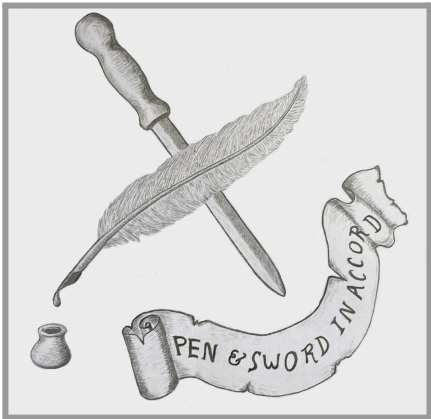


“What is the robbing of a bank compared to the founding of a bank?”
— Bertolt Brecht

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A Semi-Monthly Publication



PPG on Strike

Natalie Duleba

Being on strike for nearly nine months is an exercise in living with contradictions.

When I walked out as a member of the Newspaper Guild of Pittsburgh alongside four other striking unions employed by the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, little could have prepared me for what would follow.

Time on strike blends and stretches and blurs, making it feel like forever and a blink of an eye. I am both encouraged and exhausted all the time; fulfilled by the endurance of my fellow strikers and frustrated by the company’s utter disregard for its employees and the local journalism we care deeply about.

I say the same thing when I talk about why I’m on strike. I went on strike for big brain reasons: people matter more than profits, workers deserve fair pay, affordable health care and protections over the whims of owners who care about money and prestige, not local journalism.

I stay on strike for big heart reasons: to take care of the people on the line with me. I have given so much to this group of people and they have given back even more. I truly believe we will win this strike and get everything we’ve sacrificed for. But even if I had less faith in that than I do, I would never betray these people by crossing the picket line. At the start, I couldn’t imagine not striking and now I can’t stomach the thought of it.

I love the work and my colleagues so much that I had to walk off the job, and I see no contradiction in that.

The reasons behind the strike didn’t come out of nowhere. Block Communications Inc., the Post-Gazette’s parent company, has been violating its workers rights for years.



Pittsburgh Gazette strikers outside PG’s headquarters on 20 October 2022, two days into the strike (courtesy Steve Mellon/Pittsburgh Union Progress)

The guild’s last contract expired in 2017. In July 2020 the PG declared an illegal impasse and illegally and unilaterally imposed terms on its workers. In late 2022, the company refused to pay a modest increase in health care costs to our sibling unions at the paper and stripped their insurance coverage, the catalyst for their strike. The Communications Workers of America, the guild’s parent union, ordered the guild to go on strike as well. We narrowly voted to approve

an unfair labor practice strike for the guild. We did it because of the six previous years of bad-faith bargaining by the PG.

The beginning of the strike was messy and frustrating. Some guild members chose to cross the line and return to work.

But the simple and complex truth is: personal feelings over how our strike began do not negate what the PG wants to do—give itself carte blanche power to undermine its own workers—and I made the decision to put aside those feelings and join the picket line.

I’ve learned things the past eight-plus months that I never thought I would. A shocking number of people are willing to drive their vehicles into people on a picket line—a carrier drove his car into me after a PG manager told him to and a delivery driver pushed me forward for several yards with the large Mack truck he was operating. (I wasn’t injured in either case, but those events are burned into my memory.)

The highs and lows are actually the easiest to deal with: the highs come with celebrations and triumph while the lows come with action plans to fix what is needed. It’s the in-between where things become a challenge. But I am still in it, and it’s as simple and hard as that.

The lack of accountability from company power players is astounding. The refrain of “I can’t do anything, it’s out of my hands,” is constant. The contempt the PG has for its union workers is monumental and is spotlighted best at the bargaining table. The lawyer from the notorious union-busting law firm King and Ballou is not only smarmy and condescending, but also has refused to make eye contact with the women members of our bargaining committee and outright ignored questions I have asked him during these bargaining sessions.

In January, an administrative law judge ruled decisively against the PG in an unfair labor practice lawsuit that the guild filed over years of the PG’s bad-faith bargaining, its declared impasse and imposed conditions. That wasn’t enough for the PG to do what’s right and follow the law. It appealed and we’ll continue to fight that in the courts. In the meantime, public awareness and support has become the most important part of our strike. Businesses and people still talk to PG journalists who are crossing the picket line, sometimes because they don’t know we’re still on strike. We are, and we will be until we win. The PG wants us to throw in the towel, but supporting the [Pittsburgh Union Progress](#) (or *PUP*) and donating to the hardship fund we’ve set up for striking workers will help us stay on the line.

