

# EQUALITY

MADSA Metro Atlanta Democratic Socialists of America

## MAY DAY AND THE HAYMARKET AFFAIR

By Milt Tambor

May Day, as a day to honor the international workers' movement, was born out of the Chicago Haymarket tragedy and American labor's struggle for an eight-hour day in the 1880s. At the time, it was quite common to work 10- to 16-hour days in unsafe conditions. Samuel Gompers,

anarchists are arrested even though no evidence is produced linking them to the bomb. Moreover, most were not present at the rally. The next day, martial law is declared. In major cities across the nation, the press and public officials use the bombing to attack anarchists, socialists and labor organizers. After a two-month-long trial, the anarchists are all found guilty. Four are hung. Several years later, Governor John Altgeld pardons the men still alive and condemns the entire judicial system for allowing the injustice.

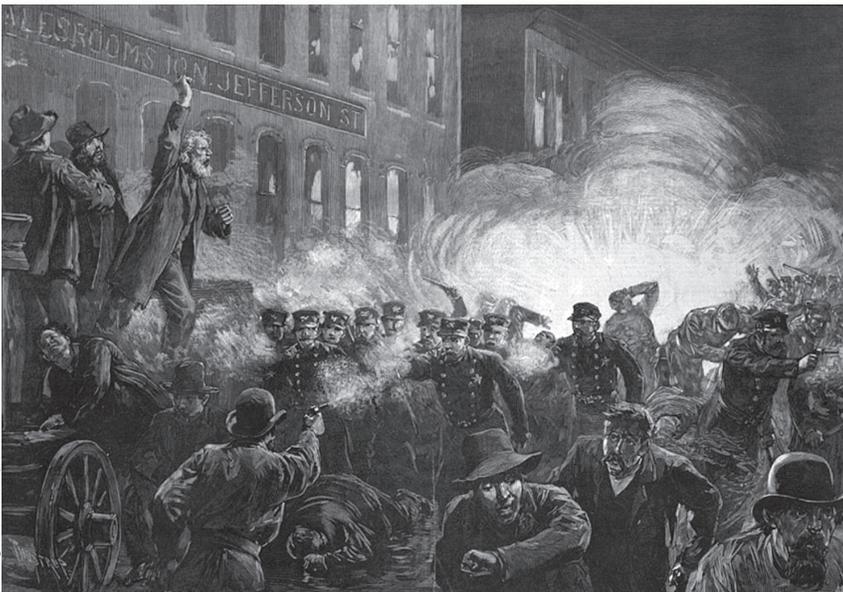


Image: Wikipedia

This 1886 engraving from *Harper's* magazine was the most widely reproduced image of the Haymarket affair.

president of the newly formed American Federation of Labor, called the demand for an eight-hour day nothing less than a "second declaration of independence." On May 1, 1886, 250,000 workers joined in a nation-wide strike demanding a shorter work day. Chicago, with its strong labor movement, had the largest demonstration as 80,000 workers marched up Michigan Avenue carrying union banners. On May 4, in response to the killing of picketing workers by Chicago police at the McCormick Reaper Plant, a protest meeting was held at Haymarket Square.

At the public meeting, a bomb explodes. As a result of the bombing and the crossfire among the police, 12 people die. Eight

The strikes for an eight-hour day and the Haymarket events led in 1889 to a decision by the International Socialist Congress in Paris to adopt May 1 as an international workers' holiday. During this same period, the AFL had successfully lobbied a bill in Congress that established Labor Day, the first Monday in September, as a national holiday. For several years both Labor Day and May Day were celebrated in the U.S. The AFL, though, felt pressure to discontinue observance of May Day. The association of May Day with anarchists and radicals was seen as problematic, even un-American. How ironic! May Day originated in the U.S., but Europe and the rest of the world then claimed that holiday as their own.

More recently, May Day has made a comeback in this country. Historians now recognize the vital contributions made by socialists and communists in organizing garment workers in the early 1900s and industrial workers in the 1930s. Contemporary movements are also reclaiming May Day for its heritage of international labor solidarity. It is an official holiday in 66 countries, and celebrated in many others. Immigrant rights groups in the U.S. drew on this tradition when thousands were mobilized in massive marches and rallies on May Day 2006. Here, in Atlanta, Jobs with Justice will be celebrating May Day with a host of activities. On International Workers Day, we should also remember to honor the important work carried on by Georgia's economic, racial, and social justice movements. ♦

# RECENT EVENTS

## SOLIDARITY WITH NEIGHBORS RESISTING DISPLACEMENT

Photos: Reid Freeman Jenkins

On March 19, some 40 MADSA members and friends, including students and professors from five area universities (Ga. State, Ga. Tech, Clayton State, Emory and Clark Atlanta), drew inspiration from and expressed solidarity with inner-city Atlanta residents who are resisting displacement by gentrification and stadium development. “Resilience, Tenacity and Self-Determination in Peoplestown, Mechanicsville, Pittsburgh and Summerhill” was the fifth annual bus tour of troubled neighborhoods sponsored by MADSA. Co-sponsors were **Occupy Our Homes Atlanta (OOHA)** and the **Peoplestown Revitalization Corporation (PRC, #peoplestownwillnotgodown)**.



