



**85<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY YEAR**  
**THE PARODNECK FOUNDATION**  
**1937 - 2022**

**[WWW.PARODNECKFOUNDATION.ORG](http://WWW.PARODNECKFOUNDATION.ORG)**

85<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION  
(1937-2022)

COOPERATIVE DEMOCRACY  
CONFERENCE

The Segal Theater

CUNY Graduate Center 365 Fifth Ave

NOVEMBER 4, 2022

<https://tinyurl.com/Parodneck85AtCUNY>

***ONIPA YIEYE FIRI ONIPA***

***THE WELL BEING OF MAN DEPENDS ON HIS FELLOW  
MAN***

***(AKAN PROVERB)***

## **Background: The Parodneck Foundation and Cooperative Democracy**

### **Consumer-Farmer Milk Cooperative, Inc. 1937 – 1971**

In the midst of the Great Depression, rural and urban dwellers were suffering. And while children were deprived of milk in their daily diets, upstate farmers were dumping milk in the ground in protest over prices for their milk that did not cover their costs. Upon his return from a cooperative tour of Europe, Meyer was met at the docks by an economist, Dr. Caroline Whitney, who was studying the impacts on children of not getting enough milk in their diets. They discussed how milk producers were suffering as well based upon their reliance on the “milk trust,” which monopolized the milk market and controlled wholesale prices. Under the 1932 Agriculture and Markets Act, New York State restricted licenses for the distribution of milk only to those areas that were “underserved.” Of course, by the 1930s no area was “underserved,” so the 1932 law effectively created a milk monopoly in New York. Meyer became excited by the challenge and suggested they work together with Dr. Whitney’s Settlement House sponsors to create a consumer-producer cooperative.

Within a few months, Meyer and Caroline had formed the Milk Consumers Protection Committee. Settlement House leaders brought pressure to bear on elected officials and with the support of Governor Lehman, a waiver was issued and the Consumer-Farmer Milk Cooperative, Inc. was in business. And for the next 34 years this unique cooperative provided upstate farmers with more money for their milk and provided downstate consumers with more milk for their money.

The Cooperative became a successful, \$6 million a year business. But the market changed dramatically and over time the cooperative’s connection to its members became more and more attenuated. This change was mostly due to the rise of the supermarkets. On the producer side, changes were dramatic as well. Those same farmers who were dirt poor in the 1930s were becoming millionaires due to the postwar development of the interstate highway system and suburban development. Finally, since the cooperative was bound by the milk trusts’ contract with the Teamsters, when the Teamsters agreed in their contract to prohibit deliveries to other than retail establishments, this

destroyed a major innovation of the cooperative, public housing “milk stations.” By delivering milk and distributing it in parking lots and open spaces of public housing projects, without overhead the cooperative was able to sell to public housing residents for 25% off the retail price of milk.

### **Consumer-Farmer Foundation/The Parodneck Foundation 1970 to Present**

The cooperative remained involved with the Settlement Houses that supported the milk cooperative. In the late 1960s a new trend occurred in our inner-city neighborhoods that Professor Robert Kolodney of Columbia University, in a report commissioned by the United Neighborhood Houses, labeled “ad hoc tenant management.” The trend occurred when landlords abandoned their properties and, in many cases, residents did not abandon their homes but instead organized their neighbors, collected their own rent, paid for fuel and utilities and maintained their homes.

Meyer was on the Housing Committee of United Neighborhood Houses and was involved with the commissioning of the study and with its ultimate release. Meyer again became excited. What if with his legal training and cooperative experience and with funds available from the sale of the milk cooperative a new organization could be formed to assist these brave tenants to legalize their ownership in these landlord abandoned buildings, preferably as cooperatives?

