would no longer be winnable. There would be "a spasm of mutual destruction," yes, but "war" as we knew it would be over. Though the bomb would lead to death, in death there would be resurrection. The very dropping of it on Hiroshima and Nagasaki signaled the rebirth of the world, the redemption of mankind. While a few hundred thousand would die, billions would be saved. Oppenheimer and Bohr had succumbed to the same millennialist fervor that has struck those living in America for almost four centuries, this perverse desire to usher in a new, perhaps even divine, age.

Turrell is not so different. His is an art of millennialist desire. It may not be one that seeks a kingdom on Earth or dreams of some sort of Christian redemption, but his hope is to bring us closer to a singular moment. How else does one explain a statement like this: "My art deals with light itself. It's not the bearer of the revelation—it is the revelation." Or this: "Space has a way of looking. It seems like it has a presence of vision. When you come into it, it is there, it's been waiting for you." Turrell's words are not so different from another artist deeply affected by the bomb who also sought to save the world the bomb had left in its wake: Barnett Newman. Writing in 1948, Newman declared: "We are asserting man's natural desire for the exalted, for a concern with our relationship to the absolute emotions. . . . The image we produce is the self-evident one of revelation, real and concrete."

Perhaps this, as "real and concrete," is how Turrell sees *Aten Reign*, his new installation that has taken over the Guggenheim's rotunda, filling it with light and creating what is an *almost* completely immersive environment. The light pulses and changes, filling the emptiness that is the center of the Guggenheim. Is it the revelation? *Aten Reign* envelops us, but the experience is not fulfilling, we do not get lost in it. The flood of color is all around us. In fact, we are in it, but the sense of full immersion (as is found in



his tunnel *The Light Inside* at the Houston MFA) is never achieved. In other portions of the exhibition Turrell's light is richer, more powerful. Earlier pieces like the Shallow Space Construction (Turrell's designation) *Ronin* (1968) with its single strip of white light running the length of where two walls meet is startling in its simplicity. *Iltar* (1976), what Turrell calls a Space Division Construction, is a room filled with grey whiteness that washes over the viewer and leaves one with an unsettling sense of being in some sort of dense yet light mist. But still, even here, there is no revelation.

Maybe what Turrell is after is not our revelation but his.

He seems to be following a path he is helpless to resist, part of a final culmination, really, that began centuries before and in one instant found its greatest expression in a flash of light, like creation, and then nothing, just death. Here was Genesis. And here was Apocalypse. Perhaps here was Revelation, the light to which Turrell grants all power. The fire bombings of Hamburg, Tokyo, and Dresden, the Luftwaffe bombings of Guernica and London, these paled in comparison to the capacity for instantaneous tragedy that would be unleashed less than a month after Trinity. The difference lay in the proficiency to drastically reduce the time it took to take lives. Gone were World War Two's

days and nights of bombing, the precision attacks that were precise in name only. Those mind-numbing numbers of munitions dropped from great heights—hundreds of thousands, even millions of tons—in what must have seemed like an endless barrage, could now be replaced with a small bit of plutonium and modern science's new found ability to stuff what amounts to the birth of the universe inside a ten-and-a-half-foot long, twenty-nine inch in diameter, ten-thousand pound falling metal coffin. That the dialectic of enlightenment, the dispelling of darkness with a cleansing light had led to one very short moment, less than a minute and forty-three seconds in fact, for the equivalent of 12,500 tons of TNT to fall 31,000 feet to earth should not be surprising.

The explosion lasted less than a second. The temperature at the center reached 5,400° Fahrenheit. Little Boy had a 54 percent kill rate. The March fire bombing of Tokyo was “only” 10 percent with one hundred thousand killed out of one million. One hundred thousand were killed by Little Boy; another hundred thousand were injured. Of 76,000 buildings, 70,000 were damaged or destroyed; 48,000 were unsalvageable. “This was what everyone had been waiting for, what had hung for months like a shadow over everything we did, making us weary,” wrote Hans Erich Nossack, who lived through the July 1943 eight-day bombing of Hamburg. “It was the end. . . We expected someone to call out to us: Wake up!”

Turrell's is not an art that worships death, but the light

that he uses is the desire to be the flash of revelation. The bomb revealed to us the mysteries of the universe, it showed that we could unlock the atom—the building block of creation—and harness it for death or life. What James Turrell does is to take the terror of the bomb's light and make it bearable, even healing. It is not the end, as Nossack feared, but instead the chance to try and live in the world. At his best—I am thinking here of *Meeting at PS1*—Turrell allows us to take the light of the world as it comes to us and accept that as most fulfilling.

We are well served to turn to Nietzsche's *The Birth of Tragedy*. “When after a forceful attempt to gaze on the sun we turn away blinded,” Nietzsche observed, “we see dark-colored spots before our eyes, as a cure. . . necessary effects of a glance into the inside and terrors of nature; as it were, luminous spots to cure eyes damaged by gruesome light.” 1945 saw the most gruesome of lights, in a war filled with death riding the brightest of flashes. We are still damaged. Yet by seeking to provide the revelation, even though that desire is both pompous and foolhardy, Turrell has attempted to lessen the burden of living with the bomb, to remove the shadow that haunted Nossack and continues to haunt Turrell to this day. Thomas McEvilly, the late art critic and philologist, once remarked that during the Second World War the sky seemed darker. Maybe this is a memory Turrell shares, and through his light he might clear those skies. This is a noble and decent thing. What else could we expect from this Quaker son? **A**

Art Review

Continued from page 32

about all this. Curry and Adler are correct when they argue that the show, “is not an encyclopedic review of American art of that period, nor is it an argument for a native style free of outside influence.” The trouble is that when all is said and done, *American Modern* is defined by what it isn't more than what it is. If there exists a sense in which these works hang together more coherently in the exhibit than they do sprinkled throughout MoMA's regular galleries, the curators aren't saying.

There's also none of the context suggested by Lowry on offer in *American Modern*. The curators claim, for example, that, “the visual dialogue with international artists and art movements is obvious here, despite attempts by critics and scholars from that earlier time to deny it.” How did that dialogue take shape? Why did critics and scholars attempt to deny it? These questions, and many others that come to mind when taking in the totality of works on display, are left unanswered in the essay, and aren't even asked in the exhibit.

It should be noted that the catalogue features a

lengthier, more substantive essay by Adler on the history of MoMA's dealings with American art and artists in the years before Abstract Expressionism grabbed the world's attention. The narrative here amounts to a detailed elaboration of Lowry's opening defense of his institution's longstanding appreciation for American modernism, and it is done exceedingly well. Adler's article will undoubtedly be of academic value and use to those interested in the museum's evolution.

