

New York City News

NATIONAL LAWYERS GUILD – NYC CHAPTER



SPRING-SUMMER 2016

NLG National Convention Coming to NYC August 3-7 *Epic Justice Battles Loom as Guild Gathers on Washington Square*

“We are facing the most serious Constitutional crisis that this country has faced since...”

You can almost hear Arthur Kinoy’s legendary call to action as summer 2016 approaches. It is one of the starkest political junctures in forty years, where the direction of the U.S. Supreme Court for the next quarter century hangs in the balance, and a presidential candidate has unleashed words of hate into public dialogue.

This is a year when you’ll want to strategize with the movement legal community when the NLG’s 79th Annual Convention convenes in New York City. CLE’s begin August 3 and 4, and the convention opens Thursday evening August 4. Through the generous co-sponsorship of NYU School of Law’s Public Interest Law Center, the Guild will meet on Washington Square to hear from outstanding speakers, hold stimulating and vital workshops and CLE’s. You’ll confer with people from across the nation engaged in work in communities fighting for racial justice, the



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poor, workers’ and immigrant rights. Scores of people returning from Cleveland and Philadelphia will add special energy and vitality to the convention’s program work.

Because it’s summer when legal professionals, law students and activists alike have scheduling flexibility, this will be an exceptionally accessible convention. It will feature affordable accommodations in air conditioned NYU dormitories and outstanding meeting and work space at NYU School of Law.

Invite your out-of-town NLG friends for a visit, prepare to host guests on your living room couch, tell your friends about the air-conditioned dorm space in the East Village. Most of all, tell them this year’s NLG convention is an event they will want to attend!

REGISTER TODAY by visiting www.nlg.org/convention, where you’ll also find full information on the convention, and your friends from outside NYC can find the amaz-

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LAWYERS GUILD
New York City News**

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President's Column

BY CARL LIPSCOMBE

Welcome to the spring edition of the NLG NYC Chapter Newsletter. As each month passes and I learn more about the work of my fellow Guild-members I remain inspired. From the water crisis in upstate NY to the Central American refugee crisis, we are at the forefront of the social challenges facing NY. But if the current political climate is any indicator of what's to come, we have our work cut out for us.

Not only will we have to continue our existing work supporting political dissidents and oppressed communities broadly, but we will also have to adapt as both a bar association and social justice organization to this new political reality. Specifically, we will need to figure out:

- How we substantively engage in social movements led by oppressed communities
- How we support people of color-led organizations in providing culturally competent legal services to their communities
- What we need to change in order to increase the participation of people of color as members, leaders, and staff in our Chapter and the Guild, more broadly
- What are the programs that will maximize our

impact while also enabling us to make a unique contribution to social movements.

- And more generally, how we ensure that our values are espoused in our organizational policies and practices.

The Executive Committee of the NLG NYC began this discussion in February at our Planning Retreat. At the retreat we not only identified goals for the next period but we also envisioned how the Guild could grow and have an impact for decades to come.

However, this was only the beginning. We hope that you will take on this discussion in your committees, in your practices, and at the National Law for the People Convention taking place this August in NYC.

Lastly, I want to recognize our executive director Susan Howard who has been working diligently to plan our upcoming national convention, increase our membership, support our committees, and raise resources for our Chapter. Thanks, Susan!

Until next time, onward and upward!

Yours in struggle,
Carl Lipscombe
President, NLG NYC Chapter

Congrats to the Graduates!

BROOKLYN LAW SCHOOL

Jerehme P. Bamberger
Ellen Piris Perez
Jill Rudge
Samantha Weiss

BENJAMIN N. CARDOZO SCHOOL OF LAW

Sara A. Doody
Amy Helfant
Dan-Devarha St. Juste

COLUMBIA LAW SCHOOL

Gregg Badichek
Julia Bedell
Amy Elmgren

CUNY SCHOOL OF LAW

Miles Ashton
Julie Gilgoff
Kelly Anne Herrmann
Hilal Khalil Homaidan
Michelle Lewin
Jackelyn Mariano
Hoda Mitwally
TL Popejoy
Marc Ramirez
Chloe Serinsky

FORDHAM UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW

Rodrigo Bacus
Michael D'Ambrosio
Jeffrey F. Kinkle
Noelle Park
John-Chris Record Chávez
Laura Wooley

NYU SCHOOL OF LAW

Frances Davila
Leo Gertner
Jacqueline Horani
Michael J. Puleo Jr.

PACE SCHOOL OF LAW

Kat Fiedler
Steven Lapkoff
J. Justin Woods

RUTGERS-NEWARK SCHOOL OF LAW

Pooja Patel
Rob Rossmeissl

SETON HALL UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW

Omer Wasqas Khwaja

The Parole Preparation Project

Interview with Mark Shervington

This is an interview with Mark Shervington, a former Parole Preparation Project participant who was released on August 6, 2015. The Parole Preparation Project collaborates with parole-eligible individuals serving life sentences in New York State prisons; we work together to develop a strong parole packet and release plan and provide support for the actual interview. PPP does not provide an attorney to represent the parole applicants we work with, and our volunteers are lawyers, law students, social workers, graduate students, professionals, activists, legal workers, and others concerned about mass incarceration and parole justice.

What did your volunteers do that was most helpful during the process of working together?

One day, I asked them what they were getting out of this. Were they getting paid? College credit? No. They were just genuinely concerned. Once I realized that they were just real people who cared, I was comfortable with being open and straightforward with them.

My team was Emily Sims, Whitney Seiler, and Hillary Packer. They pushed, they pulled, they prompted, they did everything they could for us to focus on what would make a better presentation. The key was in the verbal communication between the Board and me. The preparation with the team and the mock interviews. It was intense. I actually felt like I was with the Board, freezing up.

How did they help you unfreeze?

I just had an ah-ha moment. I'm really tired of going through this. I had gone to the Board nine times before. I decided that this is the last time I'm going to go through this so I was going to make the best presentation possible.



It was the overall process, something like an evolution. Like in *The Matrix* when Neo went through rebirth.

What is the worst thing a volunteer can do?

Give the participants false hope. Don't let the participant delude themselves. Some people think that because the Project gets involved they will get released. I felt better about the process because the team was helping me, but I understood that their involvement didn't guarantee my release.

Also not listening. Encourage the participant to be open about themselves. Talk about what led to the crime. It could be something in their life experience that led them to the eventuality. I had a sense of it but I didn't have the words for it. One day Hillary says, Don't

“Once I realized that they were just real people who cared, I was comfortable with being open and straightforward with them.”

you see it? The Parole Prep process helped me connect the dots and put words to it.

What kind of reentry plan did you have?

I ended up going to a three-quarter house in Brooklyn. Some of the three-quarter houses are a little shady, but it was good to have a place to be released to and not have to start with the Shelter system. When I first got there, I was hungry and I said to guy standing out in front – Take me over to that deli. He said – *What do you mean? You're free! ... Just go.* It was good to be reminded. But after a while, I didn't like it there so Hillary got me into the Fortune Society's Academy (aka The Castle).

What programs have been most important to you since you got out?

The Coming Home Program at St. Luke's Hospital. I got myself medically checked out – first and most important. And I live at The Fortune Academy in Harlem.

Is there anything else you'd like to say?

I received a 2016 NLG Haywood Burns Memorial Fellowship to work with the Project and I'll represent the Project on a panel at the NLG Convention this summer. I'm also seeking full-time work as a paralegal and ... I'm single.

The interview was conducted by Liz Gewirtz, an intern at the Parole Preparation Project.

Convention

continued from page 1

ing pricing information for the dormitory housing and at a hotel alternative. Currently enrolled students at NYU School of Law, including 2016 graduates, receive free registration.

Editor's Note – The “Spring Fling” will Return in Spring 2017:

When the incoming NLG national leadership asked the chapter last year if we could host the 2016 NLG Convention, it presented a problem as complex as the bar exam: how to have a national conference in one of the world's most expensive cities. We were pleasantly surprised to find we could orchestrate an NLG convention in NYC which has a prospect for strong attendance, includes work of allied and diverse public interest

communities for some programmatic cross-pollination, and in the process “Build the Guild”, putting the national organization in a stronger place. But to do a more affordable school-based convention, we realized that we could not also do a major “Spring Fling” event this year. So the “Spring Fling” will return in Spring 2017. The chapter is thus taking a financial hit to help build the national organization. So in addition to attending the Convention this year, remember to renew your dues this year, and if you are in a position to do so, consider a tax-deductible donation to our soon-to-be-launched partner, The NLG-NYC Chapter Foundation, Inc. More about the foundation, and our wonderful new 168 Canal Street, 6th Floor offices (shared with the A.J. Muste Institute) in the next chapter newsletter!

Not a standard biography...

First Two Women Justices “More Effective Together”

SISTERS IN LAW

How Sandra Day O'Connor and Ruth Bader Ginsburg Went To The Supreme Court and Changed the World

By Linda Hirshman
Harper Collins 2015

REVIEWED BY

HON. EMILY JANE GOODMAN

Reprinted from the New York Law Journal

Let's be clear. Sandra Day O'Connor is no Ruth Bader Ginsburg. Ginsburg gave us the legal architecture of women's place in America. O'Connor, the first woman on the Supreme Court, gave us George W. Bush. The tie-breaker in *Bush v Gore*, O'Connor adds color and contrast, but the Reagan appointee was vastly more Republican than feminist. And while the ostensible thesis of the book is that sisterhood is powerful, the real story that author Linda Hirshman tells us, is the story of, “The Notorious RBG.”

This is not a standard biography or dual biography, nor has Hirshman interviewed the principals. The book is based on her own legal expertise, justices' papers, Opinions, public records, and interviews with supporting cast. Smart money says that O'Connor declined to participate and the book's concept wouldn't work with Ginsburg interviews alone. Without a direct word from her subjects, the writer seamlessly weaves their voices, along with history, politics, and her own point of view that only the sleepest reader can miss.

Hirshman is a deliciously sly writer. “Harvard noticed that they didn't have any women professors.” Or “[O'Connor's] passionate advocacy for Rehnquist's confirmation for a seat she, as state Senator, had proposed for a woman, neatly presents the question of how serious a feminist she was.” Meantime, Ginsburg, a crafty strategist herself, began developing a civil rights movement based on sex, even when some feminist scholars, and even the ACLU where she ran the Women's Rights Project, disagreed with her. She made case law with facts that appeared counter-intuitive – representing male plaintiffs claiming discrimination – building on one ‘gotcha’ moment after another. If a widowed father was denied his wife's social security benefits, though a wife was entitled to her deceased husband's, well, then, the discrimination was based on sex.” Next case.

Alix Kates Shulman's 1970 “A Marriage Agreement,” a radical domestic equality document that divided all home and child related work between Shulman, the women's libera-



Courtesy of HarperCollins

tion activist, and her husband, had sparked a fire in Ginsburg, the young professor of federal procedure. As lawyer and Justice her long range vision and strategy to establish equality regardless of gender, has been to end sex role stereotypes and discrimination based on sex through the equal protection clause. She, of course, also recognized that the Equal Rights Amendment, which O'Connor, as state legislator, hadn't considered necessary, would have provided a direct path, but fell three states short of enactment.

It should not surprise us, though it does, that Ginsburg, fiercely pro-choice, has always disagreed with the Court's *Roe v Wade* analysis.

Ginsburg's fight has long been, “to transform the constitutional status of women in America,” though not (yet) the radical feminist vision of overhauling the social structure of patriarchy that was behind the Shulman marriage manifesto of 1970. Ginsburg, like John Stuart Mill writing *On the Subjection of Women*, may not necessarily think that keeping women down stops with equality, but that we have to start with equality.

