

ADVOCATE · EDUCATE · LEGISLATE

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CONFUSED ABOUT YOUR RETIREMENT?

Results will be presented in

E REAL MESSA r CON'J

f the squeaky wheel gets the grease, then it should be little wonder why progress to improve the working conditions of contingent faculty has been so meager over the last fifty years. Being precariously employed, most contingents are reluctant to do much squeaking about their working conditions. compromised silence leaves impression that, when it comes to the treatment of contingent faculty, things are pretty much OK as they are.

A promising new approach that could revitalize the stalled contingent faculty movement comes out of Vancouver,

Precarious Academic Labour at Emily Carr University of Art + Design. Written and assembled by Terra Poirier, a writer, artist, activist, and

former undergraduate at Emily Carr, who was dismayed by the lack of accessibility to her instructors/mentors, Non-Regular presents essays, commentary, and graphics that aptly capture the absence of professional dignity among these contingent instructors. Its most striking feature, however, is the candid impressions and quotations from over two dozen anonymous Emily Carr contingents who lay it on the line about the nature of their precarious employment.

The project was carefully designed from the outset to protect the identity of the contingent participants. Poirier

These measures are necessary in a climate where instructors have to reapply for their jobs every year, where some in fact feel they aren't even at liberty to teach about controversial topics from the world at large, let alone the labour practices of their own employer (p. 14).

A few quotations are published elsewhere (the book cites roughly fifty sources), one noting that for contingents, it is "... 'weird' to socialize with people who do what they saw as the same job for much higher pay" and who "decide to hire me or not every term" (p. 83). But most quotations are from Emily Carr instructors, one being, "To make ends meet, I am often working at least two other jobs at the same time I am teaching

Canada in the form of an attractive 5" by 7" book entitled Non-Regular: ...regularization should be seen as a solution to the problem of contingency and the central goal of the contingent faculty movement.

> at ECU. I don't generally have weekends or holidays" (p. 59).

> Many contingents can identify with universal experiences documented in the book: "When I first started I spent many weekends designing courses only to get them taken away..." (p. 83) and "I never actually felt I was part of a community or that the courses I taught were even valued by the school administration" (p. 49) or "... I was told that being a sessional [adjunct] was not a career and that these decisions were not to be taken personally!" (p. 33).

> Even a casual glance at Non-Regular dispels the notion that the situation of contingent faculty is pretty much OK or an institution's rhetoric about its instructional staff being one big, happy family, all pulling for a common goal.

By Jack Longmate Olympic College, Washington

ed establishment is The higher certainly fooling itself if we believe there is no need for such frank admissions about the nature of contingency. From time to time, anecdotes about adjuncts who are homeless, who can't afford to pay their rent, or who sell their plasma for income appear in the media. But such sensationalism can be easily dismissed as misfortunes of a given individual, not as symptoms of a systemic exploitation of a

class of public employees. Real stories from real people employed by the college are much harder for a trustee or administrator of that college to

The solution the book offers is implicit in its title. In British Columbia, "Regularization" refers to job security

awarded after a contingent instructor completes a defined probationary period. While BC institutions have differing regularization provisions, at Vancouver Community College, a contingent instructor who has taught at fifty percent of full-time for two years with satisfactory performance reviews automatically becomes regularized and thereafter is assured of at least a fifty percent teaching load that he or she may ratchet up to one hundred percent over time, which is how most part-time instructors become full-time. Barring unusual circumstances, regularized instructors can assume their employment will continue until retirement. As such, regularization should be seen as a solution to the problem of

Continued on page 4

CPFA wants to find out what adjuncts know and don't know about their retirement from CALSTERS, Social Security, and other plans. Please take a moment to take our short survey at <u>CPFA.org/retirement</u>.

the Fall 2019 issue.

ADVOCATE **EDUCATE**

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By Dave Bush

I began teaching adjunct an instructor at a rural Northern California community college in 1994. As a new instructor, I spent

the first couple of years focused on honing my classroom teaching skills. Over time, as I searched for a full-time position, it became obvious that colleges were increasingly relying on contingent workers, and so I began teaching part-time in other districts. During this period, I came to realize that my faculty union representing both fulland part-time instructors demonstrated little interest in advocating for part-time

Then I learned about FACCC and their part-timer listserv. Previously, I felt rather isolated at rural community colleges, but on this listsery I learned I was not alone. As I participated in discussions about the rotten treatment of adjunct faculty, I received a private email from Margaret Quan. She told me that a group of part-timers were planning to meet and strategize about creating a new organization, and she encouraged me to attend.

