

# New York City News

NATIONAL LAWYERS GUILD – NYC CHAPTER



DECEMBER 2007

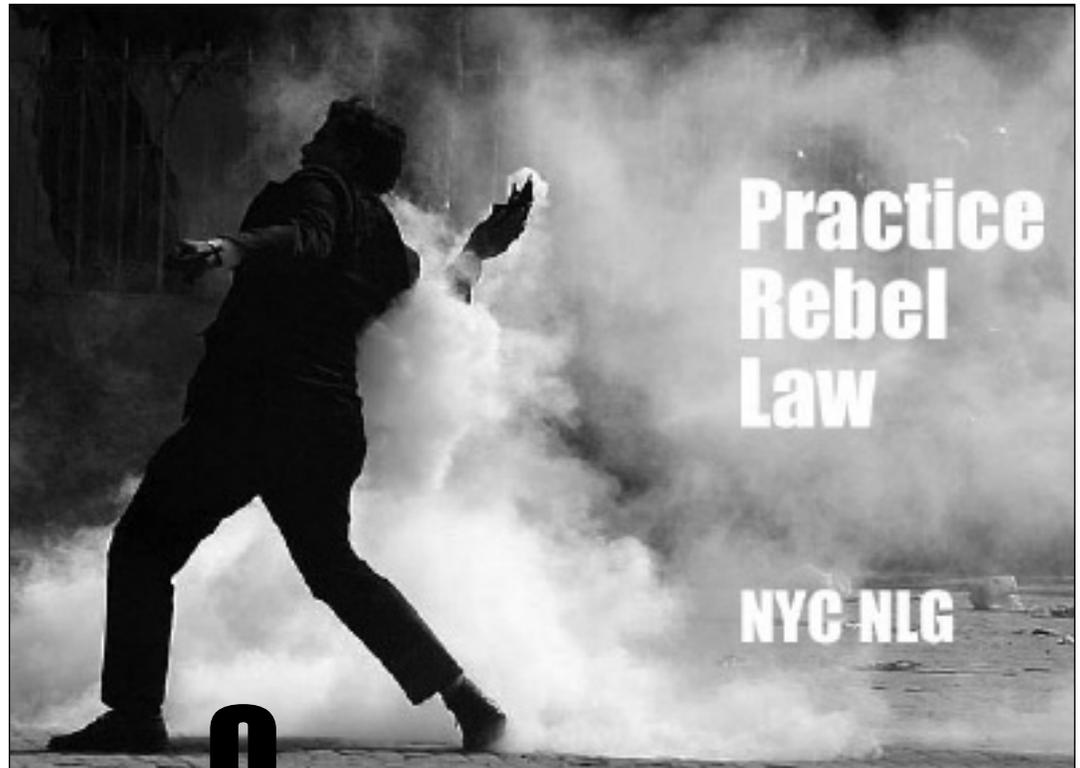
## Unwash Your Brain! A Law School Disorientation

**This special edition of the NYC NLG Newsletter aims to convince law students of the need for disorientation in law school and also to provide tools and perspectives to accomplish this goal.**

What is disorientation? It is an antidote to those insidious law school orientation sessions where Esteemed Authorities announce: “Law school will change the way you think.” Change the way you think?! This declaration transparently announces a brainwashing agenda. And we’re here to help unwash your brains.

Law school too often functions to scrub scruples from your conscience and morals from your mind. It achieves this unhappy state of affairs by privileging abstract reasoning over concrete human concerns and further by demanding obedience to precedents and authority. In this way, law schools churn out law-and-economics robots who bow before Invisible Hands, the WTO, “Homeland Security” and the police state. Unquestioning students can become Scalia-like originalist blowhards who yearn for the days when only landed white men had rights. Yet the Disoriented student knows better—those rights are wrong!

Of course, law school need not be experienced as structured anxiety and pointless competition. One can learn valuable skills and make lifelong friends while hitting the books and struggling with finer points of tort or criminal doctrine. Indeed, when approached critically, legal reasoning can help liberate minds. Useful legal reasoning



One of the most noticed photographs in the newspapers last week was that of a well-dressed Pakistani lawyer on the streets hurling back a tear gas canister toward the soldiers who were suppressing a demonstration by lawyers protesting the martial law of Gen. Pervez Musharraf... What about lawyers in the United States standing up to the Bush regime’s regular violation of our Constitution, the imprisonment of thousands of people without charges and without attorneys, the assault on due process, probable cause, habeas corpus, the spying on Americans without court approval and the defiant, illegal use of torture?—**Ralph Nader, *The Sleeping Professions*, 11/12/07**

includes a rigorous understanding of how evidence supports proofs and how authority persuades those in power. Properly armed with knowledge of legal conventions and a desire to challenge our unjust status quo, the Disoriented student will leave law school prepared to **Practice Rebel Law.**

