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Images in this issue courtesy of the BBC, STOP, the Amnesty International Photo Bank, the University of the South, the Official Website of Norman G. Finkelstein, Julie Fry, and the Art Institute of Chicago.
Much right now. We need to start taking care of our whole selves, watching out for our friends, and breaking the stigma that is all too present in the older generation. It's up to us to demonstrate that our generation is, indeed, not afraid of or embarrassed by these issues.

Talk to a friend who you are worried about, reach out to someone if you're worried about yourself. By opening a dialogue and treating mental illness as seriously as we treat physical illness, you'll be showing people like my brother Brian that they are not alone, that what they are experiencing is nothing to be ashamed of and is not their fault, that with treatment they can regain the life they once dreamed for themselves, and that life is not over.

Alison Malmon is Founder and President of Active Minds, Inc., the nation's only nonprofit organization dedicated to engaging young adults in the mental health awareness movement. If you are interested in becoming involved in the youth mental health advocacy movement, please visit the website at www.activeminds.org or email her at amalmon@activeminds.org.
Building Solidarity through Struggle
The Experience of STOP

by the Student/Tenant Organizing Project

“Let us in to see the plans they’re rolling out for our community!” demanded Marie Goodwin, an elderly poet and Woodlawn tenant, as she stood at the entrance to the Palmer House Hilton on a hot day in July. “U of C is Exclusionary” read a sign held by a nearby University student in the thick crowd of community members gathered to question the kind of community being planned for Woodlawn. “Homeowners we are next. Our taxes shoot up if those buildings go condo!” said one Woodlawn resident, addressing a packed room of homeowners and tenants in a local church basement. A group of students listened for hours in a campus coffee shop as community members explained how the EI tracks in Woodlawn came down, what the University and developers have done and are doing in their neighborhood, and what residents are doing to fight back. Organizers fighting gentrification in Humboldt Park, Pilsen, and Woodlawn shared stories and perspectives from their struggle to stop the displacement of low-income and working class people around the city. A wide cross-section of community members and students packed a Woodlawn church where the Kimbark Tenants Association won major repair demands from a Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) representative.

These are some scenes of solidarity playing out in the work of a new organizing project on the South Side called STOP.

The Student/Tenant Organizing Project (STOP) works to identify and build grassroots leadership around issues of community concern in Woodlawn. We focus on issues that advance an agenda of racial and economic justice and impact large numbers of people. The backdrop for all of our work is the ongoing gentrification and displacement of African-American residents of Woodlawn. We emerged in 2004 when Woodlawn residents and three U of C students and alumni, began researching subsidized housing and the tenants’ rights. From this effort, STOP was launched with our first organizing drive.

From day one, STOP was founded on the idea of solidarity - not only tenant-student solidarity, but homeowner-tenant solidarity, cross-racial solidarity, worker-community solidarity and intergenerational solidarity. After we forced a public commitment from the University not to acquire Grove Parc, numerous homeowners and tenants approached STOP with concerns over the New Communities Program planning process taking place in Woodlawn. Led by its fiscal agents, the University, The Woodlawn Organization (TWO), and the Woodlawn Preservation and Investment Corporation (WPIC), the process had included little or no input from community members facing potential displacement. All committees were controlled by members of the three fiscal agents, and questions about the preservation and expansion of affordable housing were constantly sidelined. In fact, although a line in plan referenced “preserving affordable housing opportunities,” The Woodlawn Organization was in the process of removing 100 tenants in 5 buildings to convert their buildings to condos. This contradiction, combined with a general sense of exclusion and a lack of information, created a rallying point that produced an uncommon alliance. Though most believe that homeowners just want subsidized tenants off their block, we

to nearly half of the project-based Section 8 housing in the neighborhood. Quickly, the core group, which was made up of four Woodlawn residents and three U of C students and alumni, began researching subsidized housing and the tenants’ rights. From this effort, STOP was launched with our first organizing drive.

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An Action a Day Keeps the Greedy at Bay
Chicago Tenants Rise Up

by Matt Ginsberg-Jaeckle

Across the country, land is being snapped up by developers at an alarming rate, pushing poor people and people of color to the suburbs and onto the streets. In Chicago this has meant the demolition of whole communities, the tearing down of public housing, violations of renters’ rights, condo conversions and working-class displacement. But people who thought the cycle of deterioration and gentrification was inevitable are being awakened by the thump of marching feet and the choruses of voices that refuse to be silenced. Tenants with the Student/Tenant Organizing Project (STOP) are taking action against the displacement caused by city officials like Mayor Daley, private developers like East Lake Management and large institutions like the University of Chicago.

“Mayor Daley needs to know, condo conversions got to go!”

Hyde Park tenants in a building facing a condo conversion decided it was time to take to the streets, supported by their neighbors and friends. The Metropolitan Tenants Organization invited STOP members from the neighboring Woodlawn community to join them in a march against condo conversions.

STOP organizer and Kimbark Tenants Association member Ebonee Stevenson addressed the crowd at the end of the march. “Me and my neighbors organized and stopped our five subsidized buildings in Woodlawn from going condo last year and forced HUD [the Department of Housing and Urban Development] to step in and make the owners fix our apartments,” he said. “Tenants everywhere need to stand together to defend our homes!”

“Ignore us once, ignore us twice, East Lake’s askin for a fight!”

Two days later, on International Housing Rights Day (October 2nd), STOP tenants from the Washington Scene Tenants Association were joined by other STOP members and allies from around the city for a protest at East Lake Management’s Michigan Avenue headquarters. Fed up with leaky windows, unfinished hallways and broken elevators, tenants it was time to make themselves heard.

“I think the march on East Lake showed them that we’re not playing and that we mean business,” tenant Brenda Blanks said.

Even today, tenants remain angry because East Lake has only addressed a few of their concerns. “Yeah they are meeting our demand for better security by replacing the security company, but here it is November and they’ve only replaced one window. They told me they will replace my carpet, but only once their contractor is done somewhere else. This struggle isn’t over yet,” said Blanks.

Tenants at City Hall: “Don’t push out the poor!”

That same Wednesday, STOP tenants joined Beauty Turner, leader of the Poor People’s Millennium Movement and writer for numerous local newspapers, to take the fight to City Hall.

“We’re here to tell you, stop sending your shameful waste to the suburbs, stop pushing the poor out of the city,” Turner said.

Public housing and subsidized housing tenants denounced the policies they feel are pushing the poor out of the city. They told the press about injustices such as the tearing down of public housing, restricting where Section 8 voucher holders can move and cutting out subsidized tenants’ voices from decisions at project-based complexes such as the Grove Parc Plaza apartments.

“We the people need to be more conscious and aware of what’s going on politically around us - who’s in authority and who really is saying what is to be done - not just take for granted that someone who owns or manages property will do right by their tenants. These are our homes but just a job for them. We aren’t just coming together for a just cause concerning housing; we are coming together for the sake of humanity,” said Annette Williams, a tenant at Grove Parc.

HUD tenants at Grove Parc Apartments: “We’re taking our power back.”

A week later, several tenants representing the Grove Parc Tenants Association went to the Palmer House Hilton Hotel where policy makers and banks were holding the National Housing Conference. They were kicked out for trying to deliver a letter and petitions to Alphonso Jackson, the U.S. Secretary of Housing and Urban Development. Despite this setback, the documents eventually made their way into Mr. Jackson’s hands.

HUD is threatening to foreclose on the 500-unit Grove Parc Apartments because of deteriorating conditions, but tenants are organizing to ensure their input and to preserve subsidized housing. They are demanding an opportunity to speak with HUD, the Woodlawn Preservation and Investment Corporation (WPIC) and the University (which has two representatives on the WPIC board).

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found many residents who recognized the need for solidarity to stop the community from being displaced by rising rents and property taxes. A movement began that resulted in the formation of the Kimbark Tenants Association (KTA) and a number of major victories, securing both the continued affordability of buildings as well as major repairs and maintenance improvements.

Woodlawn homeowner P.J. Humphries described these early efforts as, “a united effort, solidarity in progress.”

“Holding on to eviction notices and repeating verbal threats from greedy intimidating landowners and property managers - this dual combination of students and tenants raised their voices, marched, wrote the federal government and appealed to the media in solidarity to stop the illegal removal of tenants from their residences,” recalled Humphries.