By this time, I was teaching the equivalent of at least a full-time load between two colleges, but money was still scarce, so I packed my tent and headed to the El Chorro campground in San Luis Obispo. Here a small group of community college instructors decided we needed to begin our own organization and start our own listserv (which we named after

the campground and which a full-time instructor volunteered to create). The group agreed to begin working on a constitution and bylaws, exchanging ideas on the new listserv. A few months later, I packed my camping gear and headed to the constitutional convention being held at a campsite in Kern County, near Bakersfield.

Twenty years on, I have only sporadic of the discussions that memories

occurred those nascent days. Should we faculty members be of the new organization? If so, should they be allowed on the executive council? How

do we communicate with adjunct faculty who do not use the internet? While a statewide organization, we needed a regional focus; how would the state be divided into regions? Should there be a hyphen in the word "bylaws"? Should people not attending a face-to-face meeting be eligible for election to the executive council? Should there be a special title ("Founding Member") for people who join the organization in its first year? Looking back, some of these conversations seem silly, and some still feel significant.

Beyond the specific debates and discussions, there are some things I clearly remember. I recall a relatively small group of people (approximately twenty or so instructors out of 24,000 adjuncts in the state) who were committed to making a

difference. We were a group with strong personalities. Some of us, like myself, were relatively new to this struggle and some had been engaged in the fight for many years. Some of us believed that only unions with both full- and part-time faculty could make the most gains in college districts, and others, burned by such "inclusive" unions that were happy to collect adjunct dues but not so eager to support part-time faculty, noted the significant

"Never doubt that a small

group of thoughtful, committed

citizens can change the world;

indeed, it's the only thing that

ever has." Margaret Mead

advances made by part-time faculty-only unions. sucn debates, remember mantra of CPFA members, "We are NOT a union." Instead, we were creating the first independent voice for contingent

faculty. CPFA would connect faculty across districts, work with all unions and other faculty organizations, and engage the state government to improve adjunct employment conditions.

At our early meetings, we discussed more than bylaws, unions, hyphens, and goals. We shared our love of teaching and our disciplines of study, the conversations we had with students, pictures of our cats, and our hopes for the future. We became friends.

Thinking back twenty years, the quote often attributed to Margaret Mead comes to mind, "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has."

CPFA made, with the help of unions Continued on page 4

THE TWO TIER SYSTEM



By Donna Frankel

My college Office of Instruction sent out a "survey" asking faculty what about we do with

our students that involves developing leaders, equity, and community service.

The last question was "what else do you

want to tell us?" So I let them have it:
Sadly, I do not see our colleges practicing this with their present policies and two-tiered system of employment. Part-time faculty are not treated as equals though they have the same experience, qualification and education as full-time faculty. We have many part-time faculty (and we comprise the majority of all higher ed faculty in our state) who demonstrate more leadership ability and more moral and ethical responsibility than some full-time faculty and many staff. This is a great, untapped area of leadership right here on our campuses, but we are largely ignored.

Do not forget that many part-time faculty teach at multiple districts and navigate the rules, procedures and personalities of multiple institutions in addition to being at-will-employees: easily removed for no reason. We are evaluated at many times the rate of our full-time colleagues when at multiple colleges. Simply stated, we do not have equity in employment and are from from equity in salaries, job security, benefits including sabbaticals, and working conditions. Until this changes, we have no equity on our campuses.

Faculty—all faculty and students—deserve the same treatment, protections and respect. It has not happened in the thirty-two years I have taught on five campuses, but I work daily in many venues and organizations to effect this important change. This is Community Service and Service Leadership! Students know and see what is going on. They learn by example, not just through books and lectures. What and the larger community? This would be with the people in power acknowledging that they have been part of an abusive and making the changes to bring about true employment and treatment equity. We see this starting to take place with students and faculty of color, but again, the vast majority of faculty (part-timers)

I am reminded of Salesforce CEO Marc Benioff who, on "60 Minutes," talked about his reckoning with the gender pay gap. It cost him three million dollars a year to treat all his employees equitably, and he did it "because it is the only right thing to do." His moral convictions are higher than those in positions of power at most community colleges in our state. Those working in the state chancellor's office are all well aware of the situation part-timers face, but staunchly fight against change, sweep inequity under the rug and look the other way. You want change for the better in our community, don't you? I do too. Start with your own employees, right here on campus. It will reverberate around the state and nation and true equity will be present in our community. Won't you be the one to set an example?