The NLG has a long and proud history as a home to those who see law as a tool in broader struggles for justice and against oppression. As stated in the preamble to the

Guild’s constitution, “We seek to unite the lawyers, law students, legal workers, and jailhouse lawyers of America in an organization which shall function as an effective political and social force in service of the people, to the end that human rights shall be regarded as more sacred than property interests.” We invite you to learn more about us and get involved by joining your law school chapter or by checking out [www.nlg.org](http://www.nlg.org) and [www.nlgnyc.org](http://www.nlgnyc.org).

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## New York City News

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# Where To Sell Your Soul

**T**he NLG NYC's Ad-Hoc Subcommittee on Bolstering Resolve offers an informal survey of corporations we don't like and the law firms that represent them. Of course, we recognize that every client, no matter how despicable, has a right to legal representation and we certainly respect that. But we humbly suggest that YOU do not need to help the rich and powerful further line their pockets while crushing dissent.

We know what it's like to longingly eye an elegant couch and think, "If I sold out for one year, I could finally afford to upgrade from my Craigslist futon." We nearly convinced ourselves that the odds were slim that firm work would mean defending *Blackwater* in a suit on behalf murdered Iraqi civilians. But then we realized: even if it was not dripping with blood, the money used to purchase our swank new living room set would still be earned by working long hours on behalf of business entities we loathed.

Associates at firms large and small do more than just defend multinational corporations when they are accused of committing heinous crimes. Lawyers who represent corporations also perform the soul-sucking work that greases the wheels of the corporate machine such as performing due diligence investigations of a client's target in a buy-out or monitoring compliance with SEC regulations. Such work is just plain dull. And do you really want a client like *McDonalds* to benefit from your four years of undergraduate studies and three years of law school?

Selling out means your paycheck could be as tainted as the Love Canal. After all, even if you manage to do nothing but pro bono projects, the firm's clients remain the

source of the funds in your bank account. The clients of corporate law firms make their profits by recklessly disregarding the environment, underpaying workers, overpaying CEOs, and overcharging consumers. Accepting payment from them, directly or indirectly, makes you complicit in their shameful acts.

So next time you're tempted by the life of luxury that selling out offers, we encourage you to consider what it would mean to work for the following law firms and some of their choice clients:

As an associate at **Kaufman Borgeest & Ryan**, a firm that represents *Wackenhut Corrections Corporation* (now renamed *GEO Group*), you could enjoy regular weekend get-aways to Paris. Wackenhut owns and manages detention facilities for immigrants. And why can Wackenhut's legal team afford these regular jaunts? Because it pays its inmates less than a dollar an hour to clean their own prisons.

You might be able to host the baddest Superbowl and/or debate watching parties on your ginormous flat screen TV if you worked for **Quinn Emanuel Urquhart Oliver & Hedges, LLP** or **Squadron, Ellenoff, Plesent & Sheinfeld, LLP**. You could also enjoy the quality programming of your client, *Fox TV* in hi-def.

You may twist and squirm at the idea of helping *Wal-Mart* to renego-

Do you really want to shake his hand?



tiate the zoning regulations of small towns trying to support their local businesses by forbidding box stores. Should all that twisting and squirming lead to slipping and falling in a *Wal-Mart* store, *Wal-Mart* would be represented by the likes of **Melvin and Melvin** of Syracuse and **O'Conner, Cresee & First, PC** of Albany.

Not even buying a full page ad in the NLG annual dinner book would redeem you for working for **Linklaters LLP**, **Simpson Thacher & Bartlett LLP**, **Proskauer Rose LLP**, or **Fulbright & Jaworski LLP**. Those four firms are doing pro-bono work on behalf of the *City of New York* in lawsuits brought by NLG attorneys representing protesters arrested during the Republican National Convention.

We submit that curling up on your fancy couch and reading the NLG NYC newsletter would not be a fully relaxing experience if the couch were funded by defending the *The New York Post* in defamation lawsuits, as **Hogan Hartson LLP** does.

Ultimately, selling out to a firm means that you'll be doing unfulfilling work and in your leisure time you will be haunted with images of the polluted source of the money in your bank account. So don't go there.

# Inside Corporate Hell: A Big Firm Confession

## BY ISOBEL RALEIGH

Friends, Romans, countrymen, lend me your ears. My employer is a big firm. I've learned a lot about how the big corporate private practice works from the inside. You should know what I know. Though I can't tell you whether you should or should not take that big-paycheck job, I can tell you what the big firm expects to get for all that money they're offering. And it is not pretty.