But if the catalogue accompanying *American Modern* represents MoMA's commitment, in the words of Lowry, to “constantly revis[e] the narrative of its own history,” it just as assuredly reminds us of a distinct absence of obligation to the average museum-goer. MoMA had the chance to do something interesting, and above all, important, with this show of its American holdings. The curators could have seized the opportunity to contribute valuable insights to our understandings of the period, the artists who gave it life, and its place within the wider sweep of modern art's development in the 20th century. They did none of these things. Instead, they chose to mount a show whose whole is much less than the sum of its parts. **A**

Summer Theater Festivals in New York

- ▶ “Game Play,” The Brick, 5—27 July 2013. Reviewed: “Preview Cabaret,” 5 July 2013; *The Photo Album*, 6 July 2013; *That Cute Radioactive Couple*, 13 July 2013.
- ▶ “Shakespeare in the Park,” The Public Theater’s Delacorte Theater in Central Park, 28 May—18 August 2013. Reviewed: *The Comedy of Errors*, 27 June 2013; *Love’s Labour’s Lost*, 31 July 2013.
- ▶ “New York International Fringe Festival,” Various Venues, 9—25 August 2013. Reviewed: *Occupy Olympus*, 19 August 2013; *The Rufus Equation*, 21 August 2013; *Track Twelve*, 21 August 2013; *The TomKat Project*, 22 August 2013; *The Dead Hooker Play*, 23 August 2013.

DAN VENNING

I was alerted to the Game Play festival at The Brick by Lisa Reinke, a fellow doctoral candidate in Theatre at the Graduate Center (and a fellow gamer). The Game Play festival, billed as “a celebration of video game performance art,” was a series of shows that demonstrated ways that theatre can interact with the world of gaming. The first event was a short “Preview Cabaret” with ten-minute selections from the festival’s ten shows. I was unable to see full productions of all these shows, but some of them looked quite promising: David Lawson’s solo piece, *No Oddjob*, was represented by a mesmerizing selection about Hironobu Sakaguchi, the creator of the *Final Fantasy* series. But I wondered whether he was creating a text that really needed to be staged, as opposed to read. Another piece that I wish I had been able to see was Mac Rogers’s play *Ligature Marks*, which appeared to be about the conflict between addiction and love—here, addiction to MMORPGs (massive multi-player online role-playing games).

The two full productions I was able to catch at the festival were *The Photo Album* and *That Cute Radioactive Couple*. *The Photo Album*, by The Story Gym (Reinke, the director, and her cast collaboratively created the show) required audience members to download the iPhone or Android application “Layar.” Audience members would then scan photos, piled on a table, and Layar would use embedded information in the image to give the audience members a prompt to say to an individual cast member. The audience members would then have brief one-on-one scenes with the cast. Together, the stories and shared secrets built a larger image of the numerous fictional residents of one house over a span of years: a fortune teller, a scientist and her husband, an insane murderer, and more.

Because the show lasted only an hour, it was impossible to meet every cast member, but this was fine: the experience was unique enough. The cast was, however, somewhat uneven, and it was a bit infuriating that the assistant director suggested photos to audience members—part of the fun was choosing and finding the images that we were most drawn to. However, this was clearly a directorial choice designed to make sure audience members weren’t selecting images that would lead them to a cast member already occupied with someone else.

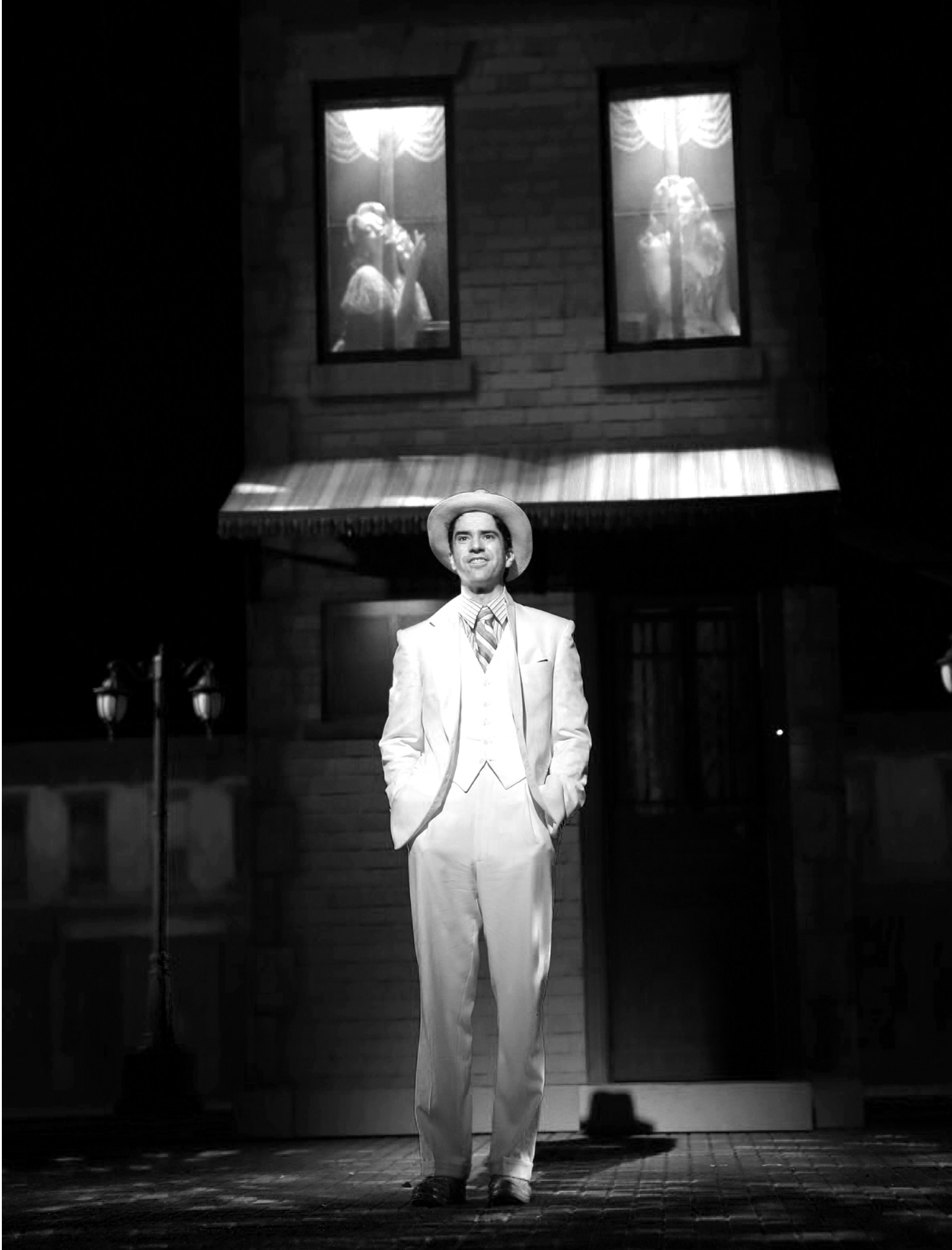
That Cute Radioactive Couple, written and directed by Charles Battersby, was crafted as the live theatrical prequel to a user-created module (also created by Battersby) for the video game *Fallout: New Vegas*. This was a fascinating concept and meant that the story was left incomplete at the end of the show, which centered on a couple living in an “Apocalypticorp Bachelor Bunker” following the nuclear obliteration of the United States. Battersby also appeared as the personification of the recorded voice of the Apocalypticorp spokesman. He was hilarious in this role and elegantly crafted a show that brought black humor to a very dire situation while also making me want to play his game module. Unfortunately, his cast was unable to effectively present the play. Although the actors had their moments, Amanda Van Nostrand and Len Rella had little chemistry as the titular couple. Indeed, the title was apt: because it wasn’t effectively performed, the play wound up little more than “cute.”