Nonetheless, there have been consistent challenges and barriers to tenant-homeowner solidarity that we also must acknowledge. The people who are profiting off the gentrification of communities like Woodlawn, namely developers and large institutions such as the University of Chicago, have long sown seeds of division within the community. They harp endlessly on security concerns to avoid talking about what causes them in the first place - inequality and injustice. Rather than addressing the need for safe and decent affordable housing, living-wage jobs and more opportunities for youth, the business-controlled media focus on crime as if it occurred in a vacuum. This attempt to divide the generations and impose policy prescriptions that criminalize youth is an excuse to displace people and make way for the massive profits that come with “re-development.” Rather than play into these divisions, STOP has worked to build a strong understanding of the importance of unity. The results of this effort include a balanced turnout of tenants and homeowners to protest the rollout of the New Communities Program, as well as the ongoing involvement and engagement of homeowners in the Kimbark Tenants Association’s campaigns to preserve and improve their complex.

As we won victories and began to grow, we encountered another challenge directly tied to our vision of solidarity. More and more people wanted to volunteer, yet we had no clear way to integrate them or to separate tasks that require long-term relationships from the more routine ways for people to help out. We had been working hard to develop community leaders and organizers capable of taking on the majority of STOP’s day-to-day work. Consequently, we were neglecting student involvement for fear that STOP would be perceived as a group of students organizing the community, rather than a community-led organization harnessing the involvement of a diverse group of people as organizers, leaders and allies. We took a major step to overcoming this barrier by creating a group specifically meant to serve as an entry point to the issues. This was a space in which people could get educated and help educate their peers about issues on the South Side, without necessarily needing to become organizers or make long-term commitments. This group, the Southside Solidarity Network, has come to embody the solidarity within STOP’s work, bringing tenant leaders to talk and recruit support on campus, hosting educational series on present and historical struggles with speakers from around Chicago, and working with STOP to fulfill research and support needs.

Reflecting on the importance of a recent event the group hosted, U of C student Thomas Kelley-Kemple described the importance of such events in building solidarity among students. “As far as many students here are concerned, they would be all too willing to push gentrification south of 61st Street,” he said. “What we have done is exposed them to the reality that there already exists something there worth preserving: a vibrant neighborhood full of people.” As his comments show, the Southside Solidarity Network is creating opportunities for students to participate in action-based, instead of a service-based, learning.

Part of the effectiveness of the Southside Solidarity Network is the result of using organizing tools to develop the group. STOP organizers had preliminary conversations and identified students with strong personal motivation to get involved in the community. Doing so, they worked to create a group that could best use their respective skills, talents and passions in the service of the struggles taking place throughout Chicago, and on the South Side in particular. Nevertheless, we continue to face the challenge of creating avenues for effective involvement directly in STOP’s work. While we took on three students from the Southside Solidarity Network as interns for the 2005-2006 school year, we need to better use our interns in ways that develop their skills and experience, while simultaneously benefiting STOP and its other member organizations.

Solidarity for STOP is not just about connecting constituencies we work with, but also connecting issues and linking our work to broader struggles. The best recent example was our work to bring Woodlawn residents to the immigrants’ rights marches and foster dialogue in the community about black-brown relations and the potential power of unity. Following the May 1st march, STOP leader and Woodlawn homeowner Wardell Lavender remarked, “The African-Americans and Latinos need to march side by side. This might give people in our community an initiative to unite just like the Latinos, so we can show force in numbers. People sometimes say that ‘they’re just coming to take our jobs, they should stay in their country,’ but some people begin to understand that people from all over the world are being displaced and need to look for a country that can offer a job - something so they can take care of their family. Where there’s opportunity they go.” Echoing this opinion was Lonnie Richardson, president of a tenant council at Grove Parc.

“The immigrants being used as cheap labor takes me back to how this country was built on our backs as black people through slavery,” she said. “The government’s been on the backs of people of color and it’s about time we demonstrate that we’re all tired of it. I think it’s unfair for you to be used as slave labor just ‘cause you came across illegally. Immigrants have come here and been exploited from all over. We were brought over here by force, and there still are forms of slave labor, even with blacks. Look at all the prison labor - that’s a form of slave labor, of cheap labor. We got a border right here in the United States with the blacks, especially the black young men. They set them up with no jobs, no good education, not enough social services, then they do something to survive and wind up as prison labor, just like the Latinos, who do something to survive and end up as slave labor. What I would like to see is for the Latinos to support us also in the demand for reparations. I think that could happen if some of the black people who are for reparations get with the groups that we are in touch with on
this issue. That would be amazing. What I really got out of it is that what we are doing in our neighborhoods, we can do it, if we unite. This sends a big signal, not only here in Chicago but across the country. The amazing thing about it was that this was going on all over the place.” Both comments show solidarity at its best - support for each other’s demands with the expectation of reciprocation and a commitment to unity.

STOP is attempting to challenge the conventions in organizing that tell us people will only do what is in their narrowly defined self-interest. While recognizing the importance of self-interest in getting and keeping people active, we remain committed to continually pushing the boundaries of the “self” in self-interest. In so doing we are developing a way of understanding and confronting the systems of oppression this society is based on. We do not think it is enough for students to want to “get involved in the community.” Rather, we challenge them to look at the power relations that their own university maintains. We do not think it is enough just to bring together people from different races who share common issues or concerns, but instead strive to address race and class head on in all the work we do. We do not think that developing strong organizations is a goal in and of itself, but stress the need to define the values those organizations exist to fight for. A person might initially involve themselves because of a leaky roof. Shortly thereafter, he or she will realize that other tenants have similar issues, and seek unity. In forging this unity, tenants may realize similar problems exist in other buildings, and even in other communities. Through continued struggle, reflection and dialogue, the goal is to get at the root of these problems. We aim to build power, not just to fix the immediate situation, but to use that situation as an entry point into the broader struggle for justice taking place in this country and around the world.

Lonnie Richardson, tenant council president for two buildings at Grove Parc, saw encouraging signs.

“The positive thing is that we have gotten this leadership team together now,” she said. “And now the family units have started organizing and then we’re coming together as one to unite. We are doing things for ourselves, raising our own voices. The reason we are in the shape we’re in now is because at complexes like Grove Parc, management does anything they want if people let it happen. Protesting and coming together like this to demand a seat at the table - they don’t think we can do this. They think the low-income are tearing it down, they don’t ever see the positive side of the community. But we are taking our power back.”

We are always looking for submissions. Please contact Ali Winston at ali.winston@gmail.com or Julie Fry at juliquah@gmail.com.
Non-Governmental Disorganization
The Problem with Third-World NGOs

by Julie Fry

I completed a 10-week internship in Nairobi, Kenya, with Defence for Children International (DCI), the internationally-recognized, Geneva-based NGO. I was interested in the area of children’s rights, and more specifically the demobilization of children in conflict. What I ended up being put to work on was falsification and misrepresentation, for an organization that was not entirely on the up-and-up.

The principal mission of DCI Kenya is ostensibly to promote and protect the rights of the Kenyan children as articulated in the United Nations Conventions on the Rights of the Child. The chairperson of DCI Kenya, Dr. Kopiyo, replied to my inquiry about working with an organization that dealt with reintegration of child soldiers. Dr. Kopiyo said that DCI Kenya administered several such transition camps and that I was welcome to come and intern with the organization for the summer.

After excessive visa trouble (Kenya requires a paper ticket in hand verifying date of departure before they will grant you a visa–no printout of electronic tickets accepted!) I was able to get my visa to enter the country–no printout of electronic visa issued! I was able to get my visa to enter the country–no printout of electronic visa issued! After excessive visa trouble (Kenya requires a paper ticket in hand verifying date of departure before they will grant you a visa–no printout of electronic tickets accepted!) I was able to get my visa to enter the country–no printout of electronic visa issued! I was able to get my visa to enter the country–no printout of electronic visa issued! After excessive visa trouble (Kenya requires a paper ticket in hand verifying date of departure before they will grant you a visa–no printout of electronic tickets accepted!) I was able to get my visa to enter the country–no printout of electronic visa issued! I was able to get my visa to enter the country–no printout of electronic visa issued! After excessive visa trouble (Kenya requires a paper ticket in hand verifying date of departure before they will grant you a visa–no printout of electronic tickets accepted!) I was able to get my visa to enter the country–no printout of electronic visa issued! I was able to get my visa to enter the country–no printout of electronic visa issued!