I’m so grateful for the lessons I’ve learned. The union Starbucks workers are some of the most dedicated, passionate people in this city—they’ve shown up for the guild time and time again. Pittsburghers will show up, too, when we ask. The crowd at our demonstration outside PG publisher JR Block’s wedding reception was large and energetic. The most dedicated journalists in this city are writing for our strike publication, *PUP*. They are producing amazing work, putting in countless hours for literally no pay. They do it for the love of the craft.

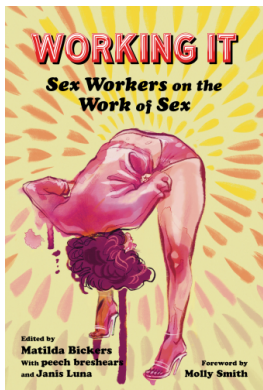
There’s a chant that gets shouted a lot during our rallies: one day longer, one day stronger. The strength of our strike comes from the commitment and sacrifices of those on the picket line but also from the community we live in. Collective action goes beyond the individual union and its members, and that’s a lesson everyone should learn.

You Are Not Alone, and There is Hope: A Review of *Working It: Sex Workers on the Work of Sex*

Meghsha Sqawsan

The sex workers rights movement is an intellectual powerhouse, and is producing some of the most interesting thinking around, not only on commercial sex but also on gender, feminism, trauma, racial justice, work, and labor organizing as a whole. (Foreword, Molly Smith, xiii)

Working It: Sex Workers on the Work of Sex is a roadmap—for organizers, activists, care workers, and anyone else who dreams of liberated futures and a world that values connection over coercion, community over control. Indeed, the first piece after the introduction is titled *Life At the Margins: A Roadmap for Revolution* (advising us that revolution will only happen when we center the most marginalized). *Working It* is an anthology, edited by Matilda Bickers, with peech breshears and Janis Luna, created almost entirely by sex workers (one piece is by a non-sex-trading social worker), composed of long-form essays, short poetic pieces, interviews, and other art. It is a purposeful, structured book that does not claim to speak for all sex workers—an impossible task—but includes voices not typically centered, like First Nations sex workers. And, critically, it is hopeful.



our current social configuration—but lacking living wage jobs—lends itself to people practicing sex work even as it is increasingly criminalized. It also addresses what some might consider to be the elephant in the room: trafficking, how the fear of trafficking is connected to whiteness and colonialism, and how ostensible protection against sex trafficking only harms sex workers. SESTA/FOSTA, the 2018 laws that shut down most online access to sex work, and other anti-whore state actions are addressed throughout the book and also broken down in detail in “The High Cost of Cheap Labor” by Melissa Ditmore.

The interviews with sex workers are a truly special element of *Working It*. They offer personal, specific narratives that showcase both the diversity in experiences and beliefs of the contributors, and the common themes that connect them. Particularly compelling is the question asked of everyone: what would help sex workers? And the answers are always what would help anyone: greater worker protections, decriminalization, universal healthcare, housing assistance. Nearly, if not all, of the sex workers interviewed also addressed how white sex workers need to step up, the amount of colorism in the industry, and how the myth of white supremacy shows up in sex worker organizing and solidarity.



Sex workers protest in Bogotá on International Women's Day, 2019 (Diana Sanchez / AFP via Getty Images)



Protest in support of sex workers in Lagos on May Day, 2019 (Adekunle Ajayi/NurPhoto via Getty Images)

This book is special, each piece containing its own wisdom, whether through beautiful, heartbreaking narrative (like Stephanie Kaylor’s poetry, “What Would You Say To Other Girls Who Are Considering It?”), meticulous description of stripper labor organizing (Domino Rey’s “White Supremacy in Organizing”), flipping the narrative on lazy tropes about sex work (Emily Dall’Ora Warfield’s “Waiting to be Rescued from My Office Job”), and so much more. It is an easeful if not easy read, without academic jargon but entirely with rigor.



Trans workers strike in Mexico City on International Sex Worker Day, 2022 (Ismael Rosas/ Eyepix Group/Future Publishing via Getty Images)

This book is vast and brings together so many elements: the connection between sex work and anti-imperialism, the effect of the (ongoing!) COVID-19 pandemic, how the requirement of work under

While the book rejects the idea that sex work and sex workers are easily classified and interchangeable, many themes arise throughout. One that I found particularly compelling was the overlap between sex work and non-sex work (“straight work”): virtually all work is degrading in some degree. Most of us do not work because we want to, but because we need money to exchange for the basic necessities of life. Sex work, including full service sex work (sex work that involves literal fucking), is not inherently more traumatizing than other work, especially work that intimately involves the body or some form of customer service. Bickers in “Intimate Labor” describes in excruciating detail being a nurse for minimum wage and working with a patient with a poop fetish who delighted in humiliating her, including by shitting in her face. She compares this, unfavorably, to sex work, where if she had engaged in scat play it would be cleaner and more boundaried, and regardless she would make much, much more money.

