The first civil and human rights movement by and for Black people started during the Civil War and the period of Black Reconstruction that followed. It was a time of radical hopes for many freed slaves. But it was also a time of betrayal. Then President Andrew Johnson and the non-radical Republicans, in collusion with the Democratic Party, the party of slavery, sold out the early post-war promises for full equality and "40 acres and a mule". Instead, the promise of equality was soon replaced by the restoration of the property rights of the former slave owners in the South. This was accomplished by the Compromise of 1877.
How did they accomplish this betrayal? The answer is simple -- terrorism. They used police and terroristic Ku Klux Klan violence. These extra-legal activities laid the basis for the overthrow of Black Reconstruction and the institutionalization of legal segregation (*Jim Crow*) in the former slave states. To enforce *Jim Crow*, Black people were, for decades, indiscriminately lynched and framed.

This was the status quo in the United States until the United States Supreme Court came out with its "Brown v. Board of Education" decision in 1954, mandating the right to equal education. The successful yearlong Montgomery Bus Boycott in 1955-56 reflected the new, more militant mood among Negroes (the name given to Black people by the ruling class). This new mood was a product of the rise of the Black Liberation movements in Africa, the confidence gained by the Black working class during the rise of the CIO, and the respect, knowledge, and expectations of democracy gained by Black soldiers during the Korean War.³

Thus the struggle against *Jim Crow* had begun, and with each victory to integrate and enforce the 1954 Supreme Court decision, the mass of Black people gained confidence in themselves and that the fight for racial equality could be won. In the early sixties, the movement grew stronger as young people from the universities spearheaded the 'freedom rides' and sit-ins throughout the South to oppose *Jim Crow* and enforce the law of the land, which the local, state, and federal governments had refused to enforce.

In the spring of 1963, the struggles in Birmingham, Alabama, led by the Black working class, garnered international attention when police commissioner Eugene ("Bull") Connor unleashed powerful water hoses and German shepherd police dogs against the demonstrators. Terror and violence gripped this city, while the world watched. Indeed, it was the national and international embarrassment that forced President Kennedy and the government to begin to take governmental action.

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After Birmingham, the March on Washington was called. In the space of a few weeks a huge demonstration built. This demonstration was the largest social action in the United States since the mass strikes that led to the rise of the CIO in the 1930s and late 1940s. This mass action led to the passage of the Civil Rights Act in 1965.

At that rally, the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) Chairman John Lewis was prevented from delivering his prepared speech by the march organizers. It was a notable omission. In this speech, he was going to say:

"... We are now involved in a serious revolution. This nation is still a place of cheap political leaders who build their career on immoral compromises and ally themselves with open forms of political, economic and social exploitation. What political leader here can stand up and say 'My party is the party of "principles"'? The party of Kennedy is also the party of Eastland. The party of Javits is also the party of Goldwater. Where is our party? "

But if Lewis could be prevented by the March organizers from offending the liberal Democratic establishment from the stage of the Washington march, they could not prevent the civil rights movement from embracing a growing militancy and desire to expand the struggle to embrace a larger vision of social change.

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4 The Militant, September 9, 1963
Unfortunately, the momentum that was gained from the March was lost during the 1964 Presidential election campaign, when the major civil rights groups called for a moratorium on demonstrations in order not to embarrass then President Lyndon Baines Johnson during the election campaign against the "greater evil" Barry Goldwater. (Both were defenders of Jim Crow prior to the 1963 March on Washington.) The movement never fully recovered to this subordination of the struggle to "lesser evil" political action.

http://www.historycentral.com/sixty/60's/March.jpg

"The March on Washington for Jobs and Justice was the largest social action in the United States since the union strikes that led to the rise of the CIO in the 1930s and late 1940s. This mass action led to the passage of the Civil Rights Act in 1965."

While the struggle in the South was specifically against Jim Crow, the struggle in the North was against de-facto segregation. The images of the dogs etc. on TV being used against Blacks in the South subsequently gave rise to the Black Nationalist movement in the North. The rise of the Black Muslims and Malcolm X was a reflection of the mood in the majority of the Black ghettos in every major northern city, where the economic and political power of Black people
was more concentrated and greater than in the rural south. The rise of the nationalist movement consequently generated heated debates within the movement between the strategies of peaceful disobedience and righteous self-defense.

In his latter years, Malcolm X saw the Black struggle as a struggle for human rights, and, notably, as an anti-capitalist economic struggle. As he explained at the Militant Labor Forum in the fall of 1964:

"It’s impossible for a chicken to produce a duck egg… The system in this country cannot produce freedom for an Afro-American. It is impossible for this system, this economic system, this political system, period… And if even a chicken did produce a duck egg, I’m certain you would say it was certainly a revolutionary chicken."\(^5\)

Unfortunately, Malcolm X was assassinated in 1965 before he could build an organization to follow in his footsteps.

Following the assassination of Malcolm X, Stokely Carmichael, later known as Kwame Ture, became the new leader of SNCC and is credited with starting the movement for Black Power. In Lowndes County Alabama in 1965, he helped the Lowndes Country Freedom Organization (LCFO) to form their own party. The symbol of the party was the Black Panther and they were called the Black Panthers because of that symbol. The Alabama Democrats retaliated against this movement by evicting sharecroppers and tenant farmers, and attempting illegal foreclosures against Black Panther supporters. They even threatened to kill any African-American who registered. Thus the LCFO was forced to arm themselves for self-defense, but not to initiate any violence. The political activities of the LCFO inspired the formation of the Black Panther Party in Oakland, Calif. In the course of time, Black Panther Parties arose throughout the country.

Due to the mass mobilizations by the civil rights movement and the Black rebellions in the inner cities, by 1968 legal segregation, Jim Crow, was destroyed. Blacks acquired the right to vote and access to jobs through affirmative action programs, to make up for the past discriminations. There was hope for a better life in the Black Community. However, after Martin Luther King, struggled against de facto segregation in Chicago, he realized that the struggle for economic equality was a more difficult fight than the struggle against Jim Crow. At this point he began to take similar anti-capitalist positions as Malcolm X.

Both Malcolm X and Martin Luther King opposed the Vietnam War prior to their assassinations. At the time of their assassinations, both Martin Luther King and Malcolm X were
embarking on a course in opposition to the capitalist system. It is clear from reading and listening to their final speeches that they had both evolved to similar conclusions of capitalism's role in the maintenance of racism. That is why they were assassinated.⁶

It's now known that during the rise of the modern civil rights movement, the government, led by Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy, was spying on the movement and its leadership. In the 1970's, the "Cointelpro" disruption operations by the government against the civil rights movement, the antiwar movement, and radicals and socialists, during that period, also became public knowledge. Under "Cointelpro" the different United States spy agencies used informers, agents, and agent provocateurs to disrupt organizations. One purpose of this program was to "neutralize" Malcolm X, Martin Luther King, and Elijah Muhammad," in order to prevent the development of a "Black Messiah," who would have the potential of uniting and leading a mass organization of Black Americans in their quest for freedom and economic equality.

At the end of his life, King also stated what he was planning in the struggle for economic equality:

"There is nothing but a lack of social vision to prevent us from paying an adequate wage to every American citizen whether he be a hospital worker, laundry worker, maid, or day laborer."

"There is nothing except shortsightedness to prevent us from guaranteeing an annual minimum-and livable-income for every American family.

"There is nothing, except a tragic death wish, to prevent us from reordering our priorities... The coalition of an energized section of labor, Negroes, unemployed, and welfare recipients may be the source of power that reshapes economic relationships and ushers in a breakthrough to a new level of social reform.

"The total elimination of poverty, now a practical responsibility, the reality of equality in race relations and other profound structural changes in society may well begin here."⁷

At that time, the stock market was below 1,000 points. Today, it is above 10,000 points, and yet there still is no social vision for paying an adequate wage and the minimum wage has dropped 42% since 1968.

Unlike Malcolm X, whose assassination cut short his organizing plans, King was organizing a movement to obtain his stated goals when he was assassinated. In fact, he was in Memphis to build that "coalition of an energized section of labor, Negroes, unemployed, and welfare recipients" in support of striking municipal sanitation workers.

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⁶ For more information read The Assassinations of Martin Luther King, Jr. and Malcolm X, http://www.holtlaborlibrary.org/malcolmx.htm

If such a force had been launched, the whole power of the antiwar and civil rights movement in the 1960s could have transformed the labor movement and become "the source of power that reshapes economic relationships and ushers in a breakthrough to a new level of social reform."

To combat the rise of the Civil Rights Movement, the "war on poverty" was first launched in 1965 along with the concept of "Black Politicians". Malcolm X described this process in his Jan. 7, 1965 speech "The Prospects for Freedom", at the Militant Labor Forum, in New York City:

"They have a new gimmick every year. They're going to take one of their boys, black boys, and put him in the cabinet so he can walk around Washington with a cigar. Fire on one end and fool on the other end. And because his immediate personal problem will have been solved he will be the one to tell our people: 'Look how much progress we're making. I'm in Washington, D.C., I can have tea in the White House. I'm your spokesman, I'm your leader.' While our people are still living in Harlem in the slums. Still receiving the worst form of education.

"But how many sitting here right now feel that they could [laughs] truly identify with a struggle that was designed to eliminate the basic causes that create the conditions that exist? Not very many. They can jive, but when it comes to identifying yourself with a struggle that is not endorsed by the power structure, that is not acceptable, that the ground rules are not laid down by the society in which you live, in which you are struggling against, you can't identify with that, you step back.

"It's easy to become a satellite today without even realizing it. This country can seduce God. Yes, it has that seductive power of economic dollarism. You can cut out colonialism, imperialism and all other kind of ism, but it's hard for you to cut that dollarism. When they drop those dollars on you, you'll fold though."\(^8\), \(^9\)

After the assassination of Martin Luther King and the subsequent rebellions in the inner cities protesting his assassination, the Democratic Party's "war on poverty" started laying dollars on any potential Black leaders and grooming Black Candidates.

John Lewis, formally of SNCC, became enlightened, he forego the Black Panthers and saw the Democratic Party, symbolized by a jackass, as his party. Most of what W.E. B. DuBois described as the "talented tenth" were bought off by this process. The more radical concepts that Martin Luther King and Malcolm X had developed at the time of their deaths disappeared from the scene. No one took up where they left off. The governmental policy, directed towards the 'leaders' of the civil rights movement, of the carrot (dollarism) and the stick (assassinations) had proven to be successful.

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\(^8\) A complete audio of the speech can be found at http://www.brothermalcolm.net/mxwords/whathesaid23.html
\(^9\) http://www.accuracy.org/newsrelease.php?articleId=987
A last chance at rebuilding the movement was the first National Black Political Assembly on March 10, 1972. "Eight thousand African Americans (three thousand of whom were official delegates) arrived in Gary, Indiana, to attend their first convention, which was more commonly known as the 'Gary Convention.' A sea of Black faces chanted, 'It's Nation Time! It's Nation Time!' No one in the room had ever seen anything like this before. The radical Black nationalists clearly won the day; moderates who supported integration and backed the Democratic Party were in the minority. It gave birth to the "Gary Declaration" which stated:

"... A Black political convention, indeed all truly Black politics, must begin from this truth: The American system does not work for the masses of our people, and it cannot be made to work without radical, fundamental changes. The challenge is thrown to us here in Gary. It is the challenge to consolidate and organize our own Black role as the vanguard in the struggle for a new society.