In every survey you take, work in the fact that right under their noses they have untapped leaders and equity issues of enormous proportion, and not just involving people of color. Our colleges could not operate without part-time faculty. As the majority in every college, we are here to teach and model leadership, equity, and community service! It is high time we were made whole, too! Do not let a single opportunity go by without bringing up our cause. If we all raise our

Donna is currently a dance instructor at Mission, West Valley, De Anza, and Foothill Colleges. She also serves as

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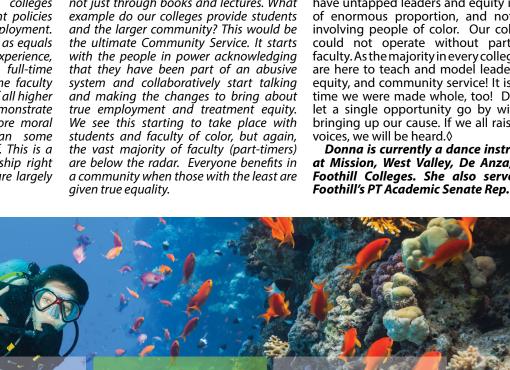
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THERE IS NO SUCH THING AS AN ADJUNCT PROFESSOR

By Debra Leigh Scott, originally posted in the online blog, junctrebellion.wordpress.com, on October 18, 2018.

full year has passed on these pages since I announced my departure from academic "adjunct" employment, listing my plans for reconstructing my life once I was no longer living the life of a precariouslyemployed scholar. I've been silent here as I went about that reconstruction, even withdrawing from most of the conversations about higher education. I'd like to say that this was done through a healthy intentionality – but it was not. The year's anniversary for my departure has just passed. During this year, it's become clear to me that more time is necessary for both life reconstruction and for healing the trauma of such long-term professional, economic and emotional abuse. As any therapist will attest, any extended experience of abuse requires extended efforts at healing. When a person is consistently demeaned, dehumanized,

stressed, and frightened, there is a kind of PTSD that forms that doesn't simply go away with a few months of extra sleep, or a week at the beach. Healing prolonged, takes intentional effort to address these And no, effects. you don't have to

have a history of combat in Baghdad to have PTSD. Prolonged emotional abuse, economic stress, humiliation and anxiety can produce the disorder.

The ADAA (Anxiety and Depression Association of America) defines the disorder:

"PTSD is diagnosed after a person experiences symptoms for at least one month following a traumatic event. However symptoms may not appear until several months or even years later. The

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disorder is characterized by three main types of symptoms:

- Re-experiencing the trauma through intrusive distressing recollections of the event, flashbacks, and nightmares.
- · Emotional numbness and avoidance of places, people, and activities that are reminders of the trauma.
- · Increased arousal such as difficulty sleeping and concentrating, feeling jumpy, and being easily irritated and angered."

What I began to realize over this past year is that I had all three symptoms. I did have frequent distress thinking about the years I spent living in poverty while trying to perform the duties of the profession for which I had trained a decade. These thoughts were persistent and somewhat

obsessive. did withdraw from conversations with former colleagues, and from the work I was doing on the documentary about corporatized university. (Even as I've struggled to work on the script, I've found myself unable to think straight,

unable to put my thoughts together in a coherent way.) I wouldn't set foot on a campus anywhere, and especially would not go to the campus where I had taught. I had sleep trouble. And, finally, I realized that I was in a state of near-constant irritation and anger. Not being one to rush to practitioners of western medicine, I chose instead to continue with the kind of gentle work I had been doing: yoga, meditation, journaling. I am not the kind to take a pill for my distress, but I'm sure

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might wish I had. I realized that for many years I was struggling with depression and anxiety - for so long, in fact, that I had normalized feeling terrible. Friends and family probably felt the effects of this more than I did. In that way, our

struggles the this is an issue requires attention.