Peace by Piece staff tell us about their new community center for Peoplestown youth.

hopes of selling them or turning them into more lucrative enterprises. Leaders **Sherise Brown** of the Boynton Village Tenants Association and **Deborah Arnold**, president of the City View at Rosa Burney Residents Association, among others, spoke eloquently of the power that can result from united community action. Both tenant associations have won improvements and/or extensions of their complexes’ HUD contracts, although tenants at Rose Burney still endure a bedbug invasion.

In Peoplestown, we heard from three homeowners who have refused to abandon their houses so the City of Atlanta could replace them with a park and floodwater retention pond even though those homes had never flooded. Mattie Jackson, 93 years old, recently won the right to keep her home in the neighborhood where she was born, thanks to her determination and public support from OOHA and others. The tour’s final stop introduced us to the “Peace by



Columbus Ward and resident install a sign.

PRC President **Columbus Ward** and OOHA’s **Tim Franzen** provided background and accompanied the buses to meetings with neighborhood activists. The tours were initiated and are coordinated by Georgia Tech Professor Emeritus and MADSA member **Larry Keating**, author of an excellent survey of the devastation wrought on Atlanta’s black inner-city neighborhoods in recent decades: *Race, Class and Urban Expansion*. MADSA is an endorser and supporter of the Turner Fields Community Benefits Coalition, which represents the neighborhoods affected by the new stadium development.

We visited two affordable housing complexes privately owned but subsidized by the federal Housing and Urban Development agency, Stanton Oaks (formerly Boynton Village) and Rosa Burney. Federal funding gave the tenants leverage to organize against their landlords, who had neglected the properties in



Sen. Vincent Fort listens to Peopletown resident Mattie Jackson.

Piece House,” a donated house and lot that a collective of young activists and other local volunteers are turning into a community organizing center and adjacent vegetable garden, with support from the American Friends Service Committee.

For the tour’s finale, we put our solidarity into action by planting signs in front of empty lots and boarded-up houses on all sides of the Peopletown resisters’ block, reading: **“REZONED FOR GENTRIFICATION For lack of transparency**

**and no communication whatsoever, please contact the Office of Whitewashing and Community Displacement.”** Mayor Kasim Reed’s office phone number was thoughtfully supplied on each sign.

A Housing Justice Movement meeting will take place at 7 pm, Tues. April 19 at the McDevitt Youth Center, 1040 Crew St., Atlanta, GA 30315. For more information: A. Johnson, 404-521-9070. ♦

## SOCIALIST DIALOGUE: “THE ABCS OF DEMOCRATIC SOCIALISM,” WITH BHASKAR SUNKARA

*Jacobin* founder and editor **Bhaskar Sunkara** was in the metro Atlanta area on March 6th, to discuss socialism and the *Jacobin* magazine. The conversation was moderated by **Brandon Payton-Carrillo** and covered modern socialist thought and the importance of the Sanders campaign. Once the main thrust of our conversation was finished, an enthusiastic audience engaged in a thoughtful question and answer segment. If you were not in attendance, you really missed out on an amazing event. (NOTE: Members of MADSA have begun a reading group under *Jacobin*’s auspices. If you are interested, contact Norm at normarkel@gmail.com or 404-378-4026.) ♦



Bhaskar Sunkara in dialogue with MADSA.

Reid Freeman Jenkins

## STILL FEELING THE BERN

Thousands of Bernie supporters marched on Feb. 27 along the Beltline to Piedmont Park (photo below), where they dispersed to canvass in the surrounding neighborhoods. MADSA members participated as individuals, helping to make buttons, give out signs, serve as marshals, and carry **Daniel Hanley**’s awesome DSA posters, continuing the work of People for Bernie that we helped birth. Special thanks to new member **Johnnie Martinez** for providing space for Bernie events at his very cool **Joystick Game Bar** on Edgewood in the Fourth Ward, even leading a “Bar Crawl for Bernie.”