The Big Firm is a rigid hierarchy, a bureaucratic monster. The Big Firm offers big salaries to buy off your professional legal judgment. The Firm enforces its contract daily, and grants back to you only the

barest minimum necessary to keep you in your office chair until you claw your way past your colleagues to Senior Partnership, or until you burn out.

But it starts out beautifully. In the beginning, you are told how special you are, how carefully you were chosen from hundreds of candidates. You feel like yourself again after the bar and law school grind, finally paying off creditors with your bonus, and enjoying competent clerical support from some of the nicest New Yorkers you will ever meet. Your parents are proud, your significant other is cozy, and you enjoy writing checks to the non-profits where you might have worked but simply couldn't.

# Dealing with Debt

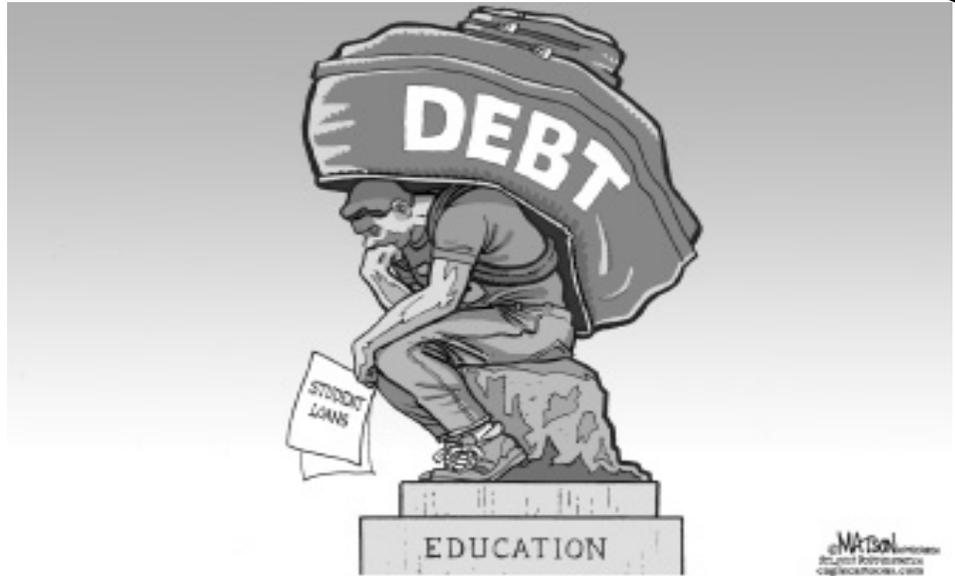
**T**here's no getting around it – law school debt sucks. Tuition, especially private law-school tuition, is outrageous and living in a city like New York while attending classes only increases financial pressures. And if debt alone wasn't enough to sicken you, your stomach really turns when you realize that starting salaries at private firms are three to four times more than those at “public interest” jobs in the City. What's an idealist with real bills to pay supposed to do?

**SPECIAL  
DISORIENTATION  
SECTION**

Fair question. Unfortunately, we cannot offer a transcendent answer or guaranteed cure. Debt woes first and foremost remind us of the Beast we are fighting – a system where money governs relations; money skews incentives; and love of money turns good people bad. And yet, for all the gloom and doom, we can also state unequivocally that it is possible to manage debt while doing good work. Many NLGers do and do not starve. With a little faith in your abilities and recognition that the debt struggle is simply part of the larger Struggle, it can be done. Advice too fuzzy? Well, consider instead these practical tips:

**Research your school's Loan Repayment Assistance Program (LRAP).** Almost all area law schools have one form of LRAP or another – though the programs go by different names and vary in their generosity. The basic idea is that your school will help pay back your loans while you do eligible work and don't make too much cash. As you can imagine, the devil here lies in the details and it's a smart move to speak to other students and to graduates currently participating in the LRAP to see how well the program actually works. Recent graduates may also be able to advise you on what you can do while still in law school to make things easier for yourself when you graduate.

**Advocate for LRAP change.** Activism around improving LRAP has been a staple of student-chapter NLG work at many area law schools. Working in coalitions with other student groups, organizing alumni in improvement campaigns, and comparing your LRAP to other schools' programs (especially to those schools your Dean competes against) have all helped bring about positive changes in the past. Make the administration know you are concerned and paying attention. You can also join the Guild's LRAP organizing efforts by visiting



<http://groups.google.com/group/nlg-lrap> or emailing [studentorg@nlg.org](mailto:studentorg@nlg.org).