It should not surprise us, though it does, that Ginsburg, fiercely pro-choice, has always disagreed with the Court's *Roe v Wade* analysis. That opinion is based on privacy, physicians' expertise, trimesters of pregnancy, while Ginsburg argues that a woman's right and access to abortion should have been established on equal protection grounds, as developed in a brief by New York lawyer,

Nancy Stearns for amici in *Roe*. For Ginsburg, the “justification for protecting abortion is women's equality.” In the Justice's robust vision of women's lives, Hirshman writes, “it is the unfettered right to make the decision that is central to a woman's equality. Telling her what to do is the core violation.” No one has ever said it better than Ruth Bader Ginsberg: “Women need to control their reproduction if they are going to participate as equals in American life.” But O'Connor, whose appointment thrilled millions of women in the same way that many swooned over the election of Margaret Thatcher, had called the procedure, “abhorrent,” “repugnant,” and inconsistent with the interests of the fetus (even before “personhood” came along). Yet, as Hirshman tells it, while O'Connor would not “send women back to 1972...she would not let them move beyond the backlash that erupted after 1973 either.”

Still, the writer considers the first two women justices more effective together than separately even as she writes that O'Connor was not a committed strategist for women's rights and calls much of her work “ungenerous, even in cases where she voted for the woman's side...” Yet according to Hirshman's study, when Ruth (as everyone in the feminist legal community circa 1970's thinks of her) joined the Supreme Court bench, the first woman or TFWOSC, was more likely to vote on the liberal side in cases involving women's issues than in any other area. O'Connor recognized that she was an affirmative action baby, but Hirshman writes, she “tightened the noose” around affirmative action, until casting one saving vote just before her retirement. In short, no one would mistake the first woman as “a voice for social change.”

Joan Washington: A Great Fighter

BY CYBELE GASPARD

Chapter member Joan Washington passed away in February. This tribute was written by her granddaughter Cybele Gaspard.

Joan: A great fighter
She fought for social justice
Every path has its puddle
The light of New York City
Courageous young high school student left
for a new path
From Miami, to New York City
If the wind will not serve, take to the oars
Hard working single mother
Time and time, wait for no man
Mano Lax and Bessie Lax were Jewish
They left Europe during the war period
Both moved to New York, Where they met
each other
Mano and Bessie had two daughters
The oldest was named Lois, and the youngest
Joan
As a family they moved to Miami
Joan left for New York in the mid-1960s
Joan met Roosevelt Houston, and had Raina
Later Joan met Haywood Burns, a lawyer,
they shared a passion for justice
They fell in love
She later met Sunny Jackson, her partner, and
best friend for 25 years
Raina met Patrick Gaspard, they had two
kids, Indigo and I
Spectacular friend, grandma, and a
wonderful role model
I sing of the one who was always courageous
Charms do not perform miracles on the
shelf,
They perform for those who are brave
She always fought for what she believed in
Mighty oaks from little acorns grow
When Joan was a kid she always had strong
opinions
She used to question adults
As to why black people were not treated
equally
Joan left home when she was a teenager
Joan left because she didn't agree with her
parent's views on
Civil rights and social justice
When Joan left she went to Manhattan
She got a job at a coffee house in the village
One day Roosevelt Houston, a black man
came into the coffee house

Roosevelt introduced himself as a musician,
songwriter
He wrote a song for Joan, entitled "Joanie"
They fell deeply in love.
Love is blind
The young couple had my mom, Raina
Roosevelt was a black man, and Joan a white
woman
Many people discriminated against their
relationship
A trouble shared, is a trouble halved
During the 1960s interracial marriage was
illegal
In Virginia, where Loving versus Virginia
took place
And in several other states
Although interracial marriage was not ever
illegal in New York
It was still very rare, and considered
"incorrect"
And with no fear in side
No need to run, no need to hide
You're standing strong and tall
You're the bravest of them all
If on courage we must call
Then just keep tryin'
And tryin', and tryin', you're a lion
In your own way, be a lion
She thought people didn't understand her
strong views on rights
She thought that she was the only one
Who understood that everyone should be
treated equally
She started fighting for social justice
As a strong courageous woman
Where she met so many other people
Who believed in fighting and not quitting
Union is strength
My Grandma, Joan Washington
Was alive during many moments of tragedy
and of triumph
Not only was she alive, she was aware
Sparking a passion to fight for equality and
justice
La raison du plus fort est toujours la
meilleure
The motive of the strongest is always the best
In 1970-1973 Joan Washington worked for
the American civil liberties union, ACLU
The ACLU worked on helping people get
social justice
At the ACLU she worked as the legal
secretary to the Assistant Director



Joan and her granddaughter Cybele Gaspard.

She quit the ACLU
When they started to support the KKK's
freedom of speech
In 1974-1987 she worked at a social justice
law firm
Called the Center for Constitutional Rights,
CCR
As the legal assistant to William M Kunstler
At the law firm each case was based off the
Constitution
To help those whose rights were being
violated
While Joan worked at the CCR, and the
ACLU
She worked on many cases, some of them
were:
Angela Davis, Lenny Bruce and the Chicago 7
In her free time she protested for social
justice
Joan loved to fight
She protested for the free South Africa
movement
And for 23 years, she sat on the board for the
Asian American Legal Defense and education
fund
A woman's strength is a multitude of words
Joan, a great fighter
When you belong to a minority you have to
be better, in order to be equal
The light of New York City
Hard working single mother
Always courageous, always had strong
opinions
There are two sides to every question.
And Joan lived like she knew the answers.

Meet Our Officers and Executive Committee Members

Chapter Officers:

President Carl Lipscombe is a policy advocate, organizer, and attorney. Currently, he is national policy coordinator of the Black Alliance for Just Immigration and a consultant with the Future of Work Initiative. Previously, Carl was a public defender at The Bronx Defenders, and a campaign organizer at ALIGN: The Alliance for a Greater NY, Jobs with Justice, and Right To The City. Carl graduated from Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law and received a B.A. in philosophy from Brooklyn College.

Co-Vice President Elena L. Cohen is an attorney and a doctoral candidate at the CUNY Graduate Center. Elena was President of the NLG-NYC Chapter for the past two

years, and she was a coordinator for the Mass Defense Committee at the time of the Occupy Wall Street (OWS) protests. She is a member of the Animal Rights Activism Committee, the national NLG Queer Caucus, and the International Committee. She was a coordinator for the recent NLG-NYC delegation to Cuba. Elena's academic work focuses on sexuality in protest activity.

Co-Vice President Mark Taylor is a partner at Rankin & Taylor working primarily on civil rights and criminal defense matters. Mark is a past co-vice president of the Chapter.

Treasurer Rose Regina Lawrence is the executive assistant at the Software Freedom Law Center, a nonprofit offering

pro bono legal services for free and open source software projects. Previously, she was the office manager and legal assistant at a worker side labor law firm, and coordinated jail support for OWS. She is co-chair of Next Gen Committee and is active with the International Association of Democratic Lawyers (IADL) Youth. She has a degree from Simon's Rock College in Politics, Law, and Society; and she wrote her thesis on the squatter movement in New York City. Rose Regina previously worked at the A.J. Muste Memorial Institute and Small World News. She has been organizing workshops on understanding and resisting digital surveillance since 2012.

Executive Committee Members:

Marco Conner currently works at Transportation Alternatives, managing the organization's city and state legislative agendas, monitoring NYC's traffic safety enforcement and prosecution, and providing internal legal support. He is a 2014 law graduate of Cardozo Law School where he was a board member of the NLG chapter. He worked in the Housing Rights Clinic, and interned at the Center for Popular Democracy. Marco does not eat animals and tries to practice and live in a way that is anti-oppressive and holistic. He is originally from Denmark and has made the United States and New York City his permanent home.

Michael Decker is an attorney in private practice, where his pro bono clients include the Catholic Worker, the Clemency Project, Immigration Equality, and NYCHA tenants. He is a graduate of Cardozo Law School, where he was an Alexander Fellow in the Chambers of Hon. Susan D. Wigenton, and a Public Interest Law Student Fellow. For many years he was a volunteer and legal committee member for Develop Don't Destroy Brooklyn, opposing the Atlantic Yards development. He recently returned from the NLG's Cuba Delegation and looks forward to furthering the Chapter's Cuban relationship.

Alek Felstiner is an attorney at Levy Ratner, PC, a worker-side labor and employment firm. He represents unions and their membership at the National Labor Relations Board, in arbitrations, and in court. Alek also represents individuals and groups of employees fighting to protect their right to minimum wage, overtime, and a workplace free from discrimination and retaliation. Alek clerked for Judge Barbara Jacobs Rothstein in the United States District Court for the District of Columbia, and served as an Honors Attorney

at the United States Department of Labor in Washington D.C, where he represented the Solicitor of Labor in cases ranging from employee benefits to mine safety.

Cristina Gallo has been the chairperson of the Chapter's Labor & Employment Committee for three years. She currently practices labor, employee benefits, and wage and hour law in private practice. Prior to law school in Los Angeles, she worked as a labor union researcher and strategic campaigner. Cristina has been a member of the Mass Incarceration Committee, and a legal observer and member of the Mass Defense Committee.

Elba Galvan has worked as a litigator and appellate attorney in two private firms, and has managed a solo practice. She was special counsel to the Puerto Rican Legal Defense and Education Fund (currently LatinoJustice PRLDEF), and she was a Law Clerk to SDNY Judge Analisa Torres and NYC Civil Court Judge Laura Johnson. She is a past president of the Puerto Rican Bar Association, and a current deputy regional president of the Hispanic National Bar Association (HNBA). She was the recipient of the Puerto Rican Bar Association's 2011 Excellence in Advocacy Women's Award. She received her B.A. from Cornell University and J.D. from Howard University School of Law. Elba is active in the immigrants' rights community, and is one of the executive producers of a narrative feature film that advocates for immigration reform entitled "Dreamer." As a result of her work as co-chair of the New York Women's Bar Association legislation committee, the Association issued a position statement supporting the New York State Dream Act, a bill that will help undocumented students to attend college.

Lauren Gazzola is a writer at the Center

for Constitutional Rights (CCR), a longtime social justice activist, and a member of the NLG Animal Rights Activism Committee. She is a member of the SHAC 7, six activists and a nonprofit organization who were convicted of "animal enterprise terrorism" for their work with Stop Huntingdon Animal Cruelty (SHAC), an international, grassroots animal rights campaign dedicated to closing the notorious animal testing laboratory, Huntingdon Life Sciences. Lauren served 40 months in federal prison for her work on the SHAC campaign. She recently completed studies for an interdisciplinary M.A. through Antioch University in Law, History, and Philosophy of Free Speech and the First Amendment. She is the author of "Political Captivity" in *The Ethics of Captivity*, Lori Gruen, Ed., Oxford, 2014.

Valeria Gheorghiu is a multi-lingual contract attorney. Valeria co-founded United Contract Attorneys drawing from her prior work as a global justice organizer, and as a workers' rights attorney at NGOs such as South Jersey Legal Services. She practiced immigration, non-profit, and criminal defense law at her office in Kingston, New York. Her more notable cases included obtaining dismissal of charges in the interest of justice for Occupy New Paltz, establishing that a pagan association was entitled to a property tax exemption for its religious and charitable purposes, and arguing international human rights law in immigration proceedings. At Vermont Law School she was an Albert Schweitzer Fellow working to stop a gold mine in Romania. As a 3L she was a Fellow at the Center for World Indigenous Studies working on farmers rights in India. Valeria also initiated a legal text drive to sev-

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Natasha Lycia Ora Bannan Elected National President



The current National Lawyers Guild national president is chapter member **Natasha Lycia Ora Bannan**. She has maintained a tremendously active schedule in addition to her duties as Associate Counsel at LatinoJustice PRLDEF:

- On May 21 moderated panels at the Left Forum: on Venezuela, and on colonialism, gender, and sexual and reproductive rights in Puerto Rico.
- Presented on employing a gender-based perspective in lawyering and from the bench at the Seventh International Conference of the *Tribunal Supremo Popular* (Cuban People's Supreme Court), and on gender-based discrimination at work and the targeting of immigrant women of color at the *Congreso de Genero* (Gender Congress) in Havana, Cuba on May 11 and 13.
- In connection with the April 19-21 United Nations General Assembly Special Session, (#UNGASS2016), a [meeting of UN member states](#) to assess and debate the world's

drug control priorities, Natasha met with racial justice organizations conferring on the impact of drug policy on communities of color. "Drug policy has been used to criminalize communities of color, through jails and immigration detention." #StopTheHarm.

