I cannot remember when I was unaware of how badly restaurant workers were paid, but I could never see what I might do about changing the system. Now the possibility for reform has increased significantly by the rise of a restaurant workers justice movement and the publication of two new books. Now diners can know how to support workers in raising the minimum wage from its present $2.13, and other reforms.

Dick

Contents
Saru Jayaraman, *Behind the Kitchen Door*

Sen: Review of Book
Restaurant Opportunities Center (ROC)
Moyers & Co. PBS Program
Simon: 10 Reasons to Care
UUSC Support

Sen and Mamdouh, *The Accidental American*, on ROC
Going Behind the Kitchen Door to Inspire A Different Kind of Foodie

by Rinku Sen

Monday, February 11 2013, 9:31 AM ESTTags: books, Food Justice, restaurant workers
On Wednesday, Saru Jayaraman’s book *Behind the Kitchen Door* drops, and this is going to be a piece of shameless friend promotion. The book will be released that night at Busboys and Poets in Washington, D.C., a beautiful space where so many activist authors have met their fans, and you can buy it here or at any book venue. Jayaraman is such an amazing organizer that she appears in both of my books, indeed is the number two in *The Accidental American*, the story of the Restaurant Opportunities Center of New York (ROC-N.Y.) before it spawned a nationwide organization ROC United.

Writing from the perspective of a restaurant diner, in *Behind the Kitchen Door*, Jayaraman translates the great research ROC United has done, including the largest ever survey of restaurant workers nationwide. She tells the often-heartbreaking stories of workers who give everything they have to their workplaces, only to encounter wage theft, untreated on-the-job injuries, and rigid racial and gender hierarchies that prevent them from advancing within the largest private sector industry in our country.

We meet Daniel, a Latino runner at Del Posto, a four-star restaurant in New York City, who was told repeatedly that he could not be a server because he didn’t “communicate well,” even as he watched white European men with incomprehensible accents get the best jobs in the house. We meet Alicia, a pastry chef who chronicled being called “little girl” by one chef, and a long record of unaddressed sexual harassment by another. We read about Woong and Nikki, who worked with swine flu and conjunctivitis, respectively, because their wages were too low for them to take time off without paid sick days.

Most importantly, Jayaraman’s book brings together two ends of an industry — diners who want to eat ethically, and workers who want to be able to feed their own families. She explains some basic things, like why tipping is critical to workers whose federal minimum wage is only $2.13 per hour, how it happens that prep cooks, servers and runners are forced to go to work sick, and the mechanisms by which racial and gender discrimination is allowed to run rampant. You can watch her explain some of these issues during an appearance on CNN last week.

Jayaraman’s goal is to redefine the “foodie” identity, making it include as much concern about the people who put your food on the table as it does about whether the food was locally sourced or organically grown. In his foreword, Eric Schlosser, author of *Fast Food Nation*, writes, “The abuses endured by American farmworkers, meatpacking workers and restaurant employees violates even the most watered-down definition of ‘sustainability.’ Our food system now treats millions of workers like disposable commodities… When people ask what are the most important changes that we could make to our food system right away, I reply: Enforce the nation’s labor laws and increase the minimum wage.”

This week, ROC United will be asking Congress to make the most basic change, to raise the federal
minimum wage for tipped workers, which has been stuck at its current rate for some 22 years as a result of relentless lobbying by the National Restaurant Association. Please buy the book this week, on Valentine’s Day if you can, to help these workers leap into the public consciousness as they carry out actions in Washington this week.

The book’s website includes an invitation to join the Welcome Table, ROC United’s new effort to organize diners as successfully as it has workers. In addition to joining, you can download the national Diners’ Guide that will help you determine the best places to eat from a labor standpoint and what to do if you eat elsewhere and don’t like what you see. You can also watch beautiful profiles of workers created by Louverture Films, the company that is also developing a fictionalized film version of The Accidental American. Jayaraman is starting a 13-city book tour that includes Detroit, Los Angeles and Chicago. Before you eat in another restaurant, you want to read this book and join this movement. If you love food, and if you love people, help to ensure the sustainability of both by reading and sharing Behind the Kitchen Door.
Saru Jayaraman is the author of the new book *Behind the Kitchen Door*.