"To accept the challenge is to move to independent Black politics. There can be no equivocation on that issue. History leaves us no other choice. White politics has not and cannot bring the changes we need."10

Unfortunately, Black Democratic Party supporters such as Richard Hatcher the mayor of Gary Indiana, Jesse Jackson, Ron Daniels, and even Amiri Baraka betrayed the hope from the Cary Convention. Instead of the course that was decided at the convention, they led the way to support Black politicians and through them, the Democratic Party. "Vote for Me and I'll set you Free" became the slogan for the day and the civil rights movement became completely demobilized and with its "leaders co-opted" into the system. From this demobilization, came the betrayal and atomization of the movement.

As Malcolm X said in his New York City speech, Dec. 1, 1963: "The Negro revolution is controlled by foxy white liberals, by the Government itself."11

At first, there was an illusion of progress; there was a rise in the number on Black politicians. There was an increase in jobs for black professionals in government, in industry, and on television. There was an impression that things were getting better through the strategy of relying upon the Democratic Party to politically secure, protect, and advance the struggle for racial equality.

An example of what was wrong with this strategy was clearly demonstrated when Maynard Jackson was elected mayor of Atlanta Ga., in 1974.

At the time of Martin Luther King's was assassination, he was willing to risk jail and to

http://afgen.com/malcolmx.html
organize a mass demonstration, in defiance of a court injunction and National Guardsmen, in armored personnel carriers equipped with 50-caliber machine guns, to help the striking Memphis municipal garbage workers. These workers ultimately won their union contract, and thousands of ordinary working families in that city got living wages that allowed them to educate their children, buy houses, live decent and dignified lives, and even retire.

In contrast, Maynard Jackson quickly demonstrated that he was not beholden to or a leader of the Black population that elected him, but beholden to those who financed his election campaign and who helped his personal political and financial advancement. In Atlanta, Jackson, instead of helping city sanitation workers, fired more than a thousand city employees to crush their strike. In this, he had the support of white business leaders and the Atlanta Journal-Constitution.

Similar fruits, from the political policy of supporting the "lesser evil" Democratic Party, has led to a set back for the struggle for civil rights and equality.

"Lesser evil" always means "More Evil"-the Republican Richard Nixon, the "greater evil" in 1968, would be the "lesser evil" to the Democrat Clinton (Bill and Hillary) in today's world!

No longer fearing a mass civil rights movement in the streets, the Democrats have, for the past 30 years, shared responsibility for the gradual reduction of affirmative action and the victories of the movement.

From my own experience, the only way to enforce affirmative action, is if there are quotas for employment in the workplace. The new Black politicians, along with Jessie Jackson, came out against quotas in the 80s, helping to make affirmative action more difficult. Various court decisions helped to reduce the effects of affirmative action and to resegregate the nation's
school system. In 1995, President Clinton, as the leader of the Democratic Party, drafted a memorandum for the elimination of any program that creates (1) a quota; (2) preferences for unqualified individuals; (3) creates reverse discrimination (The slogan of the racists); or continues affirmative action even after its equal opportunity purposes have been achieved." (A myth)

Actually, according to a recent article from the *Boston Globe*, at the elite colleges, there is affirmative action for rich dim white kids.\(^2\)

The Democratic Party was responsible for the 1986 Anti-Drug Abuse Act which established a 100-to-1 sentencing ratio between possession of crack (mainly used in the inter-cities) and of cocaine powder (mainly used in the suburbs). Under this law, possession of five grams of crack is a felony and carries a mandated minimum five-year federal prison sentence. For cocaine powder it is only a misdemeanor for the possession of less than 500 grams of cocaine powder. The five-year felony sentence applies if one has 500 grams in their possession. This sentencing disproportion was based on phony testimony that crack was 50 times more addictive than powdered coke. The Democratic Party-controlled Congress then doubled this ratio as a so-called "violence penalty". This has led to "affirmative action" in the prison system, where Black inmates are a far greater in percentage of all prisoners than their percentage in the nation. At the same time, many states are now preventing those convicted of a felony from voting.

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Graph [http://faculty.ncwc.edu/toconnor/images/racedrugs.gif](http://faculty.ncwc.edu/toconnor/images/racedrugs.gif)

\(^2\) [http://www.civilrightsproject.harvard.edu/research/deseg/separate_schools01.php](http://www.civilrightsproject.harvard.edu/research/deseg/separate_schools01.php)
According to the Harvard Civil Rights Project the public schools have become more separate and unequal - the consequences of a decade from 1988 to 1998) of resegregation along economic, ethnic and racist lines. \(^{13}\)

http://www.equaljusticesociety.org/connerly_myths.html

Throughout this land, both the Republican and Democratic Parties are gentrifying the inner cities, in the service of big business, and the poor are being scattered to the winds. It is how the rich are handling unemployment and poverty in this country. Recently, Black U.S. Senator Barack Obama (D-IL) went to Africa to publicize the catastrophe of Aids in Africa. He should have also gone to the Black Communities in the United States and publicized the crisis of Aids in Black America, where nearly half of the million Americans, who are living with HIV today, are Black. In fact it has become a Black disease. \(^{14}\)

The bipartisan corporate "bankruptcy reforms" in the late 80s to the present have allowed corporations to lay off workers, rob pension plans, and tear up union contracts. Because Black workers are still the "last hired and first fired", they have received the brunt of these attacks.

Overall, the rich have become richer, and the poor have become poorer.

Ben H. Bagdikian put it well in his "Preface to the Sixth Edition" of *The Media Monopoly*, after he explained that just six of the world's largest corporations, control 95% of the mass media, he wrote:

"The American economy [has been] undergoing an astonishing phenomenon that the

\(^{13}\) http://www.blackaids.org/ShowArticle.aspx?pagename=ShowArticle&articletype=NEWS&articleid=203&pagename=1

mainstream news left largely unreported or actually glamorized in its infrequent references, the largest transfer of the national wealth in American history from a majority of the population to a small percentage of the country's wealthiest families.\textsuperscript{15}

This process was facilitated by the fact that almost every "tax reform" from Kennedy in 1961, to Bush in 2004, has resulted in the taking of wealth from the working class and giving it to the capitalist class.

And yet, the Congressional Black Caucus echoes the "hype" from the government, the press, and the Republican and Democratic Parties, that things are better today. The economic figures from the bipartisan wage-price freeze in 1972 to today demonstrate that this it is false illusion.

According to \textit{infoplease}, Black households median income in 1972 was $21,311 or $97,201.78 in 2005 dollars, while white Households median income in 1972 was $36,510 or $166,526.06 in 2005 dollars.\textsuperscript{16} In 2004 Black households had a median income in 2004 was $30,947 in 2005 dollars. White Households had the highest median income at $47,957 in 2005 dollars. Significantly lower than the median incomes for 1972.\textsuperscript{17}

These figures show that Black Households median income in 1972 was 58\% of white households median income and approximate 64\% of white households today. This does not represent progress, it represents that income for workers, Black People and other minorities has decreased since 1972. Black people now have an income of 64\% of white households that has not kept up with inflation and has actually decreased by over 50\% since 1972. 15 Since the working class and the poor have been suffering an ever-increasing rate of taxation and concurrent cuts in government services, the decline in real wages and their standard of living has been worse.

In order to regain what has been lost and win equality rights for all, we must stop supporting those who are oppressing us - the Democratic and Republican Parties - and go back to what made all movements powerful. Which was relying upon ourselves and building our own independent power.

As King said: "There is nothing, except a tragic death wish, to prevent us from reordering our priorities... The coalition of an energized section of labor, Negroes, unemployed, and welfare recipients may be the source of power that reshapes economic relationships and ushers in a breakthrough to a new level of social reform.

\textsuperscript{15} \url{www.infoplease.com/ipa/A0104552.html}
\textsuperscript{16} All inflation calculations done at \url{http://www.westegg.com/inflation/}
\textsuperscript{17} \url{http://www.infoplease.com/ipa/A0104688.html}
"The total elimination of poverty, now a practical responsibility, the reality of equality in race relations and other profound structural changes in society may well begin here."

Such a coalition, as King envisioned it thirty-three years ago, is needed today. In order to survive, we must begin the begin.

The Congressional Black Caucus echoes the "hype" from the government, the press, and the Republican and Democratic Parties, that things are better today. And yet, racism continues to be an institutional part of the United States.

As King said: "There is nothing, except a tragic death wish, to prevent us from reordering our priorities... The coalition of an energized section of labor, Negroes, unemployed, and welfare recipients may be the source of power that reshapes economic relationships and ushers in a breakthrough to a new level of social reform.

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18 For a graphic video on how race relations have not changed in this country go to: http://www.komotv.com/home/video/5001856.html?video=YHI&t=a
From “Dominion” to Domination: The Duplicity and Complicity of Matthew Scully

Mathew Scully (pictured here between two of his fellow enthusiastic enablers of war crimes, Michael Gerson [left] and David Frum), is not just a hypocrite or opportunist. He is a menace to all life, beings, species, and nature.

By Dr. Steve Best, Ph.D.

9/6/08

In 2002, arch-conservative Matthew Scully wrote a book called, Dominion: The Power of Man, The Suffering of Animals, and The Call to Mercy, that was universally and uncritically acclaimed by the animal advocacy movement. Because this movement is overwhelmingly single-issue in its focus, and in most cases doesn’t care about a person’s views or politics except how they relate to animals, no one had a problem with the fact that Scully was a senior speechwriter for President George W. Bush. He wrote some of the key fear-peddling diatribes that got Bush elected and he was recently re-enlisted to help Bush sell the Iraq war “surge” to the American people.

As someone who is concerned about a person’s overall political standpoint, and who would not embrace a Leftist who is a speciesist anymore than an animal rights person or vegan who is a racist, I had some serious problems with Scully and the fawning adulation of his book by virtually the entire
animal advocacy movement. Many people, such as Karen Dawn (the founder of DawnWatch.com), saw it as a key sign of progress that the conservatives were embracing the animal cause (in welfarist form), and thus concluded that animal advocacy could be introduced to an entire new audience of people—some very rich, powerful, and influential ones at that.

No one mentioned that Scully had blood all over his hands by sycophantically serving Bush-Cheney (providing the “eloquence” they lacked) and the neo-con invasion and occupation of Iraq—all at the cost of more than 100,000 innocent Iraqi lives, over 4,000 US troop deaths, countless US troop casualties and destroyed lives, and over three trillion dollars.[i] And all based on lies and blatant deceit by Bush and his henchmen, all of whom—were there any justice in this country or backbone in the Democrats—would have been impeached and jailed for crimes of the highest order.

Nor could I understand the praise over Scully’s book. Really, Dominion is two books: the first sections are indeed well-crafted and hard-hitting critiques of factory farming and hunting. But the bulk of the
book was just nauseating, amateurish, antiquated medieval/early modern natural law theory which tried to justify the critique of animal cruelty in cosmic laws, rational imperatives—as if the issue of animal welfare or rights were not controversial and could not be seen in endless ways by diverse groups of people. It had a very uncomfortable authoritarian tone to it: here are the moral laws of the universe; here is moral truth. And he urged the same naïve Socratic belief that contaminates the thinking of the pacifists who dominate the animal advocacy movement – the idea that if we can only reason with people, show them this “Truth,” they will no longer abuse animals. As if there were no violence and cruelty in the human heart, no desire to dominate the weak, no lust for profit off slavery of any group.