- Spoke on the Puerto Rico debt crisis at John Jay College on April 14.
- Participated in a briefing on Capitol Hill on April 4 following an Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) hearing on public debt and poverty in Puerto Rico. "We've heard a lot of the discourse around the economic crisis as being just a narrow debtor and creditor issue, when what we're really talking about is a much larger humanitarian crisis. You can't divorce economic policies from social policies."
- Contributed a column to the March 16 Hispanic National Bar Assn newsletter on Puerto Rico's debt and humanitarian crisis.

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Meet Our Officers

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eral developing country law school libraries as Co-Chair of the International Law Society.

Andy Izenson is an Associate Attorney with Diana Adams Law & Mediation, and is a passionate advocate for queer and nontraditional families and for trans and gender-nonconforming youth. Andy is an activist and educator around gender, sexuality, positive consent practices, and sexual communication. While at New York Law School on a Trustee Scholarship, Andy affiliated with the Justice Action Center, concentrating in Social Justice and Family Law, and chaired the NLG Student Chapter, the Stonewall Law Students Association, and Law Students for Reproductive Justice. Andy's "Radicalizing Consent: Towards Implementing an Affirmative Consent Model in New York's Rape Law," received the Justice Action Center's "Outstanding Work on a Capstone" award and was later published on the Yes Means Yes blog. Andy is a trained mediator and a trained collaborative attorney, as well as a member of the NYC Bar Association and the LGBT Bar Association, and is an NLG Legal Observer.

Joel R. Kupferman is the co-chair of the NLG Environmental Justice Committee (local and national), and executive director of both the New York Environmental Law & Justice

Project and the Environmental Initiative for Haiti. Joel was co-counsel in *Benzman v. Whitman and EPA*, in which the judge found EPA Administrator Christie Whitman's statement that the air was safe in lower Manhattan after 9/11 to be egregious. Joel represents tenants, community gardens, public parks, indigenous people, and workers' groups on environmental justice issues from lower Manhattan to the Gulf Coast to Haiti.

Devin McDougall is an attorney in private practice, focusing on environmental law and nonprofit law. He is a 2012 graduate of Columbia Law School, where he was on the Executive Committee of the NLG chapter. Devin has been a member of the NLG-NYC Executive Committee since 2012, and is Co-Chair of the NLG-NYC Next Generation Committee. This year he has worked with Next Gen to help organize a Zen retreat in Maine, a potluck party, and a collaborative encryption workshop.

Daniel L. Meyers is a Criminal Defense/Civil Rights Attorney. He has been practicing since 1967, and has been a member of the NYC Chapter since 1968. From 1974-2001, he was an attorney member of the Attica legal team. Danny is a past president of the Chapter.

Ann Schneider has practiced law for 25

years on behalf of union members, specializing in divorce, housing and consumer law. She is a writer and activist who has been involved in feminist, labor, anti-nuclear, death penalty, and anti-imperialist causes over the years. She was the chapter's unpaid coordinator during our financial crisis of the mid-90's.

Martin R. Stolar has been a lawyer since 1968. He was a member of the original New York Law Commune, a partner of Stolar, Alterman & Gulielmetti, and has been in individual private practice since 1987. Marty has represented hundreds of arrested demonstrators as part of the Mass Defense Committee, including Black Panthers, civil rights activists, anti-war activists, welfare mothers, Young Lords, Vieques activists, RNC and OWS demonstrators and just about everyone who comes within the scope of the NYC Chapter's Mass Defense Committee. Other notable cases include The Camden 28, The Attica rebellion, assorted Grand Jury resisters, post-9/11 detainees, the 34th Street Subway bomb plot, and *Handschu v. SSD*, the now 44 year old action attempting to control the activities of the NYPD's Intelligence operation. Marty has been part of the NLG since he began practicing law, and has been President of the NYC Chapter for five terms.

Remembering Attorney Bill Schaap

BY ATTORNEY MICHAEL SMITH

William H. Schaap, radical lawyer and co-founder/publisher of CovertAction Quarterly and Sheridan Square Press, died on February 25, 2016, of pulmonary disease at his apartment in Manhattan. He was 75.

Born in Brooklyn, New York on March 1, 1940 to Maurice and Leah (nee Lerner) Schaap, Bill Schaap was raised in Freeport, New York. His older brother was the late sports broadcaster and author Dick Schaap. Bill received his BA from Cornell University in 1961. He graduated in 1964 from the law school of the University of Chicago, where he became part of the civil rights movement in 1963, counseling students arrested for protesting segregated housing.

After receiving his law degree, he worked as an associate for several years at the Wall Street firm of Fried, Frank, Harris, Shriver & Jacobson. During this time he joined the radical National Lawyers Guild, and his commitment to civil rights, anti-Vietnam War and leftist political causes deepened. In 1968 when Columbia students were arrested for occupying a building on campus, Schaap represented and got many of them released from jail.

When William Kunstler, president of the Center for Constitutional Rights, asked Schaap to head a project to defend U.S. military resisters to the Vietnam War, Schaap left his Wall Street law firm. He and his wife, Ellen Ray, spent three years in Japan and Germany counseling and defending American GI resisters. Though he had no previous training in military law, he learned on the job and claimed that he never lost a single case.

In 1976, Schaap and Ray moved to Washington DC, where he became the editor of the Military Law Reporter. With Louis Wolf and the controversial former CIA operative Philip Agee, Schaap and Ray founded and edited CovertAction Information Bulletin, which eventually expanded into a glossy, source-noted magazine called Covert Action Quarterly. Initially, the focus of the magazine was the illegal activities of the CIA around the world, but it later branched out to report on domestic abuses by the National Security Agency and FBI. The journal's exposés from 1978-2005 included in-depth stories on the CIA's destabilization, assassination and disinformation programs in Jamaica, Chile, Grenada, Vietnam, Nicaragua, Guatemala, Panama, Spain, Greece, Turkey, Israel, Palestine, South Africa, Rwanda, Mozambique, the Philippines and many other countries. Schaap, Ray and Wolf wrote and researched many of the articles themselves, but they also recruited prominent progressive voices like Noam Chomsky, Ramsey Clark, Diana Johnstone and Mumia Abu-Jamal to write for the publication.

In the early years CovertAction Information Bulletin identified CIA agents in print based on research from public unclassified sources. The Intelligence Identities Protection Act, passed by Congress in 1982, was aimed primarily at preventing the naming of agents by CovertAction. But once the law was passed, the magazine stopped identifying agents. No one was ever prosecuted under the law until Vice President Dick Cheney's chief of staff Lewis "Scooter" Libby was convicted in 2003 for leaking the name of CIA operative Valerie Plame to newspaper columnist Robert Novak.

Schaap was an articulate and relentless opponent of the Vietnam War. In the early 70s, he and Ray were arrested along with several others for protesting the war at a session of Congress. From the visitors' gallery they interrupted the proceedings by playing tapes of the U.S. bombing of Vietnam.

In 1980, Schaap and Ray moved to New York City and founded Sheridan Square Press, first publishing books about the CIA by former CIA agents and later a wider variety of books. These included *Deadly Deceits: My 25 Years in the CIA* by Ralph Mc Gehee; *Secret Contenders* by



PHOTO CREDIT ACCRA SHEPP

Bill Schaap and his partner Ellen Ray in Duarte Square December 17, 2011

Melvin Beck; *Profits of War: Inside the Secret U.S.-Israeli Arms Network* by Ari Ben-Menashe; *Destiny Betrayed: JFK, Cuba and the Garrison Case* by Jim DiEugenio; *Bioterror: Manufacturing War the American Way* edited by William H. Schaap and Ellen Ray; *The Street and Other Stories* by Irish Republican Army leader Gerry Adams; *Guantánamo: What the World Should Know* by Michael Ratner and Ellen Ray; and most prominently, *On the Trail of the Assassins: My Investigation and Prosecution of the Murder of President Kennedy* by former New Orleans District Attorney Jim Garrison, which became a number one *New York Times* bestseller and the basis for the Oliver Stone movie *JFK*.

When President Ronald Reagan's former national security adviser Robert McFarlane sued Sheridan Square Press for libeling him in Ben-Menashe's book *Profits of War*, Sheridan Square lost its financial backers and was forced to shut down. The case was eventually thrown out by the courts.

In 1986 Schaap and Ray founded the non-profit Institute for Media Analysis and began publishing *Lies of Our Times*, a magazine of media criticism that analyzed the underlying political assumptions and biases of *The New York Times* and other mainstream media. In 1988, the Institute organized a three-day conference at Harvard University on *The History and Consequences of Anticommunism in the United States*. It was attended by more than 1,500 people and featured presentations by prominent radical activists and scholars, including Howard Zinn, Jessica Mitford, Ring Lardner Jr., John Henry Faulk, Stephen Jay Gould, John Kenneth Galbraith, Daniel Ellsberg, Blanche Wiesen Cook, Cheddi Jagan, Leonard Boudin, and many others.

Schaap's wife and work partner of 45 years, Ellen Ray, died of lymphoma in June 2015. Schaap is survived by his sister, Nancy Silvio, and many nieces and nephews.

Tribute to Ellen Ray

BY MICHAEL SMITH, KAREN RANUCCI & MICHAEL RATNER

JUNE 16, 2015 – Ellen Ray of New York City died on June 11, 2015 from complications of cancer. Born in Grand Island, Nebraska, in 1939, she was a documentary filmmaker and journalist. Her films include *Standup Grenada*, which documented Maurice Bishop's first anniversary as Prime Minister and the U.S. government's efforts to destabilize his government. Ellen also worked for the legal defense of anti-Vietnam War soldiers based in Okinawa. And she was co-publisher of the magazine *Covert Action Information Bulletin*, which exposed CIA covert actions to destabilize democracies and subvert revolution around the globe. Aiming to put a stop

to agents' undemocratic and counterrevolutionary work, the magazine publicly named hundreds of CIA agents. This was the impetus for the U.S. government to make the "outing" of covert agents illegal under the Intelligence Identities Protection act.

Ellen Ray was the President of Sheridan Square Press, publisher of *On the Trail of the Assassins*. This memoir by former New Orleans district attorney Jim Garrison exposed the conspiracy behind the 1963 assassination of President Kennedy. The book later became the basis of Oliver Stone's Academy Award-winning film, *JFK*.

Together with her husband of 44 years, New York attorney William Schaap, Ellen published *Lies Of Our Times*, a magazine

that detailed the inaccuracies of articles published by the *New York Times* and other mainstream press. William Schaap and Ellen Ray worked closely with former CIA operative Phil Agee, publishing his revealing book, *Dirty Work*, which detailed CIA covert operations worldwide. With Michael Ratner, Ellen co-authored *Guantánamo: What the World Should Know*, the first book to expose torture in the Guantánamo prison.

Long before the advent of the personal computer, Ellen's work was a precursor to Wikileaks' revelations, decades later, about government spying. Dedicating her life to opposing U.S. government surveillance, violence and counter-revolution, Ellen was a dogged journalist who never tired of exposing government.