WEB ONLY// FEATURES » FEBRUARY 9, 2013

**The Woman Who’s Changing the Definition of ‘Foodie’**

ROC’s Saru Jayaraman is doing for ethical eating what Michael Pollan did for slow food.

**BY MICHELLE CHEN**

ROC [Restaurant Opportunities Center—Dick] has gained media attention by targeting high-profile establishments with their workplace justice campaigns; they recently waged a successful workplace justice campaign against celebrity chef Mario Batali’s Italian restaurant Del Posto.

As one of the largest low-wage sectors in the country, restaurant work is more than a tough gig—it’s an industrial pressure cooker. Even at the toniest restaurant, the typical server or cook’s shift may be exhausting, thankless, exploitative, unhealthy (many have to work when sick) or even coercive (when the boss threatens to call immigration authorities if they complain about unpaid wages).

The **restaurant industry rests on a base wage that starves workers**. Unlike other workplaces, restaurants can pay tipped workers such as servers as little as $2.13 an hour on the assumption that they will earn something comparable to the regular federal minimum wage of 7.25 through tips. The system has gender and racial biases built into it, as many women and workers of color are disproportionately relegated to precarious tip work, like server jobs. Poverty wages and limited opportunities for promotion keep them mired in the industry’s lowest tiers. Meanwhile the federal tipped minimum wage has been flat, without even inflation adjustment, for over two decades.

For over a decade, the Restaurant Opportunities Center has been developing a new recipe for labor mobilization that infuses grassroots worker empowerment with policy advocacy, adds a dash of media-savvy marketing, and—to generate enduring consciousness in a high-turnover industry—stirs in street-level
direct action and a global economic justice vision.

In a recent interview with In These Times, ROC’s co-founder Saru Jayaraman (now Director of the Food Labor Research Center at University of California, Berkeley) reflected on her experience organizing in a sector that has long remained marginal to the American labor movement. Her recently released book, Behind the Kitchen Door, encapsulates ROC’s journey from a hardscrabble worker center in Lower Manhattan to a national network of activists taking on a massively profitable industry.

Jayaraman, who built the organization from the ground up with a group of displaced workers from the Twin Towers after 9/11, starts her outreach small—with the diner who pauses between bites to think about who prepared her meal and how.

“Ten years ago, before we started ROC, before 9/11, I ate out a lot and never thought about the people who touched my food,” says Jayaraman. “After ten years of meeting literally thousands of workers in this industry, my own dining experience has changed—and we, as an organization, would like to let consumers know that once they get to know the stories and data of what’s happening really behind the kitchen door, it will change their dining experience too.”

Unlike other low-wage sectors, like factory or farm work, restaurant labor is uniquely situated for a consumer-driven reform. Not only is servers’ work in the public spotlight, but customers interact far more with their server even than in other service professions like retail sales. In our increasingly atomized popular culture, the sumptuous meal remains that rare gut experience linking all of us to our primal sensual core. From the dazzle of five-star ambiance to the warm memories of your favorite pancake joint—we cultivate a deep appreciation of our meals, even if we fail to appreciate those who feed us.

To bridge the consumer and labor components of food activism, ROC has partnered with foodie initiatives such as the Slow Food movement—an international lifestyle campaign centered on naturalistic and globally conscious gastronomy—in an effort to improve the food and agricultural system holistically. Taking a page from popular books aimed at bringing food wisdom to everyday life, like Michael Pollan’s Omnivore’s Dilemma, ROC has realized that merging the messages of fair food and good food requires “popular mass education on these issues.” To raise consumer awareness, Jayaraman said, “we looked at what made people care about organic and local in the first place, and it was books and films that very recently drove millions of people who didn’t know about those issues, either.”

Though not all natural-foods connoisseurs consider the implications of their epicurean choices for farm workers or restaurant staffers, many of the leading voices in the foodie universe have been incorporating a labor analysis into their political commentaries. Food writer Barry Estabrook, for example, brought the plight of Florida’s exploited tomato harvesters to the pages of Gourmet magazine in 2009, exposing middle-class readers to the labor groups trying to raise migrant workers’ wages in a deeply inequitable farm production chain.

