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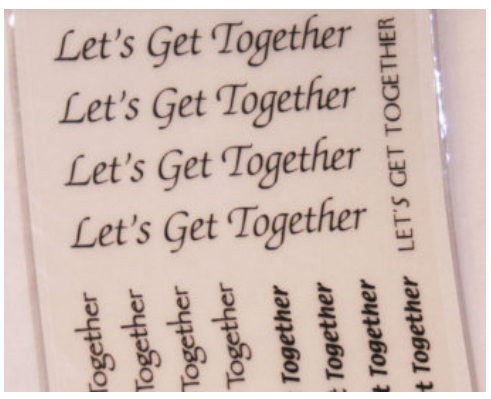
THE DOUBLESPEAK OF LET'S GET TOGETHER

by Marnie Webster

I began researching part time faculty working conditions in 2010, the year I had abuse shouted at me by a peer at a local university who confused himself for the boss of me.

He'd tricked me into a casual get together with him, inviting me for coffee by email, the subject of which was: Let's Get Together, a false message at best. When I arrived at his office at the appointed time, he began accusing me of something I hadn't done. When it got to the point where he told me the person accusing me had an excellent reputation, implying that I hadn't and so wasn't to be believed, I realized this was no coffee chat. Of course, I felt confused, as I so often feel from the way so-called grown up people behave, so I tried to tell him that he was listening to one of his mentees, and that he might try to get to know me a bit better before making assumptions about my character based on hearsay. He didn't like this, and he ended up yelling at the top of his lungs.



When he did this, I pictured my huge, dearly departed alcoholic husband yelling right in my face about my liberal politics and calling me a hippie puke, neck veins bulging, face red as a fire truck, and I thought, "You don't scare me, buddy, I've got you beat. I've been yelled at by an enormous, raging alcoholic."

But George was an old-fashioned man's man, a gentle giant whose bark was far, far worse than his bite. Not that he wouldn't use physical means to defend himself or, especially, others. Because of his upbringing and his personal ethics formed by years of protecting those weaker than he, the idea that a man would hit a woman was foreign to my husband. Yelling, yes. Hitting, never. But I didn't know this about my abuser of the moment. I collected myself, and calmly told him he needn't worry, that nothing of the sort would ever happen again. I said this because I knew right then and there that after the semester, I would refuse to work with a department and people who foster such abusive practices.

Even though I'd been mistreated and didn't deserve the severity of my aggressor's manipulations, I knew neither the chair nor anyone else would care that this man had harassed me this way. The man who'd tricked me with his passive-aggressive email was a favorite in the department. He'd had a bad attitude about me for years, and I could tell that he believed his chance had come to instigate trouble for me. I knew I'd get no help because whenever I'd spoken to other part time faculty about the atmosphere of wanton backstabbing and abuse in the department, they'd change the subject or simply sigh. Meanwhile, the chair pretended to ignore the negativity, for doing so allowed others to do most of the dirty work for him. He knew exactly what was happening—the lying, the spying, the backstabbing—he just didn't always know all the details. In politics, we call this plausible deniability. In life's day-to-day happenings, it is a rotten way to treat fellow human beings.

I was clear I'd been bullied, but I wasn't clear as to what I could do about it other than run and tell my mom. It occurred to me that there was something much deeper fueling the rage behind my aggressor's assault. The tension in the department reflected the atmosphere on the campus, and I realized this was not the same atmosphere of investigation, deep thought, and learning I'd come to know in college in the late 70s. I wondered what had happened to education. What happened that causes seemingly reasonable, highly educated people to behave like starved dogs fighting over a bone? The benefit I gained from being bullied was to focus my energy on finding out.

One thing I discovered quite quickly is that adjunct faculty are a symptom of a far-reaching epidemic: privatization models set up to casualize the work force. In other words, sacrificing hard fought labor rights for corporate profit by creating a flexible, at-will workforce.

Privatization is now "an idea whose time has come.... The knowledge, communication, and computer industry can make political representatives obsolete."

- Willard R. Garvey
National Center for Privatization
1985 Letter to Ronald Reagan

But my view after only a little more than two month's worth of researching privatization is that we will really get nowhere unless we concert efforts on all levels of education – K12 through PhD institutions. I didn't come to the idea of joining efforts right away. It took another few weeks to realize that the voices I was seeking were not being highlighted. In fact, just the opposite, they were often being ignored, muted or suppressed. But that was half a decade ago, and today more and more people are aware that terms like Student Success and accountability are doublespeak meant to fool us into submission.

From this point of view, it makes no sense, for example, for contingent faculty to waste time and energy arguing against tenure. It's

see "Together..." **PG. 8** »

CPFA & UPTE Go to NAWD in Sacramento

by Margaret Hanzimanolis

On February 25th, in support of National Adjunct Walkout Day (NAWD), CPFA, along with its University Professionals & Technical Employees, Local 9119 (UPTE) partners, sponsored an event in solidarity with a diverse coalition of activists. Instead of walking out of class, a group of 45 Part-time Faculty and students from around the state gathered to visit legislators in Sacramento to talk about California Community Colleges' dependence on Part-time Faculty. They found legislators sympathetic to the challenges that long commutes, uncertain and inadequate income, and weak or missing job security and seniority language in contracts bring to this majority instructional workforce, and how a failure to address these challenges has created a pattern of "bad practices" in all too many of the 72 Districts in the California Community College System.

Part-time Faculty and students shared personal stories and perspectives with eight legislators or legislative staff members about the vital place of this instructional workforce who remain low-paid and largely unintegrated. They explained how the working conditions of the Part-time instructional workforce affects the delivery of quality education in the California Community College System and explicated why better job security mechanisms, mandated office hour pay for Part-time Faculty, and fair and equitable pay structures for all faculty are sorely needed. They stressed that these steps to the full integration of Part-time Faculty should be mandated by statute or budget appropriation language, tied expressly to an agreed upon, statewide parity figure.