It was a struggle considering that the milk business prospered, even if not as a true cooperative. Ultimately, Meyer was able to prevail on his board, the cooperative members, and the courts (there is a landmark case that stands for the proposition that a cooperative formed for public purpose would distribute its assets as a charity would), and the milk cooperative’s milk routes, its milk plant in Belle Meade, New Jersey, and its office in Long Island City. With the sale of the cooperative, the Consumer-Farmer Foundation was formed, later to be renamed after our founder, The Parodneck Foundation for Self-Help Housing and Community Development, Inc.

In the early years of the foundation, our energies were focused on tenants who were struggling to maintain their homes, homes that were abandoned by their landlords. Working with MFY Legal Services, the foundation financially and technically assisted tenant associations in obtaining title to their buildings. In the late 1970s, after the city changed its approach to tax delinquent proper-

ties and foreclosed after only one year of arrears, the foundation turned its attention to what was then referred to as the “sweat equity” movement. Working with groups such as Adopt-a-Building, the Renigades of East Harlem, Peoples Development Corporation and Banana Kelly Community Improvement Association, and others, the foundation provided critical seed funds for predevelopment and stabilization, which permitted these groups not only to preserve buildings for upgrade, but also to learn a trade and obtain title to these landlord abandoned buildings.

From this experience, the foundation went on to assist many local efforts for control of land and democratic operation of residential buildings. Working with ACORN and Pratt Center, the foundation co-sponsored the formation and first project of the Mutual Housing Association of New York. Working with the Bronx Borough President Fernando Ferrer, the foundation chaired and staffed the Bronx Community Form, an effort that led to the creation of We Stay/Nos Quedamos, a group that eventually converted a 100% displacement urban renewal plan into a contextual, mixed use, preservation development plan.

Working with CUNY Graduate Center’s Housing Environments Research Group, the foundation sponsored a collaborative initiative with city-wide and community groups that informed and helped guide city in rem policy. As background, when the city changed its vesting law and foreclosed on properties after a year of delinquency, the city inadvertently created what amounted to the second largest public housing system in the country. The foundation worked with other housing and advocacy groups to develop policies to preserve this housing as permanent affordable housing under the control of residents or community-based organizations. To support this advocacy, the foundation funded the surveying of over 6,000 then current and former in rem tenants, the largest survey of its kind.

Also, in the late 1980s, the city began to take title to smaller homes, even single-family homes through the in rem process. The asked the foundation to help with this issue, recognizing that many of these homes were owned by fixed income senior citizens. The foundation put together a new program, the Senior Citizen Homeowner Assistance Program, of SCHAP. From 1986 to present, the foundation has assisted hundreds of seniors, keeping the seniors safe in their homes, eliminating potential blight, and preventing premature institutionalization.

In the run-up to the 2008 Great Recession, the foundation noticed that many of our applicants were eligible for City assistance through the SCHAP program but were also in danger of losing their homes. As we researched this further, we were introduced to predatory lending, which was soon to spread throughout the country hitting all demographic groups. To save as many senior homeowners as we were able, the foundation, working with Brooklyn Legal Services and NEDAP (now renamed New Economy), we created an innovative Fannie Mae program that permitted refinancing predatory equity (ARM) mortgages even in default, if we were able to tie the default directly to the predatory practices. This program was duplicated in other cities.

In another trailblazing effort, the foundation worked with a local community board in the Bronx, developing and getting passed the first ever New York City Charter 197-a plan. Around the same time, the foundation worked with other groups to form a citywide mutual housing association, Community Assisted Tenant Controlled Housing. This mutual housing association, of MHA, was a citywide MHA organized on European “mother-daughter” cooperatives. CATCH is the citywide sponsor of the development of independently run local MHAs, for which the majority of local board members are members of the local MHAs, and the minority of board members are CATCH representatives.

The foundation continues its work in the spirit of self-help, mutual aid and cooperation. It is our hope that our work will continue to expand through a more comprehensive and unified cooperative collaboration. This is one expressed goal of this conference.