Some authors point out that sex work isn’t the glamorous, get-rich-quick scheme many non-sex-workers believe it to be (more than one person points out how even the top 2% of earners on OnlyFans make between \$2 and \$4k a month), where others discuss the financial autonomy that comes with sex work: Bickers made her electric bill in three minutes of private dancing. I make my electric bill in 2 or 3 hours and I have a J.D. and work for a law firm. My job is tedious and traumatizing: why is no one trying to rescue me?

So much of this book resonated with me, particularly reflecting on my decade-plus time spent organizing and advocating prison and police abolition. For example, the perennial issue of people in (sex worker or other) movement spaces with privilege not willing to relinquish that privilege for the greater good, even when it would ultimately benefit them. And this quote from Domino Rey, in “White Supremacy in Organizing”: “What finally broke me was the dynamics in the group.” We expect the cops or the state to harm us—it rips out our hearts when we are harmed instead (in addition) by our movement brethren. My

heart has been ripped out too many times to count. But Rey also reminds us that “all we have is each other,” and “The most privileged workers must be willing to stand with the most marginalized among us and get familiar with getting uncomfortable, question systems that unfairly distribute power, and be willing to sacrifice unearned benefits in the name of protecting the most vulnerable to abuse.” Again, lessons for all of us.

The last essay in the book is one of my favorites: Dee Lucas’ “Metatopia: Imagination beyond Dystopia.” They ask us, how many people, on average, think that the world is ending? What use is the endless slew of dystopian genres where only the white man makes it out alive, storytelling that positions us “to see dystopia as inevitable and apathy as the only logical response.” I would add too that apocalypse narratives erase the many apocalypses that have come before our current unveiling: the apocalypse of white settlers unleashing genocide on Turtle Island, the apocalypse of the trans-Atlantic slave trade and its aftermath. Through these apocalypses, people fought back, died, survived—we can too. Lucas points out the importance of Storytelling, and how we cannot move towards a future that we cannot imagine. That is why we must make revolution irresistible (thank you, Toni Cade Bambara), why we must make things like abolition imaginable, so that they are achievable. Lucas gives us a beautiful, tangible guide to reclaiming our birthright of the imagination, so we can create new futures.

This new future is possible, and *Working It* is a roadmap to it. What this book ultimately teaches the non-sex-worker is that what harms sex workers harms everyone, and what would help sex workers would

help everyone. Our struggles and liberation are, as always, bound together.

Working It is a work of an art, a gift, a guiding path in demoralizing times.



Sex workers strike in London on International Sex Worker Day, 2020 (Ollie Millington/Getty Images)

It is also a critical contribution to academic thought and organizing knowledge, but more than that, it is a reminder so needed right now, given to us in Matilda Bickman and Melissa Ditmore’s introduction: “You are not alone, and there is hope.”

“An Assembly of Magdalenes”: A Brief History of the First Sex Workers’ Protest in the US

On a cold afternoon in San Francisco, 25 January 1917, a troupe of three hundred sex workers marched into the Central Methodist Episcopal Church. Situated at the northern edge of the city’s (in)famous Tenderloin district, the church was home to the Reverend Paul Smith and his city-wide crusade to shutter all brothels.

Some sex workers had fled city authorities in 1913 as they attempted to eliminate prostitution from the Barbarity Coast, another neighborhood of ill-fame to the northeast. This had led, that same year, to the serialized publication of a sex worker’s startling narration: a candid, first-of-its-kind *Memoirs of a Barbary Coast Prostitute* by an Alice Smith (pseudonym). For all we know, Smith herself might have been among the women to confront the preacher.

Behind these roundups was the new Progressive movement—a liberal ideology that stressed paternalistic oversight of the poor; hygiene, both moral and physical (which could include eugenics, a so-known cleanup of the gene pool); parsimonious social safety nets and labor laws in some municipalities; and temperance (refusing alcohol and sometimes constraining sexual desire*). Which culminated in 1919 with the passage of Prohibition. Beginning in 1911, red light districts were under attack across the United States.