For restaurant workers, ROC has gained media attention by targeting high-profile establishments with their workplace justice campaigns; they recently waged a successful workplace justice campaign against celebrity chef Mario Batali’s Italian restaurant Del Posto.

Workers come to ROC with complaints about a wide range of restaurants, from small eateries to elite white-tablecloth restaurant chains. But given ROC’s limited advocacy resources, the group selects its targets carefully. “We could choose to go after small mom-and-pop restaurants, or we could choose to go against restaurants who set standards,” she said. So they focus their workplace justice campaigns on larger, influential establishments, “to encourage them to set the right standards.”
To that end, ROC partners strategically with what they call “high road” restaurants, which are run by responsible employers who make a point out of paying their staff decently and ensuring high standards in their workplaces. This may involve a waltz of compromise and political pressure on brand-conscious high-end restauranteurs, culminating in a public agreement on workplace standards. In a sector that is less than 1 percent unionized, the payoff of winning over a boss in a restaurant where workers are not organized can make a substantial difference.

Meanwhile, ROC aims to make the high road a good value proposition by steering consumers to invest in workplace justice when they eat out. In cities where diners are showing their values through their spending habits—be it ostentatiously sipping biodynamic wines or swilling Pabst Blue Ribbon—ROC is figuring out ways to corner the market for conscious consumerism that elevates labor ethics to the level of food sourcing ethics.

Last year, ROC published (as a mobile app and booklet) a Diner’s Guide, sort of a Zagat’s for labor oriented foodies, identifying restaurants that score high on criteria like offering paid sick days or good promotion opportunities for staff.

Alongside efforts to challenge unscrupulous employers and encourage decent ones to aim higher, ROC is trying to change the industry culture and public perceptions of the workforce. The industry’s profit structure is entwined with the dangerous misconception that restaurant work is by nature precarious and temporary, not to be taken seriously by bosses, consumers or even workers themselves. “The industry likes to say these are workers who move on to something else so it doesn’t really matter how they’re treated,” Jayaraman said, “but the truth is that restaurant workers move from restaurant to restaurant, but they stay within the industry because a lot of them take great pride in being restaurant workers, and they enjoy the work.”

One of the reasons ROC doesn’t try to do the work of a conventional union—by organizing one shop at a time—is that veteran restaurant workers move from job to job, often because they have no choice. Jayaraman explains that membership in ROC is portable, so retaining members “hasn’t been an issue for us, primarily because contrary to what most people understand, people do stay in this industry often for their whole lifetime.”

One of ROC’s most ambitious ventures setting a good example by essentially becoming the industry. The organization has opened two worker-run restaurants, called Colors, in New York City and Detroit, which operate as full-fledged businesses catering to gourmet tastes and embodying the concept that a good place to eat can be a good place to work.

The bustle in the kitchen at Colors seems far afield from, say, a picket line outside a crooked employer’s bistro. But the labor-led enterprise perfectly complements ROC’s vision of workplace justice: “What we’re trying to do in general is create collective prosperity in the restaurant [industry], for workers, employers, and consumers,” Jayaraman said. “So in opening Colors, we are working towards building a community-owned restaurant; one that can be shared by workers, employers, and consumers; one that promotes the model of joint investment in an industry that’s better for everybody.”

**ABOUT THIS AUTHOR**

**Michelle Chen** is a contributing editor at *In These Times*, a contributor to Working In These Times, and an editor at *CultureStrike*. She is also a co-producer of *Asia Pacific Forum* on Pacifica's WBAI. Her work has appeared on Alternet, Colorlines.com, Ms., and The Nation, Newsday, and her old zine, *cain*. Follow her on Twitter at @meeshellchen or reach her at michellechen [at] inthesetimes [dot] com.
Saru Jayaraman on Justice for Restaurant Workers
February 22, 2013
Activist Saru Jayaraman marches with restaurant workers struggling to make ends meet, and talks about how we can best support their right to a fair wage.
Activist and author Saru Jayaraman marches on Washington with restaurant workers struggling to make ends meet, and talks about how we can best support their right to a fair wage. Jayaraman is the co-founder and co-director of the Restaurant Opportunities Centers United, which works to improve pay and working conditions for America’s 10 million-plus restaurant workers. She is also the author of Behind the Kitchen Door, a new exposé of the restaurant industry.