The Game Play festival was accompanied by several gaming installations at The Brick. The only one I was able to sample was *Big Huggin’*, a side-scrolling video game played by hugging and releasing a giant teddy bear, in order to make an onscreen bear jump. While adorable, and a subtle comment on the need for more love and affection in gaming, as opposed to violence, the game itself was somewhat buggy, as it was easy for the player to become “stuck” in an onscreen obstacle.

Overall, the shows and selections that I saw at Game Play were fascinating examinations of how theatre can be interactive in the video-game age. Although I left the festival not completely satisfied with anything I’d seen, I still was impressed with The Brick’s programming—plucky and wholly fun.

• • •

For me, the Public Theater’s annual Shakespeare in the Park is a form of experiential theatre. Sitting out overnight



to get the free tickets is an act that makes me feel more part of the process than when I simply buy tickets. For the second year in a row, the Public chose to present a Shakespearean comedy paired with a musical. Last year, this was *As You Like It* and *Into the Woods* by Stephen Sondheim; this year, the pairing was *The Comedy of Errors* and a new musical adaptation of *Love's Labour's Lost*.

The Comedy of Errors is itself a loose adaptation of Plautus's Roman comedy *Menaechmi*, a story of mistaken identity involving twins. Shakespeare's innovation is to add a second pair of twins, the Dromios, who are slaves to the first pair, the Antipholi. When all four appear in Ephesus, endless slapstick and bawdy situations arise due to the mistaken identity. Daniel Sullivan's production was set in the 1930s in "Ephesus, New York"—an upstate city where the bus station had signs for Syracuse, Ithaca, Rome, and Schenectady. The production was designed to run a brisk ninety minutes without intermission. The action was periodically interrupted by swing numbers excitingly choreographed by Mimi Lieber and set to Greg Pliska's original music, which seemed to come right out of the era. Also a part of Sullivan's concept was the fact that Hamish

Linklater played both Antipholi and Jesse Tyler Ferguson played both Dromios. This requires body doubles in the final scene where the two pairs of twins finally meet, but is done frequently in productions to highlight leading actors' virtuosity.

The night I went was, however, unique. Half an hour into the performance, it began to rain. Hard. Audience members began to flee the open-air Delacorte Theater. Soon a voice came over the speaker system: the actors would pause, and we would wait to see if the show could continue. More audience members left. The rain did not let up. Apparently, during the storm the sound system overloaded and shut down. But instead of cancelling the show, the company decided to go on, in the rain, after a pause of about a half hour. Linklater came to the center of the stage and asked those of us remaining (about a third of the original number) to move down and fill in seats, since the actors would be working without microphones. During the remaining hour, De'Adre Aziza sang a jazz number a cappella, the dancers continued to do their full routines in the rain, without music (for one number, dance captain Bryan Langlitz called out numbers "5, 6, 7, 8" as the



dancers bounded across the stage), and the show went on. When a moment required the sounding of a bell, Ferguson pointed at the church onstage and shouted “bong, bong!” The audience erupted in laughter. In another moment that required a gunshot, the entire cast shouted “BANG!” Throughout the entire show, it continued to rain.

Sadly, even close to the stage, I was unable to hear many of the actors without microphones. A notable exception was Linklater: I never missed a word he spoke. This was unsurprising, considering the fact that Linklater’s mother is Kristin Linklater, the head of Acting at Columbia University and the author of *Freeing the Natural Voice* (1976), a foundational text for voice and speech teachers across the world. But the inaudibility of much of the cast wasn’t the only problem. Ultimately, Sullivan’s direction and extreme cutting made this production not a joyous, raucous comedy, but a thin, insubstantial work that failed to convey both Shakespeare’s humor and his insightful portrayals of the many denizens of his Ephesus. As it turned out, my excursion to this *Comedy of Errors*, with the cast and audience joining in to ensure that the show went on, was one of the most vital evenings I have ever experienced in the theatre—in spite of Sullivan’s intended vision for the production.

The other production at Shakespeare in the Park this summer was *Love’s Labour’s Lost*, a new musical adaptation of Shakespeare’s play about four noblemen who go to a woodland retreat and swear off love, but quickly become smitten by four visiting noblewomen. This romantic comedy is complemented by the low comedy of the local inhabitants of the rural retreat, most notably the quixotic Spanish knight Don Armado, who falls in love with a local commoner. The production was directed by Alex Timbers (who also adapted the book) and music and lyrics by Michael Friedman. This is the team that created the extraordinary *Bloody Bloody Andrew Jackson*, the Drama Desk Award-winning emo-rock musical examination of America’s populist seventh president. Their *Love’s Labour’s Lost* is not the first time Shakespeare in the Park has commissioned a new musical based on a Shakespearean comedy. In 1971, it produced *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, with a book by John Guare and Mel Shapiro, lyrics by Guare, and music by Galt MacDermot (of *Hair* fame), starring Raúl Juliá as Proteus. That production transferred to Broadway and won Tony Awards for Best Musical and Best Book; it is still periodically produced by both professionals and amateurs, and was even revived at Shakespeare in the Park’s 2005 summer season.

The Public was clearly trying to replicate its historical success at adapting an early Shakespearean comedy into a musical. There was indeed much to love in Timbers

and Friedman’s *Love’s Labour’s Lost*. Many of Friedman’s songs had incredible hooks. Timbers has a gift for conceptual staging that nevertheless wholly fit the text of the show. The musical was staged as if at a college reunion. This allowed for many sight gags involving, among many other things, Constable Dull (Kevin Del Aguila) attired as campus police, riding across the stage on a Segway. Everyone was satirized: academics, hopeless romantics, sorority sisters, even audience members who paid \$175 for donor seats to avoid the line. Timbers’s linguistic and staged gags were complemented by Friedman’s musical ones: a moment poking fun at Philip Glass’s *Einstein on the Beach*, a re-staging of the final kick line straight out of *A Chorus Line*, and references to Sir Mix-a-Lot’s “Baby Got Back” and Mr. Big’s “To Be With You.”