The CC system has strong ties sprouting from the K12 system as well as lateral ties to adult education, and provides indispensable, cost-effective preparation to those transferring upwards. The education provided by community colleges lies at the heart of an educational system expressly dedicated to upskill, upgrade, and innovate. For that reason, lapses in fairness—inadequate provisions for health care, inadequate retirement and sick leave, scarce professional development funding, and for many Part-time Faculty, no office hour pay—and other obstacles to effective team-building between Part-time faculty and other faculty across the state system produce effects that cascade upward into the other tiers of the tertiary higher educational system.

The rally in Sacramento aimed at letting politicians and the public alike know that faculty can be treated well and paid fairly and still provide a cost-effective, quality education to students. The legislators and the Governor were contacted in order to create the public and governmental will to restore and expand categorical funding in California, widely believed to be the most effective lever for re-integrating and re-professionalizing the over 38,000 Part-time Faculty who are largely shut out of local community college governance, innovation pathways, and livable wages.

The Governor has mistakenly maintained that local districts know best how to apportion funding internally, but with Part-time faculty in the community college system earning on average of less than $39,000 across multiple districts (because Part-time faculty are limited by statute to .67% of a full-time load), and lacking an effective voice in local governance, the evidence makes clear why enhanced categorical funding and strong compliance language is the best route for strengthening the delivery of educational success for students in this era of rapid change and high demand for higher education.

The California CC system is tasked with the successful training and education of up to 2 million young and returning adults. Relying on a poverty-stricken Part-time Faculty majority is not the way to achieve improvement toward student success goals. It is a widely held, but erroneous view that Part-time faculty are hobby teachers or professionals giving back to their community. Despite the existence of this kind of adjunct in some small fields and at some historical period, overall, nothing could be farther from the truth. The more common profile of the Part-time faculty is a single mother, an aging Ph.D holder who never got a full time job, a career teacher trying to patch a living together in multiple districts, and now, in 2015, the most common profile of Part-time faculty is an increasingly well informed and determined activist.

IN THIS ISSUE

Let's Not Study the Problem; Let's Solve It

by Jack Longmate

Non-tenured faculty members are often invited to take part in efforts to collect data about their working conditions. SEIU's "Office Hours" project, for example, promises that information collected "will be aggregated and used to support national and state policy initiatives."

While research is important – California Rep. George Miller was surprised to learn about the dismal working conditions of our nation's adjuncts – information alone does not cause change. If it did, the problem of smoking would have ceased with the information that it is linked to cancer.

And if the principle of equality is not accepted politically or as a structural feature of the workplace, then no amount of research is going to affect the lives of the near three-quarters of the workers whose treatment does not meet any reasonable standard of equality.

What would a higher education workplace with equality look like? An example is Vancouver Community College in British Columbia. Some of its essential features as contained in the Collective Agreement are as follows:

a. Equal Pay: all faculty, whether full-time or part-time, whether permanent or probationary, are paid according to the same 11-step salary scale. At most U.S. colleges, part-timers are paid at a significantly discounted pay rate.

b. Equal Work: The work profile of full-time faculty is proportionally adjusted for part-time faculty. That is, part-time faculty are not hired to "just teach" as they are in the U.S., but are assigned the same duties and expectations as full-time faculty. If a full-time instructor is expected to hold 5 office hours per week, a part-timer working 60 percent of full-time would be expected to hold 3 office hours per week.

c. Job Security: after completing a probationary period, all faculty, including part-time faculty who teach at 50 percent of full-time for two years, are "regularized," which is the functional equivalent of tenure in job security, academic freedom, and other faculty rights. Along the way to being regularized, after any six-month period of work, probationary faculty must be offered further work by right of first refusal.

d. Seniority: All faculty accrue seniority, and seniority is the primary, though not the lone, determinant of workload. Probationary faculty (called "term") accrue seniority on a pro-rated basis; those teaching at 50 percent of full-time get 50 percent of the seniority. For regularized faculty, however, seniority accrual is at the full-time rate whether one is full-time or part-time. This provision protects the seniority ranking of all faculty since one's seniority ranking cannot be overtaken only because someone else has taught more classes.

What's stopping us from replicating the Vancouver Model?

Many American models have focused on re-establishing tenure—this "tenure or nothing" approach which leaves 3 out of 4 faculty without equitable pay or job security. Other American models continue to focus on studying the problem—enough said. Others, understandably frustrated by the inertia, are turning to unionization of contingent-only units. Time will tell if these morph into something like the Vancouver model, but crucial is the Vancouver Model's automatic transition from part-time contingent status and full-time regular status.

The Vancouver Model did not come about by conducting surveys but through (1) "Principled Militancy," which is how Frank Cosco described the VCCFA's use of every tool possible: strike votes, grievances, strikes, and organizational solidarity; and (2) true principles of unionism, like equality for all members, which has meant building up the working conditions of the weakest members, who are contingent.

In practical terms, how could this model of building up the working conditions of the weakest members become incorporated in U.S. institutions? First, it is important to recognize that the current state of affairs took decades to evolve, and immediate reform is not likely. Second, while a lack of funding is part of the problem, it is only a part. Third, since the strike is generally banned in public sector higher ed unions in the U.S., it is not usually available as an option.

To address the question of how to bring about change, Frank Cosco of the Vancouver Community College Faculty Association (VCCFA) and I have developed a guide or chart to help change agents called the Program for Change, essentially how the Vancouver Community College model could be adopted in the U.S. It is posted online on the VCCFA's newsite page.

The Program for Change has over thirty goals, which are classified according to whether they involve costs (e.g., as fully pro-rated pay would) or no cost/nominal one-time costs—the majority are no-cost goals. Recognizing the difficulty of implementing even innocuous goals, each is set against a suggested timeline, which is intended to be adapted by local activists who best understand their local conditions.

One goal is a common hiring procedure for permanent and temporary faculty, as exists at VCC. At institutions where none exists, the first phase would be to formalize one in each department. A second phase would be to combine all to refine a campus-wide procedure. Hiring all faculty according to the same criteria would allay fears that contingents are inferior, as would a common faculty evaluation procedure.

Another goal is improved union democracy and union solidarity, especially for units with part-time and full-time memberships. Those units cannot blame the forces lined up against them.