“It’s an incredible irony that the people who put food on our tables use food stamps at twice the rate of the rest of the U.S. workforce — meaning that the people who put food on our tables can’t afford to put food on their own family’s tables,” says Jayaraman. “They don’t use food stamps because they want to; they use food stamps because their wages are so low and they face higher levels of food insecurity than other workers... they can’t afford to eat.”

Extra: Watch Jayaraman explain what average Americans can do to support restaurant waiters and kitchen staff.

Interview Producer: Lauren Feeney. Editor: Rob Kuhns. Associate Producer: Reniqua Allen.

More about Saru Jayaraman
Top 10 Reasons to Care About Food Workers

With the release of Saru Jayaraman's new book, *Behind the Kitchen Door*, I've been writing about the powerful influence of the National Restaurant Association, for example, in lobbying against paid sick days for workers. Sadly, most of my colleagues in public health and the good food movement don’t pay enough attention to the many injustices workers face every day. So here is my attempt to help correct that situation.

1. **Millions of Your Fellow Humans.** Maybe this number alone will convince you: 20 million workers toil every day -- often under inhumane conditions -- harvesting fields, killing and cutting up animals, packing boxes, driving trucks, cooking meals, ringing up orders, serving tables, and cleaning up your mess.

2. **Worker Conditions Tied to Food Safety.** Research has shown a connection between worker conditions and food safety. For example, speeding up lines in slaughterhouses puts food at higher risk for contamination, and endangers worker safety. Also, workers who experience labor violations in restaurants are more likely to be forced to perform duties that might harm consumers. So better treatment of workers in the fields, in meat packing plants, and in other settings means safer food for everyone.

3. **Sick Workers Mean Sick Customers.** As I wrote about before, the health of restaurant workers is especially tied to food safety. Obviously it’s not a good thing for restaurant workers to be sneezing all over your meals. That’s why we need to support paid sick days for all workers.

4. **Workers Risk Lifelong Injuries.** While many food-related jobs are backbreaking work, meatpacking plants are especially notorious for being extremely dangerous places to work. If you care about how animals are treated on factory farms, you should also care about the workers suffering along with them.

5. **Farm Workers Exposed to Pesticides.** While most foodies are concerned about their own exposure to pesticides and other harmful chemicals used in agriculture, remember those most at risk are the farm workers who have to spray the crops and work in the fields. In other words, it’s not enough to just buy organic, we need policies that protect workers, too.

6. **Food Workers Living in Poverty.** According to this must-read report from the Food Chain Workers Alliance, "The Hands that Feed Us," “more than 86 percent of workers reported earning sub-minimum, poverty, and low wages.” If you only care about how this effects you, consider that nearly 28 percent of food system...
employees are on Medicaid, more than a third use the emergency room for primary care, and especially tragic is how food system workers use food stamps at 1.5 times the rate of others U.S. workers. In other words, the low standard of living suffered by most food workers effects us all through higher insurance costs and taxpayer programs. This is a fancy way of saying we are all subsidizing an industry that pays its workers slave wages.

7. Wage Theft. While I obviously live a privileged life, I like to consider myself fairly knowledgeable about the plight of those less fortunate. However, "wage theft" is a term I am ashamed to admit I only heard of fairly recently, in relation to farm workers and others working in the food system. (Of course, it can apply to any work sector.) It means exactly what it says: that employers simply fail to pay what their workers rightfully earned. It’s commonplace with immigrant workers who often have no recourse to complain.

8. Race and Gender Discrimination. Also applicable to the workplace in general, but in her book, Jayaraman paints an especially dire situation in restaurants, where women and workers of color are often not promoted to higher-paying positions. The Darden Group, which owns such chains as Olive Garden and Red Lobster has been hit with a class action for discriminating against workers in its Capital Grille outlets, along with wage theft and other labor law violations.