The performances were also strong throughout. The Princess of France (Patti Murin) and her companions Rosaline (Maria Thayer), Maria (Kimiko Glenn), and Katherine (Audrey Lynn Weston) rocked their introductory number “Hey Boys.” Caesar Samayoa gave a comic star turn as Don Armado, highlighted in his hip-hop infused flamenco ballad “Jaquenetta.” As Jaquenetta, a barmaid clad in a sexy faux-dirndl, Rebecca Naomi Jones wowed the audience with her introspective, brooding ballad, “Love’s a Gun.” Colin Donnell was magnetic as Berowne and owned the stage in numbers like “Are You a Man” and “Young Men.” Probably the funniest were Rachel Dratch as Professor Holofernes and Jeff Hiller as her subordinate, Nathaniel; the satire of pretentious, self-righteous academics was spot-on.

Part of why Shakespeare’s *Love’s Labour’s Lost* is so affecting is its ending, when the expected unions do not occur, replaced by mourning and penance after an unexpected death. This moment was intensified in the adaptation: a full marching band was brought onstage, confetti blown everywhere, as it appeared love and joy would triumph. Once the blow came, the shift in mood was even more powerful. At this point, Timbers stopped adapting the text, and allowed Shakespeare’s original words to close the show. At earlier points, however, they departed significantly from the original text: most notably by eliminating a sequence where the central characters ruthlessly and pitilessly make fun of those with less social standing, and, in so doing, reveal that they lack a degree of empathy and kindness. By eliminating this part, the adapters made the central characters more likeable, but less complex. They might have trusted Shakespeare more. Their desire for fun and joy throughout similarly led to periodically sacrificing nuances of the text or continuity of character in favor of getting a laugh or keeping the audience tapping their feet; this was most notable when Bryce Pinkham, as Longaville,

perplexingly went from bad-boy stoner to musical theatre geek in a sequined outfit.

Like *The Comedy of Errors*, *Love's Labour's Lost* ran under two hours without an intermission. Strangely, it seemed like it was in need of both trimming and expansion. Several of the songs felt unfinished, as if verses could have been added. Timbers and Friedman should have adapted more of Shakespeare's long final scene, with its plays-within-a-play, trusting the nastiness in this scene to make the musical more affecting, not alienating, to audiences. "Are You A Man" in fact worked like a perfect curtain number, and a two-act production with an intermission would have been more satisfying. At the same time, Timbers and Friedman needed to rein in, slightly, their impulse to make gags. Their love of theatricality was on full display, and I left the musical entirely happy, but felt like Shakespeare's play had disappeared into something markedly less substantial and satisfying, as with Sullivan's *The Comedy of Errors*.

• • •

Seeing shows at the New York Fringe is always a crapshoot. While last year I found several pieces brilliant and one mind-numbingly awful, the five shows I saw this year were neither awe-inspiring nor horrible. All felt like journeyman projects, wholeheartedly and energetically produced but never entirely to their desired effect.

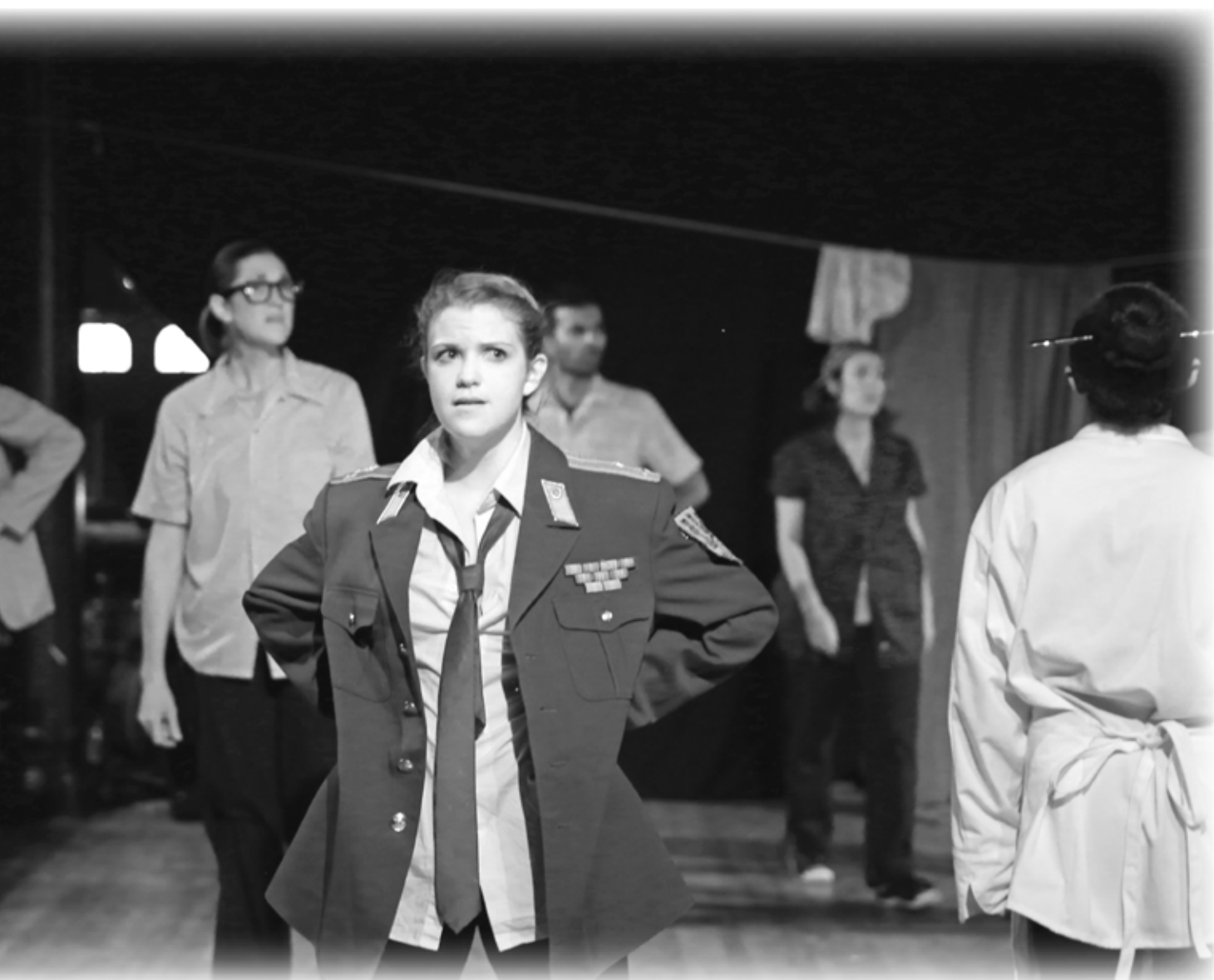
The best was *Occupy Olympus*, based on Aristophanes' *Plutus*, *God of Wealth*, loosely adapted by the Magis Theatre Company and directed by George Drance, who played Plutus. This was a genuinely Marxist production, an economic and political call to arms that would have made Brecht proud. In fact, Elizabeth Swados's final song called to mind Kurt Weill's dissonant collaborations with Brecht, but her other songs ran the gamut of genres, from blues to electro-pop and even a square dance ("Wheel of Fortune"). Two scenes were particularly haunting: Penia, goddess of Poverty (Erika Iverson) gave a monologue that seemed to be drawn directly from Reagan's philosophy of trickle-down economics: the world needs poverty, she argued, because people need the wealthy to look up to, admire, and earn money from. In another scene, the newly wealthy slave Cario (Margi Sharp) humiliates "CorpoMask" (Ronalda Nicholas), a terrifying amalgam of famous figures of corporate greed, costumed in a business suit with a mask made of dollar bills. But despite such moments, the show was unevenly cast, and its politics, like its music, were not consistent. The show ended with a whimper, when the citizens of Athens marched on Olympus, only to discover that the gods themselves had been evicted.