While some tenured faculty might see the Vancouver Model as threatening, tenured faculty would benefit by being part of a single-tier workforce where all faculty can pull for across-the-board initiatives. Improving contingent faculty working conditions does not have to mean that tenured are forgotten or harmed. In Vancouver, this faculty solidarity has been manifest by several successful strikes over the years. By contrast, in the U.S., our bifurcated two-tier faculty workforce makes it hard to imagine full-time faculty taking the risks involved in a strike to improve the working conditions of part-time faculty.

We academics commonly feel that if only policy makers understood contingency, they would step in to solve the problem. But it is one thing to support contingents and quite another to effect a solution. The Program for Change is a solution. The Vancouver Model provides an answer.

Since 1992, Jack Longmate has taught composition at Olympic College in Bremerton, WA, where he has served two terms as a union officer. He is former chair of TESOL's Employment Issues Committee and its Caucus on Part-time Employment Concerns, and is active with the Washington Part-time Faculty Association. With Frank Cosco of Vancouver Community College, he co-authored the Program for Change, a strategic plan to move the two-tiered U.S. higher education to the egalitarian Vancouver Model.

ACCJC's Significant Unlawful Practices Need to Be Stopped

By Colette Marie McLaughlin, PhD

While few would dispute the value of assessing public institutions to ensure they are proving the quality of service for which they are funded, it also is reasonable to expect evaluators to provide a legitimate process focused on the public's best interests. Superior Court Judge Karnow's recent preliminary rulings on a lawsuit filed by the San Francisco City Attorney's Office indicate this has not been happening.

This suit against the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC) was filed to overturn ACCJC's decision to terminate accreditation for City College of San Francisco (CCSF). Judge Karnow concluded that the ACCJC engaged in significant unlawful practices such as under-representation of academics on evaluation teams; inadequate attention to conflicts of interest; violation of federal regulations for due process in the accreditation decision; and failure to comply with common law by improperly notifying CCSF of accreditation termination.

ACCJC's use of Lumina Foundation funding and connections to Community College League of California's Retiree Health Benefits Program Joint Powers Agency (JPA) trust reveal that ACCJC has more than a few corporate sponsors who stand to benefit from ACCJC's sanctioning colleges that prioritize serving all students, respecting faculty, and providing an authentic education acted in arbitrary and punitive ways towards CCSF and gives credence to ACCJC's opponents' allegations that ACCJC is acting to privatize (transfer publically run functions to private enterprise) community colleges.

K-12 schools have endured the horrors of corporations driving decisions that enable them to profit from privatization. Privatizers counter this opposition by showcasing exceptional charter and voucher-funded for-profit schools. However, privatizers do not mention that they are comparing apples to oranges. These schools are often exempt from regulations public schools must follow, are free to exclude costly students, may require parents to donate time and/or money to support programs, will pass the costs of denying workers livable wages and benefits to public agencies, are such showcased private schools are able to fire teachers who challenge inappropriate educational practices or misleading test results, and exclude students who would lower their test scores. Thus, claims that privatization increases efficiencies and lowers public costs relies on comparing real apples to plastic oranges. These manufactured benefits of privatization created by corporations who profit from lies were exposed by Arizona's extensive analysis of the actual costs of privatizing prisons. Further, privatization's reliance upon standardized out-of-the box curriculum and emphasis on test scores is counter to the vast majority of research on characteristics of high quality education. A focus upon the bottom line results in students bearing the greatest costs with higher tuitions, increased class sizes, loss of non-profitable offerings that provide specialized knowledge, standardized and/or reduced services, stressed out educators working at multiple colleges in order to earn livable wages with no benefits who will be fired if they challenge the implementation of questionable practices just to increase test scores.

To have the public demand legislators create an effective accreditation system to replace what the ACCJC has made into a sham by exposing the harm being done to students is needed. Your stories can help. Hope to see you at the CPFA conference to add your voice.

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Pomp and Last Minute Circumstance: Hiring Practices at Community Colleges

by Dennis Selder

The bustle of activity that occurs upon the announcement of a new full-time job offering at a community college is a singular experience on campus. It begins with the public announcement posted on the community college's jobs list and postings—depending on the discipline—in the announcements for new hires with the requisite professional organizations—the MLA, APA, AAA, and so on.

The news spreads through whispered conversations among part-timers, who immediately start to wonder who they can ask to write their letters of recommendation, what full-timers might go to bat for them, and what they might be able to say about their own special qualifications for the job. Part-timers size each other up and try to determine who the department favorites are—who has been able to do things for the department (for free) without losing too much dignity.

Among the full-timers, a hiring committee is formed, and members are told that they will have to go through hundreds of job applications in a short period of time. Any spare time they might have had will be consumed with choosing a true colleague.

Then there are the actual interviews. There is the first interview which usually includes a teaching demonstration, followed—if one is lucky enough to make it—by a second and third round. Finally, the president gets a go at the ultimate decision. At each point, there is more gossip and discussion as part-timers keep track of who made it to the next round. Making it a round or two helps establish cachet among part-timers as well—one must be really good to have made it two rounds. As a part-timer, it feels a bit like a speech tournament, except at stake is a job that will more than double the winner's income, provide the luxury to focus one's career on teaching, and make retirement possible.

But these exercises in hiring, now representing about one percent of the employees at a community college, are so infrequent and unpredictable that the bustle of activity mainly functions as a public relations tool for the college. As one academic senate president confided to me, "It's like winning the lottery." Hiring trends in higher education, are, as everyone knows, sharply tilting toward part-time, contingent labor. The rare full-time hires give colleges the unusual opportunity to inspire a largely cowed and dispirited workforce with hope and to resist activism—speaking up about working conditions may further erode one's paper-thin margins of getting a job. At the same time, it reassures the public that good-old academia—the kind where a cantankerous misanthrope who under a thorny exterior still really cares about students— still exists.

The public relations gambit of a full hire is evident when one looks at the data. According to the U.S. Department of Education, the number of full-time hires and tenure-track positions has been in steady decline since the seventies (see graphic below).

...."We are looking for a good fit for the department." This kind of language shows the hiring of full-timers more closely models game theory or an episode of Survivor.