**GREAT SOCIAL CHANGES THAT ARE PERMANENT ARE THOSE  
THAT ARE BROUGHT ABOUT BY MEANS SIMILAR TO THE ENDS  
SOUGHT. COOPERATION EXEMPLIFIES THIS.**

**(JAMES PETER WARBASSE)**

## **PROGRAM:**

Welcome: **Harold DeRienzo**, The Parodneck Foundation

A message from our Chairperson-**Irma Rodriguez**

Program Overview: **Rebecca Lurie**, Community and Worker Ownership Project, School for Labor and Urban Studies, City University of New York.

Moderator: **Jacqueline Mondros**, Professor and Dean Emeritus Stony Brook University School of Social Welfare

### **PANEL A. History and Context**

Topic 1: Cooperative History, with an emphasis on the Black Community; Current Potential for a Future Equitable Economy

Guest Speaker: **Dr. Jessica Gordon Nembhard**, John Jay College, Department of

Africana Studies, and author of *Collective Courage, A History of African*

*American Cooperative Economic Thought and Practice*

Topic 2: History of Housing Cooperatives and Potential for Growth and Support of the Cooperative Sector Generally

Guest Speaker: **Ken Wray**, Executive Director, The Parodneck Foundation

Topic 3: Historical Racism in the Government and Private Sector Housing Financing Sector and The Need to Address These Historical Discriminatory Practices

Guest Speaker: **Gregory Jost**, Banana Kelly and Fordham University

### **PANEL B. Meeting Current and Future Needs**

Topic 4: Growing Our Own Food: Community Gardens, Food Cooperatives and Community Supported Agriculture

Guest Speaker: **Sheryll Durrant**, Just Food and Kelly Street Garden

Topic 5: Local Control of Public Land

Guest Speaker: **Edward Garcia**, Northwest Bronx Community and Clergy Coalition

Topic 6: Community Land Trusts

Guest Speakers: **Athena Bernkopf**, East Harlem/El Barrio Community Land Trust

### **PANEL C. Reorganizing Capital and Labor**

Topic 7: Community Development Credit Unions, Public Banking, and Democratizing Finance.

Guest Speaker: **Deyanira Del Rio**, New Economy Project

Topic 8: Worker Cooperatives

Guest Speaker: **Emmanuel Pardilla**, New York City Network of Worker Cooperatives

Topic 9: Cooperation Among Cooperatives

Guest Speaker: **Ali Issa**, Cooperative Economic Alliance of New York City

Wrap-up and Putting Together the Pieces-Guest Speaker: **John Krinsky**, City College

***WE UNWITTINGLY STAND AT THE CROSSROADS –  
SHOULD WE GO THE WAY OF CAPITALISM AND TRY  
TO BECOME INDIVIDUALLY RICH AS CAPITALISTS,  
OR SHOULD WE GO THE WAY OF COOPERATIVES  
AND ECONOMIC COOPERATION WHERE WE AND OUR  
WHOLE COMMUNITY COULD BE RICH TOGETHER?***

***(W.E.B. DUBOIS)***

**PRESENTERS AND PANELISTS:**

(in order of presentation)

**IRMA RODRIGUEZ, Parodneck Foundation Board President**

**Email; [irmaerodriguez@gmail.com](mailto:irmaerodriguez@gmail.com)**

Irma Rodriguez served as Executive Director of Queens Community House from 2008 to 2015; prior to that, she spent 25 years as the organization's Associate Director. Queens Community House is a multi-site settlement house serving the diverse populations of Queens through a combination of social services, educational advancement, advocacy, and leadership development.

During Irma's time at Queens Community House (QCH), it grew from a locally-serving community center into a borough-wide organization with 25 sites in 11 neighborhoods and serving 25,000 children, families and older adults. Under her guidance, QCH developed a particular expertise in organizing, neighborhood preservation, and community building. She has been acknowledged for her efforts to promote human service provision as a vehicle for social change.

Since her retirement Irma has served as part time Executive Director Of The International Federation of Settlements, and as consultant to the national Community Learning Partnership.