Michael Ratner: Past President and Human Rights Crusader

It is with the greatest sadness that the chapter shares the news that our comrade, friend, and past President Michael Ratner died May 11, 2016 at the age of 72. Michael was a true revolutionary lawyer. He embodied the spirit of the Guild's founders who believed that the law could and must be used to protect those dissidents and revolutionaries most despised and persecuted by governments worldwide – including our own.

First introduced to the National Lawyers Guild (NLG) at Columbia Law School, the longtime member and 1995 honoree of the NLG-NYC Chapter took part in the historic 1968 Columbia University protests along with fellow Guild students Daniel Greenberg, Margaret Kunstler-Ratner, Gus Reichbach, and Eleanor Stein. It was there that he met Guild attorneys including Arthur Kinoy, William Kunstler Bill Schaap, Mary Kaufmann, Ralph Shapiro and others in what became the birth of the NYC-NLG Mass Defense Committee.

As President of the Guild in the early 80s, Michael inspired the organization to challenge US interventionism in Central America and the Caribbean through groundbreaking litigation and war crimes tribunals – using international law to challenge the mining of Nicaragua's harbors, US military support for the Contras in Nicaragua, death squads in El Salvador, the invasion of Grenada. Because of Michael's leadership of the Guild and the Center for Constitutional Rights, US imperialism was exposed and undermined, and an anti-imperialist movement gained strength and legitimacy.

Michael had the gift of turning an urgent



Jake Ratner, Michael, Danny Alterman and Carol Arber at the NLG-NYC Spring Fling 2015.

problem into a meaningful lawsuit, using it to pursue torturers and human rights abusers at home and abroad. He and NLG member Jules Lobel litigated a series of historic cases representing members of Congress in challenges to executive war-making. He represented solidarity activists and fought in domestic and international legal forums for the victims of U.S. intervention in Central America, to end the illegal U.S. blockade of Cuba, and for independence for Puerto Rico. Additional victories include gaining freedom for HIV+ Haitians held at Guantánamo Bay in the 1990s and forging the legal challenge to the Bush Administration's post-9/11 indefinite detention of detainees at Guantánamo.

Most recently, he had been representing WikiLeaks leader Julian Assange and advocating on behalf of whistleblowers Chelsea Manning and Jeremy Hammond. For more than a decade, he also hosted the weekly Pacifica Radio program, *Law and Disorder*, with fellow NLG members Michael Smith

and Heidi Boghosian.

"Michael's leadership, legal acumen and personal courage provided inspiration for several generations of Guild lawyers and law students. Michael leavened his brilliant mind and his creative legal skills with love and humor, and an abundant energy. His work, his laugh, his irony and his enduring belief in the revolutionary spirit will live on," added fellow past NLG President Barbara Dudley.

There will be a memorial for Michael Ratner on Monday, June 13, 2016 in the Great Hall at Cooper Union, 7 East 7th Street, from 7:00-9:00 pm. For details and registration go to: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/michael-ratner-presente-public-memorial-for-michael-ratner-tickets-25454692671#tickets>

The family would also love for any photos, stories or remembrances of Michael to be sent to pkcfhe5jd06ib@tumblr.com and they will automatically be uploaded to the <http://michaelratnerpresente.tumblr.com> site for his family and friends to see.

A Compendium of Liz-isms

SARAH KUNSTLER: So the night after Liz died, Rebecca and I met at a bar, and mourned her. On impulse, we started writing down Liz-isms – the kinds of things Liz used to say. Her turns of phrase. There was a bit of desperation to it. A bit of urgency. We wanted to keep her close. We didn't want to forget. So today, in Liz's memory, I am going to share a few of those with you. And if there are any we have forgotten or omitted, please find us and remind us.

To begin with, Liz practiced what she called **the nag theory of law**. If you need something done, nag them until they pay attention to you or your client – if only to make you go away. This didn't mean be rude. She was fond of the phrase **"you catch more flies with honey."** But it was meant to be persistent. The flip side of this was that in situations where the nag theory didn't apply, she was the consummate procrastinator. She would say **"I have a PhD in adjournments and extensions."** [she took this seriously – for example, there was the time she stood outside naked in the winter so she would get sick enough for an adjournment, or the time she fell down the stairs...] And she liked to take her time, to ruminate on things. "I'm still thinking about it," she would say, which usually meant sitting in front of her television, legal work spread out in front of her, smoking pot, and watching old movies. Or sitting in her armchair by the window, smoking pot, listening to WWOZ. And make no mistake. You. could. Not. Call. Her. During. WWOZ.

It drove Rebecca and me crazy. We were new at this. We had to do lists and we wanted to check stuff off of them. Waiting for Liz to get back to us on one thing or another was one of the formative experiences of our nascent legal careers. But Liz used to say that **"criminal cases, like good wine, improve with age."** Things shake loose, fall apart, over time. She would constantly tell us to slow down, be patient, wait for the government to contact us. **"The ball is in their court,"** she would say. Let them get back to us.

REBECCA HEINEGG: Liz made it clear that she thought we were too hyper. After leaving a court appearance in the morning, she would tell us **"go home. Take your clothes off."** Which I always assumed meant change out of your suit and chill out, not go run around naked, but I never actually inquired. It was a prescription that she followed too. On arriving back at the office, she would announce **"I'm going to go upstairs, take my clothes off and smoke some dope."**

But Liz, we'd say, it's noon, we still have to... whatever it was, she didn't want to hear it. I don't remember her actually saying "mañana" but it was definitely her philosophy. We would go to her sometimes to say we talked to the prosecutor and they want this, or they want to do that, and she would look back calmly and say **"I'm happy for them."** What the government wanted was not her concern- she would do things the way she wanted to do them.

And when I say government - I mean government with a little g not a big G. When Liz edited our legal work, she always making sure that word was in lowercase, never wanting to give them the respect they did not deserve. She was always fixing our drafts. "I beefed this up," she'd say, or "I totally rewrote this." **85% of the world,** she'd tell us, **does their job badly.** She wanted us to be part of the other 15%. She gave our arguments power, anger, righteousness. She taught us the meaning of advocacy.

SARAH: Liz gloried in battle. She was good at it. She was ready for anything the government might throw her way. At the start of a trial, Liz would announce triumphantly, that we had arrived at **"another opening, another show."** She used to tell us that our job, as criminal defense lawyers, **"was to stand between our clients and the crushing weight of government power."** When she admired the way someone practiced criminal law, someone's courage in the courtroom, she would say they had **"more guts than God."**

But it didn't mean she was without fear. When I was afraid, she

told me this story about when she and my mother were so nervous during some court proceeding that they took turns running to the bathroom to throw up. Liz had fear. She used fear. She refused to be intimidated. She taught us that everything about a courtroom is designed to intimidate you, to shut you up. And that our job is not to let them shut us up.

REBECCA: Liz was practicing "holistic defense" before everybody else started calling it that. When I first started working with Liz, I knew next to nothing about criminal defense. And one of the first things I learned is that when you take on a client, you don't just take on their case; you take on their life, their family, their medical problems, their aspirations, even their literary interests. During the first meeting with



an incarcerated client, Liz would always find out what they like to read, so we could send them books. She would say **"we're a full service law office."** And what that meant is that when you have a case, you don't stop at the papers. You spend hours in the jails, you develop a relationship with their doctors, you drive hundreds of miles during a hurricane if that's what it takes to get the result your client needs. And she was very strategic about what those results were. As a young lawyer it is very easy to get stuck on the trees, but Liz would always remind us to keep our eye on the forest. She liked to talk about **maneuvering, and getting over** – she never felt constrained to do things the way other lawyers did them. She never got hung up on the technical details, because she knew where she wanted to go, and she would carve her own path to get there. Liz taught me how to be a lawyer, and how to do it with courage and compassion.

SARAH: She taught us to prepare, in the courtroom, and in our practice, generally, for everything to change up in an instant. She liked to invoke Karl Marx. She would say **"It's dialectical materialism."** And she would tell us that we always needed to be prepared, for **"all that is solid to melt into air."** And she was always prepared for this. She loved it. For her, being a criminal lawyer was an intensively creative process. She could bob and weave with the best of them, dancing between the raindrops without getting wet.

Liz liked to say **"dare to struggle, dare to win."** She also was fond of the Frederick Douglass quote, **"power concedes nothing without a demand."** If you spent any time around her, you heard these expressions a lot. But they are more than just clever turns of phrase. These ideas are powerful. They are radical. They are true. But they are meaningless if you don't believe that the impossible is possible. If you accept as unscalable the many obstacles that criminal practice - and life-throw in your way. For Liz, there was always a path to justice, even if we hadn't found it yet. And more often than not, Liz found it. Many of us here - lawyers, clients, friends - are the beneficiaries of the strength of her conviction, of the size of her fight.

Good night, fierce fighter. You are missed.

Application to Modify Handschu Guidelines

Handschu v. NYPD Special Services Division, et al is a class-action lawsuit originally filed in US Federal Court for the Southern District of New York in 1971 by activists who were being investigated, surveilled, infiltrated, provoked, and harassed by the New York Police Department (NYPD) for their political views and for their membership and affiliations with various political and ideological organizations. They asserted that these police practices had a chilling effect on their exercise of freedom of speech, assembly, and association; that they constituted unreasonable searches and seizures; and that they violated their rights of privacy and due process.

In 1985 Judge Charles Haight issued a decree which sought to establish limits on police interference with constitutionally-protected political activity. Unfortunately, these guidelines were significantly weakened in the repressive aftermath of the 9/11 attacks.

In May 2015, in the wake of police repression of demonstrators protesting the police killing of Eric Garner in July 2014, **Marty Stolar** and **Franklin Siegel**, both counsel for the original plaintiffs, wrote to the City and the NYPD accusing them of violating provisions of the 1985 consent decree, which have become known as the *Handschu Guidelines*. Protesters reported being questioned by police about who had organized the demonstrations, who had participated in them, and what forms of social media they had used.

The plaintiffs' application to reopen the case and to strengthen the Guidelines has been joined with *Raza v. City of New York*, a class-action lawsuit which was filed in 2013 in response to extensive NYPD spying against NYC-area Arabs and Muslims.

In January 2016, a tentative **settlement** was reached, proposing modification of the Guidelines which can briefly be summarized as follows:

- There will for the first time be an explicit policy against investigations in which race, religion or ethnicity is a substantial or motivating factor.
- For the first time, undercover operations will not be undertaken unless there has been a determination that the information sought could not be reasonably be obtained by less intrusive means.
- Investigations may not be launched without an articulable factual basis.
- All investigations will be subject to review every six months by the *Handschu* Committee, which will now contain a civilian lawyer with no police department affiliation.
- The civilian representative will have the obligation to report violations of the *Handschu* regulations.



On April 20th following the second day of Judge Charles S. Haight, Jr. hearing class members' views on proposed amendments to the Modified Handschu Guidelines, *Raza v. City of New York* lawyers and clients with Handschu class counsel outside Manhattan federal court. Among those pictured, Barbara Handschu (standing 3rd from left); Raza counsel Naz Ahmad (seated front center), Ramzi Kassem and Hina Shamsi (standing right side); and Handschu class counsel Art Eisenberg, Marty Stolar, Jed Eisenstein, Paul Chevigny and Franklin Siegel (rear standing), along with Raza community members.

Before ruling on the modifications to the Guidelines, Judge Haight, who is still overseeing the case, invited residents of New York City to file comments with the court.

Ben Meyers, co-chair of the **NYC-NLG Mass Defense Committee (MDC)**, appeared and testified on behalf of the MDC on April 19. He noted that for at least the last decade, the NYPD has been compiling an extensive database allowing it to engage in a previously unimagined level of surveillance of the physical movements and group affiliations of individuals. This so-called **Domain Awareness System** retrieves information from cameras, license plate readers, environmental sensors, and law enforcement databases.