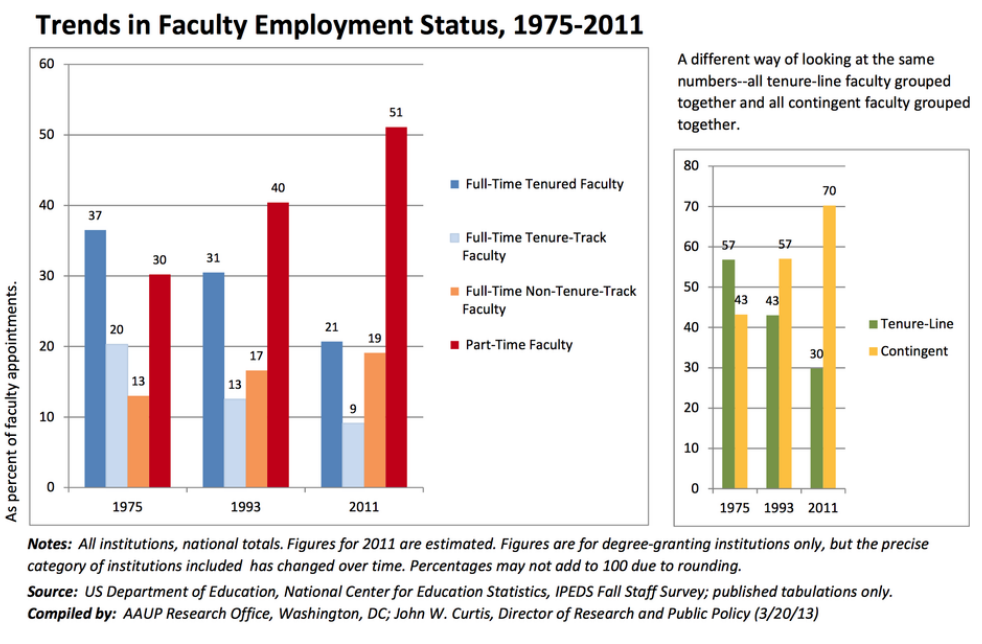
But even these numbers don't tell the whole story. At my college, for example, there are roughly eight hundred part-timers and slightly over two hundred full-timers. The president announced this year that she had decided to allow for eight new full-time positions given the dangers and financial obligations associated with a full-time hire. Her prudence means one percent of the part-timers will get a full-time position. But even that is optimistic because some hires will not even be currently working at the college.

This low rate of full-time hires has a number of effects, and all of them are bad. One of the worst is the effect it has is how hiring relates to one's qualifications. If we take my own department as an example, at last count there were ninety-three part-time instructors who could potentially vie for the one job being offered this year. Of this group, the large majority has experience in the classroom, good rapport with students, and plenty of personal gifts to offer. So the end result is that qualifications really don't matter because there is an overabundance of them. Almost all of them would make a fine full-time hire. This then shifts the debate to other factors, mainly political ones. The way full-timers put it is, "We are looking for a good fit for the department." This kind of language shows the hiring of full-timers more closely models game theory or an episode of Survivor. The "positionality" of a given candidate exceeds any qualifications or merit that individual may have. For instance, given the few chances a department has to hire new people, a young teacher is far more appealing than an older one because the department as a whole already looks so aged.

Then there is the further use of part-timers for work without compensation. Working for free has a place in our lives. If one is "paying one's dues," so to speak, as a newbie member of an organization, being generous with one's time makes sense. But when the chance of actually becoming a full-fledged member in an institution is dubious at best, to ask for free labor moves from reciprocity to exploitation. Contingent faculty contracts at community colleges stipulate grades must be submitted, but offers no compensation for grading, classes must be prepared, but offers no compensation for class prep. Some colleges are starting to offer compensation for office hours. In this context, what is the advice for how to get a job from the full timers? In addition to everything you are already doing, you should do things for the department: Serve on committees, organize events, and help the full-timers manage their administrative responsibilities. Working for free, which once felt like a respectable activity, now has come to feel like stitching ermine and Russian fox into the fancy evening coats of administrators.

The other major impact the low full-time hiring rate has on college professors is to undermine their sense of competence and self-worth. The continued failure to secure a full-time job among the majority of part-timers is creating a generation of "wounded teachers," people who feel that they are something of a joke even as they are in front of their students, that were they better qualified, harder working, more charismatic they wouldn't find themselves in the position they are in. As a group, they undervalue themselves and their contributions to the college and students.

The PR bonanza that is the full-time hire with its public spectacle and pomp can usefully be contrasted with the last minute circumstance that is the part-time hire. Hiring in the part-time arena is muted and resists public scrutiny. My last part-time assignment at a different college from where I teach now came about when a department chair decided two weeks into a term that she was unhappy with one of her part-timers. An email was sent out at the current college where I work. I spoke to the chair over the phone, and a couple days later I was in the classroom teaching someone else's class. I didn't meet the chair in person for two weeks after that. I was never introduced to anyone in the department other than the person who helped me get my keys, a student worker. My one interaction with a full-timer occurred when a professor decided that her student with a cold would be safer taking a makeup test in the adjunct workspace than her office. And I believe I was the one who made the introduction. And so it goes, part-timers, with their naturally high turnover rate, and casual hiring circumstances, appear more from nowhere with the same surprise one gets on seeing mushrooms come up in the lawn after a rain. They come they go. Sometimes you learn their names.



Notes: *All institutions, national totals. Figures for 2011 are estimated. Figures are for degree-granting institutions only, but the precise category of institutions included has changed over time. Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.*

Source: *US Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, IPEDS Fall Staff Survey; published tabulations only.*

Compiled by: *AAUP Research Office, Washington, DC; John W. Curtis, Director of Research and Public Policy (3/20/13)*

Unions Need to Step Up for Equality

by Keith Hoeller

Last fall an adjunct professor, who wishes to remain anonymous, created a Facebook page titled "National Adjunct Walkout Day" and posted the following: "On February 25, 2015, adjuncts across the country will come together to insist on fair wages and better working conditions."

Since 2000, various faculty and union groups have participated in Campus Equity Week to increase awareness of the inequities faced by contingent faculty members. But this call for a walkout is a different strategy that has attracted interest across the country—and rightly so, because though the approach may be new, the problem is not.