**Learn more about the College Cost Reduction and Access Act (CCRAA).** This recently enacted law purports to forgive federal loan debt for those in qualifying positions who have made timely payments for 10 years. While not particularly generous, the CCRAA may be helpful for those who structure loan repayment over longer terms (see “Weigh Payment Options”). For more information on the program, see [www.nasfaa.org/publications/2007/Inpublic101507.html](http://www.nasfaa.org/publications/2007/Inpublic101507.html).

**Monitor and advocate for the “John R. Justice Prosecutors and Defenders Act of 2007.”** This bill, which passed the US of House Representatives last May, is being considered by the Senate. It would establish a federal loan repayment program specifically for prosecutors and public defenders, see [www.govtrack.us/congress/bill.xpd?bill=h110-916](http://www.govtrack.us/congress/bill.xpd?bill=h110-916).

**Weigh Payment Options.** Let capitalism work for you for a change. Loan companies tend to provide many options for structuring payback. You can consolidate loans at lower interest rates, or opt for very long term payment plans, up to 20 or 30 year terms. You can also request deferment on payments when necessary. The key here is paying attention and getting information. These companies want your business and you can sometimes use that to your advantage.

**Don't panic.** While we would never advocate defaulting on your loans – a bad credit rating is bad news in a credit-obsessed society – you should know that even if it all goes to hell, you'll still have your freedom. New York abolished all debtors' prisons in 1831 – and no state permits incarceration for mere insolvency. In addition, the Fair Debt Collections Act offers protection against more ordinary harassment. So don't let the bastards scare you!

Yet one day, before too long, your boss knocks on your office door and tells you that a huge review or draft brief or filing or collection must be done, right now. “Fair enough,” you say. “This is what I'm paid for.” Then you are told, “Get 40 people who are on our support staff. Tell them to cancel their weekends to work on this project for us.”

So you send the email to the support staff, and that's when you learn about children's birthdays and barbecues on Long Island and dying mothers. You must tell them, “You have to come in, or I will have you fired.” Now

maybe you know or maybe you don't about whether the project really has to be done this weekend, and maybe you know or maybe you don't about why it's so important, but that's not what you're being paid for.

You're being paid to boss a bunch of people who get paid a lot less than you do.

Let's say you respond, “No. I'm not going to have anybody fired with a kid's birthday or a dying mother just for not coming in to do data entry on a draft brief I didn't even know about until three o'clock on a Friday afternoon.” Good for you, I say, Reader of this

Newsletter! You have not conceded that last inch of your humanity and professional judgment to your firm.

Alas though, you're sunk. In the logic of Big Firm hierarchy, the ones who succeed are the junior associates who will in fact ruin the weekends of their subordinates. These climbers don't care that the weekend's work will be sloppy when performed by angry corporate serfs. The climbers only know that the partners will profit from hours billed on this project, and these partners have the power to

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# Unsolicited Advice: Ask the Guild Guru



Ever wondered how things really work in the Guild? Your New York City Chapter Newsletter presents a column for your questions about our operations: Ask the Guild Guru.

**Dear Guild Guru,**

*Is your organization a front group for the Communist-Islamist-9/11-Truth-Nudist Party? — Just Wondering in Langley*

Dear Langley,

You must be new on the job. As your colleagues uncovered during the COINTELPRO investigations of the 1970s, the National Lawyer's Guild proudly and openly advocates for human rights, including workers' rights, immigrants' rights, government accountability, and freedom of sexual expression. We're far too busy with our own work promoting peace, and economic & social justice to run an underground political party.

**Dear Guild Guru,**

*I have a question about my membership. I am a law student at CUNY but I live in New Jersey (yeah, my commute totally sucks, but I get a lot of reading done on the trains). My parents' address where I receive mail is in Florida. Also I was a member of the San Francisco chapter when I was a legal worker there before law school. My question is: Which local chapter am I a member of? —Perplexed on the PATH train*

Dear Perplexed,

It is confusing, isn't it? That's because our NLG Constitution provides for maximum autonomy at the local chapter level. So, yes, sometimes the mailing lists don't get updated across chapters — but don't worry, as long as you're current on your dues in one chapter. We encourage you to participate in any Guild activities that you want to, and to contact each chapter you're connected with to be added to their announcement email lists.

**Dear Guild Guru,**

*Can I get this excellent chapter newsletter by email? — Blogging in Brooklyn*

Dear BiB,

Alas, no. Our Technology Committee reports that we do not have that capacity. Our Technology committee still runs its PC on Windows 95 and can't connect to the Internet. Maybe you'd like to rescue our Technology Committee from oblivion? If so, contact the chapter office.