9. Healthy Food Is More Than Nutrition. One of the most troubling short-comings among many of my public health colleagues is to only see "healthy food" in terms of fiber grams and vitamins. This is far too narrow a lens for many reasons, including the moral obligation to also care about how the food was grown, raised, harvested, prepared, and served. This is why I cannot blindly support partnerships such as this one between Let's Move and United Fresh (the trade association for fresh produce) to promote fruits and vegetables to children. We have to also ask how such a group treats its workers.

10. A Sustainable Food System Must Include Workers. Hopefully this is obvious by now, but we cannot talk about sustainability without including the workers, who are on the front lines of all the problems that food policy wonks complain about. Every public health, environmental, and animal welfare problem that has been written about for decades intersects with the plight of food workers. We need them to help inform our analysis and to help forge solutions. Also, as good food advocates, we have a moral obligation to help ensure they can live sustainable lives. We are in this fight together.

This Blogger's Books from

Appetite for Profit: How the food industry undermines our health and how to fight back
by Michele Simon
Justice Is Choosing Compassionate Consumption

Sunday, February 24, 2013
4:00-5:00 p.m. (EST)

» Register for this event
» Join the Get-Together (4-5 p.m. on 2/24/13)

Join UUSC for a compelling conversation with Saru Jayaraman, author of Behind the Kitchen Door. Here's what Danny Glover — actor, producer, and cofounder of Louverture Films — has said about the book:

"With Behind the Kitchen Door, Saru Jayaraman has introduced a fresh and essential perspective on our culture's food obsessions and dining habits. By highlighting the lives and circumstances of workers who are often unseen and unheard, she has helped us see that labor is a key ingredient of authentic sustainability, and greatly enriched our understanding of those people who have — whether we have recognized it or not — been part of some of the most important celebrations of our lives."

Behind the Kitchen Door is not just a book — it is a unique opportunity to change the national conversation about how to
create a truly sustainable food system. Consumer demand changed the restaurant industry by asking for sustainable, locally sourced, and organic (SLO) options. Together, we can now shift restaurant practices from the bottom up by requesting respect for workers' rights in every dining establishment — putting the "W" in SLOW.

**UUSC’s Get-Together includes a live interview and interactive discussion with the author.**

Get ready to take part with these simple steps:

1. **Register for the Get-Together.**
2. Invite others in your congregation and community.
3. Purchase the book and add it to your book group's reading list.
4. **Let us know you bought the book.**
5. Plan a potluck gathering.
6. Join us on February 24 to talk about worker justice and ethical eating.

**Purchase your copy of Behind the Kitchen Door through the UUSC bookshelf at Powell's** — where every book purchase generates a donation supporting UUSC's human rights work!

**Date:**

Sunday, February 24, 2013

**Resource format:**

Webinar
The Accidental American vividly illustrates the challenges and contradictions of U. S. immigration policy, and argues that, just as there is a free flow of capital in the world economy, there should be a free flow of labor. Author Rinku Sen alternates chapters telling the story of one "accidental American"--coauthor Fekkak Mamdouh, a Morrocan-born waiter at a restaurant in the World Trade Center whose life was thrown into turmoil on 9/11--with a thorough critique of current immigration policy. Sen and Mamdouh describe how members of the largely immigrant food industry workforce managed to overcome divisions in the aftermath of 9/11 and form the Restaurant Opportunities Center of New York (ROC-NY) to fight for jobs and more equitable treatment. This extraordinary story serves to illuminate the racial, cultural, and economic conflicts embedded in the current immigration debate and helps frame the argument for a more humane immigration and global labor system.
RINKU SEN
RINKU SEN IS PRESIDENT AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE APPLIED RESEARCH CENTER (ARC) AND THE PUBLISHER OF COLORLINES MAGAZINE. SHE IS THE AUTHOR OF STIR IT UP: LESSONS IN COMMUNITY ORGANIZING AND ADVOCACY.

FEKKAK MAMDOUH
FEKKAK MAMDOUH IS COFOUNDER OF THE RESTAURANT OPPORTUNITIES CENTER (ROC) OF NEW YORK AND CODIRECTOR OF THE RESTAURANTS OPPORTUNITIES CENTER UNITED, THE COUNTRY'S FIRST NATIONAL RESTAURANT WORKER ORGANIZATION.