Irma has taught courses in community organization, social administration, and social work field instruction at several local universities. She has published articles on housing, the court system, and human rights and has served on numerous boards throughout her career, including City Project, The Association for Neighborhood and Housing Development, The Parodneck Foundation for Self-Help Housing, NY Women's Foundation, and the International Federation of Settlements. Irma served on David Dinkins' Mayoral Transition Team, and her work has been recognized by City Limits, The Center for an Urban Future and Asian Americans for Equality, among others.

Irma is a graduate of The City College of New York/CUNY with a BA in Fine Arts and received her MSW in 1980 from the Hunter College School of Social Work. She is a resident of Sunnyside Gardens, and was a leader in that neighborhood's effort to secure Historic District status.

**Harold DeRienzo, The Parodneck Foundation**

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Mr. DeRienzo began his career in community development working with residents on Kelly Street in the South Bronx in the 1970s. In 1982, Mr. DeRienzo was recruited to head up the Parodneck Foundation for Self-Help Housing and Community Development, Inc. In November 2002, at the request of the New York State Attorney General's office, Mr. DeRienzo returned to Banana Kelly to help rescue it from bankruptcy. From a staff of six and a failing housing portfolio of 566 units in 2002, at the time of his semi-retirement in 2019 the organization the organization's portfolio grew to over 1600 units, with a staff of over 40, not including service employees.

Socially and organizationally, Mr. DeRienzo facilitated the return of the organization to its residents. Through a change in its by-laws, Banana Kelly transformed from a housing

services organization to a centralized mutual housing association, with residents making up a plurality of the board, drawn from a Residents Council.

Mr. DeRienzo has been published in local, national and international community development, real estate and civic publications. In 2008, *The Concept of Community, Lessons from the Bronx*, was published by IPOC Press. A second book, *(Building Homes/Building Community)* was published in June 2021 along with a third book *(Preventing the Next American Civil War, How Culture, Community and Democracy Frame Human Progress)*, available through Barnes & Noble. A fourth book, *Coming of Age in an Era of Political Apostasy*, is currently with a publisher but the Introduction and Chapters can be found on the blog page of my website ([www.communitycivics.com](http://www.communitycivics.com)), along with information about the other book publications.

**Rebecca Lurie:**

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Rebecca Lurie is currently on faculty with the Urban Studies Department and the founder of the Community and Worker Ownership Project at the City University of NY School for Labor and Urban Studies. She was a founding member of the worker-owned cooperative, New Deal Home Improvement Company and City Roots Contractors Guild. She began her working career as a union carpenter and transitioned into worker education through the union's apprenticeship program and the construction industry. Using a sector approach for understanding industries and businesses and their employment needs, she has remained dedicated to inclusive community economic development. Rebecca has collaborated on numerous initiatives in NYC, including pre-apprenticeship programs, a Bronx green jobs network, a kitchen business incubator and the design of Best for NYC. She was a founding member of the board of the Bronx Cooperative Development Initiative, is secretary of the board of the Democracy at Work Institute and serves on

the executive committee of the Union Coop Council/US Federation of Worker Coops. She is Trustee Emerita with the Brooklyn Society for Ethical Culture. She holds a Master's in Organizational Change Management from The New School, a certificate in Adult Occupational Education from CUNY and is certified in Permaculture Urban Design. She is a native New Yorker raised by a fervent activist with the DNA and tireless passion for social justice.

**Dr. Jacqueline Mondros**

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Dr. Jacqueline B. Mondros, D.S.W., is Professor and Dean Emeritus of the School of Social Welfare where she was also Assistant Vice President of Social Determinants of Health at Stony Brook University SUNY. She is past president of the National Deans and Directors of Social Work and co-director of the Leadership Academy for Deans and Directors of Social Work.