I was confused as to why he would have told me I could come for the summer to do work in transit camps for child soldiers when DCI had no affiliations with such camps, and I asked what sort of work with children in conflict DCI was involved with. Dr. Kopiyo explained that because Kenya was a country with no recent conflicts or upheavals, there was no DCI program that dealt with children in conflict. He mentioned that there was a possibility I might be able to go into Sudan and work with War Child, an NGO which did work along the lines I was envisioning in coming to Kenya.

So my internship ended up totally different from how I had imagined it would be. When I arrived for my first day at the office, Dr. Kopiyo had gone out of the country for a meeting, and neither of the other two staff members in the office had any idea what I was supposed to be doing, or why I was in the office. Dr. Kopiyo remained out of town for almost a full week, during which time I read almost every piece of literature in the office, because of my lack of responsibilities and the inability of anyone in the office to direct me towards a project. I was the first intern at this extremely young organization (just under a year old), and I don’t think they had much idea what an intern was supposed to do when I first arrived.

When Dr. Kopiyo returned back to Nairobi, he assigned me to work on editing a project proposal about the environment and community development in western Kenya. The project proposal was nearly 100 pages long, and completely unreadable. It was the kind of thing I would expect to see if I asked a 7th grader to write me a 100-page project proposal on a topic of their choosing: effusive, confusing, and out-of-place word choices, run-on sentences that lasted for pages, and spelling and grammatical mistakes so severe it was impossible to discern the intent of the author. There were pages upon pages that had clearly been cut and pasted directly from UN Documents with minimal relevance to the project being proposed, and there was no outline or sense of organization to the document whatsoever. He gave me a list of organizations to which he had been sending the full proposal, and I was appalled at the inconsistency and randomness of the organizations. Many of the foundations had not even the slightest relevance to what the project was proposing, and nearly all of the foundations did not accept unsolicited proposals.

I had to go through the project proposal and figure out what would actually happen if the project was funded, and impose a structure on the document that detailed the problems being addressed, the measures to be implemented, and the expected outcome of the project.

The project would introduce reforestation efforts to the area, planting fruit trees both to stop erosion and also to give families produce to live off of and to sell. The project would also set up community honey facilities and give farm training to local landowners about low-impact, environmentally-friendly farming. Dr. Kopiyo (whose background is in development
economics) felt this was an appropriate project for a children's rights organization to take on, because he claimed communities cannot care for children and protect their rights without being economically stable first.

Editing this project proposal, formatting it into short summaries that met the application requirements of potential donors, and searching for donors took up approximately the first 6 weeks of my internship. I also worked on reformatting the budget for the project, converting it into the foreign currencies of potential donors. When I was first converting the budget into US dollars, I noticed that the budget was severely mis calculated. Neither the rows nor the columns added up. (A row that listed honey hives at $30 a hive, and estimated the need for 40 hives would then show the projected cost of hives to be something like $8,300! Similarly, none of the final totals in each category were an accurate sum of the subtotals above it.) After mentioning the errors to Dr. Kopiyo and spending nearly a week, untangling and reworking the 26-page budget, I showed Dr. Kopiyo the final product, excited that I had slimmed down a nearly $150,000 project to just under $75,000, simply by adding all of the categories correctly.

The next morning, Dr. Kopiyo handed me his revisions to my budget, saying that he had gone to meet with community leaders (who were located in Western Kenya, a two-day trip from Nairobi) and after discussing the project with them, had made some changes to the amount of materials needed, as well as adjusted the budget for inflation. The final total was now $650,000 for a small, one-year project. My meticulously calculated budget had inexplicably multiplied by a factor of 10 overnight!

Another concern with the project emerged when I went to Western Kenya with my boss, to meet with various community groups (who had supposedly initiated this project themselves and been key architects of the proposal after intensive discussion about community needs, or so the project proposal emphasized). When I gave speeches about the project to the community groups, they had no idea what I was talking about, but brightened up at the mention of possible funds for their community-based organizations. When I mentioned to my boss that none of the groups seemed to have heard of the project before, he laughed and said, “Yes, we told the donors that the community was involved in planning this project, and now we take this trip so that we will not be lying to them.” As I worked more and more in the community, it because much clearer how small an area this project would actually reach—incidentally it was the area inhabited almost exclusively by Dr. Kopiyo’s extended family, with much of the “help” being in the form of cash itself for vague “consultations” and “services rendered.”

I did accomplish a lot of “résumé” activities, but the general ineptitude of the staff at DCI make it unlikely that any of the headway I was able to make will be sustainable.

The rest of my time at DCI Kenya was spent being asked to “rework” (blatantly falsify) financial reports, make field reports to the main offices in Geneva that wildly exaggerated our activities in Kenya, and listening to my boss tell stories about what an accomplished headway I was able to make will be sustainable,.. The fact that I never was able to work with children in conflict (or on children’s issues at all, for that matter) and the experience of my boss changing the subject or brushing me off when I pressured him on a timetable for interning with War Child was very disheartening to me.

My experience with DCI Kenya was certainly eye-opening, but not a positive experience. The misuse of funds and misrepresentation of activities that characterized my time at DCI are things that anyone working in the non-profit world in Africa ought to be aware of, but still were not pleasant day-to-day realities. Being all-but-straightforwardly asked to falsify the annual budget (and then having “revisions” performed on the accurate budget I submitted), watching my boss try to leverage $750 “intern placement fees” from other young interns, and reading blatant falsification of accomplishments in reports to the International Secretariat was absolutely demoralizing. The fact that I never was able to work with children in conflict (or on children's issues at all, for that matter) and the experience of my boss changing the subject or brushing me off when I pressured him on a timetable for interning with War Child was very disheartening to me.

I did accomplish a lot of “résumé” activities—things that seem successful when put down on paper—but the general ineptitude of the staff at DCI make it unlikely that any of the headway I was able to make will be sustainable, and I doubt that many of the successes I had this summer will be built off of. My summer in Kenya turned me off to the realities of non-profit work on the ground in third world countries. After more schooling and life experience, I may return to Africa to do similar work as to what I hoped to accomplish this summer. But for now, I have no plans to accept the standing job offer Dr. Kopiyo extended to me at the end of my internship.
Fighting Slavery in 2006
The Long War Ahead Against Human Trafficking

by Bryan Collinsworth

Numbers are a huge part of any sporting event, and the recent World Cup was no exception. Thirty-two countries sent 736 players to duke it out in 90—sometimes 120—minute games in which victory often turned on just one goal, scored in as many seconds, before 40,000 to 80,000 people. An estimated five out of every six human beings on the planet tuned in at some point to watch the action.

But there was another shocking number that didn’t show up in most rundowns of World Cup statistics: 40,000. That was the number of women predicted to arrive in Germany during the tournament to provide sexual services for those in attendance.

Prostitution is legal in Germany, but everyone from Amnesty International to the Vatican to Swedish Equality Ombudsman Claes Borgström agreed that a huge portion of the women coming in for the Cup would be forced into sexual servitude as victims of one of the most widely-practiced and least acknowledged human rights violations in the modern world: trafficking in persons.

Modern-Day Slavery

The World Cup is just the tip of the iceberg. The U.S. Department of State estimates that between 4 million and 27 million people (that’s the entire population of Los Angeles and the entire population of California, respectively) are being kept in modern-day slavery throughout the world at any given time.

Advocacy groups debate the precise definition of trafficking, but the State Department’s 2006 Trafficking in Persons Report includes in those numbers people subjected to “forced labor, bonded labor, forced child labor, and sexual servitude.”

The most common stories are of young women and girls who are lured from poverty-stricken places with promises of work as servants or nannies, only to find themselves turned into shut-in sex slaves in alien countries where, even if they do escape, the authorities are often inaccessible to them. There are also men and boys, offered well-paying labor in faraway locations, only to be told when they arrive that they must work off the (previously unmentioned) costs of their transportation, and that their passports, wages, and freedom will be withheld until they do.

As the disparities in trafficking estimates and definitions already suggest, however, much about human trafficking remains a wretched mystery. Those who seek to measure the scope or track the effects of what many call “modern-day slavery” are stymied for the very same reason that the crime itself flourishes even in the 21st century: Human beings can still be abused in secret, coerced into silence, and frightened from escape.

In sparse, straightforward tones, brochures issued by the State Department demonstrate the difficulty of identifying victims of human trafficking. “Most trafficking victims will not readily volunteer information about their status because of fear and abuse they’ve suffered at the hands of their trafficker,” explains “Tips for Recognizing Victims of Trafficking in Persons.” “They may also be reluctant to come forward with information from despair, discouragement, and a sense that there are no viable options to escape their situation. Even if pressed, they may not identify themselves as someone held in bondage for fear of retribution to themselves or family members.”