The Rufus Equation, by Ted Cubbin, was the only show

I saw this year that won an Overall Excellence Award, for Cubbin's Playwriting. I have no idea how the play won this prize. It was skillfully directed by Tom Ridgely and starred the engaging Geoffrey Arend as Bert Rufus, a young physics professor at an East Coast university. But to my mind, the writing was inelegant. The first half-hour of the play dragged, doing nothing to advance the plot other than introducing the audience to Rufus, his colleagues, and the women in their lives (all young, tenure-track faculty). The play didn't genuinely engage until Rufus revealed, more than a third of the way in, his titular equation: a deterministic way to predict the near future. The play would have been significantly better if Cubbin had managed to trim his opening and establish character while advancing plot at the same time. And despite that plot, the play felt rather weightless until the last moments, which were made effective by Pierre Epstein as Ed Wilson, a senior professor at Princeton. Telling a story about when he met Einstein, Wilson in turn became that genius, creating a few moments in the theatre that were (electro)magnetic.

Track Twelve by Emily Comisar also had textual issues, but, in contrast to *The Rufus Equation*, these came at the end of the play instead of throughout. *Track Twelve* featured strong performances by Leo Goodman, Charlie Gorrilla, Sarah Sanders, and Keelie A. Sheridan as four people stranded at Penn Station during a snowstorm, and then onboard their finally-departed train to Washington, D.C. A brother and sister (Goodman and Sheridan) are going to their mother's wedding; two co-workers and former lovers (Gorrilla and Sanders) are going to a business meeting. As the delays increase, so do the interactions between these formerly separate pairs. Director Josh Penzell brought out effective performances and created clever blocking that successfully moved the story forward. He was particularly skillful at creating moments of silence that built the tension and humor. But at the end, it all seemed to be for nothing: the show did not yet have a satisfying resolution and wound up feeling like a chuckle-





worthy play without depth.

Brandon Ogborn's *The TomKat Project* was a frenzied comic retelling of the tabloid Tom Cruise/Katie Holmes romance and divorce, highlighting a number of very versatile performers. The play featured Ogborn as the narrator, Julie Dahlinger and Walt Delaney as spot-on impersonators of Holmes and Cruise, and Kevin Knickerbocker, Micah Sterenberg, Briana Baker, and Allison Yolo as fifty-two other characters. The impressions were always hilarious: Baker was particularly funny as Oprah Winfrey, but the best by far was Sterenberg, who created a completely varied repertoire of bizarre characters including, among others, David Miscavige (head of the church of Scientology), writer Kevin Williamson, Midwestern dad Marty Holmes, Tom Hanks, and a German reporter from *Der Spiegel*. The actors sat in chairs onstage, wearing all black, and would shift between characters by using minor costume accessories and small vocal and physical cues. It


was always clear and brilliantly done. At times, actors not in a scene would hold up signs saying "this dialogue is verbatim," to let us know that the text was taken directly from the news. Still, until the final moments—a confrontation between Ogborn as narrator and journalist Maureen Orth (Yolo), the show seemed to lack any point beyond hilarity. In these final moments, Ogborn acknowledged that we, as outsiders, cannot truly know what happened in this breakup, that many of our preconceived notions (which he played on) were created by a frenzied tabloid media, that these are real people with real feelings, and that he may very well have the story backwards. I enjoyed *The TomKat Project*, but nonetheless the play ended up feeling like an extended sketch-comedy piece, not yet quite a fully-developed play.

The final show I saw at the Fringe, Scotty Decker's *The Dead Hooker Play*, had an intriguing premise: a hilariously offensive comedy designed to acknowledge internalized

misogyny, building to a tragic, not comic resolution. The play revolved around Miles (Decker) about to be married to the terrifying Kelly (Madeleine James). Miles is discovered by his best friends Marco (Jim Conroy) and Lee (Sean Modica) on the morning of his wedding with a dead prostitute, Hope (Maria Pastel), on his couch. The two acts were presented reverse-chronologically, so that the titular dead character of the first act was very much alive in the second, which takes place the previous night. The comedy was as side-splitting as it was repulsive, involving necrophilia, improper ways to win carnival prizes, a child's ruined birthday party, an extended toilet joke to the tune of the song "Love Shack," and a boatload of drugs and alcohol. I found myself laughing constantly, but disgusted at both myself and the show: it did not live up to its promise and (surprise!) never escaped from the misogyny present even in its title. Kelly was nothing more than a harpy, and Hope was a "magic prostitute" with unearned wisdom and depth—neither was a real human being. Decker, while skilled at writing jokes, failed to move beyond a Tucker Max-esque masculinity to critique the genre; as an actor he was also awkward and wooden in his movements. Conroy was a highlight as the degenerate drug-addled best man, but even his levity could not save this show from utter vileness.

One thing to remember about the Fringe is that the shows there, although open for review, could perhaps still be classified as in development. All the ones I saw could have used some reworking: whether to unify tone, develop or focus more clearly on the play's ultimate point, or tighten up sections of the script. Not all of the shows I saw were worthy of such reworking, but seeing such rough theatre, presented by energetic companies, felt refreshing nonetheless.

• • •

Although I had a lively summer of theatre-going, the results were decidedly mixed. While several of these shows had strong elements, among them there wasn't a single show I wholeheartedly loved, and a number were mediocre at best. Still, some of this was luck of the draw: hopefully next year I will pick better shows at the Fringe, or perhaps I will sample different festivals, such as the Lincoln Center festival or the ambulatory New York Classical Theatre. Or perhaps I'll venture further afield, to one of the many festivals outside of the city. 

The Photo Album. By The Story Gym. Directed by Lisa Reinke. Assistant Directed by Jack Karp. Featuring Tim Dowd, Colleen Kennedy, Alden LaPaglia, Laura Merrill, Freddie Moultry, Frank Paiva, Anna Paratore, Donna Ross, Mark Scherman, Leon Vogol, Kyung Sik Won, and Clara Wong. At The Brick. 6, 7, 10, 16, and 26 July. Tickets \$15.