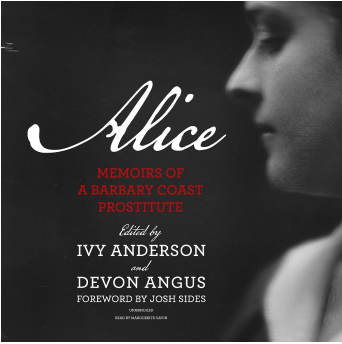
In the meantime, San Francisco’s moral police were after sex workers, threatening a new city-wide roundup on Valentine’s Day. This had happened in no small part because of Smith’s non-stop fulminations against vice. In fact, his church had sent investigators to visit taverns at the edge of the Underworld, interviewing prostitutes and their clients—grist for Smith’s sermons. Clearly the preacher was gunning

for a political career—at the time, the reverend was putting together a coalition to rid San Francisco of every bordello. (A quixotic effort if there ever was one; sex workers reported that his diatribes had the reverse effect, generating curiosity and a stream of new clientele.***) Pushed to the brink, the women responded.

The crowd of threatened workers took control of the church and forced the reverend to listen. Browbeat, he took a seat, clearly rattled, at one point mumbling to himself, apparently contritely, that “This is the saddest day of my life.”

In between outbursts and taunts from the women gathered, Reggie Gamble, one of the madams that had organized the march, addressed Smith and his congregation. “You and your people say, ‘Our boys must sow their wild oats.’ All right, you see before you the harvest of those oats... It’s the men who preach morality and contribute to churches” that also underpaid women or refused them work altogether. They created the conditions for sex work, became (she insinuated) their customers, and then hypocritically shamed them on Sundays. Most of the prostitutes were mothers and not a few took turns at the pulpit to give moving life examples of enduring underpay, overwork, deprivations, squalor, and fear.

If Smith didn’t like sex work—fine, Gamble harangued. But then give them the means to live. Why not use his power to press for a woman’s living wage rather than attack their fallback profession? Give them so-called respectable work, pay them equitably, welcome them back from the margins. “Jesus didn’t scorn the Magdalene as you have done.”***



From left to right: In 1913 the *San Francisco Evening Bulletin* published *Memoirs of a Barbary Coast Prostitute* in serialized form. A compilation, titled *Alice*, was published in 2016, edited by Ivy Anderson and Devon Angus. Frames 3-4 show coverage of the sex worker protest by the *San Francisco Chronicle* (26 January 1917).

Women’s wages in the domestic trades stood at \$6 to \$7 per week. Smith suggested he might help raise wages to \$10, which provoked outrage. Gamble, the women assembled concurring, said they needed at least \$25 to get by. One prostitute had written to her brother, a

preacher, asking for help. His reply was to “trust in God,” for he would not help. Gamble turned the response on Smith: “You can’t trust in God when shoes are \$10.00 a pair and wages are \$6.00 a week.” This was a material, not a moral question.

Sadly, nothing came of the protest at the time. Subsequent to the meeting, Smith proposed to “arrest all the fallen women and put them to work on a state-owned farm.” His peers, however, were not too keen

on the idea. So he then suggested that pimps be sent instead. The roundups that happened in 1917 emboldened the reverend, who ended up going to Hollywood and starring in his own retelling of his struggles against vice, including a reenactment of the invasion of his church. It was called *The Finger of God*, which, well, hmm. He took the film on a cross-country tour, which proved a disaster. The movie was banned in New York for indecency and he had to skip the commonwealth of Pennsylvania when Philly authorities issued a warrant for his arrest. (I mean, with a movie title like that, it’s hard to fault them.) Historian Curt Gentry summarizes: “Smith had often preached that prostitution was the downfall of good men, little realizing he would be one of the victims. He officially left the ministry in 1922, met a series of financial reverses,” and wound up a car salesman in Los Angeles. Interestingly, Reggie Gamble’s foray into preaching appears to have stuck. A few years later, she became a Baptist minister, preaching in the Midwest with occasional guest sermons in San Francisco. A curious world, indeed.

Though the women—the “magdalenes,” the press called them—were not able to prevent a new round of repression, sex work was there to stay. And their critiques resonate today in a society little changed from their day—workers overworked, underpaid, and variously scorned morally by their exploiters.****

Notes and Sources

* The interplay reformers saw between the bottle and the bordello was summed up thusly by Dr. Ella Boole, president of the Women’s Christian

Temperance Movement: “The saloon filled the brothel; the brothel filled the saloon.” To her, both had to be suppressed.