And yet they may live right next door. When the subject of human trafficking does break into mainstream discourse—a shamefully rare occurrence—the stories are often of girls in Southeast Asia being forced into brothels, or boys in Uganda kidnapped to fight for warring armies. These crimes deserve a huge part in the trafficking narrative, but modern slavery thrives even within the United States—to the tune of 18,000 to 20,000 new victims each year, according to various government estimates.

But thankfully, it is also in the United States—and even in that peculiar corner of it called Washington, D.C.—that another human trafficking story desperately in need of telling is developing. Over the past five years, the U.S. government has embarked on a serious effort to curtail trafficking in persons. And working side by side with public officials have been college students and young activists who are starting to take the lead in a growing American anti-trafficking movement.
Unprecedented Action

For progressives who pride themselves on being at the cutting edge of humanitarian causes, the recent history of the fight against trafficking will be full of surprises. After all, U.S. Government action against trafficking began in earnest in 2000 when the late Sen. Paul Wellstone (D-MN) and Sen. Sam Brownback (R-KA) came together from opposite ends of the political spectrum to co-sponsor the Trafficking Victims Protection Act, which made trafficking for sex or labor a federal crime, channeled funding to anti-trafficking advocacy groups, and created a new network of executive agencies and offices to crack down on the practice in the U.S. and abroad.

And while saying that the Bush administration has made “unprecedented use of its executive powers” has been cause for great concern in many other contexts, in the area of human trafficking it has done so to significant positive effect. Since 2001, the State Department’s Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons (created by the 2000 legislation) has released annual reports ranking countries around the globe based on their progress (or lack thereof) in apprehending, prosecuting, and convicting traffickers. Meanwhile, Justice Department prosecutions of traffickers have increased by more than 300 percent since Bush entered office.

Over at the Capitol, Congress has continued to approve more and stronger anti-trafficking legislation since 2000, most recently the Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2005.

And finally, this flurry of government action has been mirrored and fed by a rise in public support. For decades, NGOs have worked to combat trafficking by raising awareness, investigating and tracking trafficking activity, providing support and rehabilitation for victims, and even actively working to free slaves.

But that movement has recently seen a grassroots groundswell as well.

A Growing Student Movement

“[Y]ou’re seeing the explosion of student groups, the explosion of community-based groups,” says Bradley Myles, National Program Coordinator for the D.C.-based anti-trafficking group Polaris Project, which was started by two Brown University students in early 2002. “[W]e have 90 or 100 colleges now joining this student movement,” he continues.

The movement he’s speaking of is the Campus Coalition Against Trafficking (CCAT), jointly founded in summer of 2005 by Polaris Project and Fair Fund, a group that “look[s] at human trafficking through a gender violence lens,” according to Co-founder and Executive Director Andrea Powell.

“We were getting 50, 60 calls a week from students interested in working in the anti-trafficking movement,” Powell recalls of the time before CCAT’s founding. She and other advocates had the same thought: “I get the same questions from the same students all over the country—let’s bring them together and really make this a movement.”

In the year since its founding, Powell and Myles say the Campus Coalition has grown from 10 members to a network of nearly 100 college groups, including several outside the United States. Groups range in size from five to 100 students, usually starting with a core group of few dedicated advocates and then expanding to become a presence on campus.

And while student anti-trafficking activists engage in standard campus organizing efforts such as movie nights or speaking events, Myles and Powell both emphasize that the disturbingly close-to-home nature of the trafficking issue gives rise to more unique student actions as well. “So many victims who are identified, here in the United States and elsewhere, are identified by community members,” Powell explains—so students reach out beyond their campuses “to raise the level of victim identification in the community.” Myles says.

“I find that many of the students that we work with through the Campus Coalition...they end up telling their friends and family, and in fact some of our Campus Coalition members have had their family members calling and saying ‘I think I’ve heard of this case,’ or ‘I think something is suspicious,’” Powell adds.

A Long Way to Go

This spring, CCAT worked with the Northwestern University Conference on Human Rights to sponsor the first National Student Summit on Trafficking. Approximately 100 student leaders from across the country attended. The coalition also offers students a database of internships with 95 different anti-trafficking groups across the nation.

Still, for CCAT and students working on the front lines, this is a long-term struggle with many challenges ahead. Maheen Kaleem, who helped organize a regional student conference on trafficking as one of the leaders of the Georgetown University anti-trafficking group SSTOP (Students Stopping the Trafficking of People), argues that a truly effective movement against human trafficking will require “a long-term shift in perspective.”

“Awareness...is almost more important than advocacy at this point,” she contends, because so few people currently have any conception of the problem or even the mental framework to conceive of slavery still existing in the 21st century, much less the knowledge to debate and advocate effective policies to stop it.

Moreover, Kaleem and her fellow Georgetown leaders see the student movement against trafficking as a response not only to an opportunity, but to a serious need. “The adult movement is highly, highly, highly politicized,” Kaleem says, by debates over distinctions between consensual prostitution and sexual slavery, or between accepted low-wage labor practices and indentured servitude.

She hopes that the rising generation of anti-trafficking activists can avoid or push beyond this debate, and focus all of their energy on ending one of the greatest and most persistent evils in the modern world. And she hopes that more and more students will join the fight every day.\n
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An Interview with Norman Finkelstein

by Mario Diaz-Perez

Norman Finkelstein, professor of political science at DePaul University, is one of the most controversial commentators on the Israel-Palestine conflict. A long-standing critic of the policies of the Israeli government, Finkelstein has often been painted as an ‘anti-Semite’ at worst and ‘a self-hating Jew’ at best. In his most recent book, Beyond Chutzpah: On the Misuse of Anti-Semitism and the Abuse of History, Finkelstein argues that his critics’ charge of anti-Semitism is most often used to suppress concern for the plight of the Palestinian people and to silence voices critical of the Israeli government.

In late September, I sat down with Mr. Finkelstein to discuss some of the ongoing problems between Israel and its neighbors, especially the Second Israel-Lebanon crisis which began on July 12th and lasted until August 14th, 2006. By the end of hostilities, 5,100 people lay dead; 1,100 of whom were Lebanese civilians. Despite this disproportionate death-toll, several agencies (e.g. Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch) have criticized both the Israeli military and Hizbullah for their indiscriminate use of force and the unnecessary deaths of civilians. Finkelstein points out that while the death of civilians is always regrettable, the Israeli military’s response he would not have ordered he had. He is to a certain extent a representative of the Lebanese government because there are cabinet members who are Hizbullah members. He knows that Hizbullah is not allowed to sacrifice Lebanon for the sake of Gaza unless the Lebanese agree. As the fighting elapsed, he downplayed the Gaza issue even more. He was always cautious about the way he put it because there is an issue left to Lebanese sanctioning. Most Lebanese would simply not accept that their country should be martyred for Gazans. But as a matter of principle, I see nothing objectionable about it. On the contrary, I see this act of solidarity as quite noble.

Why did Hizbullah capture the Israeli soldiers? Do you think this act was justified?

While I cannot claim to be an expert on the history of Hizbullah, I can only offer a summary analysis of the events and the explanations that were put forth, as well as an assessment as to whether those explanations were valid. The original explanation as to why Hizbullah carried out the action was that Israel held Lebanese civilian prisoners who had been promised release but were still unreleased. As far as Nasrallah is concerned, I don’t believe the events contradicted what he had been saying throughout the war.

First of all, he had alerted the Lebanese cabinet that Hizbullah would be taking action in order to secure the release of the Lebanese who were held in Israeli prisons. This was the first justification. According to what Nasrallah said in one of his speeches, the Lebanese government did not dispute or challenge their responsibility to try to secure the release of the Lebanese held in Israeli prisons.

Secondly, it was said that Hizbullah carried out these actions in solidarity with the Gazans under the siege of Israel. Frankly, I thought that this motive was very honorable. The whole world was ignoring Gaza and the whole world is ignoring Gaza right now. The reports coming out of Gaza are quite horrific. There is a steady stream of reports from Amnesty International about a policy of massive starvation being imposed on Gaza in order to get the Hamas government to look formally into the kidnapping of Corporal Shalit. Israel has simply crushed the Hamas elected government and the whole world seems to be going along with it.