And consider the subtitle: notice that he is calling for MERCY (to the slaves) not LIBERATION (of the slaves). And we needed a burdensome arsenal of arcane metaphysics, philosophical, and legal theory to reach this conclusion? A few rights/abolitionist voices tried to expose the severe limitations of this overwrought speciesist and welfarist tome, but they were drowned out by the roar of the multitudes celebrating the movement’s “revolutionary” breakthrough into new social sectors — so “new,” in fact, that there were now more white, elite, and “privileged” people in the animal advocacy/vegan movements than before.

To whatever degree he cares about animals, Scully’s real constituency are rich, white, Republicans and — having written speeches for Bush in the aftermath of 9/11 — he had already
become a shining star in the firmament of right-wing ideologues and corporate fat cats, each of whom need the best PR and BS teams they could assemble. And thanks to the fawning adulation of the likes of Karen Dawn, Scully overnight became the new darling of the animal movement. When not making the rounds of Congress or aerial warfare conventions, Scully continued to write speeches for Bush and anyone on the Right with the right fee. And, as it turned out, as so many of us were bracing ourselves for the nauseating Republican National Convention in early September 08, not wanting to hear another disingenuous word from “straight-talking” McCain but curious to hear about unknown Alaskan female governor whom he shrewdly chose to win Hillary’s armies of disaffected, we learned — at this crisis moment and critical juncture for the Far Right — that Matthew Scully stepped in to write the kind of speech the McCain team thought necessary to disguise their malignant and predatory policies in terms of populism and family values. Right-wing soldier that he is, Scully stayed up the entire night before the speech and gave the magic words to which Sara Palin only had to give life in order to sell this sordid spectacle and sham to the US public and bring us another 4 more years of Bush—or probably much, much worse.

The moment was tense. The stakes were high. An unknown — a woman! — was walking onto the stage to accept her party’s nomination for Vice President. But could she prove herself at the podium? Thanks to Scully’s adroit words and Palin’s androgynous mix of feminine soft talk and macho militarism, the chronically anxious Right erupted into a roar of elation as they felt they had, with the addition of Palin, finally found the ticket they wanted — one entirely devoted to militarism and privatization, increasing their already obscene levels of wealth and waging a full-blown culture war against abortion, sex education in the schools, the ban on prayers in public places, and so on.

Well, as the right-wing pundits droned on all next day, Palin/Scully “blew it out of the water.” Even Democratic Vice Presidential candidate Joseph Biden said she was going to be “a tough debater” and had “a very skillfully written …speech.” And one awestruck fan gushed, “Palin sounded at times like she was speaking a foreign language as she gave voice to the beautifully crafted words that had been prepared for her on Wednesday night.”

Congratulations, Scully, you did it! You galvanized and unified the most reactionary forces of the country that want to finish the job — on the Constitution, liberties, privacy, human rights at home and abroad, the United Nations, international justice, restrictions on trade, unions, animal protections and
the environment — that Bush brought to such a high level in eight years. There is nothing innocent about what Scully does: he is a hack, a propagandist, a demagogue, a mouthpiece for nihilistic ideologies that are anything but “pro-life.” To the degree that Bush, Cheney, McCain, and Palin are truly menacing forces — who threaten not only neighboring nation states but the entire planet itself, Scully is their Paul Joseph Goebbels: a total ideologue, a skilled orator (on paper), and a devotee to the party line.

Whereas Obama is known to have fairly progressive views on animals, Palin is an aggressive supporter of hunting and herself an avid hunter. She goes so far as to champion aerial hunting of wolves and threatened to sue the EPA if they listed the polar bear as an endangered species.[ii] Beyond her regressive views on animals, she has helped mobilize the base of the far Right in a way McCain could not do himself because she is such an extreme conservative. According to MoveOn.Org:
**Palin recently said that the war in Iraq is “God’s task.” She’s even admitted she hasn’t thought about the war much—just last year she was quoted saying, “I’ve been so focused on state government, I haven’t really focused much on the war in Iraq.”**

**Palin has actively sought the support of the fringe Alaska Independence Party. Six months ago, Palin told members of the group—who advocate for a vote on secession from the union—to “keep up the good work” and “wished the party luck on what she called its ‘inspiring convention.’”**

**Palin wants to teach creationism in public schools. She hasn’t made clear whether she thinks evolution is a fact.**

**Palin doesn’t believe that humans contribute to global warming. Speaking about climate change, she said, “I’m not one though who would attribute it to being manmade.”**

**Palin has close ties to Big Oil. Her inauguration was even sponsored by BP.**

**Palin is extremely anti-choice. She doesn’t even support abortion in the case of rape or incest.**

**Palin opposes comprehensive sex-ed in public schools. She’s said she will only support abstinence-only approaches.**

**As mayor, Palin tried to ban books from the library. Palin asked the library how she might go about banning books because some had inappropriate language in them—shocking the librarian, Mary Ellen Baker. According to Time, ”news reports from the time show that Palin had threatened to fire Baker for not giving “full support” to the mayor.” [iii]**

Unfortunately, thanks to Scully, Palin’s “homespun” speech (professionally crafted by a DC-insider), was a smash at the RNC, and she “hit it out of the ballpark” as nearly every conservative pundit said the following day. And so we have Scully — who wrote a book critical of hunting – to thank not only for supporting a psychopath whose lust for killing animals perhaps rivals that of Ted Nugent, but for reinvigorating a fascist movement that has excellent chances at winning the next election, and taking the US even deeper into the innermost circles of hell, as somehow I suspect that McCain-Palin will be even worse for the US, the world, animals, and the planet than Bush-Cheney.

And yet, still we hear hardly a word from the animal community about what a thug and criminal Scully is and what a traitor he is to the animals, to fellow humans, and to the entire planet. The most pathetic comment I have heard so far is from Karen Dawn, a well-known animal activist and social butterfly who runs the newsletter, Dawnwatch, which comments on media representations of animal issues. Given her social and economic status – the fact that she lives in the affluent area along the California coastline, that she is a regular in the LA party and cocktail scene, that she loves to see and be seen with celebrities – it is not surprising she takes an apolitical view of animal issues, and in fact believes that this movement ought to strive to be a powerful single-issue, DC-based powerhouse like the NRA.

Here is Dawn’s self-serving, cowardly, and deplorable commentary the day after Palin’s speech:

"The news this week is the Republican Convention, and the animal news is the choice of Sarah Palin as McCain’s running mate. Before I write any further on that issue, I need to stress that DawnWatch is entirely non partisan. If you’ve read [her new MTV-style book] Thanking the Monkey you know of my commitment to non-partisan animal activism. It would be unfair to the animals for their advocates to alienate half of the human population. And in Thanking the Monkey, I explain that the somewhat common assumption [which I personally have argued for in detail] that animal advocacy is a left wing issue is false. Democrat voting records are better on animal issues overall, but the exceptions are shining.
Republicans John Ensign of Nevada, and Christopher Shays of Connecticut are just two of those current outstanding exceptions. And former Senator Robert Smith of New Hampshire, an ultra right wing conservative, is the only person to date to speak passionately against vivisection on the Senate Floor.

Perhaps most notably, one of the finest books ever written on animal protection is “Dominion: The Power of Man, The Suffering of Animals, and The Call to Mercy.” It is by Matthew Scully, who worked as a senior speechwriter for George W Bush, penning the book on his off hours. Scully sees his compassion, or mercy, for animals, and his vegan lifestyle, as perfectly in line with his Catholic conservative values ...

In an extraordinary twist of fate, Scully was selected to write Sarah Palin’s speech, which aired last night. Let us hope that in the time Scully and Palin spent together working on the speech, he began to influence her thinking. I hope every Republican on this list will urge her to read his book!”

"Let us hope that in the time Scully and Palin spent together working on the speech, he began to influence her thinking." How naïve and deep in denial can this woman be?! Does Dawn think that Scully and Sarah had a reasonable and open chat about the evils of hunting?! That he gently reminded her that animals are not meat machines to shoot down in cold blood, just as he appreciatively received his lucrative paycheck for selling out the planet by helping some of the most dangerous forces in our history in their bid to win an election? I suspect Scully talked far more with Palin about his fee than her bloody proclivities to kill animals.

Dawn is indeed critical of Palin’s zeal for hunting and her abysmal environmental record, but she would rather be an enabler to this carnage than offend her powerful, rich, and influential friends. I do not exaggerate when I draw a line connecting McCain/Palin to Scully and to opportunists like Dawn.

In contrast to Dawn’s vapid view that we can bring all people and parties into the animal cause, another animal advocate (infinitely more authentic and profound than Dawn), Norm Phelps, penned (in a personal email to me) some extremely critical remarks on Scully and the far Right:

"I think the fact that Matthew Scully wrote her convention speech (which was a masterpiece of viciousness) should give us all pause about the notion that conservatives
will ever be serious animal advocates. I used to think that AR [animal rights] was a non-political issue and that we should keep it that way in the interests of converting as many people as possible and having the greatest impact on society. I no longer think that. I now believe that the mindset that leads conservatives to pursue policies that are hostile to the well-being of most of humanity (everyone except themselves and those to whom they are close) almost invariably leads them to policies that are hostile to the well-being of most animals (everyone except those to whom they are personally close, such as their companion animals).

“There is nothing that I find more perplexing and discouraging than the blatant speciesism that is rampant in most progressive circles. But in spite of this, I have reluctantly come to the conclusion that the liberal to progressive end of the political spectrum is where we have to concentrate our efforts and where we will ultimately find our victory. Conservatives can, in many cases, be persuaded to welfarism (properly so called, not as redefined by the so-called “abolitionists”), but not to AR. Scully’s vehement denunciations of AR in Dominion are, I think, an important indicator of this, as is the fact that this man who wrote so eloquently of the suffering of animals could put his gifts in the service of a woman who practices and celebrates all manner of barbaric cruelty to animals. Scully obviously considers the lives and suffering of animals less important than politics as usual.”

Phelps is right to argue that the Left is just as abysmal in its views on animals, and yet draws this distinction:

“The speciesism of liberals/progressives contradicts their fundamental values, which creates an opportunity for animal advocates. The speciesism of conservatives reinforces their fundamental values, which creates a solid wall. But I still think it is dangerous for the AR movement, as a movement, to align with other social justice movements until we have succeeded in raising their consciousness about animals to the point that the alliance can be formed on a basis of at least approximate equality. And I think a lot of groundwork needs to be done before we reach that point. I guess where I’m headed is that we need to be taking that groundwork seriously and getting busy at it—which, of course, is what you’ve been doing for some time now.”[v]
While I agree with Phelps that Leftists are Paleolithic in their views on animals and we should not be too ready to tie ourselves to a human rights/social justice platform as it is, and that we do need indeed to educate the Left, I have also disagreed with him (in quite friendly terms) that animal liberation is winnable without human and Earth liberation and a progressive alliance politics that fights against the main threat to the planet today, which is the capitalist grow-or-die economy.[vi]

But while we examine the problems with both the Right and the Left, let us not lose focus on the idiocy, cowardice, and opportunism in our own movement, for there are far too many “animal advocates” who are in fact advocates for something far less noble: money, power, glory, fame, and self—advancement. If it was not obvious with the writing of Dominion six years ago, Scully in particular has since revealed himself to be a sham, fraud, charlatan, prevaricator, hypocrite, and (neo-)con man, an enemy not only to animals, but also a de facto opponent of women, science, secularism, freedom of speech, and the environment.