That Cute Radioactive Couple. Written and directed by Charles Bat-

tersby. Lighting design by Amanda Woodward. Featuring Charles Battersby, Len Rella, Amanda van Nostrand, and Isaiah Tanenbaum. At The Brick. 10, 13, and 27 July. Tickets \$15.

The Comedy of Errors. By William Shakespeare. Directed by Daniel Sullivan. Scenic Design by John Lee Beatty. Costume Design by Toni-Leslie James. Lighting Design by Jeff Roiter. Sound Design by Acme Sound Partners. Music by Greg Pliska. Choreography by Mimi Lieber. Dramaturgy by Robert Blacker. Stage Management by Cole P. Bonenberger. Featuring J. Clint Allen, De'Adre Aziza, Becky Ann Baker, Emily Bergl, Tyler Caffall, Reed Campbell, Keith Eric Chapelle, Robert Creighton, Jesse Tyler Ferguson, Reggie Gowland, Jonathan Hadary, Bryan Langlitz, Brian T. Lawton, Hamish Linklater, Michael McArthur, Rachel McMullin, Heidi Schreck, Skipp Sudduth, Adrienne Weidert, Natalie Woolams-Torres, and Jessica Woo. At the Delacorte Theater in Central Park. 28 May—30 June. Tickets: Free (standing in line or digital lottery); \$175 supporter tickets available on limited basis.

Love's Labour's Lost. A New Musical Based on the Play by William Shakespeare. Songs by Michael Friedman. Book Adapted and Directed by Alex Timbers. Scenic Design by John Lee Beatty. Costume Design by Jennifer Moeller. Lighting Design by Jeff Croiter. Sound Design by Acme Sound Partners. Music Direction by Justin Levine. Choreography by Danny Mefford. Dramaturgy by Anne Davison. Stage Management by Arthur Gaffin. Featuring Daniel Breaker, Kevin del Aguila, Colin Donnell, Michael R. Douglass, Rachel Dratch, Andrew Durand, Bradley Gibson, Kimiko Glenn, Jeff Hiller, Rebecca Naomi Jones, Justin Levine, Patti Murrin, Lucas Near-Verbrugge, Bryce Pinkham, Charlie Pollock, Caesar Samayoa, Maria Thayer, and Audrey Lynn Weston. At the Delacorte Theater in Central Park. 23 July—18 August. Tickets: Free (standing in line or digital lottery); \$175 supporter tickets available on limited basis.

Occupy Olympus. Based on Aristophanes' *Plutus*, *God of Wealth*. Adapted by the Magis Theatre Company. Directed by George Drance. Music by Elizabeth Swados. Lyrics by George Drance and the company. Production Design by Devin Chowske. Stage Management by Katherine Barton. Featuring Becca Ballenger, George Drance, Erika Iverson, Lindsay Lark, Wendy Maples, Ronald Nicholas, Sajeev Pillai, Margi Sharp, and Taylor Valentine. At CSV Flamboyant. 16—21 August. Tickets: \$15-18.

The Rufus Equation. By Ted Cubbin. Directed by Tom Ridgely. Scenic Design by Jason Simms. Costume Design by Ana Milosevic. Lighting Design by Greg Goff. Sound Design by Kortney Barber. Stage Management by Rachel Manheimer. Featuring: Geoffrey Arend, Pierre Epstein, Joy Farmer-Clary, Chris Kipiniak, Dave Quay, and Kristin Villanueva. At the Connelly Theater. 13, 17, 18, 21, 23 August. Tickets: \$15-18.

Track Twelve. Written and Presented by Emily Comisar. Directed by Josh Penzell. Lighting Design and Set Consultancy by Will Cotton. Stage Management by Jay Levy. Featuring Leo Goodman, Charlie Gorrilla, Sarah Sanders, and Keelie A. Sheridan. At Teatro Circulo. 10, 15, 18, 21, 23 August. Tickets: \$15-18.

The TomKat Project. By Brandon Ogborn. Directed by Elly Green. Music by John Ahern. Produced by Dein Sofley. Featuring: Briana Baker, Julie Dahlinger, Walt Delaney, Kevin Knickerbocker, Brandon Ogborn, Micah Sterenberg, and Allison Yolo. At The Player's Theatre. 20—24 August. Tickets: \$15-18.

The Dead Hooker Play. By Scotty Decker. Directed by Scotty Decker and Lindsay Stringfellow. Featuring Jim Conroy-Marco, Scott Decker, Madeleine James, Sean Modica, and Maria Pastel. At The Player's Theatre. 9, 11, 18, 21, and 22 August. Tickets: \$15-18.

The Next Generation in Summer Dance

► Festival TBD: Emergency Glitter & Whim
W'Him as part of Ballet v6.0

MEREDITH BENJAMIN

Late summer is often a slow time for dance in New York, as companies and performers scatter to festivals across the country. Ben Pryor however, creator of the annual “American Realness” festival, injected some “Emergency Glitter” into the contemporary dance scene’s summer with a new festival of the same name, the first iteration of a new project called “Festival TBD.” Held at the Abrons Art Center, and spread out over five days in late July, “Emergency Glitter” featured performances by a number of young choreographers (many of whom performed in each other’s works) as well as a series of conversations and parties at a “B.Y.O.Beer Garden” set up in the center’s courtyard.

Like American Realness, Emergency Glitter draws playfully and provocatively from both high and low culture, with a description that references “feminist ideologies” and “pop cultural phenomenologies” alongside “butt cheeks and twerking” and a recommendation to “Bring an open mind, a generous spirit, a tank top and a fantasy.” This, my friends, is queer studies in motion, and it is having a damn good time.

The audience’s position as spectator was immediately thrown into question as we took our seats at the back of the stage for Rebecca Warner’s “Into Glittering Asphalt,” and looked out into the empty seats of the Playhouse Theatre. Throughout the performance, a dancer would occasionally appear in the audience or the balcony, sometimes watching her onstage counterpart, sometimes mirroring or dancing with her. The performer onstage was thus being observed from both sides, and we, as the audience, were also being watched. This use of the space to multiply the levels of observation was intriguing, but could have been developed further. The majority of the interaction between the six dancers (Evvie Allison, Rachel Berman, Siobhan Burke, Ashley Handel, Juri Onuki, and Warner) occurred onstage, alone and in various groupings, their slides and spins moving to an ever more joyous crescendo.

While Warner focused on the “glitter” to be found in movement—the pleasure inherent in dancing, and dancing with others—the two pieces I saw in the upstairs cinder block Experimental Theatre were more interested in how movement and choreography are constructed and what they conceal.

Grinding and Equations: Two Duets at Abrons, performed by choreographer Gillian Walsh and her dancers Maggie Cloud, Mickey Mahar, and Robert Maynard, had a casual, exploratory air. The titular equations were testing grounds, and the dancers made no efforts to hide the work and communication that went into them. Entering in baggy grey and purple sweats, the dancers chatted casually seemingly oblivious to their audience.