Obviously I cannot say that solidarity with Gaza was the primary reason for Hizbullah’s actions. We have to be honest about the amount of political responsibility Nasrallah felt he had. He is to a certain extent a representative of the Lebanese government because there are cabinet members who are Hizbullah members. He knows that Hizbullah is not allowed to sacrifice Lebanon for the sake of Gaza unless the Lebanese agree. As the fighting elapsed, he downplayed the Gaza issue even more. He was always cautious about the way he put it because there is an issue left to Lebanese sanctioning. Most Lebanese would simply not accept that their country should be martyred for Gazans. But as a matter of principle, I see nothing objectionable about it. On the contrary, I see this act of solidarity as quite noble.

Could Hizbullah have expected such a heavily-handed response?

Personally I see no reason to doubt what Nasrallah has said, which is that Hizbullah did not expect a response of this magnitude. I don’t see any reason to doubt this. Of course, there is Robert Fisk and all his slapdash ranting. Fisk comments on the “insidiousness” of Nasrallah for the simple fact that he had built a network of tunnels and bunkers. Building bunkers proves nothing other than a strategy of a shrewd military commander. Nasrallah may not have known that this would be the moment of attack, yet he was prepared. Of course everybody knew that Israel would attack at some point, but why presume that he knew it would be at this moment? The fact that all politicians lie is not grounds to conclude that he is prima facie lying now. In fact, Nasrallah has explicitly said that if he had known about the severity of the Israeli military’s response he would not have ordered the action, and I believe him.

If we look at the issue merely on prudential grounds, from the perspective of military strategy, it is clear that Nasrallah would not want to be on the defensive internationally. He would have wanted to arrange things in such a way that Israel would have to initiate the war or appear to initiate the war. Instead, in the first ten days of the war, Hizbullah was definitely on the defensive internationally because nearly every reporter felt that they had started the war by attacking and kidnapping Israeli soldiers. Surely they expected some response, but I don’t believe they expected such a disproportionate one, I don’t believe they expected a big war. Were they prepared for a big war? Yes. Did they anticipate a big war? Of course. Hizbullah’s commanders are militarily shrewd. They understood what was happening on the Israeli side, but whether they thought it would be at this moment—no. However, I don’t even think it’s important because regardless of what the pretext was, the Israeli response was disproportionate.

“The reports coming out of Gaza are quite horrific. There is a steady stream of reports from Amnesty International about a policy of massive starvation being imposed on Gaza in order to get the Hamas government to look formally into the kidnapping of Corporal Shalit.”

Were they internationally on the defensive because everyone seems to have forgotten about the two Gazans kidnapped by Israel on June 24th?

Well that really wasn’t a related issue. The issue of whether Gazans captured Corporal Shalit because of the earlier abductions by Israel depends on where you want to put the emphasis. I personally don’t think the issue is very important. I think we should stick to the record as the Gazans themselves have put forth the record. They were concerned about the ten thousand Palestinians held in Israeli prisons, including the several hundred women and children. About 800 to 1,000 are held under the term ‘administrative detainees’ which means they are held without charges or a trial. The so-called military trials which the rest have been subjected to are just mockeries of the rule of law. Basically, there already are 10,000 Palestinian hostages in Israeli prisons. If the word hostage has any meaning these days, there really are 1.4 million hostages—the entire Gazan population. I have come to this conclusion by the Israeli military’s own statements; they have said that Gaza is being held hostage until the soldier (Shalit) is returned. And they claim they are carrying out the mission to free Shalit, and


2. Corporal Gilad Shalit was captured on June 25, 2006 by Palestinian militants (the Izz ad-Din al Qassam Brigades) demanding the release of all Palestinian women and children in Israeli prisons.
Let’s move on now to the conduct of the war. Why did Israel hit the airport in Beirut and not just target the Hizbullah controlled south? Could Israel have isolated Hizbullah by simply hitting those areas and perhaps aroused hostile attitudes towards the organization among Sunnis and Christians? Instead, Israel bombed vast sections of the country, made it a Lebanon v. Israel issue, support for Hizbullah soared—even among Maronites.

First of all, it’s important to put all this into historical context. This is how Israel has always attacked Lebanon. It is their standard strategy. I don’t even want to go back to 1982 in which Israel killed many more civilians (as many 20,000 civilians) because then Israel’s objectives were very different: to destroy the PLO and also establish an Israeli protectorate over Lebanon. If we go back to the invasions of 1993 and 1996, Operation Accountability (under the stewardship of Yitzhak Rabin) and Operation Grapes of Wrath (Perez), we can observe all the same things. These include the bombing of power plants, carpet bombing the south, and driving the civilian population to Beirut; all in the hope that the population will put enough pressure on the government to rein in Hizbullah. It was the same thing in this war.

What went awry this time is that it lasted much longer than expected. At its end the war was reminiscent of the Kurasawa film *Ran*. At the end of the film there is a battle and the mad general is saying “more, more, more.” At the end, the Israelis adopted the strategy that since their maximum goal, the defeat of Hizbullah, would not be achieved, then their minimum goal should be achieved. Their minimum goal was to inflict enough devastation to send a message to the Lebanese and regional governments that this is what will happen to you if you mess with us. It was much like what the US did when it realized that it couldn’t win the Vietnam War, it decided to turn the country into a moon crater. The message then to the Vietcong and every other national liberation movement was: “OK, you’ll win, but do you really want to win a moonscape?”

To what extent were US and Israeli interests planned to be furthered by the bombardment of Lebanon? Was it a convergence of interests or Israel simply doing the bidding of the US? If the latter, then why would the US waste all the work it did to encourage a ‘Cedar Revolution’? What do you make of the Israel Lobby argument offered by John Mearsheimer and Stephen Walt?

No, I don’t go for those explanations. What happened was, in my opinion, the first few days was a war between Israel and Hizbullah in which the US expected to get derivative advantages, that is to say that any defeat of Arabs is good for us, but these were not the impetus for Israel’s attack. About four or five days into the war it became clear that this was a US-Israeli war, that there were advantages that Israel sought that could have regional dividends for the US. The US sees Hizbullah as the weakest link in the “Axis of Evil”. They couldn’t attack Syria because it’s a state and that of course brings in issues of international law and so forth. The US obviously couldn’t attack Iran. The only easy targets are Hizbullah and Hamas, though Hamas is really a small player. They knew there would be regional dividends in terrifying Syria, Iran, and also the Shia insurgents and Sadr forces in Iraq. They thought that if they could knock out Hizbullah, then it would send a message to all these other forces in the region.

But I don’t accept these arguments that Israel is just doing the US’s bidding or that Israel is manipulating the US. None of these explanations really hold up against the historical record. Israel has local interests; it has local problems with the Palestinians and others in the region. It also has regional ambitions which often converge with the regional ambitions of the United States. And this war was an example of this convergence. I don’t think that the original aim was to do so much damage or that the US knew so much damage would occur. Only after Israel knew that its maximum objective in the war could not be achieved did it inflict most of the devastation that was visited upon Lebanon. For the US there was a realization that yes we have interests in Lebanon, but we also have other broader issues in the Middle East: there’s Iran, Syria, the Iraqi insurgency. And so, in the end, they calculated that destroying Lebanon was worth it.

The overall regional interests of the US and Israel clearly in my opinion converge as was shown in the Israel-Lebanon war. Which is why Fisk remarked somewhere during the war: “now it’s plain as day, this is an Israeli war.” This is the stupidest remark I’ve heard, because it was plain as day, days before that this was an American war as well. That was just blindly clear as it was blindly clear that the US had these interests before the start of the war. So there was a clear convergence of regional interests. These interests are to keep the Arab world subordinate to the Western powers, for which Israel is a regional surrogate.

But then there are local Israeli issues, the Palestinian issue, the settlements, the occupation etc. from which the US gets exactly zero. But they go along with it mostly because of the work of the Israel Lobby; I think that much is obvious. There’s never been a real overlapping of interests when it comes to Israel-Palestine. There are a few recent developments which make the picture a little bit more complicated.

What makes the picture more complicated is that 1) many have so completely absorbed or internalized the Israeli worldview that the only language the Arabs understand is the language of force and 2) they have so internalized the view that whatever is good for Israel is good for the United States—an Israeli victory is an American victory, etc. They believe that an Israeli victory over the Palestinians is an American defeat over the ‘Islamo-fascists’.