Steve Eberhardt

The Georgia Democratic primary has come and gone – OK, Bernie has done better elsewhere, can’t win ‘em all – but some dedicated DSA members continue to phone bank to voters in other states. Daniel even helped canvass in Jacksonville, FL (far left in photo at right of the Atlanta-to-Jacksonville crew) the week before their primary, as he had done in South Carolina.



Atlantans in Jacksonville, FL canvass for Bernie.

But DSA holds that we and other Bernie supporters must remain active beyond the nomination process and even the election, important though they are. Whoever is elected – even if it’s Bernie! – the key to this country’s future will be a progressive movement that holds together and keeps pushing for social and economic justice, most likely in a variety of organizational forms and in many non-electoral arenas. We are thrilled that many people, especially young people, encouraged by the Bernie campaign are joining DSA all over the country. Several new local chapters have been certified just within the past few months (Augusta GA is organizing!), and MADSA has new members we met during the campaign. But the important thing is to join with our coalition partners to make sure that whoever is in political office – federal, state and local – has no choice but to work for the interests of the 99 percent, not the 1 percent. That would really be a political revolution! ♦

# MEMBERSHIP MEETING: LOTS TO TALK ABOUT

On Feb. 20 over 40 people crowded into the meeting space at the Open Door Community to exchange information about a wide range of current issues and struggles. To name a few: attorney **Chaka Washington's** fight against the death penalty for Kenny Fults; **Adam Cardo** on the Young Democratic Socialists' winter conference; **Becky Rafter's** report on Ga. WAND's fight against radioactive pollution and other dangers from the Savannah River Plant and Plant Vogtle (with the low-income, mostly African American community of Shell Bluff on the front lines); **Daniel Hanley** on the Bernie campaign; and guest speaker **Larry Pellegrini's** wry and insightful report on the Georgia legislative session, complicated this year by the members' re-election campaigns.

We started by honoring new member **Johnnie Martinez** for offering his **Joystick Game Bar** on Edgewood as a Bernie and MADSA base (two MADSA events and a "pub crawl" for the Bernie campaign have been held there). After the activity reports **Steve Gill** announced that the MADSA **LGBT and Allies Committee** was meeting and invites new members (contact [sgill@buffalo.edu](mailto:sgill@buffalo.edu)). And, we were addressed by Georgia House candidates **Janine Brown** (District 59) and **Renitta Shannon** (District 84), running in the decisive State of Georgia Democratic Party primary May 24.



Reid Freeman Jenkins

MADSA Chair Milt Tambor welcomes members and friends.

Our membership meetings continue to bring together people with a common interest in social, racial and economic justice that bridges our different approaches and areas of expertise. We usually meet every other month, but due to a flurry of other activities this spring we are skipping the April general meeting. Our next **Socialist Dialogue** will take place April 24. Check the calendar at [dsa-atlanta.org](http://dsa-atlanta.org) for all scheduled MADSA meetings and events. ♦

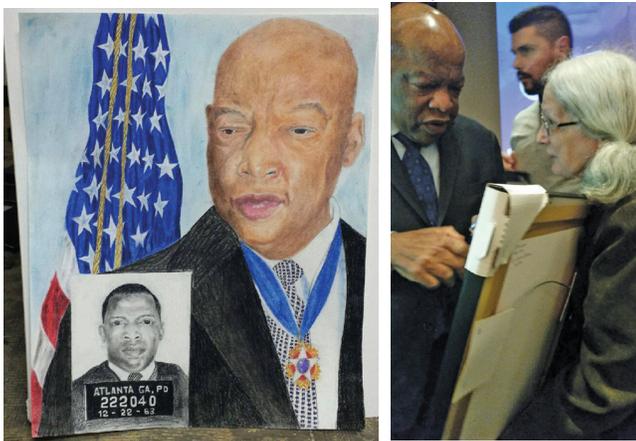
## DEAL VETOES "RELIGIOUS LIBERTY" BILL; WE DID OUR BIT

Gov. Nathan Deal has announced that he will veto the so-called "Religious Liberty" bill passed by the Georgia General Assembly, after a tsunami of business and community protest against the bill for its obvious intent to enable discrimination against LGBT people. The MADSA LGBT and Allies committee had sent a letter urging the veto, signed by our officers, which became a petition. We are proud that we could contribute our bit to this victory. Many more struggles to come! To join the LGBT committee, contact **Travis Reid** at [travis.reid@yahoo.com](mailto:travis.reid@yahoo.com) or **Steve Gill** at [gilsteven77@gmail.com](mailto:gilsteven77@gmail.com). ♦



Atlanta Pride Parade, 2015  
Photo Reid Freeman Jenkins.