In the 1970s, colleges and universities, mimicking corporate America, embarked on a policy whereby students would be taught by a huge cadre of faculty members teaching off the more lucrative and secure tenure track, largely earning low pay, few or no benefits, and no job security. These contingent faculty members now account for about 75 percent of the professoriate, surpassing one million in number.

This separate-but-unequal labor system, where the minority of tenured faculty members rule over the majority of contingents, is mirrored in academic unions, which have been chiefly run by and for the tenured faculty. Union contracts generally treat the tenured faculty members like full academic citizens, while the contingents are denied equal treatment at every turn.

These unions often violate a fundamental labor principle by failing to exclude management from the bargaining unit so as to avoid conflicts of interest and the impulse to form a "company union," despite the fact that, in 1980, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in NLRB v. Yeshiva University that tenure-track faculty members at private institutions are managers.

Some states still allow (and some require) mixed units: tenured professors in the same bargaining unit with the adjuncts they often hire, supervise, evaluate, assign classes to, and rehire (or not). While there is a presumption that the faculty recommends and administrators decide, tenured professors make personnel decisions about adjuncts. Workload assignment is a management function, yet many tenured faculty members may voluntarily elect to teach overtime (course overloads) for additional income, depriving their nontenured colleagues of work, which is a further example of the conflict of interest between tenured and nontenured faculty.

In any case, collective bargaining in its present form will not "solve" the adjunct problem, because it is simply not enough to increase adjunct salaries by a modest amount while ignoring increases in tenure-track pay. The goal must be to reduce and ultimately eliminate the overall disparity, and this the unions have been unwilling to do.

Washington State is a good example of the problem. From 1996 to 2009, the state allocated about $40-million to community and technical colleges to improve adjunct salaries in two-year colleges and reduce the disparity between tenured and nontenured faculty members. Yet the actual dollar disparity is higher now than it was in 1995, with adjuncts now earning only about 60 percent of what their tenured or tenure-track counterparts get for teaching a full-time load.

This has come about because over the years local union chapters have bargained for raises for all of the full-timers but not for most of the part-timers, and they bargained for turnover money (the savings when a senior faculty member is replaced by a more junior member) to be used for future full-time salaries but not for part-time pay. Meanwhile, legislatures gave equal percentage-based cost-of-living raises to both groups, which resulted in much more money to full-timers.

"It is possible that tenured professors, realizing that their numbers and power are dwindling, will eventually see that it is in their best interests to join contingent faculty members, fight to professionalize the working conditions of their colleagues, and abolish the two-track system."

It is possible that tenured professors, realizing that their numbers and power are dwindling, will eventually see that it is in their best interests to join contingent faculty members, fight to professionalize the working conditions of their colleagues, and abolish the two-track system. But in the meantime, organizations like the American Association of University Professors, the American Federation of Teachers, and the National Education Association must come out in favor of truly equal pay, benefits, and job security.

No national union, including the Service Employees International Union, which is organizing adjuncts in the private sector, has done so. This represents a profound failure of political vision, a capitulation to the corporate model, and a denial of "the duty of fair representation" required of all unions in return for being granted the right to serve as the exclusive bargaining agents for all the faculty. There can be no genuine solidarity wherever a separate but unequal two-tier wage system exists.

If adjuncts have any hope of substantial gains, they must have the goal of equality. They may have to turn to legislators and state and federal agencies to insist on equal treatment. The Accreditation Group of the U.S. Education Department has thus far ignored repeated complaints of violations of academic freedom and standards, so adjuncts may have to appeal to Congress to see that the agency fulfills its mission.

If union models do not fundamentally change, contingents will have to create independent organizations to advocate for equality, which means a single salary schedule, a single raise scale, and a single set of procedures for job security and grievances. It is my hope that National Adjunct Walkout Day signals a significant step in that direction.

Note: This article originally appeared in the Chronicle of Higher Education February 20, 2015, p. A28

Report from the Chair: IMHO

by John Martin

Last October, word got out that a lecturer from a California State University had called for a National Adjunct Walkout Day (NAWD), asking every contingent faculty member across the country to walk out of his or her classroom on February 25th. I first saw this proposal on CPFA's El Chorro listserv on October 9th. Though supportive of the concept, the initial response from most Part-timers was skeptical. A walkout led by "adjuncts" seemed bizarre, futile, and to some, a little too radical. Then a Southern California faculty activist challenged members of El Chorro's list-serve and others to do something, anything, in support of this call for a walkout.

CPFA did do something that caught everyone's imagination. Based on an idea by El Chorro member, Beth Clary, and encouraged by others still on the sidelines, CPFA began to organize a rally in Sacramento, and word of our efforts filtered out on social media and multiple list-serves. Many wrote to ask: "Is this for real?", and when I responded "Yes!"; they often replied with enthusiasm; "I'm coming!" The call for NAWD captured attention statewide, not just Part-time faculty, but full-time faculty leaders and a few administrators too. (There was a reported webinar to discuss how campus security forces should deal with NAWD.) Ultimately, on February 25th, the official day for NAWD, CPFA and UPTE held a gathering of contingent faculty on the steps of the Capitol, a contingent partially comprised of part-time faculty who came to Sacramento for the first time in their lives. We decreed our efforts to organize, mobilize, and educate successful in more ways than one.

Hearing about NAWD, I remembered a movie, A Day Without a Mexican (2004), which, while not great cinema, was an attempt to educate Californians about what would happened if all Mexicans in the state vanished or simply left the state. A Day Without a Mexican illustrates the likely horrors such a day would wreak on California's political and economic institutions, horrors which would perhaps ripple across the country. I could just imagine what would happen if this scenario occurred—the complete absence of adjuncts in any of California's community college classrooms. What if this disenfranchised group decided not to show up for the first day of the semester or decided not to show up during Finals Week because they were "sick?" Is such a complete walk out possible? I have my doubts about its feasibility now, but perhaps it could happen in the future when enough exploited academic laborers get angry and organized.