** As William Blake famously put it: “Prisons are built with the stones of Law, Brothels with the bricks of Religion.”

*** Though Gamble’s sermon might have sounded anti-sex work, keep in mind that she was speaking to a preacher/moralist; any assertion of sex work as *work*—as indistinguishable in principle from the myriad ways we use our bodies under capitalism to sustain ourselves—would have been totally lost on him. Gamble, in fact, was an experienced madam, shrewd, and had actually been well-educated. She appears to have had a far more nuanced position on sex work than she was able to enunciate to a man of the cloth. Still, as a madam, one ought to hold her in some suspicion; she was, after all, in the position of a manager working at the behest of some very shady brothel-owners. (As ever, death to the pimp, all power to the sex worker.)

**** The [Tenderloin Museum](#) commemorated the centennial of the Magdalene siege of Central Methodist. So too, it has preserved a memory of this precarious neighborhood where various marginalized groups knit communities and movements.

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The Once Good River

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There is a Seneca word, **ohi:yo'**. It roughly means “good river.” From the confluence of the Allegheny and Monongahela Rivers, the Ohio flows north. Eventually she will change direction and join the Mississippi River in so-called Cairo, Illinois.

But first, the Good River must pass an anthropogenic beast, a sprawling hydra: the Shell Ethane Cracker Plant; the Shell Plastic Plant; the Death Factory; the Fracked Gas Shitter (new nicknames always wanted).

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If you want to get into the gritty details about how the Shell Plastic Plant is harming you, you can visit No Petro PA (nopetropa.com) or the Beaver County Marcellus Awareness Community (marcellusawareness.org). For the purposes of this essay, here’s what you should know.

* The Plastic Plant is along the Ohio River in Monaca, PA, about 45 minutes from Pittsburgh.

* It spews ungodly amounts of Volatile Organic Compounds (aka, deadly fumes) into the air, around 764 tons of it within these past few months (a permit is supposed to restrict that number to 516.2 tons a year). As we recently learned from the Canadian wildfires and the East Palestine train derailment, pollution doesn't care about human-made borders.

* It needs fracked gas to make its product, plastic, which means that a lot of new fracking wells open up just to feed this thing's insatiable appetite. Corporate oil creates fracking wells, gains profits, and abandons the well—see how EQT is responsible for ruining New Freeport's drinking water for over a year now. The oil barons will surely kill us all to make profits.

* It uses a chemical called ethane, a by-product of fracking, to make the plastic. That means the plastic is little more than fracking fecal matter, hence the nickname, “the Fracked Gas Shitter.”

* The lights from the Plastic Plant are on 24/7. The people who live near it no longer experience night.

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The Shell Plastic Plant is more than just its central location in one town in southwestern Pennsylvania. Its infrastructure stretches hundreds of miles across multiple towns, counties (including Allegheny), and three states: Pennsylvania, Ohio, and West Virginia.

The infrastructure includes compressor stations, meter pads, shut-off valves, and the Falcon pipeline.

The Falcon pipeline is what carries the ethane to the plant to make fracking feces. The feces are technically called nurdles. Nurdles are small, round, translucent pieces of plastic. These fracking feces get turned into bottles, containers, and all the other toxic plastic shit that's destroying communities, oceans, wildlife, and our very bodies.

Plastic breaks down into microscopic pieces that are appropriately named microplastics. Microplastics are so pervasive that they now pollute nearly everything we eat, drink, and breathe (yep, microplastics float in the air and you breathe them in. You just breathed in a bunch of them right now).

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Picture of the Shell Ethane Cracker Plant ([photo credit](#) Clean Air Council)

* The chemicals in plastic cause cancer and are taking away our bodily autonomy by causing sterilization, both by killing sperm cells and by causing miscarriage.

* Microplastics bind to our organs and fat. They accumulate in our bodies much like bigger pieces of plastic accumulate in the oceans, rivers, and poor communities.

* Animals often consume visible pieces of plastic, which slowly kills them.

* Birds along the coast consume so much plastic that they have developed a new disorder called *plasticosis*. Plasticosis is a fibrotic disease that comes from eating small pieces of plastic. The pieces of plastic tear up the digestive tract, causing scarring. The scarring eventually makes the stomach unable to function and causes death. How long until humans are diagnosed with plasticosis? Do human embryos and fetuses develop plasticosis?

* Recycling plastic has been thoroughly debunked as a way to deal with our petrochemical-coated self destruction. A(n) (un)healthy portion of plastic can't be recycled at all. What can be recycled eventually degrades too much to be recycled again, and the recycling process itself vomits more microplastics into the air.