Walsh and Maynard alternated positions, one in a “crab walk” pose—hands and feet on the floor, torso lifted, facing the ceiling—repeatedly propelling the other into the air with a series of traveling thrusts. It was almost uncomfortable to watch when one landed on the other with a loud smack, often evoking a grunt from the dancer on the bottom. Overheard murmurs of “sorry!” or “let’s switch” gave us an opening to their intimate and provisional world. The choreography simultaneously engaged formalism—dancers performed stylized movements carefully synchronized—and lightly mocked it. At one point, Walsh and Maynard responded to spoken counts by flexing their butt cheeks along with the pattern.

The various choreographers whose work I saw share a fascination with pop music, explored in this piece by Walsh and Maynard, dressed in black underwear, swiveling their hips to a loop of Nicki Minaj, while their counterparts continued their own blank-faced gyrations. The deadening repetition and lack of emotion de-sexualized and made banal these movements and poses. But it may have worked a bit too well, and made the piece itself boring.

Lauren Grace Bakst’s piece was entitled “You Are Special,” but steadfastly avoided any presentations of specialness. Dressed in grayish-white sweats, Bakst looked suspiciously at the audience in between standing at various points along the walls. She was later joined by Niall Jones and Lydia Adler Okrent, a pair who eventually made their way into the audience and asked various spectators to read from a vague scripted dialogue, asking if they wanted to be “you” or “me.” This invitation to see subjectivities as transferable had intriguing potential. There seemed to be a tenuous connection between Okrent’s silent mouthing, the angst alluded to by the script, and the ending in which the dancers took turns under a pink sheet. Unfortunately, the piece as a whole never cohered.

Burr Johnson’s piece was paired with Warner’s, and as its title “Shimmering Islands” indicated, was similarly

unafraid of reveling in spectacle and the pleasure of classical technique. The curtain rose to reveal Johnson, posed in front of an empty theatre and then animated by the infectious sounds of Robyn's "Indestructible." He tore through the small space, alternating between classically beautiful movement and playful strutting. His large, powerful body and long limbs were incongruously encased in a delightful short romper emblazoned with a bright floral pattern. The costumes were designed by Reid Bartelme, who performed his own elegant solo, before being joined by Johnson. Even while dancing together, the two never connected, remaining isolated (perhaps a reference to the "islands" of the title), despite Bartelme's yearning looks.

Finally, they both collapsed to the floor, lying as if washed ashore under an ever-brightening light. Rising, the two performers retrieved flower pots from which they distributed a gold-painted wood chip to each audience member: a bit of the shimmer to take with us. Johnson's reconsideration of the potential of technique and spectacle, mixed with playfulness and just enough incongruity to keep things interesting, epitomized the best of Emergency Glitter.

A little further uptown, at the Joyce Theatre in Chelsea, another festival was also promoting the next generation. Ballet has typically found its home with larger, established companies, but Ballet v6.0 featured six small companies, each with their own take on what the art form might look like in the twenty-first century. Unfortunately, I was only able to catch one of the featured companies—Whim W'him, a Seattle-based company directed by former Pacific Northwest Ballet principal Oliver Wevers.


The problem with much so-called "contemporary ballet" is that it all looks strikingly similar: sleek, sexy movements and costumes that would seem cool or exciting to a young ballet dancer who didn't have much sense of the dance world beyond the confines of the ballet studio. Unfortunately, the opening and closing pieces on this program (all choreographed by Wevers) fell into this category, despite some valiant attempts to explore new territory. *Monster*—a series of three duets focusing on "Society, Addiction, and Relationship"—was as unsubtle as its subtitles led me to fear (the dancers actually mimed sniffing cocaine during the second section). In case there was any chance of the audience missing the themes, each was introduced by a section of a poem by R.A. Scion. Wevers seemed

afraid to let the movement speak for itself, resorting frequently, for example, to performers covering their faces with their hands to signal grief or masks.

In the first duet, two men (Andrew Bartee and Jim Kent) dance together, despite the prohibitions of "Society." While it is refreshing to see a ballet choreographer featuring same sex couples, it is hard to claim much subversion of gender norms when the women of the company were consigned exclusively to the traditional supported role (without even the benefit of solos). Anytime women appeared, they were paired with men, who, more often than not, were throwing them about or manipulating them.

Sofa, the final piece on the program, revolved around the titular piece of furniture, which served alternately as prop, obstacle, resting place, and seating for an ever-shifting group of onstage spectators. Danced to Mozart's "Jeune-homme" Piano Concerto No. 9, there were moments of insightful playfulness, but not enough material to sustain the length of the piece.

Overall, the company's dancers were uneven—some, like Lucien Postlewaite (former PNB principal, currently with Les Ballets de Monte Carlo) made the most of the material they had to work with, while others seemed like ballet students still uncomfortable stepping outside of the bounds of classicism.

The most successful piece on the program, and a welcome bit of levity, was *Flower Festival*, in which Wevers reimagines a traditionally classical pas de deux between a young peasant boy and girl as a confrontation between two men (Bartee and Postlewaite) who begin in business-like suits. Seated in opposite corners of the stage like boxers, the flirtatious give-and-take conventions of the traditional pas de deux structure were replaced by a dance-off that was alternately goofy and aggressive, as the men gradually removed layers of clothing, till they were left in tank tops in shorts. Wevers seemed most at home in this playful light-hearted style, where he was able to play knowingly with his familiar, classical ballet tradition. Experimentation with what ballet can be is important, but I hope that choreographers will begin to find more sophisticated and complex avenues to relevance. 





Above: Lucien Postlewaite and Andrew Bartee of Whim W'him.

What You Need to Know About the DSC

About the Doctoral Students' Council

The Doctoral Students' Council is the elected body of masters' and Ph.D. students that makes policy, distributes the student fee monies, and represents student concerns to the administration.

Students can access their program's allocation of student fees once a program is represented on the DSC. In addition to Program Representatives, there are At-Large Representatives elected from the student body. To find this year's Program Representatives and At-Large Representatives, follow the links at <http://cunydisc.org/people>.

If your program is not represented and you'd like to learn how to establish representation, email membership@cunydisc.org.

From the Program and At-Large Representatives

The Plenary elects the leadership in the May meeting. This year's Steering Committee is:

- ▶ Amy Martin, Co-Chair for Student Affairs
- ▶ Colin P. Ashley, Co-Chair for Business
- ▶ Anne Donlon, Co-Chair for Communications
- ▶ Dominique Nisperos, University Student Senate Delegate
- ▶ Stefanie A. Jones, University Faculty Senate Liaison
- ▶ Brandon Aultman, Officer for Outreach
- ▶ Madhuri Karak, Officer for Library & Technology
- ▶ Kristofer Petersen-Overton, Officer for Governance &

Membership

- ▶ Jennifer Prince, Officer for Health & Wellness
- ▶ Rebecca Salois, Officer for Funding
- ▶ Patrick Sweeney, Officer for Student Life & Services

Getting in Touch with the Doctoral Students' Council

The DSC's website, <http://cunydisc.org>, has information about upcoming meetings, governance documents, minutes, and information on services available to students. Reserve one of the DSC rooms (5414, 5409, or 5489) for an event or study session, enter the locker lottery, or sign up for a legal consultation with a lawyer via <http://cunydisc.org>.