Like the politicians he serves, Scully talks out of both sides of his mouth at once and serves each and every contradictory cause that advances his own good. No principled or consistent person writes a book against hunting, and then writes a speech for a vicious defender of hunting and avid killer herself. Can any animal advocate among us ever imagine doing this?! This is the moral and logical contradiction that would haunt a Kantian, someone with a conscience, anyone with principles or moral consistency. But it never troubles a utilitarian-opportunist.

In a nation rife with political and historical idiocy, layer upon layer of confusion, and pernicious myths linking capitalism with democracy and justice, the masses are so easily manipulated by the power elite that they can be convinced that the Clintons (who are at best center left on the political spectrum) are communists!
And nor is his work done. The Far Right loved his Palin speech so much that they will surely contract him again. Without hyperbole, I say that Scully is less a “progressive vegan and animal welfarist” than he is a reactionary and a dangerous man. He has been the words, phrases, metaphors, rhetoric, narratives, jokes, and overall a key voice and mouthpiece of the Extreme Right who want to take this country back to pre-Enlightenment, pre-secular medieval serfdom where rights mean only property rights, liberty falls to security and hierarchy, and democracy is a forgotten dream.

To end by reiterating a crucial point: Matthew (Straight-Laced, Compassionate Conservative, Corporate and Family Values Man,) Scully is not just a hypocrite or opportunist. He is a menace to all life, beings, species, and nature. This is not an ad hominem attack, it is simply a fact. Look who he works for and examine what they do. Because of the gigantic powers he brings to life, puffs up, drives forward, and legitimizes with the rhetoric of his folksy, small-town populism, he represents gigantic global corporations that destroy families and communities. Because Scully casts the spell and brings out the smoke and mirrors that cover up lies and package a hideous program of destruction as “progress,” and because he gets the job done, time after time, Scully is a significant danger — and I do not exaggerate — to this entire planet.

Scully’s real project is not “dominion.” It is domination–corporate hegemony of the planet and the advancement of the US Empire. To the extent his discursive artistry helps to disarm Congress and to lull Americans back into their complacent and jingoistic sleep, Scully shares responsibility with Bush, Cheney, Ashcroft, Rumsfeld, Gonzalez, Rice, Halliburton, ExxonMobil, Monsanto, and ConAgra for
turning this beautiful planet into a living hell for most of its inhabitants and for leaving behind a 
wasteland and battlefield that will prove even more difficult (if not impossible) for future generations 
to survive, as ever more species vanish forever.

Notes:

[i] For data on the ever-mounting numbers of Iraqi civilians and US soldiers killed and injured, see the 
Iraq Body Count website at: http://www.iraqbodycount.org/. On the soaring costs of the war, see 
Linda J. Bilmes and Joseph E. Stiglitz, “The Iraq War Will Cost Us $3 Trillion, and Much More,” Sunday 
dyn/content/article/2008/03/07/AR2008030702846_pf.html.

[ii] On Palin’s regressive record on animals and the environment, see John Dolan, “Party whores: 
Sarah Palin’s Big, Sleazy Safari,” September 2, 2008, AlterNet, at: 
http://www.alternet.org/story/97207/sarah_palin%27s_big%2C_sleazy_safari/; "Environmentalists 
can’t corral Palin: GOP vice presidential candidate nicknamed the ‘killa from Wasilla’, Associated Press, 
posted September 4, at MSNBC.com, at: http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/26546967/; and ""SARAH 
PALIN SUPPORTS SHOOTING WOLVES AND BEARS FROM AIRPLANES,” Defenders of Wildlife, at: 
http://www.defendersactionfund.org/. This page includes a disturbing video link to what this barbaric 
practice that Palin ardently supports looks like in reality.


at: 
http://www.dawnwatch.com/cgi-bin/dada/mail.cgi/archive/dw1000000dawnwat/20080904102648/

[v] Phelps cited with permission in a personal email to me on September 4, 2008.

Left,” The International Journal of Inclusive Democracy, Volume 2, Issue #3, June 2006; at: 
http://www.inclusivedemocracy.org/journal/vol2/vol2_no3_Best_rethinking_revolution.htm
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POWERFUL COMPASSION: THE STRIKE AT SYRACUSE

Ali Shehzad Zaidi

It is worth the trip to Syracuse University (SU) just to see Ben Shahn’s sixty-by-twelve-foot outdoor mural, “The Passion of Sacco and Vanzetti.” Unveiled in 1967, the mosaic tile mural tells the story of Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti, executed in 1927 for a crime which they probably did not commit. Witnesses placed them miles from the crime scene when the murder of a paymaster occurred at a shoe factory in Braintree, Massachusetts.

After fleeing to Mexico in 1917 to avoid the draft, both Italian immigrants returned to the United States at the end of the First World War. At the time of their arrest in 1920, Sacco and Vanzetti were under surveillance for their involvement in strike activities, and their radical beliefs were used against them during their trial. Despite demonstrations and petition-signings in many countries, Alvin Fuller, the Governor of Massachusetts, sent Sacco and Vanzetti to the electric chair based on the findings of a commission that included the presidents of Harvard and MIT.¹

Shahn’s mural consists of three connected panels. In the first panel, a group of protesters symbolize the tumult that both led to and followed the arrest of Sacco and Vanzetti. In the second, Sacco and Vanzetti, handcuffed to one another, tower over the background in a symbolic representation of their moral stature. Their shadows slant accusingly towards a courthouse. Standing behind them, a diminutive governor Fuller, casting no shadow, reads his verdict. In the third, members of the commission, in top hats and academic garb, hold flowers over coffins containing the bodies of Sacco and Vanzetti.

Shahn wanted to create, as he put it, “works of art in which powerful compassion is innate, or which... will serve ultimately to dignify that society in which it exists.”² On either side of Shahn’s mural are famous words from a Vanzetti letter which conform more to the grammar of the heart than of the schoolmaster. “If it had not been for these thing, I might have live out my life talking at street corners to scorning men,” wrote

Vanzetti to his son from prison, “I might have die, unmarked, unknown, a failure. Now we are not a failure. Never in our full life could we hope to do such work for tolerance, for joostice, for man’s understanidng of man as now we do by accident. Our words -- our lives! -- our pains nothing! The take of our lives -- lives of a good shoemaker and a poor fish peddler -- all! That last moment belongs to us -- that agony is our triumph.”

The powerful compassion emanating from Shahn’s mural could serve equally to define the SU experience in the aftermath of the unusual September 1998 strike. In the belief that current labor unrest and the erosion of the humanities at universities spring from a common cause, I visited SU for five days in September in order to research the strike and its origins.

In the summer prior to the strike, 750 unionized dining service workers, groundskeepers, janitors, and library employees at SU had found themselves without a contract. Negotiations between the SU administration and the union, Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 200A, had foundered over the abuse of temporary workers, pay equity for library workers, the use of unskilled labor, and above all, subcontracting.

Claiming that “modern institutions need flexibility,” the administration had demanded the right to subcontract any department with less than twenty-five employees -- in effect, virtually all SU dining halls and residences -- in return for higher wage increases. It claimed, furthermore, that no union employees had lost their jobs as a result of subcontracting. The union disagreed, maintaining that one hundred union jobs had been lost to subcontracting within the last seven years.

Over the summer, SU Chancellor Kenneth Shaw told a group of concerned professors that while outsourcing was undesirable, SU did not want a contract that restricted it. As physics professor Rafael Sorkin later explained, the administration “wanted the flexibility to do the things they didn’t want to do because they might want to do them at some point.”

Another concern was the abuse of temporary workers who were contractually permitted to work a maximum of twenty hours a week for eighty days at a single job. The

3 Unless otherwise indicated, all quotations in this essay are from interviews conducted with the author in September 1998.
workers were being shuttled between short-term jobs at different dining centers to get around the contractual limitation.

The union also wanted to halt the substitution of unskilled for skilled labor, which threatened the status and safety of workers. Union representative Coert Bonthius maintained that an unskilled maintenance worker who tried to fix a boiler was almost killed when it blew up. The incident recalls the times of James Roscoe Day, SU chancellor from 1894 to 1922. Upton Sinclair in *The Goose-Step* (a 1923 romp through the nightmare of higher education) describes him this way: “The chancellor even carries his hatred of labor unions to the point of crippling the university. Workingmen have been changed two or three times in one week; the chancellor set the maximum price that a workingman is worth at twenty-eight cents an hour, and as a result, the boilers of the heating plant were ruined, and the cost was four thousand dollars.”

Additionally, the union proposed to increase the low pay of library workers in order to attain gender equity. SU ranked ninety-fifth out of 109 university libraries surveyed by the Association of Research Libraries in 1996-97 for average salary of professional library staff. Women held 70 percent of library jobs at SU, but received 20 to 25 percent less pay than men in comparable jobs. One serials cataloguer, who had worked at SU for twenty-three years, was only making around twenty thousand dollars a year. In his June 1997 annual report, Head Librarian David Stam called for higher salaries for library workers, noting that “for some it is less than a living wage ... and is a particularly demoralizing factor when combined with higher expectations of productivity, more work with fewer people, and often the requirement to attain new technological skills within the old classification framework.”

On July 28, against the wishes of a federal mediator, SU negotiators presented a final offer (which would have strengthened the administration’s ability to outsource SU jobs) to the union. On August 16, union members voted, for the first time in twenty-four years, to strike. After the vote, Shaw refused to meet again with concerned faculty.

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4 Upton Sinclair, *The Goose-Step*. Pasadena, California, Self-Published, 1923: 285
5 Unity News (SEIU Newsletter at SU), April 1998: 1
Sensing the distance between SU’s rhetoric and reality, some professors urged Shaw to negotiate in good faith with the union. “As a teacher who ponders a great deal over the implicit social values I am responsible for communicating to my students,” wrote English professor Gregg Lambert to Shaw, “I cannot take lightly the situation in which I am asked to convey the university’s self-proclaimed values of mutual respect, fairness, and equity in a context where these basic principles are not honored by the university itself in its dealings with all its members.”

Ironically, in late July, weeks after the expiration of the contract, SU completed its four million dollar purchase of Marshall Square Mall, a commercial retail establishment near the university. A SU public relations official described the investment as “a real good opportunity to invest in the community and university.” Students were concerned that the acquisition of the mall, which contains the only local competitor to SU’s bookstore, might make them captive consumers. Employees wondered why SU had money to acquire real estate but not to pay them a living wage.

Shortly before the strike, a memo which apparently originated in the office of the Director of Student Activities stated that union representatives were not allowed to distribute information on campus and that students could not do so as individuals, but only through recognized student organizations that supported the union as a whole. The memo reminded graduate students that they held teaching assistantships and fellowships as university beneficiaries. Some wags noted that SU, which prided itself on being the “number one student-centered university,” had become the “number one student-censored university.” The SU administration later issued a clarification stating that the memo had been based on the second-hand report of a conversation. Free speech, however, remained at issue throughout the strike.

As classes began at SU, about 630 physical plant, food service and library workers formed picket lines at fifteen locations on campus. Only 10 to 15 percent of union employees reported for work. Some professors decided not to cross the picket lines and held classes instead at churches, a performing arts center, the Westcott cinema, or at home.

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The administration brought in temporary workers to replace the strikers. Recruiters set up booths in student dormitories. “Need a job?,” inquired an advertisement for dining services in the *Daily Orange*. The administration maintained that students were being hired not as replacement workers, but for the College Work Study Program.