# Book Review

## The Trap: Selling Out to Stay Afloat in Winner-Take-All America

by Daniel Brook

Henry Holt: 2007

Privilege is tricky. It can be nice, but it can also be a barrier to solidarity. Our clients depend on us for our privilege, for our access to expertise and to influential social networks. But as the architects of Reaganomics continue to dismantle the social safety net, young progressive attorneys are caught in the same brutal economy that exploits our clients.

*The Trap: Selling Out to Stay Afloat in Winner-Take-All America* by Daniel Brook is about urban professionals whose youthful progressive politics would be familiar to many members of our chapter. However, most of his

subjects sold out to work for the elite.

Through anecdotal interviews with these sell-outs and through quick-and-dirty historical summaries of 30 years of neoliberal economic reforms, Brook documents how young activists face the dire choice of whether to permanently forego "responsible" adulthood while working in public interest jobs.

The book explains how that the dilemma we face as young professionals is not limited merely to the management of our outrageous

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**SPECIAL  
DISORIENTATION  
SECTION**

# LEFTY MATH QUIZ

**Match Location and Number with the correct letter Description to come up with the shorthand name for seven notorious cases in progressive/activist history! Answers appear on page 7.**

### LOCATION NUMBER DESCRIPTION

LOCATION	NUMBER	DESCRIPTION
Chicago	3	A Cubans convicted in federal court in Miami on charges of espionage, though they were actually attempting to prevent terrorist attacks against Cuba.
Jena	4	B Radicals prosecuted federally for crossing state lines with the intent to incite a riot at the 1968 Democratic convention in Chicago. (Note 8 were initially tried together, but Bobby Seale was severed from the case.)
Angola	5	C African-American students who attempted to enroll in a previously all-white high school in Arkansas, and ultimately had to be escorted to school by federal troops.
Fab	6	D Black high school students who were arrested in Louisiana for assault, while the whites who instigated the tensions at the school by hanging a noose avoided criminal charges.
Little Rock	7	E Young men from Liverpool who changed the face of rock music.
Cuba	8	F Palestinians and a Kenyan woman arrested in January 1987, as the government began deportation proceedings against them, accusing them of supporting terrorist organization, by distributing a publication of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine. These proceedings were recently dismissed.
LA	9	G Black Panthers in Angola prison in Louisiana who were falsely convicted of killing a prison guard.

## Against Martial Law: NLG Demonstrates at Pakistan Consulate

On November 13, 2007, the Guild helped bring its own flavor of direct legal advocacy to support lawyers and judges battling for the restoration of the rule of law in Pakistan. While about 700 lawyers rallied on the steps of the New York Supreme Court downtown, a smaller contingent of 60 or so – including a dozen local Chapter members – applied direct pressure by protesting in front of the Pakistani Consulate's East 65th Street location. Both demonstrations received excellent media coverage and worked together to raise consciousness about the thousands of Pakistani lawyers and judges who had been arrested for protesting the imposition of martial law in their country.

Chapter President Daniel Meyers represented the NLG as part of an extraordinary delegation that spoke directly with the Pakistani Consul General in his office. Meyers proceeded from the demonstration outside and joined Eileen Kaufman, co-chairwoman of the Society of American Law Teachers, Jeanne Mirer, secretary general of the International Association of Democratic Lawyers, and Bobby Khan of the Coney Island Avenue Project in a spirited exchange inside with the representative of the Pakistani government. Meyers presented the Chapter's written statement on the crisis, voicing strong condemnation of the declaration of mar-

tial law and of the roundup and arrests of resisters. Meyers further informed the Consul General of the NLG's demand that President Bush suspend all aid to Pakistan until the state of emergency is lifted, all arrested and detained are free, and the Pakistani Constitution restored.

While neither President Bush nor General Pervez Musharraf directly responded to the NLG's demands, Musharraf did resign from his military post on November 28 and was sworn in as civilian president the next day. About 200 Pakistani lawyers clashed with police in Lahore during the ceremony. Elections are theoretically scheduled for January 8, 2008.



Above: Guild demonstrators in front of 8 East 65th Street. Photo courtesy of Bud Korotzer.



Left: Chapter President Daniel Meyers talks his way past the NYPD outside of the Pakistan Consulate General. Photo courtesy of Bud Korotzer.

## Book Review

*continued from page 4*

student loan expenses. As Diane Downs, associate dean of career planning at U. Penn Law School says, a "generous" LRAP "doesn't turn a \$40,000-a-year job into a \$125,000-a-year job. It turns a \$40,000-a-year job into a \$40,000-a-year job." Basic needs like housing or medical care are not affordable to New York activists at most non-profit salaries, unless we have the financial support of our parents or spouses.