Think about it though. If an actual, full-blown walkout occurred, school administrators—with their "talking points" in hand—would scramble and attempt to explain to the media what was happening, quite probably describing all Part-time Faculty a bunch of uppity whiners, or a group of malcontents. Full-time faculty might well say, in ways benevolent and patronizing, "Oh they shouldn't do this, their students will suffer," or "you might lose your teaching assignments for the next term, and therefore, we won't condone any such actions."

Seeing the absence of most of their faculty from school that day, perhaps the students, and the public at large, would recognize academia's poorly kept secret: that the majority of the instruction across all levels of higher education is provided by contingent, that is, Part-time Faculty. Knowing this, students might then feel empowered to attend their school's next Board of Trustees' meeting or seek out their legislators to demand that contingent faculty not be treated as Walmart employees. The more brash among the students just might find him or herself asking the board or the legislature to explain how such a system was not simultaneously exploitive of students—charging them full fees even when students are not taught by full professors—and a blatant form of educational malpractice.

Regardless of what happened on NAWD this year, the larger issue is that this day represents something that could be the start of something bigger than originally imagined. We organized a "lobby day" comprised exclusively of Part-time Faculty. Our next Day-of-Action will also be organized by Part-time Faculty who will set the agenda

and write their own "talking points" about passing much needed legislation that would lessen the precariousness of our lives. This first step was necessary, and having seen our power and solidarity, Part-time Faculty will no longer be content to look to other statewide education-unions or other institutions to represent us on their lobby days. To be sure, those entities have an important role to play as they focus on specific and broader concerns affecting higher education and those who labor in its trenches, but many times, part-time issues are not their highest priority when lobbying legislators.

The call for NAWD started last October with a dare. We plan to build on its impetus next year. See everyone next February!

Membership is Everyone's Responsibility

by Dennis Selder

Many of us Part-timers think of getting fair representation for our interests as a kind of privilege, but in fact it's a responsibility. The reason for this is our students—the conditions under which we teach affect them, and so not sticking up for ourselves hurts not just ourselves but our students as well. Some examples to consider:

<u>One-on-one Instruction</u>

A lot of our students are at risk academically, but there is credible research showing that a close relationship with an instructor, especially in the first year, can be crucial for their continued involvement in higher ed. The 67% rule forces us to teach multiple jobs, undermining our ability to form relationships with our students.

<u>Office Space</u>

Many of us don't have adequate office space. This makes it hard for students to find us. It also complicates grading and class preparation. Lack of office space also makes us feel dislocated and excluded from our work environments and campus culture.

<u>Adequate Pay</u>

Not making enough money puts us all under stress that we wouldn't otherwise experience. This stress can affect our students since we need to be there for them, but that becomes harder in proportion to the stress we are under.

I know you are all aware of these problems with the current situation adjuncts find themselves in, but by not seeking fair representation, we're only allowing these conditions to persist. CPFA ONLY represents the interests of part-timers in the State of California. Join us and meet our obligations as teachers and citizens.

INTERVIEW: Joe Berry & Helena Worthen

by CPFA Free Press

Helena Worthen and Joe Berry have been married and advocating for social justice together since the 1980s. We couldn't resist asking about this amazing relationship.

What is your first memory of your spouse?

JOE BERRY: We met at a community college union council meeting. Mostly, I remember a grey suit and a Dorothy Hamill haircut. She was the only person in the room wearing a suit. It was intimidating. She looked pretty good though. She had already put together a group, which impressed me. I wasn't looking for a relationship. We were just allies. We were also only two of maybe four part timers in the room, so we had a common bond.

HELENA WORTHEN: It was 1989. Joe was the union staff at San Mateo Community College. I was working at a bunch of places: Contra Costa Community College, University of San Francisco, Dominican College (I had just left there), and Laney, and possibly a few others, like Sonoma State.

I got "descheduled" at Contra Costa, made a huge fuss, forced the department to hold a hearing on whether it followed its own policies – and lost. A union existed there at that time, but it did not want part timers involved. Someone put me in touch with Joe Berry, who understood the problem. At Laney that same year, a full-timer "ate" my best class, and I complained to the union, which invited me to come to meetings and eventually hired me to do some organizing. Very different culture. But even there, full-timers were nervous about what would happen if part-timers actually got involved and became a majority.

In the midst of this, I got sent to a statewide meeting and met Joe. We convened a Northern California part-time committee. We planned meetings, conferences, and a newsletter. I volunteered to do the newsletter, which turned out to be great fun and put me in touch with activists all over the state. Joe volunteered for a job that looked boring but turned out to be a razor's edge: distributing the newsletter. In order to distribute something to people, you have to find them, right? And then you have to talk to them and see if they got what you distributed. And pretty soon they're organized.

What's it like working together on your common interest in social justice?

HW: The amount of communication required to be married to someone you are also working with is enormous. It means that you have to coordinate not only how you're doing on that article or that deadline, but also about what's for dinner tonight and who is going to babysit the grandchildren.

What's hard about working together?

JB: You have to be explicit about different styles: what can you assume about each other? You have to negotiate differences. Our living space overlaps with work space, so anything can turn into work at any time. It's easy to burn out and allow the work you do to impact badly on the relationship. More generally, though, I don't like being treated like we're the same person.

HW: So, for example, it's best to arrange separate slots when we go and speak somewhere. We try to produce our work together, but present it separately. We're at our best when we're not acting as an impersonation of the other person.

What have you been working on lately?

JB: We are working together, along with John Hess, a long-time leader of lecturers in the CSU system, on a history of the lecturers' struggle in the CSU system that hopes to answer the question, "How did they get the best contract for contingent faculty in the U.S.?" We also did a teaching strategy forum at City College of San Francisco with the Labor and Community Studies Department there and the United Association for Labor Education (UALE) January 31 that had twenty-plus presenters. Seventy people showed up. Everyone got ten minutes to present – it was speed-dating for teachers curriculum. We write technical columns for the Steward Update that goes out to thousands of unions in the US and Canada. I also do the news aggregator, COCAL UPDATES, that goes out weekly to over a thousand contingent activists and allies.

HW: I'm doing a survey of the status of Labor Education programs in the U.S. and Canada for the United Association for Labor Education. I also am doing some speaking about my book, What Did You Learn at Work Today? Forbidden Lessons of Labor Education, which just won the Best Book of 2014 prize from UALE.