SILVER MEDAL, 2009 NAUTILUS BOOK AWARD, MAY 2009
FINALIST, FOREWORD MAGAZINE 2008 BOOK OF THE YEAR AWARD, MAY 2009
BRONZE MEDAL, 2009 IPPY BOOK AWARDS IN "CURRENT EVENTS," MAY 2009

"WINDOWS ON THE WORLD" WAS THE NAME OF THE WORLD TRADE CENTER RESTAURANT THAT WAS DESTROYED ON 9/11, AND IN THE ACCIDENTAL AMERICAN, IT PROVIDES A WINDOW WITH A STRIKING VIEW. SEN AND MAMDOUH SHOW HOW, IN A FEW WEEKS IN 2001, THE RESTAURANT'S IMMIGRANT WORKERS WENT FROM BEING VICTIMS OF TERRORISM TO BEING TARGETS OF AMERICAN ANTI-IMMIGRANT
FERVOR. THERE’S A BRIGHT SIDE, THOUGH, BECAUSE THIS BOOK VIVIDLY HIGHLIGHTS A SELDOM-MENTIONED SIDE OF RECENT IMMIGRANTS’ EXPERIENCE: THEIR WILLINGNESS TO STRUGGLE FOR BETTER WORKING CONDITIONS FOR WORKERS OF ALL ETHNICITIES IN THEIR ADOPTED NATION."
—BARBARA EHRENREICH, AUTHOR OF NICKEL AND DIMED, BAIT AND SWITCH, AND DANCING IN THE STREETS

"SEN AND MAMDOUH HAVE WRITTEN A WONDERFULLY ILLUMINATING BOOK. BY FOCUSING ON THE CONCRETE EXPERIENCES OF PARTICULAR PEOPLE CAUGHT UP IN THE WHIRLWIND OF CHANGES ASSOCIATED WITH IMMIGRATION, THEY SHOW US AN OVERLOOKED ASPECT OF THE GLOBAL CHANGES THAT HAVE SET CONTEMPORARY IMMIGRATION IN MOTION. AND BECAUSE THEY ALSO SHOW US THE RESILIENT EFFORTS OF THESE ORDINARY PEOPLE TO ACT TOGETHER TO CONTROL THE FORCES THAT ARE SHAPING ALL OUR LIVES, THEY TELL A STORY THAT IS ESSENTIALLY HOPEFUL AND, INDEED, THE ONLY STORY THAT IN THE END MATTERS."
—FRANCES FOX PIVEN, DISTINGUISHED PROFESSOR, THE GRADUATE CENTER, CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK AND AUTHOR OF CHALLENGING AUTHORITY: HOW ORDINARY PEOPLE CHANGE AMERICA

"THROUGH THE EYES OF A MUSLIM WORLD TRADE CENTER RESTAURANT WORKER, SEN AND MAMDOUH TELL THE DRAMATIC STORY OF IMMIGRANTS STRUGGLING TO ORGANIZE IN THE HARDENED CLIMATE AFTER SEPTEMBER 11TH. WITH PRECISION AND INSIGHT, THEY REVEAL WHY THE CURRENT DEBATES OVER IMMIGRATION TO THE GLOBAL NORTH ARE LARGELY WRONG-HEADED AND ARGUE WE MUST EMBRACE OUR NATION’S CULTURAL DIVERSITY AND OUR GLOBALIZED FUTURE."
—JEFF CHANG, AUTHOR OF CAN’T STOP WON’T STOP: A HISTORY OF THE HIP-HOP GENERATION AND EDITOR OF TOTAL CHAOS: THE ART AND AESTHETICS OF HIP-HOP