Brook generally advocates for a new New Deal, with subsidized education, housing, and medicine. He explains that restoring the social safety net would increase the freedom of young activists to choose their careers in political and creative work, instead of feeling forced by fear of grinding poverty to sell out. Contrary to Republican rhetoric, tax cuts and welfare reform do not "unleash the individual." They bind us ever closer to our corporate masters.

Unfortunately, Brook missed the legal



political conclusion of his argument, which would have been to urge young activists facing the Trap to work with the communities already pressing for education reform, affordable housing, and single-payer health care.

Nevertheless, *The Trap* is a useful primer for our classmates, our parents, our mentors, and our colleagues about how our economy works to dehumanize us the same way it dehumanizes our clients. Brook's anecdotal evidence also suggests that activist disdain for "selling out" may be a barrier to the diversification our organizations, when only the most privileged workers can afford to resist the pressure of our "winner-take-all" economy.

We should prepare to respond to the material concerns of our members who are struggling in the Trap set by Reagan's economic advisors, and continue working for political changes that will liberate us all.

*Emily Compton fears grinding poverty. She can be condemned for selling out at emilycompton@gmail.com.*

## Hell

*continued from page 3*

grant entry to their money-soaked club.

Are you a climber, Gentle Reader? I think you are not. I think you would be appalled by the back-stabbing lies that the senior associate tells about you to his supervising partners when a project goes wrong and he needs a scapegoat. I see you grimaced because you cannot endure writing one more meaningless report to be churned into a brief no one will read. You would resent being honed into an incisive single-use tool for the lucrative analysis of an arcane footnote of securities law.

How do I know this about you? Because you are reading this newsletter. And if you're reading this newsletter, you're not firm material. If you've stayed tuned this long, you have already reserved to yourself that last inch of rebellion against law school propaganda. Even if you do join a firm, as I have, you will continue to rebel until you burn out and leave practice, or until you forge your own path to professional freedom. So I'll see you by the water cooler. We'll bring this place down.

**Evelyn** and **Michael Tarif Warren** continue to fight the bogus charges brought against them after a June 21, 2007 incident where the Warrens were beaten by Brooklyn police. The police attacked the Warrens after they objected (verbally and from a safe distance) to the excessive force deployed while arresting an unarmed young man. Although the injustice against the Warrens has been widely noted in the national press, and despite the tremendous showings of community support at all their court dates, Charles Hynes' office stubbornly continues to pursue charges including Obstruction of Governmental Administration, Resisting Arrest, and Disorderly Conduct. Tarif is represented by **Jill Soffiyah Elijah** and **Susan Tipograph**; Evelyn is represented by **Roger Wareham**. For more information and links to several powerful articles, including an insightful commentary on the case by **Mumia Abu-Jamal**, go to [www.justiceforwarrens.org](http://www.justiceforwarrens.org).

By all accounts, the Guild's 70th anniversary Convention in Washington D.C. from October 31st to November 4 was a success.



Evelyn and Michael Tarif Warren

Chapter members – especially students — attended the convention in great numbers and participated in numerous panels. Of special note, NYC Chapter member **Adrienne Wheeler** took home **Legal Worker of the Year** honors at the gala dinner for her relentless and creative work in the Mass Defense Committee. In addition, the convention saw **Bobby Quackenbush** of Brooklyn Law School elected as **Co-National Student Vice President**. Congratulations to both Adrienne and Bobby!

Kudos also to **Joel Kupferman** and **Martin Stolar** of the **Environmental Justice Law Project** for their successful Freedom of Information Law action leading to the release of

more than 42 NYPD reports showing that cops also feared the toxic conditions at Pier 57 during the 2004 Republican National Convention. The reports promise to play a helpful role in the ongoing RNC litigation.

After years of on-the-street and in-the-courts harassment by the City of New York, Critical Mass cyclists are fighting back – with the help of members **Dave Rankin**, **Rose Weber**, and **Gideon Oliver**. The terrific trio recently filed a Section 1983

suit in the Southern District of New York on behalf of 15 plaintiff bicyclists against the City and NYPD for their unconstitutional practices against the Mass riders, including denial of free speech, false arrest, and denial of due process. Meanwhile, Rankin also joined with **Mark Taylor** and law students **Beth Baltimore** (Brooklyn) and **Andrea Cuttin** (NYU) to assist **Daniel Gross' Brandworkers** campaign on behalf of unionizing workers at New York seafood company Wild Edibles. The Guild team helped secure a federal preliminary injunction preventing retaliation against the unionizing workers. Gross' tireless work resulted in a frivolous countersuit by Wild Edibles, which was dismissed with prejudice.