On September 1, fifty faculty members organized a picket line and held a press conference in front of Bird Library. When SU security officers informed them that they could not hold strike signs on campus, the professors sat down for an hour and a half, courting arrest. At a forum that evening, student dissatisfaction grew when Neil Strodel, SU’s Associate Vice President for Human Resources, dodged questions about SU policy on free speech and about the purchase of Marshall Square Mall.

The next day, three hundred students, including members of the Cornell Organization for Labor Action, gathered for a teach-in on the quad where they heard poems, speeches, and live music. One thousand people marched in protest to the residence of Chancellor Shaw. Students demonstrated the following afternoon in front of the administration building, chanting for Shaw to be hired part-time, hoping that he too might someday have the opportunity to experience life without health benefits, job security, or a living wage. Approximately a dozen students broke from the main group to blockade the building’s entrances by lying or sitting in front of them until closing time.

With momentum building, ninety six percent of the employees voted to continue the strike. As news of the unrest spread, parents logged on to SU’s “Q & A Strike Information For Parents” webpage, which reassured them that this union did “not have a propensity toward violence.”

The administration’s stance toward the union recalled Chancellor Day’s iron hand. “The strike is a conspiracy and nothing less,” thundered Day in his 1920 classic of oligarchic kitsch, *My Neighbor The Working Man*. “We deal promptly and effectively with conspiracies against property and persons in other matters. What delusion has closed our eyes to the true character of the labor strike which is one of the most glaring forms of conspiracy the world has known?” Day goes on to explain, in his hymn to big business,
how disorder is inherent in strikes: “The character of a strike is seen in destruction of property, assaults and murders. The call for soldiers and an extra police guard tells the story. The strike stands for everything which America opposes. It is violence. It is riot. It opposes liberty. It is dangerous to life by exciting men to unrestrained and dangerous passions.”  

While passions were high during the 1998 SU strike, only one minor strike-related injury occurred, as a supervisor hit an employee while driving through a picket line at high speed.

The administration accused union officers of acting against the interests of SU employees. “It is important to note that none of the University’s offers have been voted on by the union membership,” wrote Shaw in an August 28 message to the SU community. “Paid agents of SEIU and designated union officers have consistently refused to allow the membership to ratify or reject the proposed contract.” In response to Shaw, the parent of a SU student wrote: “I assume that by ‘designated union officers’ you mean ‘elected union officers.’ Why not say so and admit that the SEIU has a democratic structure. Unions are generally more democratic than universities. When was the last time that the workers, students and faculty got to elect you or the governing board?” Union members found Shaw’s accusation ludicrous, since three of them had been elected to serve on the bargaining committee along with the union officers. Vanessa Dismuke, union steward for the library workers, said that the members had instructed the bargaining committee not to bring back an unacceptable offer.

After a week-long strike, union members overwhelmingly ratified a new contract granting significant wage increases for library workers and modest raises for other union workers. The contract also included protections against subcontracting, limiting temporary workers to twenty hours a week and one thousand hours a year.

Both sides pledged not to take reprisals. The union agreed not to fine those who crossed the picket line while the administration agreed not to withhold tuition benefits from strikers. Some workers complained, nonetheless, that they were not being allowed to take breaks. Joan Hart, a picket captain, was written up three times within three days and demoted a pay grade for such infractions as wearing a union cap to work.

Office of Human Resources investigated the allegations of reprisals, and determined that supervisors had simply taken routine disciplinary actions. In his September 23, 1998 address to the faculty, Shaw asked professors who had refused to cross picket lines “to voluntarily inform their deans of the time missed so that their paychecks can be adjusted accordingly.” Shaw reassured them that he was “motivated not by a desire to punish, but to ensure that the lesson of civil disobedience is not lost on our students.” That lesson, intoned Shaw, was that “passionately held beliefs are worth sacrifice.”

The strike was the first campus-wide challenge to Shaw since he took office in 1991. SU had welcomed its new chancellor with an extensive renovation of the chancellor’s nine-thousand-square-foot, twenty-room mansion. Simultaneously, SU instituted a salary freeze for its staff and prepared a restructuring plan that would cut 15 percent of SU’s 4,300 employees and thirty-eight million dollars out of its 452 million dollar annual budget by 1995. Nearly 20 percent of SU’s tenured faculty -- 120 professors -- opted for SU’s “supported resignation program.”

In February 1992, Shaw wrote in the Syracuse Herald American that “in order to ensure their survival, institutions of higher learning must now devote their energies to the enterprise of sausage making.” Elaborating on this metaphor, Shaw observed: “Even with the most carefully chosen and healthful ingredients -- turkey, organic cereals, natural spices -- sausage making is an ugly process to witness. But after all the slicing, chopping, blood and gore, the end product can be delicious, nutritious and of remarkable quality. In short, America’s colleges an universities must now pursue -- and a number of them, indeed, have already been forced to begin -- the kind of painful restructuring that is akin to sausage making and has been taken up in earnest by many U. S. corporations, from Chrysler and IBM to Time Inc. Ugly in the process, but, if done well, healthy in the outcome.”

The day after the essay appeared, Shaw presented the restructuring plan to students and faculty in Hendricks Chapel. As he was speaking, a series of loud chopping

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noises suddenly rose from the central aisle. Joanna Spitzner, a performing arts major, and Michael Waddell, an illustration major, were kneeling on the chapel floor, slicing oranges on a cutting board. University security quickly led the seniors away. “The chancellor is very good at talking around questions,” said Waddell afterwards. “It’s pretty pathetic to just let things happen.”

Soon afterwards, students and professors at the School of Music occupied a dean’s office for a night to protest the cuts to their school; a dean, perhaps a relic from a bygone age, angrily took issue with Shaw’s sausage making metaphor.

Shaw took such reactions in stride. “Institutional restructuring, as I’ve stated, resembles sausage making in its ugliness,” he wrote in his sausage-making essay. “And institutions undergoing major changes will experience a grief cycle just as individuals do, with phases of denial, anger, bargaining, depression and acceptance. In reporting on educational restructuring, the media will be able to report truthfully that faculty and staff morale is at an all-time low, people have never been more vicious to one another, and special interests have never been more in evidence. This should be understood as an honest part of the sausage-making process and of the grief cycle.”

It was to restore the smooth functioning of an educational organization, to help it cope with its grief cycle, that a corporate management strategy such as Syracuse University Improving Quality (SUIQ) entered the picture. “Our internal customers are first our students and also members of the faculty and staff,” explained Shaw in his November 1991 convocation speech. “A total quality management approach leads to knowing whom we serve and how we can better serve them. It can lead to excellence in our processes and in the product.”

Thus, as employees lacked participation in the workplace and outsourcing deprived employees of even the fiction of institutional identity, total quality management (TQM), with its emphasis on communication, helped dissipate pent-up frustrations that might otherwise have turned nasty. By “listening” to the worker, TQM allowed

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18 Shaw, “SU Aims To Cut”: B7
authoritarian universities to appear caring, to create an illusion of participation and a semblance of satisfaction in the workplace.

Union organizer Larry Alcoff said of SUIQ that “allegedly it is to drive down decision-making to the point of production, to accept that the people who do the work have the knowledge, and that we should draw on that and flatten the bureaucracy.” In practice, SUIQ rigorously quantifies the hours of training that employees undergo in a never-ending quest for “quality improvement.” As Shaw explained to SU faculty, SUIQ “not only sought to change the processes by which we serve and support our students, but also to create a new mind-set.”

That new corporate mind-set was ultimately responsible for the strike at SU. Most corporations exist primarily to make a profit. In contrast, a SU faculty committee stated a decade ago that “the fundamental mission of Syracuse University is to advance knowledge and to preserve and transmit humanity’s cultural heritage. It is through the continuing pursuit of this mission that the University makes its essential and unique contribution to society.”

Faculty members typically oppose the importation of the corporate model into the university. “Our students are referred to officially as ‘customers’,” said Sorkin in a tone of disbelief. “Can you imagine? Customers!” Sorkin believes that a university ought “to be a community of scholars dedicated to the search for truth, with a great concern for the well-being of everyone in society.”

Philosophy professor Linda Martin Alcoff also deplores the supremacy of the market at SU. “The philosophy department had to prove, like every department, that we supported ourselves,” she said. “They had this arcane system showing how many students were in your class and how much revenue they provided, and then matching that with the revenues of the budget, which is insane for a liberal arts institution, because you need some departments that don’t support themselves.”

Former SU professor Bill Readings describes the symbolic displacement of culture in *The University in Ruins*: “Interestingly, during my time at Syracuse, the University logo was changed. Instead of the academic seal with its Latin motto affixed to University letterhead and other documents, a new, explicitly “corporate” logo was

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developed, and the seal reserved solely for official academic documents such as degree certificates. This seems to me directly symptomatic of the reconception of the University as a corporation, one of whose functions (products?) is the granting of degrees with a cultural cachet, but whose overall nature is corporate rather than cultural.”

SU’s corporate reorientation led to the recent suspension of graduate programs in German, foreign language teaching, and humanities. The classics department, reduced to only two professors, no longer offers graduate programs. Classics professor Donald Mills laughed when asked to explain the importance of classics to a liberal education. He inquired, “Have you got about three hours?” If the purpose of university education is to prepare one for the future, said Mills, then it helps to know where one has been. The classical world, Mills observed, is the source of such words as ‘republic’ and ‘democracy,’ and for the very concepts that those words denote. I pressed Mills for a specific example of what the past might teach us. “The Roman Republic came to an end,” said Mills, “when Roman politicians discovered ways of using the judicial process to embarrass and humiliate their opponents.”

As Mills sees it, universities, trying to justify their ever-increasing tuition by convincing students that their degrees will lead to well-paying jobs, are becoming vocational schools. “I personally rebel at that. I think that’s misguided,” Mills said. “I tell my students, freshmen in particular, ‘you’re here for four years. Your job is to get an education. After that, you’ve got the rest of your life to find a job’.”

Mills recalled how the previous chancellor, Melvin Eggers, would often refer to “our product.” In his 1988 address to the Greater Syracuse Chamber of Commerce, Eggers said, “The private nature of their business may have in the past made them wary of public government, but now the two are working in a partnership. Business and education are now partners. It’s clear that those of us in higher education need you.”

The Chamber of Commerce was appreciative of Eggers, and once named him “The Businessman of the Year.” “It says so much,” Mills sighed.

In 1991, Shaw replaced Eggers on the board of the Greater Syracuse Chamber of Commerce and became the vice president of the Metropolitan Development

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Association (MDA) which provides tax abatements and other incentives for corporations. At the time of the strike, MDA’s president was none other than H. Douglas Barclay, the former Republican State Senator who stepped down as chair of the SU trustee board in May 1998.

In the material shift underway in higher education, skills training has replaced the education needed for critical thinking, citizenship, or understanding the human condition and our obligations to the natural world. SU’s future is decidedly high-tech. The newly established Center for Really Neat Research recently won a 1.6 million dollar contract from the Defense Advance Research Projects Agency to help build a mine-detection system.23

Another recent innovation at SU is the Center for Study of Popular Television. While the relationship of TV to corporate interests and the destruction of communal bonds merit scrutiny, it is difficult to comprehend the replacement of the classics with the study of popular television. The predicament is summed up in the title of a new book from Syracuse University Press: *Bonfire of the Humanities: Television, Subliteracy and Long-Term Memory Loss*.