Dr. Mondros received her masters and doctorate from University of Pennsylvania. Her research interests are in the study of urban neighborhoods and she has written extensively on community social services, community development, and community organization. She is the recipient of numerous grant awards, most recently in the area of aging in place. The second edition of her co-authored text, *Organizing for Power and Empowerment: The Fight for Democracy*, an internationally recognized textbook in community organizing, will be published in December 2022.

Before entering academia, Dr. Mondros had a successful career in social work practice. She was director of clinical services at a school for girls and executive director of a settlement house in Philadelphia. She has won numerous awards including the NASW Top Leader award for New York City, and the Elizabeth Hurlock Beckman Award for Community Service. She has been appointed by three mayors to the New York City Age Friendly Commission and has served

since 2014. She has remained a dedicated community activist, working to bring the resources of academia to effect change in local communities throughout the country.

**Dr. Jessica Gordon Nembhard**

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Author of *Collective Courage: A History of African American Cooperative Economic Thought and Practice* (2014), and 2016 inductee into the U.S. Cooperative Hall of Fame, Jessica Gordon-Nembhard, Ph.D., is Professor of Community Justice and Social Economic Development, in the Department of Africana Studies, John Jay College, City University of NY. Dr. Gordon-Nembhard is a political economist specializing in cooperative economics, community economic development and community-based asset building, racial wealth inequality, solidarity economics, Black Political Economy, and community-based approaches to justice. She is co-editor with Ngina Chiteji of *Wealth Accumulation and Communities of Color* (University of Michigan Press 2006). She is a member of the Cooperative Economics Council of NCBA/CLUSA; the International Co-operative Alliance Committee on Co-operative Research; a Faculty Fellow and Mentor with the Institute for the Study of Employee Ownership and Profit Sharing at Rutgers University School of Management and Labor Relations; and an affiliate scholar with the Centre for the Study of Co-operatives (University of Saskatchewan, Canada). Gordon-Nembhard is also a past board member of the Association of Cooperative Educators; a past fellow with the Center on Race and Wealth at Howard University; and a member and past president of the National Economic Association. She is the proud mother of Stephen and Susan, and the grandmother of Stephon, Hugo, Ismaél and Gisèle Nembhard.

**Kenneth G. Wray**

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Ken Wray has been active in affordable housing for several decades. He started his career in one of New York's gar-

ment unions when labor was one the city's major developers of cooperative middle-income housing and served as the Executive Director of the United Housing Foundation, a consortium of unions and financial institutions, for ten years. In the early 1990's, he was one of the founding members of CATCH as we began our efforts to develop tenant-run mutual housing associations in distressed neighborhoods in Harlem, Washington Heights, Brooklyn and the South Bronx. More recently, he's served as a Vice-President at Westhab, Inc., directing housing and social services operations for low- and very low-income households in Westchester County, NY. In that time he acquired extensive experience serving the needs of at-risk populations especially those with unique needs, including Veterans and the mentally disabled. Ken received his BA from Columbia University and his MS from Columbia's Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation.

**Gregory Jost,**

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Gregory Jost is a Bronx-based organizer, educator and facilitator with expertise in the history of structural inequality and strategies for racial equity through community reinvestment and control. He is an Adjunct Professor of Sociology at Fordham University where he focuses on the Bronx's history with redlining and grassroots approaches to systemic issues. Gregory's work at Banana Kelly Community Improvement Association in the South Bronx keeps him grounded in current campaigns fighting back against the extractive economy, and fighting forward for community ownership and economic democracy. He has extensive experience in co-designing curricula, interactive exhibits, databases and popular education workshops. He is currently writing a book on the Bronx's battles against redlining while working to co-create the Bronx People's Federal Credit Union as a collaboration between the Bronx Financial Access Coalition and the Lower East Side People's Federal Credit Union.