* Plastic takes ≈400 years to disappear completely. For us humans, plastic is forever.

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The Ohio River flows past the Shell Plastic Plant. Portions of fracked gas excrement inevitably end up in her waters. Against her will, she carries plastic pollution down to farmlands, to homes, to the ones who need her most. The Good River carries on, but there are exhausted sighs in her currents.

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No Court Can Rule Over Us

Marc J. Mancini

This summer has been rather intense, in more ways than one. While we have suffered through some of the hottest days ever recorded in human history, we have also witnessed a series of U.S. Supreme Court rulings that have further eroded the rights of the working class and disempowered the most vulnerable groups in our society. Beginning with the overturning of *Roe v. Wade* last year—allowing the government control over women’s bodily autonomy and healthcare—SCOTUS has now eradicated affirmative action for higher education, allowed discrimination against LGBTQ+ folks in favor of “religious freedom,” gutted environmental protections, and dealt a devastating financial blow to struggling students by denying President Biden’s \$400 billion plan to reduce student loan debt. While there were a few “surprise” progressive rulings, such as upholding voting rights, Native American child welfare laws, and immigration policies, as well as allowing the “abortion pill” mifepristone to stay on the market (for now), the overall impact of these rulings has shifted much decision-making power to conservatives and the far-right, against the will of the vast majority of Americans.

The rulings have garnered much media attention and discussion, as well as created fear mongering in preparations for next year’s presidential elections. But one ruling in particular that has rarely been addressed, yet remains significant, is the court’s decision in *Glacier Northwest v. Teamsters Local 174*, which may have devastating impacts on the role and utilization of strikes as a weapon of class struggle. Not surprisingly, this decision occurred during some of the largest work stoppages and labor union organizing America has experienced in quite some time, including those of the actors’ guild (SAG-AFTRA) and writers guild. (It’s been since 1960 that both have struck together and they have essentially shut down Hollywood.) Meanwhile, over 300,000 Teamsters threatened a strike against UPS. Though on hold as negotiations move forward, it would have been one of the largest strikes against a private employer in US history.

In any case, the Supreme Court’s decision in *Glacier Northwest v. Teamsters* gives employers the right to sue unions for alleged “property damage” and financial losses caused by strikes—effectively deterring workers from using such tactics. In one example, the mining company Warrior Met Coal sued the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) over \$13 million for “financial losses” incurred because of a nearly 2-year-long strike. However, as of June 30th, the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) issued a ruling that found Warrior Met Coal violated national labor law in its bargaining conduct before,

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You could never touch another piece of plastic for the rest of your life and you would still be consuming plastic simply by living on this planet. You no longer have a choice but to poison yourself.

The next right thing to do is to cease all new plastic production. Anyone who has visited the Shell Ethane Cracker Plant knows that its size is dumbfounding. It is a fortress: cameras, fences, guards, snitches. Its food, ethane, is highly explosive.

But its enormity is also its weakness.

It is dependent on trucks, trains, and barges.

It is dependent on miles of small choke points that sit in rural isolation.

It is dependent on the Good River's tolerance and ours.

And that can change.

during, and after the strike, and ordered the company to immediately bargain in good faith.

In essence, while the Court’s decision did not ultimately affect what many have feared it would—effectively outlawing the right to strike by allowing employers to sue labor unions into financial turmoil for engaging in such activity—it does create an atmosphere of fear for labor unions to exercise that right. It should be noted that the National Labor Relations Act, which was passed under President Roosevelt as part of his “New Deal” program—allowing workers the legal right to organize and join unions—still holds the strike to be “protected concerted activity.” However, within a decade of its passage, the National Labor Relations Act was severely weakened by the Taft-Hartley Act, which opened the door for “right-to-work” laws, permanently replacing striking workers, outlawing sit-down and solidarity strikes, prohibiting picketing against secondary targets, among other effective direct-action tactics that gave the labor movement its power. The Taft-Hartley Act effectively destroyed any and all means of building working class struggle and solidarity among labor unions. Since then, workers’ rights have been slowly decimated, coinciding with the decline of union membership and increasing wealth and income inequality.