Ben emphasized the need to avoid a rubber-stamp operation with ambiguous standards that give a green light to police abuse, and recommended four specific improvements to the proposed modifications:

- The restrictions of the *Handschu* Guidelines should apply to the use of police databases, such as the Domain Awareness System.
- The Civilian Representative should be a permanent position.
- Appointment of the Civilian Representative should be in consultation with the City's Public Advocate, as well as the Police Commissioner.
- The new *Handschu* Committee should review the authorization of confidential informants and undercovers.

Heidi Boghosian, executive director of the A.J. Muste Institute and **former NLG national executive director**, submitted written comments. She emphasized that the NYPD's well-resourced and highly sophisticated intelligence and anti-terrorism tactics require an

equally robust set of guidelines to limit police surveillance and infiltration of political and religious groups and individuals. She also recommended four changes to the proposed modifications:

- The "reasonable indication" standard for opening investigations is too vague and allows police to abuse their authority and engage in unconstitutional surveillance and infiltration of political movements merely because they disagree with the subjects' message or tactics, e.g. supporters of Mumia Abu-Jamal, Occupy Wall Street, or Black Lives Matter. The standard should be probable cause.
- The three year presumptive limit duration for investigations is too long, and may chill First Amendment-protected conduct.
- Vague and over-broad language governing investigative techniques fails to provide meaningful checks on law enforcement. The NYPD has persisted in pre-emptive mass arrests at political demonstrations, as well as other unlawful tactics such as the use of Stingray devices. The City's history of paying out costly financial settlements for unconstitutional conduct indicates that law enforcement has knowingly elected to continue infringing on its citizens' civil liberties.
- The proposed Handschu Committee composition calls for just one civilian member, which is wholly inadequate for civilian review and oversight. The imbalance is so weighted by high-ranking police officials as to be "absurdly comedic".

On April 19 Judge Haight extended the deadline for comments by 30 days, and he will issue a ruling thereafter.

NextGen Committee held a spring *pot-luck dinner* on April 30 in Prospect Lefferts Gardens: “an opportunity to get to know other NextGenners, build community, and discuss our agenda for the year.”

On April 27 the **NLG-NYC Labor & Employment Committee** co-sponsored a screening of *Right to Unite*, a film about the vital importance of unions featuring the experiences of two home health care workers. The event was preceded by a reception and followed by a discussion of the significance of the current vacancy on the US Supreme Court. The venue was The Workmen’s Circle on West 37th Street, and was co-sponsored by the American Constitution Society for Law and Policy, Jews for Racial and Economic Justice, NYU Law School, the Roosevelt Institute (a student-run think tank at Columbia University), the Murphy Institute, National Domestic Workers Alliance, and Service Employees International Union Local 32BJ.

On April 22, the **NLG-NYC Animal Rights Activism Committee** co-sponsored a panel on *Animal Rights and the Human Slavery Analogy* at NYU Law’s Furman Hall. “Many animal rights groups characterize the use of nonhuman animals as a form of slavery ... On the other hand, many human rights activists have characterized this analogy as offensive and degrading to the human victims of slavery. This panel will explore the debate on this issue through an intersectional lens.” The event was hosted by the NYU Student Animal Legal Defense Fund, and co-sponsored by Collectively Free, an activist community that works towards total animal liberation through anti-speciesist messaging.

On April 1 the NYU-NLG Chapter co-sponsored a conference on *The Palestinian Right of Return: A Legal and Political Analysis* at New York University Law School’s Vanderbilt Hall. The conference addressed the elements of the right of return, its basis in international law, and its importance to a rights-based, holistic resolution of the conflict. Other co-sponsors were Law Students for Justice in Palestine, the Center for Human Rights and Global Justice, Palestine Works, Law Students for Human Rights, and the NYU Chapter of Students for Justice in Palestine.

On March 14 the chapter was notified by the Internal Revenue Service that the **NLG-NYC Chapter Foundation** has been granted 501(c)(3) tax-exempt nonprofit organization status.

The chapter co-sponsored a fundraiser for **Albert Woodfox** on March 13 at Mayday Space

NLG WELL-REPRESENTED AT LEFT FORUM

Several chapter members participated in panels at *Left Forum 2016* which was held May 20-22 at John Jay College of Criminal Justice:

- **Suzanne Adely** Intifada in America: The History of the Palestine Left in the United States; Labor 4 Palestine: From Low-wage workers to grad students, confronting Racism, Zionism & Injustice on the Picket Line; and Rise of Fascism and the Working Class Movement in India
- **Bina Ahmad** Katrina to Ayotzinapa: People’s Tribunals Condemn Crimes against the People
- **Natasha Lycia Ora Bannan** Defending Human Rights in Venezuela: Impunity, Justice and Social Movements and Bolivarian Venezuela vs U.S. Regime Change: What is Happening and What We Can Do
- **Bob Boyle** Fighting to Stay Alive: Mumia, Hep C, and the Health Crisis Facing the Incarcerated Abu Jamal and Deep State: Cointelpro Post-9/11 – First They Came for the Muslims
- **Lamis Deek** Criminalization from CUNY to Community: Surveillance and Repression of Muslim and Arab Space; Silencing Dissent: False Accusations of Anti-Semitism against Palestine; and The US, Israel, Saudi Arabia and War in the “Middle East”
- **King Downing** From the Philadelphia RNC 2000 to DNC 2016: A Case Study of Political Repression, the National Security State, and How Activists Can Fight Back!; and Transnational Movement Building – Linking and Enlarging Shared Struggles for Social Justice in Black America and Palestine
- **Joel Kupferman** Climate Change, Environmental Movements, and O’Connor’s Second Contradiction of Capitalism
- **Joelle Eliza M. Lingat (NLG Student Vice President)** Katrina to Ayotzinapa: People’s Tribunals Condemn Crimes against the People
- **Radhika Sainath** Silencing Dissent: False Accusations of Anti-Semitism against Palestine
- **Azadeh Shahshahani (past NLG President)** Katrina to Ayotzinapa: People’s Tribunals Condemn Crimes against the People and Resistance in Prisons for Immigrants
- **Lynne Stewart (& partner Ralph Poynter)** What has happened to ‘Leftist Theology’ and what has this got to do with political prisoners in the day of the ‘Trumpocalypse’ and the Trump/Clinton/Obama triumpherate?; Education is, has always been, and always will be a political issue!; and Free Our Political Prisoners

in Bushwick. The event honored the former Black Panther who was released from prison on February 19, his 69th birthday. It included a screening of the film *The Angola 3: Black Panthers and the Last Slave Plantation*. The state of Louisiana had held Woodfox in solitary confinement in Angola Prison for over 41 years, which Amnesty International called “cruel, inhuman, and degrading”. He was the last incarcerated member of the “Angola 3”. Robert King and Herman Wallace were the others. Prior to a settlement in February 2016, Woodfox’s conviction had been overturned three times. In June 2015, a federal judge granted Woodfox unconditional release and barred the state from retrying him; however, the ruling was overturned on appeal. Other co-sponsors were Free University-NYC, Campaign to Bring Mumia Home, NYC Books Through Bars, NYC Free Leonard Peltier, and the NYC Jericho Movement.

NextGen Committee held a *meditation/strategy retreat* in Prospect Lefferts Gardens on March 12. The retreat included meditation, self-care, communication, and strategizing a radical agenda for the next year. Topics discussed were developing a law practice and growing as lawyer; gender and sexuality in the Guild; transformative and restorative justice and mediation practices; communication and consensus skills within the Guild; the Legal Observer program; contemplative practices, lawyering and self-care; and radical politics, dissent, and duties to the client and to communities. Food was vegetarian with a vegan option.

On February 11 the NLG co-sponsored *Law of the Soil: A Comparative Analysis of Birthright Citizenship in the Dominican Republic and the United States*, a CLE course which focused on the 2013 Dominican

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Joel Kupferman, Danny Meyers, Marty Stolar, and Executive Director Susan Howard tabled at the 2016 Public Interest Legal Career Fair on February 4 and 5 at NYU Law School. It was the 39th annual career fair, and with over 20 law schools, it is the largest fair of its kind in the country. Natasha Lycia Ora Bannan, Bina Ahmad, Marty, and CUNY Law 3L Michelle Lewin, who are pictured above, participated in a featured panel: *Lawyering for Social Justice*.

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Republic Constitutional Court ruling which divested Dominicans of Haitian descent of their citizenship. It also examined birthright citizenship in the United States and explored issues such as: Who is a citizen? What is statelessness? How are the rights of stateless persons protected? What international and regional treaties address the right to nationality? Is birthright citizenship in the United States a settled issue? What are the implications of calls to reform birthright citizenship in the U.S.? The CLE was held at Pillsbury Winthrop Shaw Pittman, and co-sponsors were LatinoJustice PRLDEF, and the SDNY Chapter of the Federal Bar Association.

The chapter held its annual *Leadership Retreat* on February 5 and 6 at the home of EC member Elba Galvin in Washington Heights. The purpose was to evaluate the chapter's current programs, activities, and processes; develop *goals* for 2016 and beyond; identify resources and develop a fundraising plan; look ahead to the upcoming NLG national convention in NYC; and analyze the contributions of the NLG to the broader social justice movement in the current political context. The discussion identified *strengths* – we are an intergenerational, uniquely radical bar association; and *weaknesses* – we are white-dominated, and there are limited ways for members to participate in work against injustice. The discussion of food guidelines within the chapter continued.

Jeanne Mirer hosted the NLG *National Executive Committee* and the *International Committee* on January 30 for “a little political education” at her home in Brooklyn.

The *NextGen Committee* held *happy hours* on September 17 and January 28: “Chat about

and get support for any practice, personal, or activism plans for the year! Please come if interested, whether Next Gen or not. NextGenners have expressed that they like talking with folks with experience.” Both events were at the Half Pint on West 3rd Street (over 200 types of beer!)

Boycott–Divestment–Sanctions. On January 26 the chapter signed on to a legal memorandum to New York State legislators opposing two *anti-Israel Boycott bills* pending in the state legislature. The bills would blacklist individuals, businesses, and organizations that boycott (or encourage others to boycott) Israel. New York State would be prohibited from contracting with or investing in individuals and entities on the blacklist.

“Instead of protecting and advancing civil and human rights, our elected officials in Albany are taking steps to punish First Amendment-protected activity and blacklist human rights activists around the world. The lawmakers who support these bills are not only out-of-touch with the growing movement to boycott, divest from, and sanction Israel, they are also out-of-touch with the U.S. Constitution.” The memo was written by **Palestine Legal** (an organization “dedicated to protecting the civil and constitutional rights of people in the US who speak out for Palestinian freedom,” <http://palestinelegal.org>) and co-signed by the **Center for Constitutional Rights**.

NLG-NYC's *Holiday Party* on December 15 returned to the beautiful courtroom of the Honorable **Rita Mella** at the New York County Surrogates Court.

The NLG-NYC **Labor & Employment Committee** co-sponsored a CLE on *First Experiences with the New NLRB Election Rules* on December 1 at NYU Law School. Committee co-chair **Cristina Gallo** was the moderator, and

speakers included **Damian Treffs** of Transport Workers Union Local 100. NYU Law Students for Economic Justice and CUNY's Murphy Institute for Worker Education and Labor Studies were co-sponsors.