## MADSA ARTIST LORRAINE FONTANA PRESENTS PORTRAIT TO JOHN LEWIS



Artist and activist **Lorraine Fontana** presented Rep. John Lewis with a portrait which combines young John's arrest picture with his Medal of Freedom award. Lorraine is currently working on a series of Black Lives Matter portraits in pastel and charcoal.

## SUPPORTING IMMIGRANT AND REFUGEE RIGHTS

The Georgia Latino Alliance for Human Rights held a rally at Liberty Plaza on March 24 to demand an end to deportations that are tearing immigrant families apart and to oppose the anti-immigrant bills then before the General Assembly. **Barbara Joye** joined other allies who spoke in support, representing MADSA. ♦



Gloria Tatum

# COMING UP

## April 14, noon – Rally With Georgia Raise Up/ Fight for 15 and a Union

Library Plaza, Ga. State U., 100 Decatur St., Atlanta



## April 24, 2-4pm – Socialist Dialogue: The “Precariat,” Work Without Predictability or Security

Decatur Recreation Center, 231 Sycamore St., Decatur GA

We will take an in-depth look at the changing structure of the United States working class in an era of low union density, replacement of full-time employees with temps, part-timers and “contracted” workers, and jobs with low wages and unpredictable schedules.

A panel moderated by MADSA’s **Steve Wise** will feature attorney **Debra Schwartz** on “Employment Law; How Few Rights Workers Have”; Teamsters Local 728’s Organizing Director **Ben Speight** on “Organizing in Today’s Economy”; and child care worker and activist **Dawn O’Neal** on “Why We Fight for a \$15 Minimum Wage and a Union.”

Suggested readings:

- Jan Breman, “A Bogus Concept” (*New Left Review*, Nov.-Dec. 2013) <https://newleftreview.org/II/84/jan-breman-a-bogus-concept>
- Guy Standing, “The Precariat and Basic Income” (talk at Forum Poverta Napoli, Dec. 2015) [http://www.guystanding.com/files/documents/forum\\_poverta\\_napoli\\_-\\_guy\\_standing.pdf](http://www.guystanding.com/files/documents/forum_poverta_napoli_-_guy_standing.pdf)
- Tom Slee, “The Sharing Economy’s Dirty Laundry” (*Jacobin* magazine, March 2016) <https://www.jacobinmag.com/2016/03/uber-airbnb-sharing-economy-housing-tech/>

## May 1, 1-6pm – MayDay/International Workers’ Day Festival

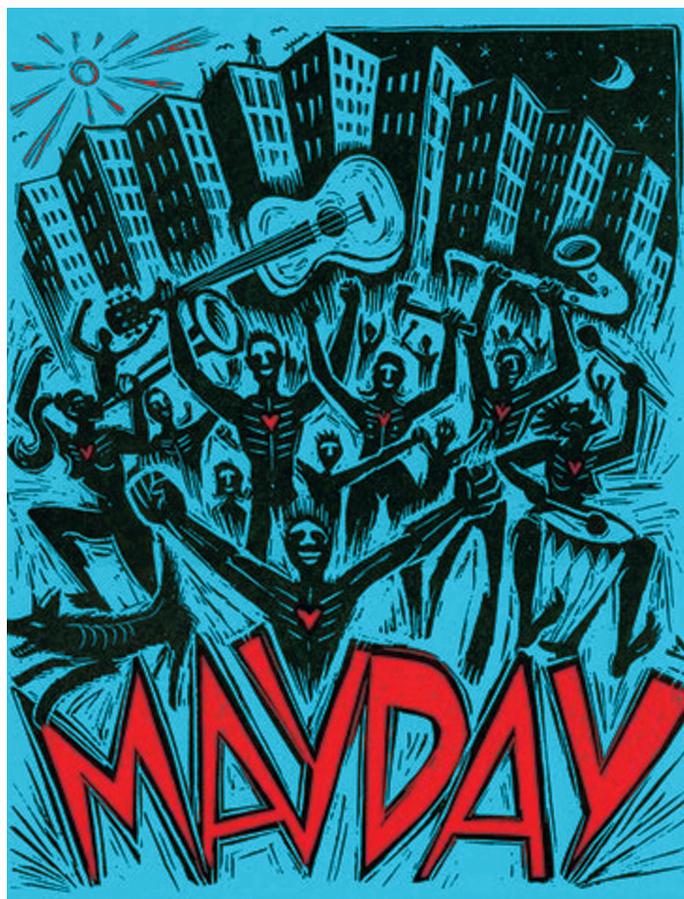
MLK Historic Site, 450 Auburn Ave. NE, Atlanta 30312 and adjacent walkways

MADSA will join our coalition partners in Atlanta Jobs with Justice and other labor and community organizations

to celebrate May Day/International Workers’ Day and Atlanta’s progressive community and to kick off a month of action. We are organizing a family-friendly, inspiring afternoon festival with entertainment, children’s activities, food and beverages, and exchange of information about our organizations and causes.