They’ve so internalized this thinking that de facto it’s hard to know whether they are working for Israel or the US. It’s easy to misconstrue who’s working for whom. This business is kind of a squandering of investigation because it’s hard to prove. The only time it will be possible to determine the strength of the Israeli lobby is when there is a clear-cut conflict of interest and we see where these neoconservatives stand. I’m not sure whether it’s a fruitful avenue of research.

The Oslo Agreements: In your book *Image and Reality of the Israel-Palestine Conflict*, you reference Edward Said’s analysis that on all crucial issues, the Palestinians gained nothing and sacrificed a great deal. While you agreed with Said on the outcome of Oslo, you disagreed with his placement of most of the blame on the corruption and incompetence of the PLO. How did the US and Israel undermine Palestinian national aspirations?

First of all you have to make a distinction on the PLO side between the negotiating position, their diplomatic position, and their mobilizing ability to achieve their diplomatic goals. Their diplomatic position was perfectly reasonable and their negotiating was perfectly fine. I’ve read through the record. Their negotiating was perfectly fine—they raised the right issues. They knew exactly what was going on. If you
take a look at Oslo I and II, Oslo I was signed in September 1993 and Oslo II, a big fat 300-page interim agreement, was signed in September 1995. As Shlomo Ben-Ami put it in his book *Scars of War, Wounds of Peace*, the agreement was the result of the balance of power and they (the Palestinians) got what they could have achieved given the relationship of forces. This notion that the PLO didn’t have lawyers or didn’t know English or didn’t have maps is silly. First of all, these issues are not so complicated. Everybody knows what the main issues are with the water, the settlements, the borders, Jerusalem and they definitely know the lay of their land. I mean they’re the most disgusting, corrupt, repellant creatures on God’s green earth, the PLO, but they know the lay of their land, they live there. Even Bill Clinton knew all the streets in Jerusalem by the end of his presidency.

Where the fault does lie however, is with their strategy, if it can be dignified with the word strategy. It was to simply get on their hands and knees before the Americans and show them that they will be obedient and servient. They never tried to mobilize society, they manipulated, but never really mobilized society before the agreements. As far as the US, it was clear at the time for those that wanted to see. If you go back and read articles by Israd Shahak, Noam Chomsky, Edward Said and others in 1993, they first described it as a “Palestinian Versailles” and they understood perfectly well what the US was going to do, the US was taking the PLO and using them as their surrogates.

What is the whole purpose of an interim period anyway if you are serious about peace? They signed an Israel-Egypt peace treaty in 1979 and the Israeli troops completely withdrew by 1981 because it was clearly an agreement to end the occupation of Sinai. The whole purpose of the five-year interim period of Oslo was to get the PLO as integrated into the Israeli power structure as possible. Conscious or unconsciously, unwittingly or unwillingly, they became the Israeli agents in the occupied territories. After five years of enjoying these privileges, being VIPs, having lots of money in Swiss bank accounts, drunken orgies and all the rest, you don’t want to give it up. And that’s what they became, Israeli subcontractors in the Occupied Territories. People like Dalen and Abbas, all of them, they’re just US agents in the Palestinian conflict. I think too many people don’t know their history because they don’t know what it means to be a collaborator. They think to be a collaborator means you have to wear a sign on your back that says so. But if you look back in history, collaborators always give fiery speeches denouncing colonial history. If you look back at South African history, even the worst collaborators like Macenzema in Transcot. Every once in awhile he would give these fiery speeches denouncing apartheid, denouncing the Bantustans. And remember Butalazee in Kwazulu, he still had a big following until the end and he was denouncing the South African government. You have to examine the actions, the relationships, the webs of power and if you look at all of that, the Oslo strategy worked almost perfectly.

Except for a couple issues it completely worked. Number one, I don’t believe they ever completely bought off Arafat. Believe me I’m the last person on earth to sing any praises for that repellant creature. But we have to be honest to the facts and till the end he wasn’t willing to sell the whole thing out. Some people say he wasn’t willing to sell the whole thing out because he didn’t want a bullet to the head and it’s probably true because he would often say: “I can’t sign that document on Jerusalem because I’ll get shot in the head.” That’s what he’d say over and over again to Clinton and Barak. I don’t think it was just that, I think he understood what was going on at Camp David. The rest of the leadership would have run right for the pen to sign it. Once Arafat was gone they thought it would be easy. Easy except for one problem, they didn’t figure that Hamas would come to power; this was the second error in their strategy.

On many occasions you have said or written that you support a two-state solution to the conflict. But in *Image/Reality*, while discussing the similarities and differences between the Palestinian predicament and the history of apartheid South Africa, you state: “If Israel eventually grants independence to the hodgepodge areas that now exercise ‘self-rule’, the Palestine question will probably be dropped from the international agenda. Palestinians will no longer be able to benefit from the kind of international solidarity that contributed so mightily to the collapse of the apartheid regime.” And, so my question to you is, would a two-state solution really be very good for Palestinians politically?

To my knowledge, I was the first one to predict that Labor would eventually support a Palestinian state. You have to remember that when I wrote that, Labor’s position was not in support of a Palestinian state, their position was to support some kind of Palestinian autonomy. When I started to read up on the history of the South African Bantustans, it occurred to me that originally the Bantustans were autonomous regions and in the beginning of the mid-1970s they began to give them statehood. And it occurred to me that that’s obviously what Israel’s going to do. Why call it an autonomous region when you can endow it with the official name of a state? So, what I was arguing there was, if you give these hodgepodge areas the title of a state, then the Palestinians will lose everything. So at the time of writing my book, my position was that it’s not a wise strategy to focus everything on the question of a state because Bantustans are states too. I said the issue has to be not just the state, but it has to be full withdrawal and you have to put equal emphasis on that. I think I can say that while I’m not a great predictor of
Some commentators have called Hizbullah’s kidnapping of Israeli prisoners as bargaining chips for the release of Palestinians as a terrorist act. Why or why not is this terrorism and could you formulate your own definition of terrorism? How does Hizbullah’s normal conduct compare with that of Palestinian organizations?

What makes the picture more complicated is that 1) many have so completely absorbed or internalized the Israeli worldview that the only language the Arabs understand is the language of force and 2) they have so internalized the view that whatever is good for Israel is good for the United States—an Israeli victory is an American victory, etc.

Well, it can’t be terrorism because terrorism in its most elemental formulation means targeting a civilian population for political ends. So already the issue of terrorism is totally beside the point. I don’t consider the capturing of combatants for bargaining chips to be terrorism. I think that Hizbullah’s record is very good compared to the Israelis and compared to the Palestinians in fact. I try to stick to one standard, but I really can’t agree with what Human Rights Watch concludes about Hizbullah. Let’s just look at the facts: there were about 1,000 casualties, and 90% were civilian. On the Israeli side there were about 150 casualties and about 20% civilian. So whether you look at the numbers absolutely or whether you look at them relatively the record of Hizbullah is about 30 times better than Israel. So if you want to call Hizbullah a terrorist, then Israel is 20 times the terrorist Hizbullah is. That is just a factual numbers issue.

Then, of course, Human Rights Watch argues that Hizbullah uses indiscriminate weapons [Katyusha rockets]. Whether this is true is open to some debate, these rockets can be used to target military sites with an estimable degree of accuracy. But let’s assume it’s true that these missiles fly any which way. Then it means that Hizbullah’s indiscriminate firing of missiles killed less civilians than Israel’s discriminate firing of missiles. Who’s worse? At least Hizbullah has an alibi, an alibi of necessity.

From what I understand, the Lebanese government is planning to bring charges of war crimes against Israel. How successful will this arraignment be?

It will be successful if the people fight hard enough for it. Amnesty International wrote in its last report that Israel committed war crimes of such a magnitude that they are liable for prosecution anywhere in the world. It can happen if we make it happen.

There was a nice folk song in the fifties called “Sinner Man.” It went like this:

Run, sinner man, where you gonna run to,
Run to the moon, the moon won’t hide you,
Run to the stars, the stars won’t hide you,
Run, sinner man, run.