NYC produces more greenhouse gas emissions than 97 countries. The **NLG Environmental Justice Committee** endorsed the *Global Climate March* at City Hall on November 29. **Goals:**

- Divest NYC funds from all fossil fuels
- Convert City-owned buildings to solar and other renewable energy sources
- Require all large buildings to be energy efficient
- Provide locally grown foods in city programs and protect community gardens
- Expand and improve public mass transit system
- Develop off-shore wind power

Black Lives Matter! The **Mass Defense Committee** provided legal support for a rally on November 25 in Washington Square Park. Protesters were marching in protest of recent police shootings in Chicago and in solidarity with five activists who were shot by police in a recent incident in Minneapolis. **Gideon Orion Oliver** tweeted: “So proud of the National Lawyers Guild – NYC Chapter and local NLG chapters for having protesters’ backs ... Protesters are being told to write NLG-NYC # on arms. 15 released with DATs.”

On November 19th the NLG-NYC **Mass Incarceration Committee – Parole Preparation Project** held a *Welcome Home Celebration and Fundraiser* at The Commons on Atlantic Avenue in Brooklyn. “We are hosting our second annual Welcome Home Celebration and Fundraiser. We’ll celebrate the homecoming of people released on parole and raise funds to cover the costs of prison visits, postage, phone calls, volunteer trainings, speaker stipends, and internships.” Since July 2014, the Project has trained over 100 volunteers to assist parole applicants serving life sentences. In the past year, 41% of PPP-assisted applicants have been granted parole. (The overall release rate in NYS is about 33 %.) “We can’t emphasize enough how important your donations are to this work.” Please contact Michelle Lewin at mlewin12@gmail.com if you can donate, volunteer, or if you have any questions.

The chapter held its *Annual Meeting* in the Moot Court Room at Cardozo Law School on November 18. After the election of officers and executive committee members, there was a report back from the chapter’s delegation to

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Cuba in September, followed by a reception.

Solidarity with Cuba: the NLG-NYC joined the Venceremos Brigade, the Center for Cuban Studies, and Pastors for Peace on November 12 for a panel discussion on the history of solidarity work with Cuba. The event was held at the Interference Archive in Brooklyn in connection with the *Armed by Design/El Diseño a las Armas* exhibition of Posters and Publications from Cuba's Solidarity Organizations.

Law Students for Justice in Palestine, Law Students for Human Rights, and the **NLG-NYU chapter** held a silent vigil for **Palestine solidarity** on November 6 in the Vanderbilt Courtyard at NYU Law School. Zionist student groups at NYU, particularly at the law school, have been harassing organizers with aggressive e-mails, many sent publicly to the law school at large, attempting to curtail open forums, and making false accusations of anti-Semitism and terrorism. Participants held signs opposing the culture of dehumanization of Palestinians that has become pervasive on US campuses, expressing solidarity with Palestinians currently living under occupation, and remembering those who have been killed by Israeli forces. The vigil was co-sponsored by the Muslim Law Students Association, the South Asian Law Students Association, the Coalition on Law and Representation (COLR), and the Women of Color Collective.

The **Animal Rights Activism Committee** and **NextGen Committees** co-sponsored a program on **Feminist and Queer Lawyering in New York City** on November 4 at NYU Law School. **Lynne Stewart** was one of the speakers.

The chapter's **Parole Preparation Project** conducted a **CLE and Training** at NYU Law School on October 27, which provided information on how advocates can support people in prison in their fight for release from New York State's unjust parole system. There are 10,000 people – disproportionately men of color from New York City – serving life sentences, approximately 3,000 of whom are already eligible to return home, but have repeatedly been denied release by the Board of Parole. The NYS Board is known nationally for exceptionally low release rate. **Andrea Bible, Nora Carroll, Scott Paltrowitz, and Michelle Lewin** (3L CUNY Law School) were the trainers.

On October 13 the 3rd U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals reinstated **Hassan v. NYC**, a civil rights lawsuit that accuses the NYC Police Department of **indiscriminate surveillance of**

Muslims in New Jersey by routinely putting people and businesses under surveillance allegedly to prevent terrorism. Plaintiffs include a decorated Iraq war veteran, Rutgers University students, the Muslim Student Association of Rutgers, a coalition of New Jersey mosques, and a grade-school for Muslim girls. Plaintiffs are seeking an order terminating the surveillance, destroying any records, and awarding damages. The **Chapter signed on to the amicus brief** which was filed by the Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund and is cited in the decision. http://pdfserver.amlaw.com/nlj/HASSAN_ca3_20151013.pdf

The **NLG Animal Rights Activism Committee** hosted a lecture by Baltimore community organizer **Brenda Sanders** at NYU Law School on October 6. She spoke on how exploitation of animals is detrimental to the environment and to our personal health and relationships. Ms. Sanders is executive director of Better Health Better Life, which advocates urban garden-building and other community-based programs to address food insecurity and health disparities in low income Baltimore communities.

The chapter co-sponsored a forum at New York City Bar on September 29 to discuss **Puerto Rico's Economic Crisis: Analysis, Alternatives & Solutions**. NLG National President **Natasha Lucia Ora Bannan** was a panelist. The forum was co-sponsored by the Hispanic National Bar Association, the Bar of the City of New York, and the Puerto Rican Bar Association.

The chapter held its annual **City-wide Student Disorientation** for law students on September 26 at NYU Law School. There were panels on How to Survive Law School, Mindfulness Training, NLG Legal Observer Training, Critical Legal Theory, Organizing for Black Lives Matter, Movement Lawyering, Mass Incarceration, and Alternative Practice: Risks and Rewards. Presenters included chapter President **Carl Lipscombe** and Executive Director **Susan Howard**, NLG National Director of Education and Research **Traci Yoder**, Brooklyn law student **Jerehme Bamberger**, Pace law student **Desiree Berger**, Fordham law student **Mike D'Ambrosio**, Cardozo law student **Sara Doody**, NYU law student **Jacqueline Horani**, CUNY law student **Michelle Lewin**, Rutgers law student **Pooja Patel**, **Bob Boyle**, **Lamis Deek**, **Andy Izenon**, **Marty Stolar**, **Dan Gross**, **Fred Jennings** and **Andrea Bible**.

The national and NYC chapters were among the conveners of the **International Tribunal of Conscience of Peoples in Movement (ITCPM)** at NYU on September

25-27. Special hearings focused on crimes against humanity committed by the Mexican government and its allies in the USA (billions of dollars funneled to military and police, supposedly related to the so-called "drug war"). Mexico is the single worst violator of human rights in Western Hemisphere, and the current **human rights crisis in Mexico** is unprecedented – over 160,000 dead and 27,000 disappeared since 2007. The tribunal coincided with the one-year anniversary of the kidnapping and forced disappearance of 43 students from the Ayotzinapa Rural Teacher's College in Guerrero, and included representatives of their parents and surviving students. Other conveners were Noam Chomsky, Tariq Ali, NYU's Greg Grandin, and former UN Special Rapporteurs Rodolfo Stavenhagen and Jorge Bustamante. <https://www.nlg.org/news/announcements/mexican-govt-trial-crimes-against-humanity-nlg-co-convenor-international-tribunal>

The chapter joined more than 20 civil rights organizations and Arab and Muslim groups in signing a **September 21 letter urging Mayor de Blasio to shun the federal counterterrorism program called "Countering Violent Extremism" (CVE)** which focuses on Muslim communities: "CVE programs impose serious adverse consequences, including stigmatizing Muslim communities as suspicious and in need of special monitoring, transforming the relationship between Muslims and schools and social service providers into security-based engagements, and bringing law enforcement scrutiny to bear on First Amendment-protected speech and religious observance. Moreover, such programs have not been demonstrated to advance their goal of reducing risks ... [and] will only result in civil rights and privacy violations ... Indeed, we are not aware of a single CVE outreach program in the U.S. that is aimed at any other community. This is so despite the numerous empirical studies demonstrating that violence inspired by right-wing beliefs poses a more significant domestic threat than attacks carried out in the name of Islam." <http://www.capitalnewyork.com/sites/default/files/092115%20Coalition%20Letter%20to%20Mayor%20Re%20CVE.pdf>

On September 10 the Bertha Justice Institute of the Center for Constitutional Rights (CCR) hosted a screening of **The Black Panthers: Vanguard of the Revolution** at the Film Forum. After the film, Vince Warren, CCR's Executive Director, was joined for Q&A by director Stanley Nelson and Gerald Lefcourt, former chief counsel

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for the Black Panthers. The event was co-sponsored by the NYC and CUNY Law School NLG chapters, CUNY Law Black Law Students Association, and the CUNY Law Latina/o Law Students Association.

NYC Chapter Executive Director Susan Howard tabled at the twenty-sixth annual Public Interest Legal Career Reception at Fordham Law School on September 3.

The Parole Preparation Project of the chapter's Mass Incarceration Committee Fall 2015 interns: Crystal Phillip-Peters of Brooklyn Law School, and Joss Greene, PHD Candidate in Sociology at Columbia University.

On August 20 Hal Meyerson and Franklin Siegel conducted an orientation for members of the September NLG-NYC delegation to Cuba. The event was held at the Center

for Cuban Studies on West 29th Street. Hal founded the NLG Cuba Subcommittee in 1977, and along with Franklin arranged for a group from Cuba to attend the NLG's 40th Anniversary Convention in Seattle in August 1977. It was the first visit of Cubans granted visas and allowed to appear and speak in the United States. Delegation members Bina Ahmad, Natasha Lycia Ora Bannan, and Elena Cohen wrote about their experience in the Winter 2015 Guild Notes: <http://www.nlg.org/sites/default/files/Guild%20Notes%20Winter%202015%20reduced.pdf>

On August 10 more than 150 protesters were arrested in Ferguson, Missouri in demonstrations against continuing police violence and in memory of Mike Brown who was killed by police one year earlier. St. Louis County declared a state of emergency in response to the protests and police officers targeted activists with tear gas and arrests.

Among those arrested were nine NLG legal observers including NLG Executive Director Pooja Gehi and former NLG Mass Defense Coordinator Abi Hassan.

With financial support from the NLG Foundation, the NYC-NLG Labor & Employment Committee has produced palm cards in Spanish and English: *Know Your Rights: A Guide for Workers in New York City*. The cards, released in August, provide information regarding various employment-related rights, including the right to organize, minimum wage, paid & unpaid leave, and overtime. The Committee partnered with MFY Legal Services, and will be working with local advocacy groups to distribute the cards, and to produce future editions. The cards are available for download on the NLG-NYC website, <http://nlgny.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/NLG.NYC.WorkersKnowYourRights.pdf>

NLG-NYC Chapter Leads Cuba Delegation

Continuing with the long Guild history of Cuba solidarity work, the NLG-NYC Chapter led a highly successful delegation to Cuba this past September. Twelve delegates spent seven days in Cuba, meeting with officials, criminal and civil judges, attorneys, professors, political artists and union leaders, as well as experts in labor, social security, trade, economic, and constitutional law. Among the topics discussed were the structure and functioning of the National Cuban Lawyers Association (UNJC); the structure and functioning of the People's Courts and the Cuban judicial system; the history and current work of the Instituto Cubano de Amistad con los Pueblos (The Cuban Institute for Friendship with the Peoples, ICAP); the new laws on foreign investment in Cuba; the functioning, structure and role of trade unions in Cuba; and efforts to advocate for LGBTIQI people in Cuba. Throughout the trip, the delegation was treated with tremendous amounts of respect and honor, and repeatedly thanked for the many years of hard work by Guild members on behalf of the Cuban people.

In a particularly moving meeting with the Bufete Colectivo (a national public law office with offices nationwide), NLG President Natasha Lycia Ora Bannan was presented with the Toga de Honor by their President, in order to show the organization's appreciation for the Guild's long history of supporting the Cuban people. The Toga de Honor, or robe of honor, is the robe that lawyers and judges traditionally wear to court and has only been



Meeting with the Organización Nacional de Bufetes Colectivos. At this meeting, NLG President Natasha Lycia Ora Bannan was presented with the Toga de Honor by their President, Ariel Mantecón, in order to show the organization's appreciation for the Guild's long history of supporting the Cuban people.