## **Sheryll Durrant**

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Sheryll is an urban farmer, educator, and food justice advocate. She has been the Resident Garden Manager at Kelly Street Garden since 2016, and is also the Food and Agriculture Coordinator for the New York New Roots program, managed by the International Rescue Committee (IRC). Her work has included developing community-based urban agriculture projects, providing expertise and technical assistance for gardens within supportive housing developments, and she currently serves as Board President for Just Food. Sheryll has led workshops and spoken on issues related to urban agriculture and food justice for many key organizations and was part of the 2019-2020 HEAL School of Political Leadership cohort. As a former Design Trust fellow for the Farming Concrete project, she is now responsible for communications and outreach for the data collection platform that helps urban farmers and gardeners measure their impact. Prior to her work in urban agriculture, Sheryll spent over 20 years in corporate and institutional marketing.

## **Edward Garcia**

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Edward Garcia is a proud Bronx resident who has lived in the borough since he moved to New York City from the Dominican Republic as a teenager. As a Community Organizer for the Northwest Bronx Community and Clergy Coalition, Edward has worked to build tenant leadership and community power to fight against predatory landlords and address poor conditions in apartment buildings while building issue campaigns that create change at a broader scale. Edward began his work as a social justice activist while attending Walton High School where he called attention to the school's limited resources being spent on metal detectors and security, rather than college counselors, SAT preparation or student support. He became involved in the School Closure Campaign and joined Sistas and Brothas United, the youth organizing arm of NWBCCC. Edward started his

undergraduate experience at Lehman College and graduated from City College. Edward currently serves as the director community development for NWBCCC leading the Bronx Community Land Trust Program.

**Athena Bernkopf**

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Athena is a cross-pollinator tending to the intersecting roots of black and queer liberation, and land, housing, and healing justice. Raised in Bed-Stuy, their work as organizer and facilitator has taken them across New York City in roles such as cop watch and community safety trainer with Harlem Cop Watch, tenant rights and anti-displacement advocate at the Legal Aid Society, and core member of The Audre Lorde Project's 3rd Space Wellness Collective. Currently they serve as Project Director at the East Harlem/El Barrio Community Land Trust (EHEBCLT), where they work to build out infrastructure for community ownership and tenant-led governance of land and housing. Athena represents EHEBCLT on the coordinating committee of the New York City Community Land Initiative (NYCCLI). They are also a member of the New York City Network of Worker Cooperatives' (NYCNOWC) Training Collective, where they facilitate popular education-based learning spaces that deepen capacity for sustainable, consensus-focused coop structures. Driven by a vision of cityscapes abundant in ancient trees taller and more common than skyscrapers, they are committed to co-creating urban futures whose foundations are rooted in mutual care, collective stewardship of resources, and being in right relationship with land.

## **Deyanira Del Río**

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Deyanira (she/her) is the co-director of New Economy Project, a citywide organization that works with community groups to build a just economy rooted in racial and neighborhood equity, cooperation, and ecological sustainability. Deyanira has worked for 25 years to promote cooperative and community-controlled finance, immigrants' economic rights, and equitable neighborhood development in New York City. At New Economy Project, she has worked with coalitions to fight systemic wealth extraction and inequality in our financial system and economy, and to promote community land trusts, public banking, and neighborhood-led development. She also co-designed the organization's foreclosure prevention, DACA, and new economy loan funds. Deyanira is a board member and former chair of the Lower East Side People's Federal Credit Union, a citywide financial cooperative serving historically redlined communities, and previously worked at Inclusiv (fka National Federation of Community Development Credit Unions), among other roles.

## **Emmanuel Pardilla**

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Emmanuel is a communist, vegan, writer and the son of black poor-working class Dominican immigrants that found their way to the US after enduring years of dictatorship in the Dominican Republic. He is a volunteer tenant organizer with a grassroots mass organization known as the South Bronx Tenants Movement where he organizes Black & Brown tenants in his neighborhood of Mott Haven. Being involved in a range organizing fights throughout the years has shaped and molded his worldview and commitment to social change. He graduated with his Master in Labor studies from the CUNY School of Labor and Urban Studies. And in his free time, you'll find him either riding his bike around or out of the city, or chilling at the Uptown Veg juice bar drinking a random natural juice with a lot of ginger.