In *Glacier v. Teamsters*, the high court considered the question of whether the employer could sue Teamsters Local 174 over alleged property destruction: striking drivers had set out with deliveries of ready-mix concrete, returning their loaded trucks, which required the company to dispose of the concrete before it hardened. There is a narrow legal exception to this rule—unions can’t be sued for alleged property damage if striking employees “take reasonable precautions to protect employer property.” While the trial court in Washington state and the State Supreme Court both dismissed Glacier’s claim arguing the action was “protected concerted activity,” the US Supreme Court overruled that decision. However, the Court did not order the trial court to decide against the union—it just allowed the case to proceed. It is possible Glacier’s claim could be dismissed again depending on what the NLRB decides regarding pending unfair labor practice complaints against Glacier in the same strike. Regardless of the outcome, the Supreme Court’s message is clear: property rights are more protected and essential than workers’ rights. As mentioned before, laws are already overwhelmingly stacked against labor unions and powerful strikes. Similar to abortion rights, *Roe v. Wade* was not overturned overnight, rather it took almost 50 years of legal battles and slowly chipping away at the law until a strong conservative

majority took power and finally overruled it. The *Glacier v. Teamsters* decision is no different. It's just another minor decision which could escalate to something more devastating in the future for working people and labor. It's not naive to think the entire National Labor Relations Act could be overturned and unions outlawed once again. However, it is important to keep in mind that we should never have to solely rely on any state or court to give or protect our rights. Our struggle and solidarity is demonstrated in our workplaces, in our schools, in our communities, and in our streets, not in the halls of power or the state. In response to the ruling, Teamsters President

Uncompromising Support for Peppy and Krystal!

On May 19, 2023 heavily armed agents raided the home of two beloved long-term Pittsburgh activists, Brian “Peppy” DiPippa and Krystal DiPippa. A little over a month later they were both federally indicted on charges stemming from a demonstration against a University of Pittsburgh-sanctioned event promoting transphobic hate speech. On June 30, 2023, they both surrendered to the court. Krystal was released and is out on bond, but Peppy remains in federal pre-trial detention at Butler County Prison. The raid and their arrests are a part of a larger framework of repression by federal agents, working in tandem with local law enforcement, against community resistance.

Peppy and Krystal are exceptional and profoundly caring humans. For decades, they have been active participants in solidarity with oppressed and marginalized people. Their tireless advocacy and community building has put them in the crosshairs of state repression. They face a long and arduous court process in the months and years ahead, and need care, support, and compassion.

Write letters! Let’s make sure Peppy knows how much support he has. No letter or musing is too small! To write to Peppy, address the envelope like so:

Butler County Prison
c/o Brian DiPippa
#42322 PO Box 9156
Seminole, FL 33775-9156

(All mail sent to the Butler County Prison is sent to Florida where it’ll be scanned and then prisoners at Butler read it on a screen.)

Be careful what you include in your letter. All prisoner mail is monitored. Do *not* ask Peppy about the case as discussing any aspect of it could come back to haunt him at any stage of the legal process. Let him know about a hike you just went on, or a meal you just made with friends, a strange animal you communed with, a wild show you were at. This everyday magic will help him get away from the isolation he faces every day.

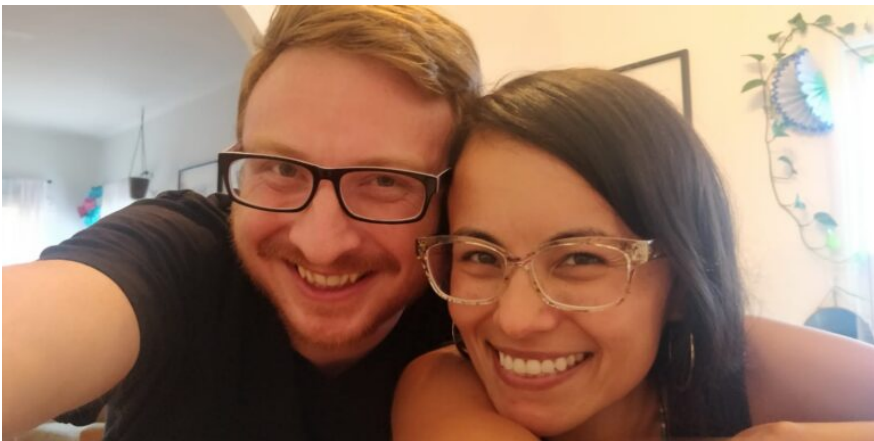
Writing your first letter and wondering where to start? Peppy’s excited to hear from any and all supporters! Peppy really likes skateboarding, comedy, and uplifting and heartwarming stories. He also likes hearing and learning about people and places all over the globe.