The reason I'm sharing this is not because I

want sympathy – far from it. I'm sharing this because I know that there are at least States working on contingent contracts, many who may well be experiencing a lot of the same difficulties. I share this because I want to say that you are not alone. That, in fact, you are in some rather exalted company - the professoriate of any country being some of the best educated and brightest citizens. Our country's best minds are being driven to mental distress by prolonged labor abuse and exploitation. Think about that for a moment, please.

- inability to remember an important aspect of the traumatic events (not due to head injury, alcohol, or drugs);
- persistent and exaggerated negative beliefs or expectations about oneself, others, or the world (e.g., "I am bad,"
 "No one can be trusted," "The world is completely dangerous");

- feelings of detachment or estrangement from others;
- persistent inability to experience positive emotions.

I realized that I had persistent thoughts about myself that were negative. I called myself a failure. I thought of myself as a loser. I had thoughts like, "You just weren't good enough," whenever I thought about the lifetime I spent struggling on part-time teaching contracts. In other words, I internalized all my anger, turned

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that others around me (at least at times)

become struggles everyone care about. For that reason, if not for any other, that

1.3 million professors across the United

To screen yourself for PTSD, think about whether or not you can identify the presence of two or more of the following (I have italicized those I struggle with):

- persistent, distorted blame of self or others about the cause or consequences of the traumatic events;
- persistent fear, horror, anger, guilt, or
- markedly diminished interest or participation in significant activities;

it into self-blame and self-loathing. I

California Community College Independents

Higher Salaries,

CCCI represents faculty from

sincerely believe that, even among those who are working tirelessly as activists on behalf of faculty re-professionalization, there may be a lot of the same kind of internalized anger, a lot of the same self-blame. It is insidious.

All this being said, I want to say that I am doing better and better, happy about my decision to exit life in the Precariat, and excited with the new stage of life I am building. For me, having spent decades in the tar pits of academia, I am looking toward retirement age, but with it, a whole new phase of life. Jane Fonda likes to call it her "third act" - and I think that is a wonderful way of thinking

The label "adjunct" was applied

to us by those who sought to

deprofessionalize the role of the

scholar, both on the campus and

in the country. We never should

have accepted it.

about these life adventures we who are the first generation of precariously employedscholars enter our years of seniority.

One thing I've realized, as I have contemplated my experiences the corporatized

university: we should never ever refer to ourselves as "adjuncts" or "adjunct professors." Rather, we should say that we are professors teaching on adjunct, contingent or part-time contracts. The difference? We are not, and never were "adjunct." The contracts we signed were for part-time employment because the universities decided decades ago to slash the number of full-time faculty positions. The label "adjunct" was applied to us by those who sought to deprofessionalize the role of the scholar, both on the campus and in the country. We never should have accepted it. We certainly shouldn't have adopted the term and applied it to ourselves. The word means "supplemental, not essential." Faculty, no matter what their contract, will always be essential to a university. There is nothing "adjunct" about the role we play, and nothing supplemental to our responsibilities and role in fulfilling any mission dedicated to the pursuit of higher learning. Words are important, and the way we choose our words, the way we frame our narrative, is of great importance. There is no such thing as an "adjunct" professor. We are essential. We ARE the university. Any university that allows its administrators to outnumber its faculty is not a university. Any university that values its lazy rivers and climbing walls while diminishing the role of its faculty is not a university. It is, instead, a site which offers an experience of a "notional" college "experience".

So....this is my first message, upon my return to these pages. Pay attention to the ways you might be struggling with PTSD without realizing it. Pay attention to the ways you might be internalizing your anger at an abusive system and blaming yourself. And pay attention to the way you refer to yourself. Take control of your own story, and the words you use to tell it. No, it won't change what has happened to our profession on the corporatized campuses. But it will change the way we represent our own reality - both to ourselves and to the outside world. It will begin to reverse the effects of diminishing ourselves - who we are and what we do. That is an essential first step to changing the internal and external reality. Let's commit to this essential change right now, and begin to own our own

Debra Leigh Scott is a writer/ playwright, currently writing and co-producing the documentary, "Junct: The Trashing of Higher Ed. in America". Junct Rebellion is an organization established to raise awareness about the demise of the American university system, through its rampant practice of adjunct faculty labor abuse and its steadily eroding concern about the quality of education provided to students. She also blogs as The Homeless (junctrebellion.wordpress. <u>Adjunct</u> com). A scholar of humanities, she's left academia, refusing to submit to any more adjunct contracts. Her personal website is www.debraleighscott.com.