In *The Moral Collapse of the University*, Bruce Wilshire ponders the implications of long-term memory loss:

> The numbness and stasis and disconnectedness so often seen in students are palpable and need to be explained and addressed. There seems to be no sense of being part of history, of sharing a common venture with those in power. The disintegration of a sense of historical community is amazing... Missing is any sense that anything is missing. Few students have... a clear awareness that there might be segments of human development which, when laid down, lead up to themselves and point beyond, and for which they have responsibility as the group of living human beings.24

Jamie McCallum, a sociology major and animal rights activist, was among the few SU students with such awareness. McCallum edited a zine called *Conformicide* and covered the strike as a photographer for the *Daily Orange*. The employees who clean

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23 “Revolutionary Robotics,” *Syracuse University Magazine*. Fall 1998: 5
floors and serve food represented for him the physical reality that makes academic life possible at SU.

While McCallum regretted the “dearth of knowledge of the importance of the labor movement and its relevance to students,” he believed that the strike did much to create an awareness of labor history at SU. “The university did not consider for one second the possibility that we as students could learn more from the workers on strike than we could from the professors in class,” said McCallum. “I can’t tell you the number of kids that went out and saw the people on strike and talked to them, and learned in minutes the history of labor and how important it was to these people’s lives.” McCallum said that SU needs alternative means of educating students and collectivizing life on campus, including democracy teach-ins. While at SU, McCallum expressed his concern for others by collecting food for strikers in Watertown and handing out free vegetarian lunches with Food Not Bombs.

Ultimately, the strike was about the search for identity, which made the fight over outsourcing particularly bitter. Outsourcing deprives employees of institutional identity, making them transients in the workplace. As universities strip their employees of identity, they strive to create an illusion of community for students and alumni. At Syracuse, pride in the football and basketball teams goes well beyond the university. In a 1988 interview, then chancellor Eggers called SU’s sports program “a vitality-generating activity, vitality-sharing activity” that “does provide a unifying theme, certainly more than anything I’ve seen in the community.”

SU’s mascot, Otto the Orange, an orange ball with a face, looks as though it might have escaped from an M&Ms commercial or a Tom Tomorrow cartoon strip. It is supposed to represent the school spirit that has powered SU sports to great heights. Sociology graduate student Katherine Gregory described the mascot’s omnipresence on campus as a sort of “forced frivolity.” “They’re reproducing identity through their sports, their athletic teams, and... this orange man, whatever it is,” said Gregory. “They want to instill it in their students so that they will eventually send their alumni checks.” In a letter to Shaw in support of the strikers, Gregory wrote: “After years of temporary positions at numerous institutions of higher education, on the most personal level, I grasp the feeling
of ‘disposability’ in the workplace. I spent over eight years without health insurance or benefits.”

While Gregory appears to have few illusions about the university in general, or about SU in particular, she says that she came to SU in search of a “refuge.” That search may well prove futile. At his convocation, Shaw quoted the University of Pennsylvania’s Robert Zemsky who said: “We are coming to the end of sanctuary. The end of a time in which America’s colleges and universities were sheltered from the cold winds that buffeted other institutions.” Shaw then went on to say that SU was now “part of the larger action” and that “clearly, ‘the end of sanctuary’ includes Syracuse.”

One cannot help but be struck by the composition of the SU trustee board. Missing are the historians, poets, artists, scientists, heads of cultural institutions, and educators. SU trustees represent top investment firms, banks, and power companies. In 1998, honorary SU trustees included Roy Bernardi, the mayor of Syracuse whose budgets devastated local schools and Governor George Pataki, who enacted the largest cuts to higher education in the history of New York State.

Professor Sorkin views the conflicts at SU as systemic rather than local. “You think that some particular conjunction of events has happened at your university, that some particular administrator got in and followed this corporate model,” he said. “But every place you go, you find the exact same phenomenon has occurred. The language is the same, the rationales are the same. It would be interesting to see the mechanism by which this is achieved.” Sorkin believes that a long-term process is underway “for universities to be absorbed into the capitalist economy, into capitalist culture, and the capitalist way of organizing things,” since “it’s natural for capitalism to penetrate every institution and reorganize it along its own lines.” Gregory sees events at SU in a similar light. “What’s being said here is being said at a dozen universities throughout the northeast. The same story. The same dehumanization,” she said.

Even so, faculty, employees and students spoke of a new feeling in the air, of exchanged looks of complicity in hallways, dining halls, and parking lots. “They [the

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25 Shaw, “Building On Strength: 7
administration] thought the strike would fracture this campus, but it has actually brought everyone together,” said union representative Coert Bonthius.26

The union victory surpassed the guarantees in the new contract. The strike ended the invisibility of those who clean the floors, prepare the food, mow the lawns, and fix the heaters. It revived a sense of identity and community, bringing Shahn’s powerful compassion to our remembrance, and his mural to life.27

Globally Segmented Labor Markets: The Coming of the Greatest Boom & Bust, Without the Boom

John Asimakopoulos

A world Social Structure of Accumulation (SSA) is forming based on global segmentation of labor, financialization, and a neoliberal trade regime. Unlike its Fordist era counterpart, this SSA lacks a corresponding regime for consumption because it has outsourced production to low-wage authoritarian regions. This is resulting in inadequate purchasing power within developed nations for whom global production is intended, raising the potential of global crisis. In fact, these emerging structures may implode before any significant accumulation occurs when the US consumer debt bubble that has been fueling consumption bursts. The paper concludes that the emerging system is intensifying class contradictions embedded in private property relations that will lead to intensified downturns. Therefore, the only structural solution is not reform but fundamental reorganization of socioeconomic relations. However, this requires a new transnational labor-activist movement willing to challenge the legitimacy of capitalism with radical counter-ideology and militant direct action.

KEYWORDS: Social Structures of Accumulation, Labor Segmentation, Neoliberal Globalization, Social Movements, IMF, WTO.

INTRODUCTION

The emerging production model referred to as globalization is reexamined using the institutional framework of Social Structures of Accumulation (SSA). According to SSA theory, multiple social and historical factors, rather than mechanistic economics, determine economic growth. Specifically, capitalists invest on expectations of return. These expectations are shaped by external economic, as well as political and ideological conditions. This external environment is referred to as the SSA, which not only determines economic expansion, but also the class

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distribution of economic gains. Important features of the institutional environment are the system of money and credit, the pattern of state involvement in the economy, and the structure of class conflict (Gordon et al. 1982).

The structure of class conflict is of particular importance because it determines the shape of institutional arrangements and whether they will be conducive to investment. SSA also holds that expansionary periods eventually end due to institutional relations becoming ossified, relative to the demands of new economic realities (Kotz et al. 1994). This is the Marxist argument of the relations of production (institutional relations) becoming fetters to the forces of production (industrial capacity) (Marx and Engels 1978). Lastly, this approach views the development of each SSA ‘as historically contingent, its internal unity as historically contingent, and its disintegration as historically contingent’ (McDonough 1994: 78).

Furthermore, historically contingent class conflicts and inter-capitalists rivalries result in an uneven process of growth and accumulation. In addition, there is unevenness built into the system exemplified by the business cycle and Kondratieff long waves. In turn, with each business cycle there results a greater concentration of capital and a reduction in the size of the capitalist class. It is argued that a global SSA is forming based on the solidifying regimes of financialization, neoliberal trade, and a new global segmentation of labor resulting from, and intensifying, the defeat of developed nation working classes. But, as the historical process of capital concentration is intensifying, occurring at the international versus national level, the fundamental mechanics of capitalism remain unchanged. However, this presents a qualitative break from the past in that corporations have severed the flow of a national business cycle by outsourcing production to nations with preindustrial labor and civil rights conditions for cheap disciplined workers while depending on market based consumption in advanced nations. This
leads to reductions in purchasing power without a mechanism to restore income flows back to the worker-consumers of developed nations. Consequently, the class contradictions of the new system may result in global economic stagnation, if not collapse, without real new growth-accumulation. The reason is that the new regime of global production lacks a corresponding regime for consumption. Inevitably this will cause stagnation due to the classic contradiction of overproduction-underconsumption emanating from capitalist private property relations. Therefore, a structural solution is not reform but altering property relations toward anarcho-communist forms of societal organization, allowing for the uninterrupted flow of production-consumption (market clearing).

For this paper, the working-class includes any person or household that does not own adequate means of production as to have a relatively high living standard without dependency on paid work. Outsourcing will refer to the transfer of production from developed to developing regions and the strategic decision to make new investments in the latter. It is also assumed that corporations reflect the interests of the upper-class which owns them, thus the two will be used interchangeably. The upper-class controls the state which protects and promotes their interests. Market clearing occurs when purchasing power allows aggregate demand to equal output (there are no market shortages or surpluses). Neoliberalism and globalization refer to free trade/capital flows; outsourcing; anti-labor policies; privatization and deregulation; upper-class tax-cuts; and cuts in social spending. As known, the principle of self-organization refers to a form of direct democracy (people representing themselves), while self-direction refers to worker owned and operated collective production.

INSIDE THE HEGEMONIC STATE

That states represent the interests of their governing elites is not new. What is new, deserving analysis is how this is done today and by whom. Specifically, US corporations have
managed to construct neoliberal global regimes through control of domestic political, financial, and ideological institutions. These institutions are then used to develop and promote a dominant ideology (expressed through neoliberal policies) that legitimize capitalist relations in production and consumption domestically and abroad (figure 1). First, the elite are class-conscious of their common interests making them a class-for-themselves (Domhoff 1975; Mills 2000). These upper-class interests are reflected in the behavior of America’s top financial institutions which form direct and indirect interlocks with the board of directors of major corporations (Mariolis 1975; Mintz and Schwartz 1985; US Senate Committee on Governmental Affairs 1978b). This allows banks to function as coordinators and facilitators of capitalist interests (Domhoff 2002). For example, banks are the major stock voters in over 122 top US corporations (US Senate Committee on Governmental Affairs 1978a). These interlocks reduce competition among companies by creating a common business agenda. Financial institutions also assist in formulating unified political agendas for corporations and the wealthy (Domhoff 2002; Mizruchi 1992). Thus, financial institutions function as ringleaders for forming a unified and highly conscious corporate-capitalist class.

Second, corporations have secured control of public policy formation by their de facto influence over major think tanks, foundations, universities, and advisory groups through their deep and historical financial funding and staffing (Domhoff 2002). For example, The Council on Foreign Relations and The Conference Board are major policy formation groups with expansive ties to government and are mostly dominated by corporate executives and members of the upper class. Third, corporations have achieved control over the legislative process (the rule making) through lobbying, political contributions, political office staffing (despite clear conflicts of interest), and corruption (Palast 2004). For example, corporate executives are often put in
governmental positions responsible for the policing of the very industries they came from. Treasury Secretary Henry Paulson, while he was the CEO of Goldman Sacks, requested the deregulations from the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) which caused the 2008 meltdown. He convinced the SEC to allow major financial institutions to increase their leverage and risk exposure by exempting them from the *net capital rule* that required them to hold higher capital reserves. As Treasury Secretary, he then asked for the epic bailout of 2008 benefiting financial corporations which he has always represented. Fourth, corporations control the free flow of information and influence public perceptions by owning most means of disseminating information—the media (Goodman and Dretzin 2005). Media concentration combined with corporate governance ensure the

**Figure 1. The Corporate Control Model**
reproduction and reinforcement of the dominant ideology using advanced propaganda models while neutralizing critical dissent as exemplified by Rupert Murdoch’s Fox network (Chomsky 1989, 2002; Greenwald 2004) or the wide spread purging of progressive scholars from academia. Having secured control over domestic policy formation and implementation, corporations are expanding neoliberalism globally through the US government, which effectively controls the rule-making of the new regimes (McMichael 2008).