"RINKU SEN HAS BRILLIANTLY DEPICTED THE NEW STAGE IN AMERICA’S IMMIGRANT SAGA. SHE EXPLORES THE SHADOWY CORNERS OF OUR MODERN GLOBAL ECONOMY, THE COURAGEOUS BATTLE FOR SURVIVAL OF LOW-WAGE MIGRANT LABORERS AND THE FURIOUS RISE OF ANTI-IMMIGRANT FEELING HERE AND IN EUROPE. BY ORGANIZING TO IMPROVE THEIR WORKING CONDITIONS, SHE REMINDS US, THOSE IMMIGRANTS ARE CHANGING OUR NATION FOR THE BETTER."
—JUAN GONZALEZ, NEW YORK DAILY NEWS COLUMNIST, AUTHOR OF HARVEST OF EMPIRE: A HISTORY OF LATINOS IN AMERICA AND COHOST OF DEMOCRACY NOW

"IF YOU HAVE EVER HAD TO STRUGGLE AS AN OUTSIDER OR A NEWCOMER (AND ALL OF US HAVE), THIS BOOK WILL TOUCH YOUR HEART. IT IS A POIGNANT STORY THAT POINTS THE WAY FORWARD FOR US ALL." - VEN JONES, PRESIDENT AND FOUNDER OF GREEN FOR ALL

"YOU CAN READ PILES OF STULTIFYING POSITION PAPERS ON IMMIGRATION AND GLOBALIZATION OR YOU CAN READ RINKU SEN’S STORY OF FEKKAK MAMDOUH. I RECOMMEND THE LATTER. YES, IT’S A MUCH MORE COMPPELLING TALE, BUT IT WILL ALSO GET YOU MUCH CLOSER TO THE HEART OF THE BOTH THE CHALLENGES WE FACE AND THEIR SOLUTIONS."
—JARED BERNSTEIN, SENIOR ECONOMIST, ECONOMIC POLICY INSTITUTE AND AUTHOR OF CRUNCH: WHY DO I FEEL SO SQUEEZED?

"CULTURAL EXCHANGES BETWEEN PEOPLE FROM DIFFERENT PARTS OF THE WORLD HAVE HEAVILY INFLUENCED MY MUSICAL COMPOSITIONS. RINKU SEN HAS WRITTEN A BOOK THAT SEeks TO PROMOTE IMMIGRATION POLICIES THAT ENSURE THAT OUR CULTURES CAN CONTINUE TO FLOURISH BY MIXING WITH EACH OTHER WITHOUT THE FEAR OF ECONOMIC EXPLOITATION."
—EDDIE PALMIERI, NINE TIME GRAMMY AWARD WINNER

—MICHAEL OMI, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR, ETHNIC STUDIES DEPARTMENT, UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY

"THE ACCIDENTAL AMERICAN IS A CRITICAL, NECESSARY WORK, EXPLORING ONE OF THE MOST CHALLENGING HUMAN REALITIES OF OUR TIME. THE BOOK ENGAGES THE IMMIGRATION DIALOGUE BY TELLING A STORY WHICH IS BOTH COMPPELLING AND INSTRUCTIVE. THE NARRATIVE OF FEKKAK MAMDOUH’S JOURNEY IS INTERWOVEN WITH INSIGHTFUL ANALYSIS AND RELEVANT HISTORY TO CREATE POLITICAL, ECONOMIC, SOCIAL, INTELLECTUAL AND EVEN EMOTIONAL SPACE, TAKING THE
CONVERSATION AWAY FROM THE NO-WIN PARAMETERS OF "EITHER/OR." THIS BOOK IS A MUST FOR ANYONE INTERESTED IN JUSTICE TODAY.

–KATHY ENGEL, ADJUNCT PROFESSOR, GALLATIN SCHOOL OF INDIVIDUALIZED STUDY/NEW YORK UNIVERSITY COMMUNICATIONS OF AUTHOR OF "RUTH'S SKIRTS" AND COEDITOR OF WE BEGIN HERE: POEMS FOR PALESTINE AND LEBANON

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Dick Bennett
My blog:
War Department/Peace Department
http://jamesrichardbennett.blogspot.com/
Newsletters
http://www.omnicenter.org/newsletter-archive/
Index:
http://www.omnicenter.org/omni-newsletter-general-index/
National/International Days
See Newsletters
Peace, Justice, Ecology Birthdays
See INMOtion
jbennet@uark.edu
(479) 442-4600
2582 Jimmie Ave.
Fayetteville, AR 72703