## **Ali Issa**

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Ali Issa - General Coordinator of the Cooperative Economics Alliance of NYC. For over a decade, Ali Issa has taken part in a variety of fights for social justice and has worked to connect the dots across issues. He previously worked with War Resisters League, organizing against police militarization and helping build cross-community coalitions in cities around the country, in addition to building solidarity with movements in Iraq and across the Middle East. He has also worked with the Urban Justice Center's Street Vendor Project, organizing alongside vendors fighting for their rights in all five boroughs. Most recently, Ali worked with New Economy Project as lead organizer with the Public Bank NYC coalition, pushing to make public money work for the public good. Originally from Iowa, Ali holds a Master's degree in Arabic Studies from the University of Texas at Austin and is the author of the book *Against All Odds: Voices of Popular Struggle in Iraq*. Ali is a committed fan of improvised music and lives in Sunset Park, Brooklyn.

## **John Krinsky**

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John Krinsky is a professor of political science at the City College of New York and the CUNY Graduate Center. He is the director of the Community Change Studies program at City College. Krinsky holds a doctorate in sociology and a master's degree in urban planning. He studies urban politics, social movements, work, welfare, and housing, and is a founding board member of the New York City Community Land Initiative (NYCCLI). He is the author of *Free Labor: Workfare and the Contested Language of Neoliberalism* (2008) and, with Maud Simonet, *Who Cleans the Park? Public Work and Urban Governance in New York City* (2017), as well as a co-editor (with Colin Barker, Laurence Cox, and Alf Gunvald Nilsen) of *Marxism and Social Movements* (2013). He has also published numerous articles on movements, public work, and housing in New York City.

## **CHALLENGE/CLOSING THOUGHTS:**

At the height of the Great Depression, cooperatives were viewed as an alternative to the excesses and exploitative practices of capitalism, as well as the centralized, totalitarian control experienced in communist systems. Below are two quotes from cooperative pioneers in this country – one from James Peter Warbasse and the other from our own Meyer Parodneck. Warbasse provided us with a definition of cooperatives that exemplifies how this form of political economy provides a genuine alternative. Meyer Parodneck's quote provides us with a warning and a guide for the challenges we will have to overcome to be successful, based upon his decades long experience of running the Consumer-Farmer Cooperative, Inc. He speaks from his experience about why the milk cooperative succeeded as a business but failed as a cooperative enterprise.

### **James Peter Warbasse:**

*A co-operative society is a voluntary association in which people organize democratically to supply their needs through mutual action, and for which the motive for production and distribution is service, not profit. In the Cooperative Movement the ultimate tendency is towards the creation of a social structure capable of supplanting both the profit-making industry and the compulsory political state.*

### **Meyer Parodneck:**

*The more successful you are in a venture like this, the less important you become. How do you work yourself out of a job? You lose all significance. You become a big business. And I find that the basic weakness of cooperatives in a capitalistic system is that you work against yourself. The more powerful you become, the less you are mindful of those most in need. This is because you have property and bottom lines to protect. Once protecting these become paramount, you lose sight of your mission and abandon the soul of your organization. As my good friend Martin Young was fond of saying, "you cannot have socialism on one block." The same goes for cooperative democracy. We have the ideals. We have the talent. We have experience to draw upon. What we need is exposure, education, accountability and collaboration.*

**For additional resources you can visit-**

<https://map.gocoopnyc.org/>

<https://www.uhab.org/>

<https://bqilt.org/>

<https://www.justfood.org/>

<https://nycworker.coop/home/>

<https://www.solar1.org/>

<https://inclusiv.org/>

<https://nyccli.org/>

[https://slu.cuny.edu/urban-studies/  
graduate-programs/advanced-certificate-  
cwop/](https://slu.cuny.edu/urban-studies/graduate-programs/advanced-certificate-cwop/)



# **NOTES**

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