What keeps you going?

HW: It's fun. I love meeting the people who are all over the place in the labor movement. It's a vast network of good people.

JB: There's also gratification in having our knowledge sought.

So, how did you become interested in advocacy?

JB: There's a difference between why you start and why you keep on. I was lucky my father taught in public schools. Both my parents were teachers, and labor issues were dinner table discussions. I got a union attitude from this. Then came the civil rights movement when I was exposed to radicals, communists, and Marxists. As a student, I started working with SDS, Students for a Democratic Society, and became an organizer. The 1969 Tinker v Des Moines Board of Education black armband case, which came partly out of my high school and was my friends and me in 1965, taught me that "neither teachers nor students leave civil rights at the schoolhouse gate." And I still think the same way. The movement saved my life. The movement gave me a different way to look at the world and different values based on how one can contribute to common struggle.

HW: What saved me was the women's movement, which exploded in California in the 1960s. Remember the poems of Susan Griffin? I came to California in a red pickup truck with my boyfriend, basically traumatized by a back-street abortion pre-Roe vs. Wade that nearly killed me. I didn't have a coherent world view, like Joe. I lived in the Fillmore and danced on the beach. Luckily, I didn't do drugs. I started reading more women's work. I read Griffin's Unremembered Country, got a Stegner fellowship at Stanford, published novels, and started teaching part time at different Bay Area schools. It was the inequities of the work at my own workplaces that took me to the union. Like they say, the boss is the best organizer.

How One Adjunct Walked Away from an Abusive Relationship and Broke His Rusty Cage?

by Bradley L. Rettele

How do you let go of a dream? How do you walk away from an abusive relationship that you were once so optimistic about? Is the failure of this relationship my fault? Maybe I deserve what I got.

These questions were often near the forefront of my mind for the last five years, or so, of the eleven that I spent working as an adjunct instructor. At the end of each semester, I would ponder what had become a hopeless path to nowhere. Why can't I be accepted as an equal? Why can't I get a full-time job?

After eleven years of adjuncting, I still loved my work, my classes, my students (well most of them), and I still had a passion for my subject. I enjoyed mentoring students, and helping them reach their academic goals. My classes were always some of the first to fill at every one of the four colleges I worked. I retained more than ninety percent of the students who enrolled in my classes. More than twenty percent of the students that took one of my classes took another with me. Every semester a number of students would tell me they decided to major in anthropology (my subject) after taking my classes. Some of those students who moved on to universities became friends. And I even officiated at a few former students' weddings, in one case at the wedding of a couple who met in one of my classes. A character in a published novel written by a former student was based on me.

I was a team player. I never had a conflict with any of my "colleagues," nor any of the support staff in these colleges. My deans and department chairs all were willing to write very positive letters of recommendation for me. I helped my "colleagues" in whatever ways they asked. I did not complain. I attended departmental social events (and stayed sober), departmental meetings, clubs, etc. I was asked to fill three semesters of temporary full-time work. I had never taken a sick day. I was late to a class, once, in eleven years.

But I came to resent my situation because I knew that I was not being compensated fairly for my work. Like the majority of Part-time instructors, I did not have access to health care. I was not included in governance activities. My tenured "colleagues" stoked this resentment when they espoused positions and actions that supported the labor movement, the disenfranchised, the poor, the uninsured, and the downtrodden. They were critical of the privatization of education and neoliberal economic policies. They organized rallies, and wore t-shirts, and pasted bumper stickers that supported innumerable progressive causes. They boycotted Walmart.

Yet they did nothing about the fact that the majority of the faculty in their department could not afford to see a doctor or a dentist, or the fact that the majority of their "colleagues" worked for exploitation wages, putting together a meager living with multiple "part-time" teaching jobs. How could they not acknowledge that they held management positions in corporations that passed on the cost of the majority of their employees to governmental support services, like unemployment, food stamps, and Medicaid in exactly the same way that the corporations they were so vehemently opposed to did? How could they not recognize that the majority of their "colleagues" were living tenuous existences that were subject to the capriciousness of department chairs? How could they not recognize that they were tolerating and benefitting from changes to higher education that would ultimately undermine their own jobs and the integrity of higher education?

That was a lot of resentment. I found myself becoming exactly the kind the person who I swore I never would. A lowly, skulking, marginalized, adjunct, grateful for whatever scraps that were thrown to me.

So what did I have to lose? Poor pay, lack of job security, an impossibility of retirement. After eleven years, I decided to get out of this unhealthy relationship, a relationship to which I had given so much time, energy, expense, and dedication, and received so little in return. It was time to walk way, to ponder an unknown future, and this was the moment when things began to get better. Not better financially, but better psychologically and emotionally and in terms of my outlook on the world. It was not I who failed; it was them; it was their institutions and those who ran and benefitted from my exploitation who were to blame.

Walking away for good empowered me. I reconsidered my options and opportunities. I realized that I had developed a huge catalog of skill sets: writing and research, evaluating and synthesizing complex data, communication skills. I had learned how to negotiate multiple complex corporate systems. I had learned how to apply for grants and manage budgets. I had learned how to get a whole lot done with very little. Hell, I learned how to repair cars, photocopiers, and the self-esteem of my students. I had also developed some very thick skin. And I had learned to do all of this while working more than seventy hours a week, for less than minimum wage. Why not take that skill set, time, and energy and direct it somewhere else, anywhere else? And I didn't have anything to lose but my rusty cage.

So what I am doing now? I took the above skill set, along with my training as an anthropologist and filmmaker and started a non-profit corporation devoted to making documentaries that are politically and socially relevant, the kind of documentaries that people like ourselves enjoy and like to use in our classes. And perhaps most relevantly, in terms of this story, I now have the ability to tell the story of the tens of millions of adjunct faculty in the U.S. who are getting the same raw deal as I was. And I hope that one of these films that I am now making, Freeway Fliers, makes an impact and changes things for my real colleagues: the adjuncts, the "part-timers," the outsiders of higher education whose stories need to be told. Maybe we can get the attention of enough people, not just adjuncts and academics, to draw attention to our circumstances. And by we, I mean the adjunct faculty collectively. I need your continuing support in all senses of the word. I need your enthusiasm, contacts, and financial assistance. And we need to realize, we're not really adjuncts, we are the new faculty majority.