Come visit the DSC's office during office hours, which you can find posted on the DSC website, in the Robert E. Gilleece Student Center, room 5495. Feel free to stop in to chat, ask a question, pass on information, buy discounted movie tickets (\$6.50 for AMC/Loews and \$7.50 for Angelika), and pick up some free safe sex materials, pens, and post-its.

The DSC has two listservs: DSC-L, to which any GC student can join and post, and DSCAnnouncement-L, to which only DSC Officers can post. Subscribe to DSC-L or DSCAnnouncement-L via gc.listserv.cuny.edu or by emailing ccc@cunydisc.org.

You can also interact with the DSC on Twitter ([@cunydisc.org](https://twitter.com/cunydiscorg)) and Facebook (www.facebook.com/cunydiscorg), or by email: dsc@cunydisc.org.

Services and Affiliates

For a third year, the Doctoral Students' Council provided lunch and

hosted an open house for incoming students at the New Student Orientation.

The DSC awards grants to support cultural events, conferences, performances, professional development activities, publications, seminars, and other projects organized by students. The deadline for the first round of grant applications is September 20. The first Grants Committee meeting to discuss and approve grants will take place Monday, September 30 in room 5489. Applicants are invited to arrive at 6:00 p.m.

The DSC continues to support and fund around forty chartered organizations. If you would like to join a chartered organization, the current list of organizations and their contact information is available on the DSC website. If you would like to start a student group, information on how to charter an organization is also on the website.

The DSC also charters The Adjunct Project, the *Advocate*, OpenCUNY, and the Fundraising and Alumni Commission (FAC).

In addition, the DSC recognizes Program Student Associations. Students who would like to organize a PSA can consult the resources on the website, and email the DSC with questions.

Last semester, the DSC created a Governance Task Force to advocate for increased student representation on all committees throughout the Graduate Center; investigate, report, and resolve infractions of governance reported by students; and discuss changes to Graduate Center and program level governance.

If you know of any issues the Governance Task Force should investi-

gate, email or stop by the DSC office.

Current Initiatives

The DSC's mission is to democratize the university; to support a community of GC students; to promote transparency; to represent student interests; to secure elected voting participation on decision-making bodies; and to allocate student fees to various activities.

The DSC's recent efforts have included moving blood drives off-campus until the FDA ban on MSM blood is lifted, which we successfully established last year. We've advocated for gender-neutral bathrooms, a project that which was awarded capital money. We affirmed the importance of fifth floor Robert E. Gilleece Student Center spaces (comprised of student offices, conference rooms, and computer lab). We've called for improved services, including changes to the library catalogue, and transparency and equity in the distribution of funding.

The DSC has been putting particular effort into ensuring and increasing elected student representation, particularly at the program level where each program standing committee must have elected student members.


The DSC's Parental Leave Working Group is pushing for the establishment of an inclusive parental leave policy and work accommodation for

DSC

Home
News
Services
Funding
Resources
Forms
People
Governance
Meetings
Budgets
Resolutions & Reports
Calendars
Chartered Organizations
Program Student Associations
The Advocate
The Adjunct Project
OpenCUNY
Fundraising and Alumni Commission
GC Library and Technology Blog
Health and Wellness Blog
FAQs
About the DSC

Username: * Password: * [Create new account](#) [Request new password](#)

THE DOCTORAL STUDENTS' COUNCIL



The Doctoral Students' Council is the sole policymaking body representing students in doctoral and master's programs at The Graduate Center of The City University of New York.

Upcoming Meetings

There are no meetings scheduled.

News and Announcements

VOTE! VOTE! VOTE! 2013-2014 DSC Elections:
<https://eballot4.votenet.com/dsc/login.cfm> @
22 weeks 6 days ago

Today is the deadline for the last round of grants. Submit a proposal for student led activities for students: <http://cunydisc.org/grants>
24 weeks 5 hours ago

Subscribe to the DSC listserv: <https://gc.listserv.cuny.edu/ScriptsGC/wa-qc.exe?SUBED1=DSC-L&A=1> @
24 weeks 4 days ago

Angelika Film Center discount tickets now available. Check or Money Order only. \$7.50 per ticket. Limit 5. Check website for office hours
24 weeks 4 days ago

<< 4 of 51 >>

Executive Officers	At-Large Steering Officers	Upcoming Office Hours
Amy Martin Email @ Co-Chair for Student Affairs	Brandon Aultman Email @ Officer for Outreach	Today

GC students.

In the Spring 2013 semester the DSC Plenary endorsed resolutions on the CUNY University Student Senate (USS) and Proposed USS Fee Increase; in Support of Cooper Union Students; on Parity of Stipend Limits for DSC Steering Committee Members; on the CUNY Library Catalogue; and Affirming the Robert E. Gilleece Student Center.

Plenary also endorsed a letter to the administration on Open Meetings. The full texts of these resolutions and letter are available at cunydisc.org/resolutions.


Upcoming Dates

DSC Plenary meetings are open to members of the GC and the public to attend. They will take place at 6:00 p.m. on the following Fridays in

5414:

- September 27
- October 25
- November 22
- December 13
- February 21
- March 21
- April 11
- May 9 (*5:00 p.m. and meeting of elected representatives at 6:00 p.m.)

Our plenary guest at the September meeting will be Jenny Furlong, Director of Career Planning and Professional Development. Students are welcome to bring questions.

The first DSC party will take place at 8 p.m. on October 25 in 5409 and 5414. All Graduate Center students are invited. 

Anne Donlon

Co-Chair for Communications
September 2013 GC Advocate 47

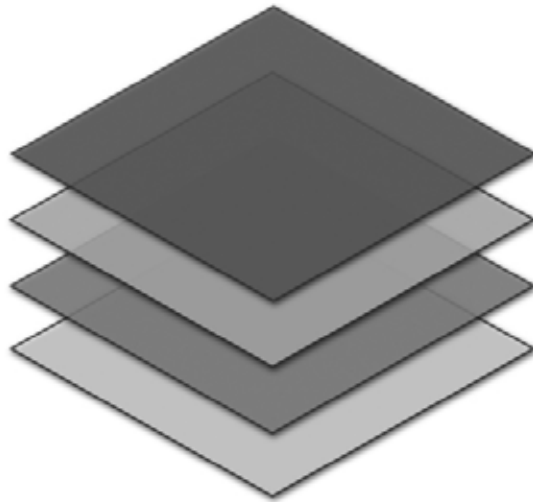


WWW.PHDCOMICS.COM

own your own data

participatory digital media for

RESEARCH, CONFERENCES, COURSES, GROUPS, ACTIVISM, and _____.



opencuny.org