We will be tabling for MADSA and participating in a special labor history presentation, with some of our members and friends portraying famous labor leaders such as Mother Jones, A. Philip Randolph, and Eugene Victor Debs.

Atlanta JwJ calls this “our political Mardi Gras in Georgia,” because it kicks off a month of political activity. “From May 2 through May 24 [the Democratic primary for state offices] we have to unleash leftist power to show no confidence in any elected state official who is complacent about the Georgia minimum wage of \$5.15 an hour, state school takeovers, legalized LGBTQ discrimination, restricted voting rights, mass incarceration and criminalization, failure to expand Medicaid, attacks on reproductive rights, attacks on immigrants, privatization and outsourcing of jobs — the list of crazy attacks against our communities is endless. The history is clear: when we fight we win.”



Eric Drooker

See [Atlantajwj.org](http://Atlantajwj.org) or #MAYDAYATL for details about the festival program as they become available. Contact [Barbara@freejoye.com](mailto:Barbara@freejoye.com) to volunteer for tabling and other ways to help.

**May 1-31, reception May 7 – Activist Photo Exhibit**  
 First Existentialist Congregation of Atlanta, 470 Candler  
 Park Dr. NE, Atlanta GA 30307



Manuel Llaneras

Watching the King Day March, 2015.

Celebrating May Day/International Workers' Day, an exhibit of photographs: "Activism in Atlanta," will hang in the sanctuary at the First Existentialist Congregation throughout the month of May. Sponsored by MADSA, the show features the work of six of Atlanta's best photographers of people's street action. You'll see scenes from the King Day march, Moral Monday Georgia, Fight for \$15, School of the Americas Watch, Black Lives Matter, celebrations of same-sex marriage, and more. The show is presented in conjunction with the #MAYDAYATL festival. Meet the photographers at a reception with light refreshments at 5 pm, Saturday, May 7.

The exhibit features photographers **Jim Alexander, Cindy Brown, Steve Eberhardt, Lorraine Fontana, Reid Freeman Jenkins and Manuel Llaneras.**



Steve Eberhardt

Black Lives Matter light brigade.

**May 3 – Amy Goodman of "Democracy Now" Live in Atlanta**  
 First Iconium Baptist Church, 542 Moreland Ave. SE,  
 Atlanta 30307

A benefit for community radio station WRFG (89.3 FM), **Amy Goodman** will be speaking about and signing her latest book: *Democracy Now! Twenty Years Covering the Movements Changing America*. \$10 general admission. Admission to a VIP event 5-7pm includes a copy of Amy's book: \$50. MADSA is a co-sponsor. For advance tickets contact WRFG 404-523-3471.

# Dougie

## THE ABOLITIONIST

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 Political orgs/Small  
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### STAY TUNED

Remember to check [dsa-atlanta.org](http://dsa-atlanta.org) for our local blog and calendar, and [dsausa.org](http://dsausa.org) for the national blog (center column); *Talking Union*; and *The Activist* youth section blog; plus links to loads of background information, DSA statements and resource publications.

### VOTE!

YOUR VOTE COUNTS EXTRA in the May 24 Democratic primary for state legislative offices, because there is usually a low turnout for non-presidential primaries. The Georgia General Assembly affects our lives in many important ways. We urgently need to strengthen the ranks of its few progressive members. Some candidates have spoken at our meetings, requesting our support. Please see if there is a competitive race in your district and if so, plan to vote.

# EQUALITY

MADSA Metro Atlanta Democratic Socialists of America

Metro Atlanta DSA encourages our members to contribute to this newsletter. Let us know what's going on in your community—your struggles, inspirations, successes. Appeal for support, share pictures, ask questions, or editorialize.

**Send submissions to:**  
 Barbara Joye  
[barbara@freejoye.com](mailto:barbara@freejoye.com)

For information about **Metro Atlanta DSA:**  
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For information about the  
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Equality is edited by Barbara Joye. Production Barbara Segal.  
*Labor donated*