And that’s what we should do to the Israelis. Everywhere they should be confronted. Not stopped from speaking—let them speak—but confront them as war criminals. Look at Kissinger now; he has to stay at his home because he is terrified that Pinochet will be pinned on him. Confront all of those Israeli generals, and make it such that they can’t go anywhere.
Les Enfants Terribles
A Review of The Emperor's Children by Claire Messud

“The Emperor's Children”
By Claire Messud
431 pp. Alfred A. Knopf. $25
by Christopher Ross

“The malady has been diagnosed—
heaven alone knows how to cure it!”
-Mikhail Lermontov, A Hero of Our Time

Claire Messud's new novel, The Emperor's Children, should put most of today's novelists, journalists, and other culture-makers to shame. Set in the months before 9/11, the novel follows the lives of three friends. All precocious Ivy League graduates, these friends are lured by a sense of entitlement and consumed by their quests for—as yet—utterly unfulfilled greatness. (“I want what I’ve always wanted, Daddy. To do something important,” says one of the characters to her father, having accomplished precious little and already 30.) This suggestion of infantilism in the ranks of today's intelligentsia is perhaps the novel's most powerful point: Not only is this a lost generation, but one arrested in adolescence.

The three friends—Maria Thwaite, Julius Clarke, and Daniëlle Minkoff—were all promising in their youth: beautiful, highly educated, and hungry for success. But as they approach mature adulthood, mere promise is wearing thin. Julius, a critic for Village Voice, “was aware that at thirty he stretched the limits of the charming wastrel, that some actual sustained endeavor might be in order were he not to fade, wisplike, away.”

Marina Thwaite is similarly troubled by creeping indications that her sense of entitlement may have been misplaced. As the only daughter of the esteemed journalist and intellectual, Murray Thwaite was once an “it” girl on the New York cultural scene. Now, she finds herself hopelessly mired in writing a silly, irrelevant book about children’s fashion. Having just broken up with a boyfriend and left with “no apartment of her own, no money with which to procure one,” she moves back to her parent's Upper West Side apartment.

The third in the group of friends, Daniëlle, has managed to grow up a bit more than Julius and Marina. A documentary producer, she has a stable job and her own apartment. In one scene, Daniëlle visits Marina at her parent's house for dinner. Daniëlle is, “suddenly, powerfully aware of the profound oddity of Marina's present life, a life arrested at, or at least returned to, childhood.”

Murray Thwaite, Marina's father, took a life of letters and political engagement seriously in his youth. When we meet him in his old age, he is an alcoholic, adulterous phony. Quickly degenerating—morally, physically, and intellectually—Murray is still revered by the intellectual and journalistic community. He maintains his status by recycling trite speeches about speaking the truth to corrupt institutions—though he has become one himself.

Once, long ago, Murray “had slain his father, no question about it.” The Oedipal implications of the novel are here revealed, in the sense articulated by Harold Bloom, as the anxiety of influence. The real reason Julius, Daniëlle and, most prominently, Marina are still children is that they continue to worship Murray as “the emperor.” This generation cannot summon the will or the strength to overthrow the old monarch; the novel suggests that they will always remain in his shadow.

While doing research in Australia, Daniëlle encounters the serpentine Ludovic Seely, a journalist famous for debunking Australian public officials. Daniëlle is entranced by Seely when he mentions in New York and planning a revolution via his editorship at a new magazine, the Monitor. The word “revolution” exerts a strong attraction on Daniëlle, as it does on Marina, perhaps because it is that very thing they are incapable of accomplishing.

In a discussion with Daniëlle, it soon becomes apparent how sharply Seely differs from everyone else in his view of Murray: “That’s what I hold against Thwaite—he's a sentimentalist. There's nothing clear-eyed about his analyses; they're rants, just empty rants.” Daniëlle replies that, still, he seems impassioned, and doesn’t that at least make him more interesting? Seeley responds fervently, “No, precisely no! What could be rarer, more precious, more compelling than unmasking these hacks for what they are? Than an instrument to trumpet that the emperor has no clothes.” The instrument Seely has in mind is his magazine, and though the Monitor has many aims, its undisputed purpose is to destroy Murray and the world of sycophants he has built up around himself.

Last on the scene is Bootie, nephew of Murray, a fumbling, overweight, college drop out, who is deeply convinced of the truth in Ralph Waldo Emerson's works. Bootie's character offers a powerful reminder of America's identity, and perhaps its only salvation. Disillusioned with the life of the mind at educational institutions, Bootie drops out of college and decides to go to New York City, “to be living like a philosopher, the way Emerson said that Plato had, alone and invisible.” He counts on his Uncle Murray to help get him started.

Murray takes Bootie into his home, fancying Bootie a younger version of himself: fiercely idealistic, ambitious, with staggeringly high standards for the world and himself. As a secretary of sorts to Murray, Bootie soon finds that his mentor fails to meet his standards, let alone anyone else's. After a few months, “Murray looked different; still an imposing façade, to be sure; but a hollow monument.”

When Bootie discovers Murray's many infidelities—to his work, his family, and his values—the damage is done. Bootie writes a ferocious attack on his uncle in conjunction with Seeley's magazine and the consequences are harsh: Bootie is effectively ostracized from his family.

Messud's take on the psychological novel can make her book a fairly unsettling read. She lays bare the complex machinations of her characters to present a particular image of themselves to the world. Julius speaks about War and Peace in terms of how, “he never knew in life whether to be Pierre or Natasha, the solitary, brooding loner or the vivacious social butterfly.” By revealing the effort required to present oneself as someone or something—a Pierre, a Natasha, a serious thinker—Messud makes us confront our own Sartrean “bad faith.”

Messud's original use of psychology justifies her writing a psychological novel. Yet it is an old form, squeezed of its relevance, much like the character of Murray himself. Where is the novel's Goddard, de Kooning, or Schoenberg? Susan Sontag once wrote, “There is no genre more compelling than unmasking these hacks for what they are? Than an instrument to trumpet that the emperor has no clothes.” The instrument Seely has in mind is his magazine, and though the Monitor has many aims, its undisputed purpose is to destroy Murray and the world of sycophants he has built up around himself.

Above all, the novel should be read as a challenge and a call to arms for a generation of thinkers and writers. It should be read as a call to live up (and grow up) to responsibilities, to reject the old and seek the new. In the words of that old American sage, Emerson himself: “Do not think the youth has no force… Bashful or bold, he will know how to make us seniors very unnecessary.”
Make It New, Make It Massive

by Julia Simon

In August 1914, Antonio Sant’Elia published the “Manifesto of Futurist Architecture” in the Italian journal Lacerma. In it, Sant’Elia articulated the modernist doctrines of his group: principles of movement, of essentialism, of the teleology of the age.

Futurist architecture, he wrote, is “an architecture whose reason for existence can be found solely in the unique conditions of modern life... This architecture cannot be subjected to any law of historical continuity. It must be new, just as our state of mind is new.”

New states of mind necessitate new questions. The question, “Now that we can do anything, what will we do?” hovers magisterially—stoutly, in immense black type—above the entrance to the exhibit Massive Change: The Future of Global Design, on view at Museum of Contemporary Art until December 31.

The “state of mind” of this exhibit can be articulated in a word: Massive. Massive Change is a “project.” When the museumgoer steps into the exhibit, he is told by the writing on the wall, “your entry makes you part of the project.” The tentacles of the project extend up (there are exhibit-relevant rooms on each of the museum’s four floors) and outside the museum walls, following the visitors as they leave the exhibit.

In the modern age, reads the online definition of the Massive Change project, we are “at the beginning of a new, unprecedented period of human possibility, where all economies and ecologies are becoming global, relational, and interconnected.” It is in relation to these “unique conditions of modern life” that Massive Change finds its meaning. The exhibit attempts to contextualize design in a massive world—a world with a population soaring to 6.5 billion and with the specter of global warming haunting our future.

The exhibit catalogues and promotes the new. Incorporating innovative concepts of material and materialism, innovative marriages between engineering and sustainability, and utopian visions of “New Cities,” the exhibit embodies the futurists’ immediacy and demand for progress.

Kant’s “purposiveness without purpose”—seized on by futurists seeking to trample down old, purposeless and “imbecile” (Sant’Elia’s word) forms of architecture—takes on new meaning in the context of Massive Change. One room of the exhibition is devoted to modern materials with amazing utility but no singular purpose. The introduction to the room reads: “Aside from any designed application, material itself, endowed with superhero characteristics, is the goal and the outcome.” Material becomes the object of design.

Walking into this room, the walls are lined with raw substances, each spelling out its distinct material’s name. As the museumgoer reads about the material, he conjures a purpose for that material, any purpose. He reads “99.8% Air”—a gelatinous mass called Aerogel offering incredible insulation with miniscule weigh—and he thinks “airplane.” He reads “Self-Cleaning Glass”—titanium dioxide promising to eliminate labor spent cleaning glass and runoff caused by glass-cleaning products—and he thinks “high-rise.” The room brims with material potential waiting to be actualized and objectified.