Finally, Second Circuit arguments in **Lynne Stewart's** appeal have been adjourned to January 29, 2008 for the Court to deal with the government's ex parte FISA and NSA submissions. Lynne continues to make public appearances to talk about her case and our collective struggles for justice. Stay updated by visiting [www.lynnestewart.org](http://www.lynnestewart.org).



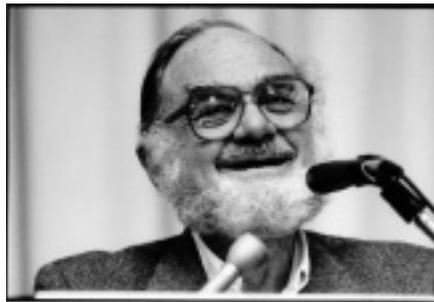
Adrienne Wheeler

## In Memoriam: Victor Rabinowitz

Victor Rabinowitz, a tireless fighter for social justice and “unrepentant leftist lawyer,” died on November 16, 2007 at the age of 96. For over five decades, Victor championed the rights of political movements, activists, trade unionists and targets of McCarthyism and represented the revolutionary Cuban government.

Victor served as the NYC Chapter President from 1964-66. He then served as the President of the National Organization from 1967-71. His passing prompted dozens of remarkable obituaries and tributes in major publications here in New York City and indeed around the world\*. We at the NYC NLG, Victor's home chapter, add our appreciative voice to the mighty chorus already singing Victor's praises with respect, admiration, and love.

The Guild owes a special debt to Victor who was one of our organization's original founders 70 years ago. In Victor's words (taken from his autobiography *Unrepentant*



*Leftist: A Lawyer's Memoir*), he and his comrades established the Guild to “counter the anti-New Deal corporation-controlled American Bar Association, which at that time did not admit black lawyers or Communists to membership.” Although his remarkable career with law partner Leonard Boudin included a landmark Supreme Court victory (*Banco Nacional de Cuba v. Sabbatino*) and the defense of numerous high-profile clients – including Daniel Ellsberg, Paul Robeson,

Photo by Paul Brubaker, 1987

Julian Bond, Dashiell Hammett, Dr. Benjamin Spock, the Rev. Philip Berrigan, Alger Hiss, the Black Panthers, the Salvador Allende government in Chile, and the Cuban government—Victor always counted his work with the Guild as one of his most significant accomplishments. “There are a few things I can point to with some pride,” Victor reflected. “The National Lawyers Guild is almost sixty years old, and I played some part in building it. I cannot think of more than a handful of national progressive organizations that have lived so long in this perilous world.”

We salute our beloved founder and role model for scores of lawyers and legal workers, young and old. We will always be inspired by his legacy.

\* *This memoriam owes a special debt to NLG National President Majorie Cohn's wonderful tribute available at <http://marjoriecohn.com/2007/11/remembering-victor-rabinowitz-legal.html>.*

## Students Educate, Agitate, and Organize

Area law school chapters are energized and taking action! Students had their first city-wide meet-up at the home of Margaret Ratner Kunstler on September 18, 2007. More than 30 students from local schools attended the event.

The meet-up provided for an impromptu recruiting pitch by Adrienne Wheeler for students to drop everything and travel immediately to Jena, Louisiana in support of the Jena 6. After just enough time to go home and pack, three brave souls — Daniel Meyler (2L NYU) and Brenna Sharp (3L NYLS) along with recent grad Amy Cara Brosnan (Cardozo) — got on the bus with Mass Defense Committee Chair Bruce Bentley and rode South. The New Yorkers rallied with thousands of others in solidarity with the Jena 6 and against racial injustice.



Photo courtesy of Araby Carlier Smyth

New Yorkers from Guild and Harlem Revolution Club represent in Jena, LA.

## Fighting Race Oppression from Jena to NYC

In coordination with the rally in Jena, the Chapter participated with a coalition of progressive and radical organizations in a press conference on the steps of City Hall on September 20. New VP Kerry McLean spoke for the Chapter at the well-attended event. Kerry also spoke about the importance of Jena at the Chapter's annual meeting, held at NYU Law School on October 10. Her remarks framed a powerful report-back from the law students who traveled to Jena — Daniel, Brenna, and Amy Cara — as well as insightful observations from Jill Humphries of Columbia University. Kerry subsequently organized a very popular showing of an independent film about the Jena 6 at the Guild's annual convention in Washington, D.C.

Of course, race oppression is not limited to the South and the Chapter has participated in recent efforts to bring international attention to racism here in NYC. Thanks to the leadership of Kerry McLean, the Chapter was a co-sponsor and contributor to "Race Realities in New York City", a shadow report coordi-

nated by the Human Rights Project of the Urban Justice Center submitted to the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) on December 7. The Report serves as an answer to the United State's own woefully incomplete and inaccurate CERD report. The Chapter was also a co-sponsor of a December 10th launch party for the shadow report, which was well attended and included city officials.