For more information about junctrebellion, consultations, or to arrange for us to speak with your group, please contact Debra at junctrebellion@ gmail.com. We welcome the opportunity to meet and talk with all who are involved in and committed to the idea of high quality education for our children and for ourselves.



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II. CHECK MEMBERSHIP LEVEL

On behalf of nearly 40,000 part-time faculty working in the California Community Colleges System, CPFA would like to take this opportunity to ask you to <u>consider becoming a Sustaining Member if you are a full-time and/or full-salaried employee</u>. Your membership dues go a long way towards improving the quality of education and advocating for fair working conditions in the state of California. Thank you for your contribution and support.

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FOR QUESTIONS OR FURTHER INSTRUCTION ON THE MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION PROCESS:

Please contact CPFA's Director of Membership at membership@cpfa.org or call (916) 572-CPFA (2732)

ST...WE'VE MADE THIS SO EASY! JUST

Continued from page 1, "The Real Message about Contingency"

contingency and the central goal of the contingent faculty movement.

Hopefully, Non-Regular will inspire a new message, the real message, about the precarious nature of contingent employment that will make policy makers finally open to reckoning with, not ignoring, the problem.

It may be time for similar efforts like Poirier's to be replicated on other campuses to record the reality about contingency on each campus. Of course, it is vital that disciplined safeguards like those employed by Poirier be in place to protect the identity of vulnerable contingents.

Notes: Non-Regular: Precarious academic labour at Emily Carr University of Art + Design has been selected for a case study presentation at the Canadian Association of Research Ethics Board's conference in April 2019. While Poirier's project was exempt from the Canadian research ethics process, Emily Carr University's Research Ethics Coordinator felt it warrants study nonetheless to determine if university-based research ethics review processes are appropriately meeting the needs of artists and other creative practice researchers, as well as those who participate in their projects.

Continued from page 1, "The Early Years of CPFA"

and other faculty organizations, a number of gains for adjunct faculty that still positively impact the lives of the growing – yes sadly –number of part-time faculty: state funds for paid office hours, state equity funds for adjunct instructors, and a study of part-time faculty working conditions. Eventually, that study put to rest the often repeated and pernicious argument of many administrators and full-time faculty that full-time faculty earn more pay because they had more education and were required to fulfil other duties like participating on committees and holding office hours. If, the disingenuous argument continued, a duty-to-duty job comparison were made, full- and part-time faculty were, for the most part, equally compensated. That claim, as adjunct faculty knew all along, was proven to be false by the Report on Part-Time Faculty Compensation in California Community Colleges.

Another significant achievement of CPFA has been to raise awareness of part-time faculty concerns among other faculty organization, student groups, politicians, unions, and the general public. First through the Action 2000 Coalition (A2K) - "Part-Time Faculty: 100% COMMITMENT, 37% PAY," and then by many other similar campaigns.

My involvement with CPFA may not have started so soon nor been as significant without that first unexpected email invitation from Margaret Quan. CPFA membership will grow and its influence in Sacramento and across the state will increase if you take action now. Your employment conditions leave much to be desired. Even so, California part-time faculty are better off now than they were twenty years ago, and that is, in large part, because of CPFA's work on your behalf.

Now I'm extending a personal invitation to you. We still have a long way to go, and we will go farther and move faster if you become involved. I am asking you (full-time and part-time faculty) to join CPFA today (go to cpfa.org and click "Join") as onetime payment of \$40 for one year membership or sign up for a payroll deduction of \$4 per month....see the membership form on our website.

If you are already a CPFA member, thank you! Now, it's your turn to extend an invitation to other faculty members. I'm inviting you to get two additional people to join CPFA this year.

Once you are a CPFA member, stay informed, and, as you are able, get involved. Your support will make a difference.

Dave Bush has been teaching history since 1994 when he was first hired as an "adjunct" instructor in the California Community Colleges system; he has taught every fall, spring, and summer term since that year. Dave has been a member of the Communication Workers of America and the California Teachers Association. He is a CPFA "Founding Member" and has served on its executive council