Pictured are: (from left to right, top row) Ian Head, Lauren Gazzola, Nurys Piñeiro, Lilia Hernandez (Vice-President, Organización Nacional de Bufetes Colectivos), Natasha Lycia Ora Bannan, Ariel Mantecón (President, Organización Nacional de Bufetes Colectivos), Dorys Quintana Cruz (International Relations Coordinator for the UNJC), Elena Cohen, Loren Shlevin, Michael Decker and Bruce Ellison; (from left to right, bottom row) Traci Yoder, Tasha Moro, Dorothy Crookshank, Bina Ahmad and Chauniqua Young.

bestowed upon one other international organization besides the Guild. The delegation also visited the Callejón de Hamel community project and learned about the struggles of the Afro-Cuban community in Havana. The group travelled outside of Havana, taking a daylong excursion to the stunning Las Terrazas nature reserve, learning about the community's work on environmental justice issues and preservation. The trip was moving and inspiring for the delegates, and assured our comrades in Cuba that the Guild's soli-

darity work will continue unabated as official conditions between the U.S. and the Cuban government evolve.

The next NLG-NYC delegation to Cuba will be this coming September 3 - September 10, 2016. Like last year's, our program will be of general interest to those in the legal radical community. The delegation will primarily be to Havana, and may include a trip to a secondary city. For any questions or to express your interest in receiving an application, please email nlgnyccubadelegation@gmail.com.

MEMBER NEWS

On May 16 *The National Law Journal* published **Alan Levine's** response to **George Washington University law professor John Banzhaf's** column which claimed that protesters are rabble-rousers who have hijacked our political process. Banzhaf maintained that police do nothing, "yield the streets", and that protesters, if arrested, face only token fines. Alan replied that the real world of street protest bears no relation to what Banzhaf describes. In fact, "the post-9/11 trend is increasingly hostile to street protest ... the war on terror has also become a war on dissent," citing the repression of Occupy Wall Street and Ferguson, Missouri, and **the increasing militarization of policing. The NYPD in particular is conflating protest with terrorism**, having created the Strategic Response Group that is used, according to the police commissioner, for "terrorist situations" and "protest control." Alan argued that "the lifeblood of a democratic society depends in no small part on the freedom it affords to peaceably assemble and to call public attention to grave injustice. Aggressive policing of street protest has put that freedom in grave jeopardy". Alan is special counsel at LatinoJustice PRLDEF, and his practice includes representation of protesters.

St. Martin's Press has released ***The Butler's Child***, the autobiography of **Lewis Steel**. It describes Lew's path from a privileged childhood as a grandson of the legendary Warner Brothers family to a 50-year career



John-Chris Record Chávez (pictured above) is a 3L at Fordham Law and a member of its Brendan Moore Trial Advocacy Center. On February 28 his team won the **National Civil Mock Trial Competition** at Florida State University, competing against 13 other teams from around the country. They defeated Louisiana State University Law School in the final. John-Chris wants to be a plaintiff-side trial lawyer.

as a renowned civil rights attorney. (Spoiler alert: the title refers to the fact that his family's African American butler played a significant role in raising Lew.) <http://www.barnesandnoble.com/w/the-butlers-child-lewis-steel/1122537817#productInfoTabs>

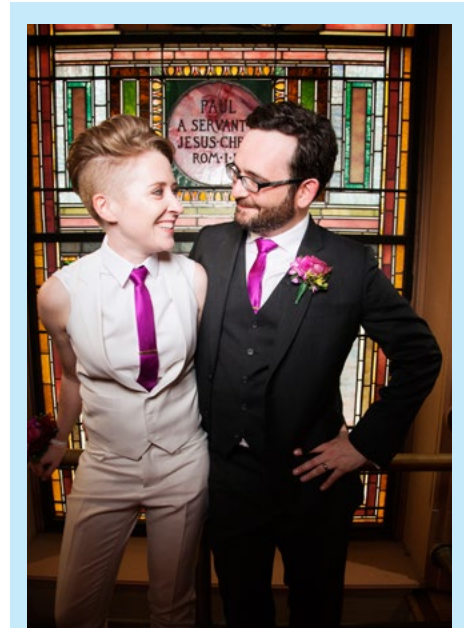
On May 13 at Riverside Church, the Interreligious Foundation for Community Organization (IFCO) held its first annual **Rev. Lucius Walker Memorial Benefit**. "Join us as we celebrate his tremendous accomplishments and recognize outstanding community organizers of today." Former chapter president **Marty Stolar** was one of the honorees.

On April 20, **Cathleen Caron**, founder and executive director of the Global Workers Justice Alliance, appeared at a press conference in Washington, D.C. with the Congressional sponsors of the **Visa Transparency Anti-Trafficking Act of 2016**, a bill that would create a uniform system for reporting data on temporary visa programs and require that the information be made publicly available, thus making it easier to identify and assist guest-worker victims of human trafficking.

Hofstra University announced on April 7 that **Ellen Yaroshefsky** will lead the Monroe H. Freedman Institute for the Study of Legal Ethics at its Maurice Deane School of Law. Ellen has been a professor for 28 years at the Benjamin Cardozo School of Law.

Soffiyah Elijah, Executive Director of Correctional Association of New York, was a panelist on ***Life After Life in Prison: A Conversation on Women's Incarceration*** on March 28 at New York Law School. The panelists discussed the experience of women, the fastest growing segment of the incarcerated population, including the circumstances that they face prior to conviction, while in the system, and after their release. The program was accompanied by a gallery of portraits of formerly incarcerated women taken by criminal defense lawyer and photographer, Sara Bennett. The program was presented by The Impact Center for Public Interest Law at NYLS and The New York Women's Foundation.

The NYU Review of Law and Social Change held its 2016 symposium **"Dishwashers, Domestic Workers, and Day Laborers: Can Alternative Labor Organizing Revive the Labor Movement?"** on March 24 and 25 at NYU Law School. It opened with a reception and the screening of ***The Hand That Feeds***, a documentary about worker organizers, many of them undocumented immigrants, fighting



Former chapter president **Gideon Orion Oliver** and journalist/writer/actress **Molly Knepfel** were married on April 30 at Judson Memorial Church.

to create their own independent union. **Jeanne Mirer**, **Ben Dictor**, and **Maria Chickedantz** represented the workers portrayed in the film.

Ellen Yaroshefsky, professor at Benjamin Cardozo Law School, moderated a panel on **Attorney/Inmate e-Mail Monitoring** at the New York County Lawyers' Association on March 24. The panel included Congressman Hakeem Jeffries who has co-sponsored a bill that would bar federal prosecutors from reading emails between inmates and their lawyers. Courts are currently divided on the issue.

On March 28 **Hillary Exter** became Coordinator of the **Anti-Harassment Tenant Protection Program at the Urban Justice Center**. "I'm really excited to be returning to legal services work, helping support programs that are keeping people in their apartments and fighting against displacement in gentrifying neighborhoods, and training the next generation of poverty law attorneys."

On March 9, **Daniel Gross** introduced the **Worker Association Canvas**, "a one-page tool to help workers create high-impact organizations by identifying and getting right the essential elements of their organizational model". Daniel is executive director of **Brandworkers**, the first and only non-profit organization dedicated to workers in the local food production industry. He previously

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co-founded the IWW Starbucks Workers Union while working as a barista at the company. Read about the Canvas here: <https://medium.com/@dgorganize/introducing-the-worker-association-canvas-ed42ba323d7f#a4dg76p2x>

J. Justin Woods presented a working paper titled *Beyond the Public Trust: Legal Stewardship of OUR Collective Water Resources* at the Public Interest Environmental Law Conference at the University of Oregon School of Law on March 6. Justin is a Sustainable Development Scholar, Fellow, & Adjunct Professor at Pace University's Land Use Law Center.

On March 3, Gideon Orion Oliver and Elena Cohen filed a civil rights lawsuit in the Southern District of New York against the City of New York and the NYPD on behalf of protesters injured by a *Long Range Acoustic Device ("LRAD")* sound weapon deployed against them while protesting against the December 2014 decision of a Staten Island grand jury not to indict NYPD Officer Daniel Pantaleo for the death of *Eric Garner*. The plaintiffs – a protester, photojournalist, videographer, and film-maker – are suing for assault, battery, and violations of their First and Fourth Amendment rights. The case is *Edrei, et al. v. Bratton, et al.*, 16-cv-01652 (SDNY 2016). Gideon and Elena are both past Presidents of the New York City NLG Chapter.

On February 25, Joel Kupferman of the NY Environmental Law & Justice Project and the NLG Environmental Committee was a guest speaker at the *Detroit-Flint Brooklyn Benefit* at the Sugar Hill Supper Club on DeKalb Avenue in Brooklyn "in solidarity with the people of Flint and Detroit, MI who are living the ongoing nightmare of poisoned drinking water, shutoffs, and systemic poverty/racism".

The NLG announced on February 23 that the recipient of its *2016 Law for the People Award* will be NLG-NYC Chapter member *Soffiyah Elijah*. An accomplished advocate, attorney, scholar, and educator, Soffiyah has served as the executive director of the Correctional Association of New York since March 2011. She has represented a number of political prisoners and activists, including Kwame Turé (formerly Stokely Carmichael), Marilyn Buck, and Sundiata Acoli.

Marina Stajic, who worked for nearly three decades as director of the forensic toxicology lab at the *NYC Medical Examiner's*

Office, filed a lawsuit on February 18 claiming that she was forced into retirement last year because of a disagreement with her superiors over the accuracy of a DNA test, referred to as low copy number DNA, which some scientists have said is so doubtful that its results should not be introduced in courtrooms. Dr. Stajic was one of only a few members of a NYS forensic science commission who voted to require the medical examiner's office to make public an internal study regarding the validity of the testing technique. The *New York Times* reported that *Daniel Alterman*, one of her lawyers, said his client "was forced out of her job because of principled positions she took" on the commission. The lawsuit also charges that age was a factor in the decision to dismiss her, and accuses the Medical Examiner's Office of engaging "in a pattern of firing, demoting and forcing the resignation" of senior managers in their 50s and older.

Governor Cuomo appointed Supreme Court Justice *Ellen Gesmer* to the *Appellate Division, First Department* on February 18. Ellen was formerly a tenant's lawyer and a supervising attorney with Bedford-Stuyvesant Community Legal Services. Ellen was elected to the New York City Civil Court in 2004 and to the New York Supreme Court in 2011.

NLG President *Natasha Lycia Ora Bannan* was a panelist on February 16 at CUNY Law School: *Understanding Puerto Rico's Economic Crisis at the Intersection of Law and Humanity*. The event was sponsored by CLORE (Center on Latino and Latina Rights and Equality) and LALSA (Latin American Law Students Association). Natasha co-signed an amicus brief to the U.S. Supreme Court in *Puerto Rico v. Franklin California Tax-Free Trust*, arguing that Puerto Rico is entitled to restructure its publicly funded debt. http://www.americanbar.org/content/dam/aba/publications/supreme_court_preview/briefs_2015_2016/15-233_amicus_pet_LatinoJustice.authcheckdam.pdf

Chapter member *Suzanne Adely*, representing the NLG and the International Association of Democratic Lawyers, appeared on a February 11 panel at the New School: *Civil War in Turkey & Right to Democratic Autonomy*. The discussion focused on the Turkish government's repressive response to the success of the pro-Kurdish Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP) in the June 2014 elections.

On January 25 the NLG National office announced the hiring of NYC Chapter member *King Downing* as its *Director of*



Future trouble maker and social justice warrior Adriana Emilia Treffs Dutchevici was born on December 28, 2015 to *Silvia Dutchevici and Damian Treffs*. She's healthy and happy, as are her parents.