## Officer Elections; RNC Subpoena

Officer elections were the first order of business at the Chapter's annual meeting held at NYU Law School. After a wonderfully successful first term, Daniel Meyers will serve again as Chapter President. Meyers expressed the Chapter's gratitude to outgoing Vice-presidents Gideon Oliver and Ursula Levelt and to outgoing treasurer Brenna Sharp. We enthusiastically welcome incoming Vice Presidents Kerry McLean and John Hirsch as well as incoming Treasurer Emily Compton. For a complete list of Executive Committee members, see page 2 of this Newsletter.

The annual meeting's program included a reports and reflections on Jena (see above), as well as a critical presentation by Elizabeth Fink and Debbie Hrbek concerning the status of the third-party subpoena served upon the Chapter by the City as part of ongoing RNC litigation. The Chapter has moved to quash the subpoena, which seeks materials gathered during RNC mass defense, and we are awaiting decision on the motion.

## Free the SF 8!

The NLG NYC was a proud co-sponsor of a hugely successful rally and fundraiser in support of the San Francisco 8, held November 30 at the Martin Luther King, Jr. Labor Center in midtown. The SF 8 are former Black Panthers (ages 56 to 72) who were arrested last January on charges related to the killing of a San Francisco police officer in 1971. That case was thrown out in 1973 when it was revealed that police torture had extracted so-called "confessions" supporting the accusations. Although prosecutors now claim to have "new evidence", speakers at the event enumerated the fundamental flaws in the prosecution's evidence and explained the underlying political nature of prosecution. For more information, see [www.freethesf8.org](http://www.freethesf8.org).



It was standing room only at the Citywide Disorientation held October 19 at ABC No Rio.

**LEFTY MATH QUIZ ANSWER KEY**  
 Angola 3 ← (C)  
 Fab 4 ← (E)  
 Cuba 5 ← (A)  
 Jena 6 ← (D)  
 Chicago 7 ← (B)  
 LA 8 ← (F)  
 Little Rock 9 ← (C)

## Chapter Coordinator's Year-End Report

BY SUSAN HOWARD

After a busy banner year, it hardly seems possible that 2008 is upon us. One of my fondest memories from 2007 is our happy celebration of the Guild's 70th anniversary at our Spring Fling at the Angel Orensanz Foundation – honoring our Chapter's past presidents and even hearing current Prez Danny Meyers deliver a hip-hop rap. In preparation for the event, I received a wonderful crash course in Guild history at the Tamiment Labor Archives and was lucky enough to meet and work with many of our past Presidents – including our most senior past President, Victor Rabinowitz. We all mourn his passing.

Programmatically, our Chapter has been very active all year. In addition to the events reported in this Newsletter, we also held Disorientations and Legal Observer Trainings at our Student Chapters, reactivated the Anti-Repression and Labor and Employment Committees, and joined with H.I.P of Greater NY to offer our members Group Health Insurance Plans. I, for one, am glad to have health coverage!

I'd like to acknowledge two particularly generous donations made this year, which continues to make our work possible. First, Debra

and Maaret Klaber made a donation in April to the Mass Defense Committee (MDC), in memory of Ralph Klaber, lifelong activist and friend of the NYC NLG. The Klaber's donated the settlement award from a suit brought by Guild member Rose Weber arising out of Ralph's wrongful arrest as a March 20, 2003 Times Square protest against the bombing of Iraq. The MDC will use Ralph's donation to fund critical retraining and recertification of our green-hat Legal Observers. Second, Guild member Allan Botshon established a Charitable Gift Annuity for the Chapter this December through the NLG Foundation. (Thanks to Marty Stolar, Noah Kimerling, Ross Wisdom and Steve Fahrer and to the NLG Foundation for their help in structuring the Charitable Gift Annuity). Allan joined the Guild in 1953. After graduating from Yale, Allan came to New York City and opened a law office on the Lower East Side with a fellow grad. One of Allan's many clients was neighbor and fellow Guild member Lynne Stewart. The two Guildies caught up back on the Lower East Side at this year's Spring Fling. Allan's donation will be used to support and expand programmatic work in 2008.

Finally, I'm happy to report that our



Chapter membership continues to grow; with approximately 150 new and reactivated members this year, we are now just shy of 500 members in the NYC Chapter. My personal goal is 1000! So please, don't let the year end without reupping your membership and asking your fellow lawyers, legal workers, law students and jail house lawyers to join the NYC NLG! Happy 2008!

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