Sean O’Brien offered these inspirational and encouraging words: “American workers must remember that their right to strike has not been taken away... The Teamsters will strike any employer, when necessary, no matter their size or the depth of their pockets. Unions will never be broken by this Court or any other. Today’s shameful ruling is simply one more reminder that the American people cannot rely on their government or their courts to protect them. They cannot rely on their employers. We must rely on each other. We must engage in organized, collective action. We can only rely on the protections inherent in the power of our unions.

Raise money! Donate at: [paypal.com/pools/c/8Wa4lBQw2T](https://www.paypal.com/pools/c/8Wa4lBQw2T)

Funds raised will help pay for Krystal and Pep’s legal support, as well as for his commissary bills. Commissary is vital to surviving in prison: jail/prison food is grossly inadequate, and often prisoners have to pay for the most basic hygiene supplies. Some funds will support housing during this period of instability and displacement, including construction materials for their new home, windows, floors, electrical, kitchen, bathrooms, and paint. Any unused funds raised here will be donated to projects supporting other political prisoners.

(Note: Legal costs go way beyond PayPal’s \$20k limit. When we reach that initial goal, we will create another fundraiser for the next increment.)



If you or anyone you know would like to make a tax deductible donation, that’d be amazing. We can accept tax deductible donations by check at the moment (and provide a tax letter for you). Please contact rehomekp@gmail.com for details. Hopefully, we’ll have a way to accept tax deductible online donations soon as well. More on that hopefully in the next newspaper issue.

Website: freepeppyandkrystal.blackblogs.org

Community Warning

On August 8, 2023 a Pittsburgh anarchist’s parents’ home was visited by two FBI agents in Connecticut. One parent answered the door and was asked questions about their child’s associates and shown about 50 photos of people in front of The Big Idea Bookstore taken from across the street. Two anarchists were identified by said parent, one by government name, the other not. This is what we know at this time. More information will be shared as we learn it. *Remember: Never talk to police.* Ask for their card and share with your community that you were approached. Reach out to your local National Lawyers Guild (NLG) (pittsburgh@nlg.org in Pittsburgh). If federal law enforcement ever approaches you or a loved, contact the NLG’s federal repression hotline at (212) 679-2811. You do not have to speak to agents and should not. We are here to support you.



THE FOOL .

FREE Tarot Readings for the Movement!

We are pleased to announce that a local soothsayer has taken up residence at The Big Idea! They are available during store hours, for your speculative curiosity, to divine the fate of our movement against the state, capitalism, carcerality, racism, and a big et cetera. They will also be performing a variety of incantations and prayers to the Old Ones (hell, even suplicatting the New Ones!) until all the world’s aforementioned ills vanish. Why get our hands dirty—why take fate into our own hands? With the gods, the tarot, brews, spells, and other magicks at our behest, the American empire will crumble in no time!

A Police Execution Very Close to Home

A few days before publication we learned that Pittsburgh police shot and killed William Hardison, Jr. in the neighborhood of Garfield during an hours-long gunbattle. On Wednesday, August 23rd, officers attempted to serve an eviction notice—on behalf of a local house-flipping concern—to Mr. Hardison. Billy, as he was known in the neighborhood, was 63, black, impoverished, and appears to have resided in that home since his father purchased it in 1998. The house was foreclosed on by Chase Bank in late 2022 and scooped up by its current, somewhat mysterious owner.

The entity that requested the eviction notice is 907 East Street LLC, with the same business address as that of Klvn Coffee Lab, located in Larimer—a neighborhood that like Garfield is experiencing gentrification. (The coffee *lab*’s website evokes a pomposity and airiness about their product that is keeping with its indifferent ties to the sufferings and dislocations of neighbors.)

At 10:30 am, seven flatfoots arrived to serve said notice and received a hail of bullets in response. After approximately 6 ½ hours of trading gunfire, Hardison was killed by one or several of the multitude of officers that descended on Garfield to consummate the lynching. We correct Mayor Gainey whose statement claimed the neighborhood a “peaceful” one until the sudden eruption of gunfire; *monsieur* mayor, gentrification is not tranquility and business as usual is not peace. To paraphrase the epigraph at the beginning of this newspaper issue, “What is the crime of using a weapon to defend one’s home compared to the violence of a bank’s foreclosure?”

Since then two memorials have taken place and organizing is afoot to protect other people facing eviction by 907 East Street LLC. Hardison’s ghost will forever haunt the barbarous act of depriving shelter from others.

(Source, in part: [Jon Moss, “Man dead after attempted Garfield eviction turns into armed standoff,” Pittsburgh Union Progress, 23 August 2023.](#))