Mass Defense. King previously directed the Healing Justice Program at the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC), where he worked on mass incarceration, solitary confinement, prisoner advocacy and conflict resolution. He was an early organizer in Jena, Louisiana supporting the Jena 6, black high school students charged with attempted murder for a fist fight with a white student in 2006. He is also former national coordinator of the ACLU's Campaign against Racial Profiling. "My adult life has been committed to human rights and justice: as a lawyer, Harlem resident, and member of several organizations, including the Ferguson Legal Defense Committee, National Police Accountability Project, NY Copwatch, the People's Survival Program, and the Campaign to End the New Jim Crow."

Former NYS Supreme Court Justice *Emily Jane Goodman* moderated a CLE at New York Law School on January 14: *Social Justice and the Power and Limitations of the Bench*. Speakers included SDNY Judge Shira Scheindlin, Deputy Chief Administrative Judge for NYC Courts Fern Fisher, and criminal defense and civil rights attorney Ron Kuby.

Former political prisoner *Lynne Stewart* helped celebrate *Oscar Lopez Rivera's* 73rd birthday on January 8 at SEIU Local 1199's Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Labor Center on 43rd Street. "Oscar has spent his birthday in prison for the past 34 years. Why is he in jail? For being a revolutionary who fought for the

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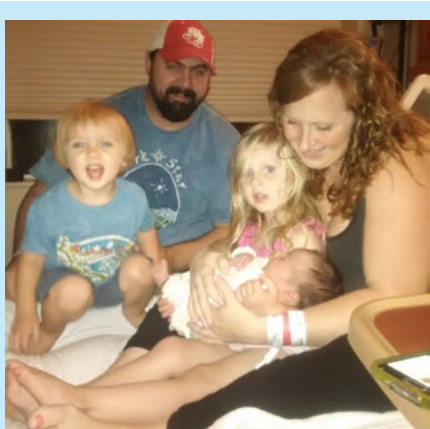
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independence of Puerto Rico from the U.S.”

Executive Director **Susan Howard**: “I just wanted to share some good news about the garden I helped start in 2013. After a long battle against proposed development, we received word on December 30 that we will be transferred to NYC Parks for continued protection. I want to invite you all to the garden next Spring!” The site at Stanton and Attorney Streets on the Lower East Side was part of the **GreenThumb** program, in which the City provides tools, materials, seasonal workshops, and small grants to develop **community gardens** on previously vacant lots.

In New York City, a person is as likely to be killed in traffic as murdered by a gun; pedestrians accounted for more than half of traffic fatalities; and low-income New Yorkers are most likely to be killed in traffic crashes. **Vision Zero** is a project that aims for a road traffic system with no fatalities or serious injuries. It started in Sweden in 1997 and was adopted by NYC in 2014. On December 18, *Transportation Alternatives* released **Justice Denied: New York City's District Attorneys Plead Out of Vision Zero**, a report documenting the failure of NYC's prosecutors to use their extensive discretion to defend New Yorkers against traffic violence. NLG-NYC Executive Committee member **Marco Conner** is the main author.

Marty Stolar and **Jonathan Wallace** were canonized as saints by the **Reverend Billy** of the **Stop Shopping Choir** for their work in representing more than one hundred **Flood Wall Street**



3L JD/MPA student at Pace Law J. **Justin Woods** and his wife **Jillian** welcomed J. Jackson Woods (John Jackson) to their growing family at 8:28 am on 9/28.

Jackson is their 3rd child, and older siblings Josslyn (3 1/2) and Jay (2) are very excited about their new baby brother.

protesters who were arrested in September 2014 after they occupied the corner of Wall Street and Broadway to protest finance capital's role in perpetuating climate change. The canonization was held on December 13 at Joe's Pub at The Public Theater on Lafayette Street.

On November 27, SDNY Judge Jed Rakoff ruled that Manhattan designer Brigitte Vosse cannot display an illuminated peace sign in the window of her condo apartment in the Ansonia building on the Upper West Side. The court upheld an \$800 fine, finding that she violated a NYC zoning provision that is part of the city's "legitimate interests in preserving neighborhood character and an aesthetically pleasing landscape". **Timothy Collins** represents Ms. Vosse. He said they are considering an appeal. "It is difficult to conclude that the First Amendment offers no protection here."

Jill Humphries has appeared on several recent panels of activists, academics, and legal practitioners:

- November 20 at the Georgetown Law Journal Annual Symposium: **Teaching Cognitive Awareness in the Context of Legal Observing**
- October 27 at Stony Brook University: **From the Color Line to the Carceral State: New Histories of Policing, Prisons, and Surveillance**
- October 14 at The New School's Lang College: **Reading NYC: Law and Order - Policing & Criminal Justice in the City.**

Gideon Orion Oliver was interviewed in the Gothamist on November 19 on the legal status of **hoverboards** in NYC. (It's complicated). "I would encourage people who are detained in connection with hoverboard operation to do what every other person who is detained by the police should do: Ask if they are free to leave and if so, leave, and if not, state that they wish to remain silent and to consult with an attorney, and that they do not consent to any search." http://gothamist.com/2015/11/19/hoverboard_overboard.php

Chase Madar is the author of **The Passion of Bradley Manning: The Story Behind the Wikileaks Whistleblower** <http://www.versobooks.com/books/1401-the-passion-of-bradley-manning>. He has made several recent appearances discussing law, ethics, and the use of violence:

- November 19 at Yale Law School: **The Policy is Killing: Human Rights and Drone Strikes.**
- November 17 at Brown University: **The Politics of Human Shielding: Human Shields, Asymmetrical Warfare &**

International Law. Watch: https://youtu.be/9Ku2RLC_LTI

- November 11 at a Veterans Day program at the Mississippi state capitol in Jackson: **Costs and Benefits of Government Secrecy.** The event was co-sponsored by Jackson State University and Mississippi College School of Law. Watch: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uHNW9kvykZM&feature=youtu.be>
- October 26 at the University of London: **The Weaponisation of Human Rights?** Watch: <https://www.soas.ac.uk/law/events/14oct2015-the-weaponisation-of-human-rights.html>.

The Westchester Coalition against Islamophobia sponsored **Free Speech/ Hate Speech: Where Do We Draw the Lines?** featuring **Bina Ahmad** and **Alan Levine**. The event was held at the Ethical Culture Society of Westchester in White Plains on November 5, and was co-sponsored by the American Muslim Women's Association, Concerned Families of Westchester, Greenburgh Human Rights Advisory Committee, Interfaith Connection, Jewish Voice for Peace - Westchester, New York Civil Liberties Union-Lower Hudson Valley Chapter, WESPAC, the Westchester County Human Rights Commission, and the Westchester Martin Luther King, Jr. Institute for Nonviolence.

Jill Humphries was honored at the NLG national convention in Oakland in October for her work with the Mass Defense Committee as a legal observer and trainer, especially for her work assisting the Baltimore Legal Defense Committee in the aftermath of the April 2015 police killing of Freddie Gray. Jill has highlighted the need for white progressive law organizations to improve their effectiveness by recognizing implicit bias and stereotypes, and she has assisted in developing a legal observer curriculum which addresses the cultural competency of legal observers in their interactions with demonstrators, Black communities, and law enforcement.

On September 29, the New York City Bar Association presented a forum on **Puerto Rico's Economic Crisis: Analysis, Alternatives & Solutions**. The program addressed the history of Puerto Rico's economy; applicable federal and local laws; the status of its bonds; and proposed solutions: from bankruptcy relief to severe austerity measures. NLG President **Natasha Bannan** was one of the speakers. The event was co-sponsored by the NLG, the Puerto Rican Bar Association, and the Hispanic National Bar Association.

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The New York City Council declared *Ethel Rosenberg Day of Justice in the Borough of Manhattan* on September 28, Ethel's 100th birthday. Guild members **Heidi Boghosian** and **Michael Steven Smith** interviewed **Danny Meyers** on October 5 for their show *Law and Disorder* on WBAI radio. Danny, like many NLG members, worked on the Rosenberg case over the decades.

"In the early morning hours of July 14th 1970, the **Young Lords** occupied Lincoln Hospital's major administrative building in

response to the city's indifference to the health needs of Puerto Ricans and African Americans in the South Bronx and the deplorable conditions of health care delivery at Lincoln Hospital." **Danny Meyers**, who represented members of the Young Lords in various legal cases, was a panelist at the September 10 Bronx Museum program **A Patient's Bill of Rights: Fighting for Community Health at Lincoln Hospital**, which discussed the prominence of health issues in the activism of the Young Lords, and the relevance of that historic struggle to contemporary health care policy.

On August 26, the Bertha Justice Institute at the Center for Constitutional Rights held a free screening of **If a Tree Falls: A Story of the Earth Liberation Front**, an Academy Award nominated film for best documentary, which tells the story of CCR client and environmental activist Daniel McGowan whose opposition to genetic engineering and to the logging of old-growth forests led to his prosecution and imprisonment as a domestic terrorist. **Bina Ahmad** participated in a discussion afterwards at the Downtown Community Television Center on Lafayette Street.

Natasha Lycia Ora Bannan

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- On January 8 joined an amicus brief to the US Supreme Court signed by 113 female attorneys and law professors, detailing the importance of abortion rights in their own lives. The case is *Whole Women's Health v. Cole*, a challenge to Texas' stringent laws designed to shutter most abortion clinics in the state. "I am proud to have signed this brief & share my story of how having an abortion made it possible to live my life."
- Led NLG delegation to observe elections for the National Assembly in Venezuela on December 6. <https://www.nlg.org/news/releases/nlg-delegation-observes-venezuelan-legislative-elections-affirms-transparency> https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t9pmqJI_noo
- Attended the IADL's conference "**Women Fighting Back: International and Legal Perspectives**" in London on November 28-29 with Jeanne Mirer and Angela Davis.
- November 24 Huffington Post column arguing that Puerto Rico's odious debt is immoral and possibly illegal, and therefore should not be repaid. http://www.huffingtonpost.com/natasha-lycia-ora-bannan/puerto-ricos-odious-debt_b_8637992.html ...
- November 19 spoke at Columbia Law School on human rights, citizenship, and the denationalization of Dominican-Haitians.
- Visited Puerto Rican political prisoner **Oscar López Rivera**, "the freest man I've ever met," at federal prison in Terre Haute, Indiana on November 15. Natasha is an organizer of NYC Mujeres x Oscar, a monthly event as part of the campaign to free Oscar, still a prisoner after 34 years.
- Appeared on Heidi Boghosian's November 2 "Law and Disorder" radio show on WBAI to talk about NLG's work, Puerto Rico & Cuba. <http://lawanddisorder.org/2015/11/law-and-disorder-november-2-2015/> ...
- Panelist at September 29 Hispanic National Bar Association program on Puerto Rico debt.
- Presenter on gender-based violence at the International Tribunal of Conscience on human rights in Mexico at NYU on September 26.
- Led a seven-day NLG delegation to Cuba in September. Twelve delegates met with officials, criminal and civil judges, attorneys, professors, political artists, and union leaders.



The National Lawyers Guild-NYC Chapter

IS MOVING!

PLEASE NOTE OUR NEW ADDRESS:

NLG-NYC
 168 CANAL STREET, 6TH FLOOR
 NEW YORK, NY 10013

AS OF JULY 1, 2016

(212) 679-6018
 NLGNYC@IGC.ORG • NLGNYC.ORG



NATIONAL LAWYERS GUILD – NYC CHAPTER

168 Canal Street, 6th Floor

New York, NY 10013

phone 212-679-6018

fax 212-679-6178

email: nlgnyc@igc.org

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