And you know what? I feel much better about everything. I'm happier. My wife's happier (and it should be noted, that this step could not of been made without the support of my partner,) and my kid's happier. I'm once again the person I was before I learned how academia works. I no longer fantasize about kicking those sanctimonious, self-righteous phonies right in the keister (or not nearly as often).

I think I've found a better way, for me at least.

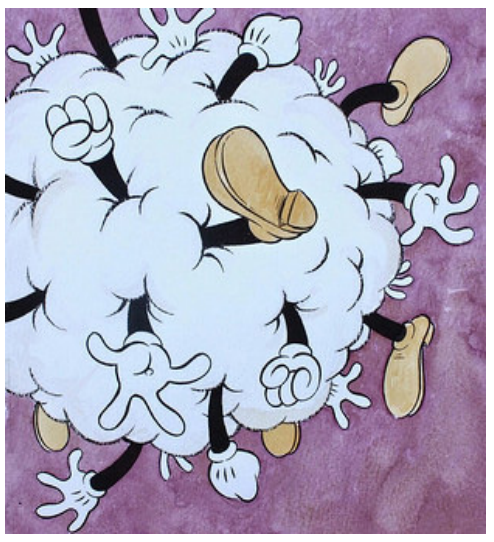
If you get the chance, check out the film: Freeway Fliers. And if you feel inspired, chip in. Together we make a difference. They need us, even though they treat us like they don't. You've got nothing to lose but your rusty cage.

Support the Freeway Flier Film ~ www.freewayfliers.com

Together . . .

» continued from **PG. 1**

already being done for us. And us doing so not only widens the two tier chasm between educators who should be focused on joining forces, it actually helps corporatizers achieve the goal of an all precarious, all the time workforce. When we think tenure, we should think union-busting. That's the way our oppressors view it. Regardless of how we feel about our unions, these are part of the bedrock of a democratic society that broadens access to our freedoms. Being anti-union undermines our desire to empower the silenced majority. Too, think about how much easier it is to be taken advantage of while we're at each others' throats.



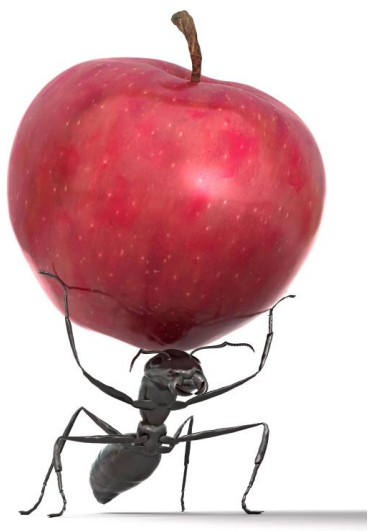
But we can choose not to see ourselves as enemies fighting for leftover bones. We can reject the black and white, us v them polarization model so in vogue today and consider alternate ways of working together. When you stop and think about it, it's going to take a whole lot of people to save education – and our democracy – from the ever-ravenous jaws of privatization.

Let's face it, for a long time now our general mood in lobbying and negotiating efforts has been defeatist and reactive: accepting contingency as a norm is in the back of our minds, and the structures of our organizations for change are not set up for the challenges brought by 40 years of austerity measures. But in order to approach these problems, we need to take a different approach, so instead of allowing ourselves to be swept into the national fervor for shutting down discourse, let's challenge ourselves to open discussion based on our differences. Isn't this what we teach our students?

In order to add the necessary force behind our efforts and amplify our calls for equity and genuine concern for students, we need to imagine more fluid leadership structures, ones that allow for much freer interplay between advocate and advocated for, and that can create multi-voiced, proactive planning. This cannot happen if we adhere to leadership styles that mimic corporate structures and focus on obsolete notions of speaking privilege. We who spend our lives teaching students about free speech are engaging in practices that silence one another. We shut down discussion in fits of emotion instead of seeing differences as opportunities for exploration. This irony doesn't have to exist if we commit ourselves to building bridges rather than constructing walls.

Way back in 1961, President Eisenhower warned us to stay alert and keep informed because he could see that greed + access to public funds not only creates economic disaster for the lower and middle class but undermines our democracy. We are on the verge of missing DDE's window of opportunity to maintain an alert, informed citizenry that can check the abuses of a privatization complex. Spreading the message that our lives are being legislated in favor of private interests needs to run deep, and this includes every person connected to education. Our advocacy has stalled at a crossroads for a very long time, and it's time to realize that we cannot reach any consequential sense of unity or solidarity without some painstaking self-examination that includes forward thinking solutions of inclusiveness. Ultimately, we must take responsibility for teaching ourselves how to create new models of working together in meaningful ways.

CPFA Annual Conference



"Which faculty group bears the greatest weight of higher education?"

Saturday, April 11th 2015
De Anza College
Cupertino, CA

- Chancellor's Office Data Mart: Effectively researching the institutions we work for
- Social Media 101
- "I'm too busy to be involved": The role of fear in disciplining subjects in corporate and educational settings
- What's up with AB 1010?
- Making friends, networking, and collective action in context / Membership
- Do activists develop transferable skills?
- "The Theorizing of Organizing Part-time Faculty"

Register early:

online at cpfa.org

or send your check to:
PO Box 1836
Sacramento, CA 95812
Info@cpfa.org

Members $30 by April 6th, $35 after April 6th. Non-members $35
Dinner: See details on the web

Date
April 11, 2015

Time
8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
Social: 5:00 to 6:00 p.m.
Dinner: 6:00 to 8:00 p.m.

Location
De Anza College
Cupertino, CA

Check online for workshop updates, agenda, and dinner info!

About California Part-time Faculty Association (CPFA)

CPFA has been advocating for Part-time faculty in California since 1998. This group spearheaded AB591, which passed the state legislature and allows contingent faculty to teach 67%. We currently advocate for AB 852, the due process, rehire rights bill. Please join us in our effort to improve teaching and learning conditions in California.