Sant’Elia’s opus is the 1914 La Città Nuova, an urban plan for the new city, describing pure straight lines of highways, bridges and aerial walkways all racing toward a central downtown. Interconnected skyscrapers—sleek, streamlined and stripped of neoclassical frills—fill the center of la città. A recurring futurist preoccupation, conjuring high-rises is also a focal point of the Massive Change exhibit.

The Zero Energy Tower will loom 300 meters over Guangzhou—a city in the Pearl River Delta of Southern China—as a monument to the highest principles of energy in equilibrium. The Chicago firm Skidmore Owings and Merrill designed the building to produce more energy than it actually consumes. The exhibit also displays a genuine città, the glass-cleaning products—and he thinks “airplane.” He reads “Self-Cleaning Glass”—titanium dioxide promising to eliminate labor spent cleaning glass and runoff caused by glass-cleaning products—and he thinks “high-rise.” The room brims with material potential waiting to be actualized and objectified.

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The exhibit also features designs for Chicago, including blueprints for low-income housing with wind turbines and solar energy capabilities and new plans for the Hyatt Regency to improve its energy usage. The Hyatt plans include energy efficient daylight harvesting, strategies to refresh the hotel’s water and waste management, and designs for a new Green Market under the hotel at the river’s edge.

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**Loaded Words in the Massive Design Age**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Photovoltaic Cells:</th>
<th>Often called solar cells, these cells are semiconductor devices that convert sunlight, solar energy, into direct current electricity.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Biomimicry:</td>
<td>A science that draws inspiration from nature and natural processes and mimics these designs to solve human problems, e.g. a photovoltaic cell inspired by a leaf.</td>
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*continued on page 19*
So the Story Goes
Five Photographers and Their Selected Lives

by Sam Cate-Gumpert

Art photography is a highly subjective, selective medium. What we as spectators see is not some objective truth of life or art; rather, we see the artist’s truth: what he or she chooses to present us. Yet this is not a wholly one-sided process. The photographer plays with the expectations and biases of the spectator, ultimately forcing questions of the ability of the medium itself. So the Story Goes, the exhibit of contemporary photography on display at the Art Institute of Chicago until December 3, is a revelatory, disturbing and ultimately wonderful example of this dialogue between artist and spectator.

Featuring the color and black and white photographs of Tina Barney, Philip-Lorca diCorcia, Nan Goldin, Sally Mann and Larry Sultan, So the Story Goes finds its unifying theme in the idea of friends and family. The selections from each photographer focus on their personal lives and the lives of their families and friends. The photographers capitalize on each personal relationship as a means of expressing the myriad possibilities of photography as a storytelling and cathartic medium.

The tour of these possibilities begins with Tina Barney and her large-format, vibrant images of East Coast affluence. Her photos of close family and friends, spans several decades, and has an easy reference point in the rustic wealth of Ralph Lauren and his bucolic mansions. Yet Barney’s photographs, of pastels and BBQs, of mornings in the Hamptons with breakfast and the New York Times, of the color-coordination of mother, daughter and bathroom, do not represent some ideal. Barney’s large, color-filled images allow her to capture the tension hiding beneath the surface of this lifestyle. The affluence of her subjects is juxtaposed against their seeming detachment from this world. One shot of a father and daughter playing in her pink room is followed by a shot of the same couple in the same room years later. This time around the daughter is grown, smoking a cigarette, staring straight at the camera with remote languor. The father’s look seems to suggest a tacit acknowledgement of life gone by, on what has led from that first playful moment to this. In another image, Barney and her boys are grouped around a grill: the younger son in bright pink shorts, tan with no shirt, drinking Budweiser. All three are laughing, yet the young son’s look is almost grotesque, all teeth and mouth, a smile that generates a feeling of revulsion that pushes the viewer away from this scene and, possibly, this life. While Barney is certainly not offering a singular perspective on the life she lives, all her subjects have a certain look, a certain tension—just tight enough to snap the surface of designer labels and heirloom paintings.

Sally Mann’s photographs function on a different, if not more off-putting, plane. The black and white images of her sons and daughters are almost all set at the lake, on what seems to be an interminable camping trip. The images are hauntingly gorgeous, developed using 19th century techniques: landscapes of mist and endless rivers emerging out of darkness, the penetrating gaze of a sun-kissed child, the father shaving while the daughter reads. Yet these pictures are also slightly disturbing. Her children are often photographed nude, and the camera’s gaze seems to oscillate between a mother’s adoration and a voyeur’s fantasy. The accompanying text indicates the consent of the children, but once the last photo is reached, one is not quite so sure. It is of Mann’s son, aged ten, naked once again and swimming backward away from the camera. Its title—“The Last Time Emmett Modeled Nude”—is, in the context of the composition, disconcerting. Emmett’s face is one of exasperation, annoyance; was this, then, really a mutual effort between mother and children? Mann, in confronting the viewer like this, seems to be confounding and questioning the preconceived notions of innocence, love and motherhood the viewer brings to the table.

Philip-Lorca diCorcia’s images function more as a whole than on any individual level:
Some photographs are quite strong, some fail to hold the viewer's attention. DiCorcia starts and ends his meandering hall of images with photos of his reclining father on his bed watching TV and in his coffin before his own funeral service. DiCorcia is narrating a life for us; his life, yes, but not necessarily the life he has led. Each image, held relationally to the others, is pregnant with possible meanings. Yet there seems to be no single meaning to be had. Instead, DiCorcia seems to be exploring the emotional possibilities that a photographic narrative can conjure. Unlike Barney or Mann, or later Sultan or Goldin, DiCorcia’s photographs are more about the possibilities of life than any particular lived experience.

Larry Sultan’s color photographs of his parent’s retirement and film stills from old home movies found in his parent’s basement create a kind of idealized document of domestic bliss. Yet this document is complicated by quotations of his mother and father taken from thorny discussions over their twilight years and displayed alongside the images. Is this really happiness? In these quotes, Sultan himself claims that, through these photographs, he was trying “to stop time,” that he wanted his “parents to live forever.” He seems to be trying to recapture the happiness that the old film stills evoke. But in his documentation, he—and the viewer—seem to realize that strange quality of memory that burns away pain and treasures the good. If his photographs are meant to hold onto whatever is left of his parent’s life, what is really captured? Sultan’s images question the tricky relationship between photographic image and memory through that reified notion of a happy family.

Nan Goldin’s images—and especially the slide show The Ballad of Sexual Dependency that ends, “So the story goes”—are by far the most arresting and emotional of the exhibit. Graphic images of a hard life document death and AIDS, drug and spousal abuse, as well as the tenderness of friends and loved ones. Her images halt the viewer in his tracks. I was incapable of dragging myself away from her photos of Gilles and Gotscho. Gilles and Gotscho are gay lovers (and Goldin’s close friends) and Gilles is dying of AIDS. The final two images—in which Gotscho kisses an emaciated Gilles and Gilles’ arm lays on the hospital sheets, white on white—are both disturbing and beautiful. This is Goldin’s basic power; in her haunting images of pain and suffering, she dares the spectator to look while simultaneously daring him to move away. The slide show, set to a haunting soundtrack of punk and post-rock, changes with each showing of the exhibit. Between heartfelt moments of love—between Goldin and her lovers and between others—there are heartbreaking moments of hurt; bloodied eyes, bruised arms. Sitting through this forty-five minute show is difficult. But once it’s done, you realize there was no way you could have left.

The exhibit seeks to awe its audience; the designs are innovative, modern, and revolutionary. As the systemic manifesto ofMassive Change states, “[Design] encompasses the utopian and dystopian possibilities of this emerging world, in which even nature is no longer outside the reach of our manipulation.” But despite such broad aspirations, the exhibit still speaks to the museumgoer as an individual within the context of modern life, with the ghosts of overpopulation and global warming continually haunting. Indeed, even as the museumgoer leaves the exhibit, the question looms above his head: Now that you can do anything, what will you do?
now that we can do anything, what will we do? now that we can do anything, what will we do? now that we can do anything, what will we do? now that we can do anything, what will we do? now that we can do anything, what will we do? now that we can do anything, what will we do? now that we can do anything, what will we do? now that we can do anything, what will we do? now that we can do anything, what will we do? now that we can do anything, what will we do? now that we can do anything, what will we do?