**COMPONENTS OF THE EMERGING GLOBAL SSA**

Given the declining rate of profit since the 1970s within developed nations, capitalism has pursued surplus value through globalization (Harvey 2006). But, is this the beginning of a new mode of production? The answer is no because these changes are more accurately described as evolutions of a fundamentally capitalist mode of production (Wolfson 2003). Rather, we are witnessing the formation of a new US led global SSA (or hegemonic regime in the language of political scientists) based on three emerging regimes. The first is the financial regime based on the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) functioning as (de)regulatory institutions for the global economy (O’Hara 2001; Peck 2002). The second is a neoliberal trade regime expressed by the World Trade Organization (WTO) and Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) (McMichael 2008). The third involves globally segmented labor markets made possible by, and intensifying, the defeat of national working classes. The origins of these regimes can be traced back to developed nations, in particular the hegemonic US and to a lesser degree the EU. In fact, we now have the emergence of *global managers* consisting of transnational corporations and banks, the WTO, World Bank and IMF, and the G-7 (McMichael 2008).
The Financial Regime

The formation of the new financial regime centered on the IMF, World Bank, and transnational banks can be traced to the 1980s. Its creation came out of the collapse of Bretton Woods in the 1970s. At that time transnational banks were forming providing offshore tax havens without controls on capital flows for transnational corporations. The banks accumulated massive reserves from corporate accounts which were then lent-out to developing nations creating the foundation for the 1980s debt crises. These developments and corporate behavior were also a major cause for the demise of the Bretton Woods regime (which had institutionalized the old colonial relations) and financial deregulation (e.g. of capital flows and currency exchange rates, causing the Mexican currency crisis in 1994 and Asia in 1997). In the wake of the 1980s debt crises which followed, the role of the World Bank and IMF changed qualitatively by adopting neoliberal principles leading to the formation of new financial and trade regimes. The adoption of neoliberal ideology by these institutions was assured given that the US has 16.79 percent of the vote at the IMF and 16.38 percent at the World Bank—shares multiple times more than that of any other single nation; the US and EU have 48.88 percent of the vote at the IMF and 44.94 percent at the World Bank; and traditionally the World Bank is headed by an American and the IMF by a European (IMF 2007; World Bank 2007).

Some scholars such as Panitch and Gindin (2005) argue that the financial regime is not new. Rather, it is a continuation of forces dating to the formation of Bretton Woods when the financial sector was requesting policies that are associated today with neoliberalism such as free capital flows. That financial or any other capital was opposed to regulation that it did not control should not be surprising. What is important is that at the end of the day Bretton Woods did not include these demands. Therefore the liberalization of capital flows is more properly dated to the 1980s.
although it has its origins in the prior system. Interestingly, Panitch and Gindin seem to acknowledge this qualitative shift ‘The impact on American financial institutions of inflation, low real interest rates and stagnant profits in the 1970s accelerated the qualitative transformations [italics added] of these years, which increasingly ran up against the old New Deal banking regulations. … This was what prompted the global ‘financial services revolution’…’ (2005: 57).

Specifically, the first major shift occurred when in its World Development Report 1980, the World Bank changed the definition of development from ‘nationally managed economic growth’ to ‘participation in the world market’ (McMichael 2008). This was a move away from what in essence were protectionist policies (nationally managed economic growth) utilized by developing nations toward neoliberal global trade (meaning capital mobility) controlled by and privileging transnational corporations. Second, the World Bank and IMF went from providing development assistance/project loans to reorganizing the economies of the poor nations in crisis through policy/structural adjustment loans. For example when poor nations are forced to seek help from the IMF (as a lender of last resort) they must agree to neoliberal reorganization of their economy—especially privatization before obtaining assistance from the World Bank and transnational banks. In addition to privatization of state resources, these measures which reflect the 1980s Thatcher/Reaganite ideology include severe reductions in public spending, currency devaluation, and wage reductions to attract ‘foreign investment’ as a result of decreased export prices.

Therefore, the emerging financial regime is designed to facilitate global capital mobility in search of profits via cheap labor. The importance of capital mobility and privatization is that it makes possible the financing of production and ownership of national resources in developing
regions. This is demonstrated by the record level of net Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) inflows to China which have intensified upon its WTO entry in 2001 (US Census Bureau 2006a). In fact, the implementation of such policies has been followed by intensification in FDI flows to extremely poor nations given no restrictions on profit repatriation. Prior to such liberalization, nations imposed restrictions on the levels of FDI flows and foreign ownership of domestic industries to maintain control over their economy. However, this made it difficult for transnational corporations to engage in their investment strategies. More important than rock-bottom prices for national resources, the regime secures the repatriation of profits from production in developing nations. The threat of capital mobility also makes it possible for corporations to continuously extract concessions from developing host nations and to discipline uncooperative governments. Finally, corporations reap tax benefits with international shell accounting and offshore banking which the financial regime makes possible.

Is this a stable regime and what about inter-state rivalries? In terms of inter-state rivalries, the financial regime is the most stable out of the three which constitute the emerging SSA. This is true because it institutionalizes US global financial interests tying the economies of other nations to it. According to Panitch and Gindin ‘the globalization of finance has included the Americanization of finance, and the deepening and extension of financial markets has become more than ever fundamental to the reproduction and universalization of American power’ (2005: 47). However, this may not be sufficient to stabilize the global system of which financialization is but only a component. More specifically, as argued by Frank:

… financial instruments have been ever further compounding already compounded interest on the real properties in which their stake and debts are based, which has contributed to the spectacular growth of this financial world. Nonetheless, the financial pyramid that we see in all its splendour and brilliance, especially in its centre at Uncle Sam’s home, still sits on top of a real world producer-merchant-consumer base, even if the financial one also provides credit for these real world transactions. … As world consumer of last resort … Uncle Sam
performs this important function in the present-day global political-economic division of labour. Everybody else produces and needs to export while Uncle Sam consumes and needs to import. … [a significant reduction in US consumption] may involve a wholesale reorganisation of the world political economy presently run by Uncle Sam. (2006: 30-1)

Therefore, the Achilles heel of the system remains consumption. This is true even if nations such as China and Japan have no choice but to participate in the financial regime through purchases of T-Bills to prop-up the value of the dollar and thus US consumption/imports. In other words, even a global financial regime is dependent on a balance between production and consumption leading us back to purchasing power and aggregate demand as will be addressed.

*The Neoliberal Trade Regime*

Corporations however needed another element present in order to take full advantage of globalized production. While the financial regime secures capital mobility, the global trade regime centered on the WTO and other FTAs is needed to secure mobility of production. The blueprint was the 1994 North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). NAFTA allowed the free flow of goods and investment *but not of people* between an industrialized high-wage region and a developing one with extremely low wages. According to Scott et al.:

> NAFTA … provided investors with a unique set of guarantees designed to stimulate foreign direct investment and the movement of factories within the hemisphere, especially from the United States to Canada and Mexico. Furthermore, no protections were contained in the core of the agreement to maintain labor or environmental standards. As a result, NAFTA tilted the economic playing field in favor of investors, and against workers and the environment, resulting in a hemispheric “race to the bottom” in wages and environmental quality … (2006: 4)

It was predicted by proponents that NAFTA would lead to a US trade surplus with Mexico. Instead, from 1993 to 2004, it rapidly led to a $107.3 billion trade deficit and a loss of 1,015,291 US jobs (Scott et al. 2006: 5).

The establishment of the WTO in 1995 extended these dynamics to a global scale. For example, the US trade deficit with pre-WTO China averaged $9 billion per year from 1997 to
2001 (Scott 2007). When China entered the WTO in 2001, the deficit began to average $38 billion per year from 2001 to 2006. As a result of these investment flows:

The rise in the U.S. trade deficit with China between 1997 and 2006 has displaced production that could have supported 2,166,000 U.S. jobs. Most of these jobs (1.8 million) have been lost since China entered the WTO in 2001. Between 1997 and 2001, growing trade deficits displaced an average of 101,000 jobs per year ... Since China entered the WTO in 2001, job losses increased to an average of 441,000 per year. (Scott 2007: 1)

Furthermore, between 1948 and 1970 there were only six FTAs, 34 from 1971 to 1991, but after the establishment of the WTO in 1995 the number of FTAs reached 181 by 2002 spreading neoliberal trade far and wide (table 1). The WTO itself is the successor to GATT (1948) which the US created as an alternative to the International Trade Organization because it included the UN’s Declaration of Human Rights such as full employment, social security, etc. Consequently, the WTO reflects the interests of its creator and dominant state(s). As with all past global systems of accumulation, the WTO is technically an independent institution (to give it the semblance of legitimacy) which in practice is defined by the hegemonic state (US policy) and to a lesser degree the elites of other developed nations.

This neoliberal trade regime allows corporations to safely move production around the globe in search of low labor costs and financial incentives without fear of tariffs or barriers in order to boost historically declining profits. For example, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) estimates that 20 percent of US outward direct investment is protected by FTAs, 43 percent for Canada, and over 60 percent for the UK (2005: 36). Even Japan, which has only recently accelerated its FTA memberships, has 12 percent of its outward FDI protected. In addition to lowering transaction costs for globalized production, FTAs also guarantee that once the goods are produced in low-wage regions they can be exported
unhindered into developed nations like the US for market based consumption. Barriers to trade would have made this unprofitable, thus limiting the extent of globalization.

Table 1. Total Number of Regional Trade Agreements 1948 – 2002

<table>
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<tr>
<th>YEAR OF ENTRY INTO FORCE</th>
<th>NUMBER OF REGIONAL TRADE AGREEMENTS</th>
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Source: Global Policy Forum http://www.globalpolicy.org/socecon/trade/tables/rta.htm

Moreover, FTA rules are typically designed in secret by corporations and their governments, often with little to no participation of any citizen, environmental, or labor groups. A prime example of this is the WTO proceedings (O’Hara 2001). Not surprisingly, the trading rules disproportionately privilege capitalist interests, which pit high-income workers of developed regions against those of underdeveloped regions through outsourcing and Export Processing
Zones (EPZs) (McMichael 2008; O’Hara 2001). For example, Mexican real wages have remained flat despite NAFTA’s promises as employment increased together with declines in US jobs and real wages:

Mexican employment did increase, but much of it in low-wage “maquiladora” [EPZ] industries, which the promoters of NAFTA promised would disappear. ... the share of jobs with no security, no benefits, and no future expanded. The continued willingness every year of hundreds of thousands of Mexican citizens to risk their lives crossing the border to the United States because they cannot make a living at home is in itself testimony to the failure of NAFTA to deliver on the promises of its promoters. (Scott et al. 2006: 2)

Globally Segmented Labor Markets

These policies shift national labor market segmentation, a concept developed by Gordon et al. (1982) to a new artificially-created global segmentation of labor without corresponding limitations on capital flows. The origins of the new labor regime can be traced back to the 1980s when the US had to contain inflation to stem capital outflows and balance the international financial system. At the time, taming inflation meant increasing interest rates through the Volcker shock (by reducing the money supply and later increasing Federal rates) and containing wage-led inflation from a US labor and Civil Rights movement on its last gasp. The latter was achieved by crushing what remained of the labor movement exemplified by Reagan’s firing of the Air Traffic Controllers. This cleared the way for financial capital to expand its global outreach (by securing international confidence in the value of the dollar) and its merging with production capital. According to Panitch and Gindin:

... the Volcker shock’s contribution to the new priority of ‘breaking inflationary expectations’ in the early ’80s depended on something more fundamental still. ... the real issue was not so much finding the right monetary policy, as restructuring class relations. Breaking inflationary expectations could not be achieved without defeating the working class’s aspirations and its collective capacity to act ... Volcker would later say that ‘the most important single action of the administration in helping the anti-inflation fight was defeating the air traffic controllers strike.’ It was on this basis that the American state regained the confidence of Wall Street and financial markets more generally. This proved pivotal to the reconstitution of the American empire by unleashing the new form of social rule
subsequently labelled ‘neoliberalism’ – promoting the expansion of markets and using their discipline to remove the barriers to accumulation that earlier democratic gains had achieved. (2005: 63-4)

Although the new labor accord had been initiated by Reagan defeating US workers in the 1980s, it could not be fully developed into globally segmented labor markets without first the financial regime to secure capital mobility (1980s) and second the neoliberal free trade regime (1995) to secure mobility of production but not of people. For this reason the emergence of globally segmented labor markets can be dated to 1994-5 with the establishment of NAFTA and the WTO, the final element in the equation. In essence neoliberal globalization, and the emergence of globally segmented labor markets, re-institutionalizes the old Bretton Woods core-periphery relations which it had institutionalized in turn from the pre-world war colonial system. Effectively, the world’s poor are trapped in regions of absolute-poverty-wages, creating a modern serfdom. According to Satterfield:

The Internal ‘logic’ of the new SSA is that of a core-periphery model of accumulation. It can be successfully adopted by a subset of national economies (the core) [i.e. U.S., E.U., and Japan], but these, in turn, require the existence of a periphery of non-participating economies from which they are able to import unemployment as a worker discipline device [which means that] a credible threat to re-locate production is necessary. (cited in Peck 2002: 212)

It follows that corporations also use the threat of outsourcing to discipline developed-region workers by arguing their wages and benefits are too high and thus not globally competitive. This in turn accelerates the downward spiral in labor standards. However, one could argue the problem is low wages in poor regions that need to be raised. This is why many scholars and activists have argued in favor of fair trade rather than free trade (McMichael 2008).

More importantly, global segmentation of labor markets presents a qualitative change in that it institutionalizes and intensifies a 1970s labor accord based on defeated national working-classes by updating the traditional core-periphery divide of colonialism/neo-colonialism. This
creates high-income regions (figure 2) of *democratic market based consumption*, where consumers are given greater sovereignty and consumption opportunities. However, as workers, they experience flat real wages, increasing inequality, and the erosion of social safety nets such as pensions, healthcare benefits, and job security (Dorgan 2006; Peck 2002; US Census Bureau 2006b, 2006c). Low-income regions of *authoritarian production* such as China are also created where the great majority of people remain subsistence-wage consumers. For example, ‘it has been estimated that wages in China would be 47 to 85 percent higher in the absence of labor repression’ (Scott 2007: 1). All too often these workers experience flat and extremely low incomes, violations of basic human and labor rights, and sweatshop conditions while independent monitors and the media are prohibited in such factories and EPZs (Dorgan 2006).

The National Labor Committee (NLC) made note of the following:

> The lack of worker rights, especially the core internationally recognized labor rights to freedom of association, to organize independent unions and to bargain collectively, is the single greatest reason that China’s factory workers are being left behind. The tens of millions of rural migrants working in China’s export factories are certainly one of the pillars – if not the most significant one – supporting China’s surging economy, the fastest growing in modern history. Yet the workers’ wages have remained largely stagnant over the last decade. (2000-6 nlcnet.org/live/reports)

> Furthermore, although the Bureau of Labor Statistics does not track Chinese wages, it estimated the hourly factory compensation in China to be 64 cents including wages, benefits, and social insurance (Banister 2005). By contrast, in 2004 the hourly factory compensation in Mexico and Brazil was $2.50 and $3.03 respectively, compared to $21.90 in Japan, $23.17 in the US, $23.89 in France, $24.71 in the UK, and $32.53 in Germany (US Department of Labor 2006b). In addition, wages for China, Mexico, and Brazil have remained relatively flat since the 1990s as other parts of the world have been able to offer even cheaper labor. For example, the average hourly wage for apparel workers in Guatemala is 37-50 cents, 20-30 cents in India, 10
cents in Indonesia, with Bangladesh coming in at a mere 1 cent (NLC 2000-6). Consequently the promises of NAFTA and other FTA promoters that these agreements would increase real earnings in developing member nations have been shown to be false.

**Figure 2.** The Global Production-Consumption Model
On the consumption side, the average pair of Puma sneakers retails for $70 in the US, giving Puma a gross profit of $34.09 (NLC 2000-6). However, these shoes are produced in Pou Yuen, China for a total labor cost of $1.16, with the worker getting an average take home pay of 35 cents per hour. Clearly, the cost savings are kept almost entirely by the corporation, rather than being passed on to the US consumer. Moreover, regardless of the purchasing power parities, Chinese and developing world workers cannot afford these consumer goods. The worker mentioned above would have to work 200 hours, or five 40 hour weeks, for one pair of shoes she produced with about three hours of labor! In other words, low-wage regions are simply segregated labor markets for production that is intended for the developed regions as indicated by US-China trade flows.

In general, the macroeconomic picture that the three regimes are painting is very clear. The role of the IMF and World Bank changed to that of facilitators of capital mobility by the 1980s with the collapse of the Bretton Woods accord. In the 1990s, the neoliberal trade regime began to solidify with the transformation of GATT into the WTO (1995) and the formation of NAFTA (1994) a year earlier. Once the basic neoliberal trade structure was established it set the stage for the formation of additional FTAs.

Having secured the mobility of capital and goods through the trade and financial regimes, corporations then began to outsource investment into developing nations for extremely low labor costs while suppressing workers at home. This explains why from 1993 to 1998 the top three recipients of FDI among developing nations were China (25.7%), Brazil (7.6%), and Mexico (6.5%), with India also gaining in recent years (Global Policy Forum 2006). The preceding nations all have very large labor pools in absolute poverty combined with relatively stable political structures. As a result, 2004 net FDI inflows to China reached record levels at $53
billion, while net FDI outflows from the US exceeded $145 billion compared to previous net FDI inflows of $11.3 billion in 1990 (OECD 2005: 12, 17, 46-7).

As FDI inflows to low wage regions reached record levels, so did America’s trade deficit as corporations shipped back the output of outsourced production to developed regions for consumption. For example, the US trade deficit with China reached $201 billion in 2005, compared to the pre-WTO levels of $10.4 billion in 1990 and $6 billion in 1985 (US Census Bureau 2006a). The declining growth rates of real GDP per capita in developed nations is the mirror image of these trade deficits as corporations relocate production (and now services) to developing ones, with the most significant drop after the 1990s when the emerging regimes began to solidify (table 2). Panitch and Gindin (2005) argue that theoretically the privileged position of the US in the global system could allow it to experience perpetual trade deficits that nations like China have no choice but to accept. This is possible given that the international reserve and trade currency is the US dollar. Thus, the US can purchase global goods denominated in its own currency by printing money at a cost of a few cents for paper and ink (Frank 2006). Panitch and Gindin though ignore that these deficits have real consequence for US workers. According to Scott:

Growth in trade deficits with China has reduced demand for goods produced in every region of the United States … Workers displaced by trade from the manufacturing sector have been shown to have particular difficulty in securing comparable employment elsewhere in the economy. More than one-third of workers displaced from manufacturing drop out of the labor force … Average wages of those who secured re-employment fell 11% to 13%. Trade-related job displacement pushes many workers out of good jobs in manufacturing and other trade-related industries, often into lower-paying industries and frequently out of the labor market. (2007: 5)

Such outsourcing has contributed to flat and even reduced real wages for the US working-class as incomes of the upper-class rise leading to growing inequality. For example, the Gini Ratios for Households in America were .397 in 1967, .419 in 1985, .450 in 1995, and .466 in
2004 (US Census Bureau 2006b). Furthermore, these shifts lead to reduced purchasing power and hence, aggregate demand. Consequently, corporate profits have also been declining. According to O’Hara (2004), the profit rate for the 500 largest US transnational corporations was 7.71 and 7.15 percent in the 1950s and 1960s respectively when the Fordist model was operative. Profit rates dropped to 5.3 and 2.29 percent in the 1980s and 1990s, while they were only at 1.32 percent from 2000-02. This trend was found to be identical in fact for the largest transnational corporations, regardless of their national origin. According to Kotz (2006) from 2001 to 2005 profit rates began to rise reaching 4.6 percent in the non-financial sector. Kotz attributes this to corporations keeping productivity growth of 3.1 percent per year resulting in flat real wages for workers that saw compensation rise only 0.6 percent per year. The author argues corporations were able to keep wages flat despite productivity growth due to the workings of the emerging neoliberal model. More so, corporations are extracting ever greater surplus value from workers in low-wage regions. This is fundamentally what underscores increases in corporate profits since 2001 when globalization was solidifying instead of innovations and productive investments.

**Table 2.** Average Yearly Percent Growth of Real GDP per Capita (using PPP in 2002 dollars)

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>US</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>2.14</td>
<td>2.32</td>
<td>2.04</td>
<td>1.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>2.36</td>
<td>2.27</td>
<td>2.71</td>
<td>1.96</td>
<td>1.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>4.46</td>
<td>2.75</td>
<td>2.06</td>
<td>1.58</td>
<td>0.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>3.52*</td>
<td>2.58*</td>
<td>1.98*</td>
<td>1.48**</td>
<td>0.66*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>9.02</td>
<td>3.30</td>
<td>3.39</td>
<td>1.14</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
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*Author’s calculations based on data from the US Bureau of Labor Statistics 2006a
(*figures for W. Germany **data from 1991-99)*

In other words, globalization has constructed a finely-tuned system that focuses on the efficiency of SSAs related to production. But economic activity is based on a production-consumption model and it is consumption that globalization is undermining. In the typical
workings of a national business cycle, capitalist accumulation is equivalent to a *siphoning-off* of surplus value and thus purchasing power away from the working-class into the pockets of the capitalists. But, unless the capitalists invest that wealth in activities that generate jobs *and* adequate income, the economy will stagnate due to overproduction-underconsumption. Here, Keynesianism’s importance becomes clear in that to end a downturn, government spending is needed to spark consumption and thus market clearing. This is largely why supply-side or trickle-down economics has been proven ineffective as demonstrated by the Reagan and Bush administrations, echoing Marx’s critique of Say’s Law (1978b). Namely, giving the capitalist class tax breaks, dismantling social safety nets, and creating low-paid flexible workforces add up to capitalist windfalls without guarantees that these savings will be invested in high-income job-generating businesses (Harrison and Bluestone 1990).

As figure 2 demonstrates, globalization is short-circuiting the income flow in the developed regions between production and consumption more so than nationally-based business cycles. Thus, globalization with its combination of an SSA for democratic market based mass consumption (upon which it depends) and the SSA of authoritarian organization of production is siphoning-off purchasing power from producers-consumers in the developed regions at a greater rate. According to Kotz “the result tends to be a high profit/stagnant wage expansion [for developed nations] that faces a contradiction between the conditions for creation of surplus value and those necessary for its realization” (2006: 2).

**TOWARD COLLAPSE: A GLOBAL SSA WITHOUT INCOME?**

The question for scholars today is whether globalization can increase productivity, which would raise wages, consumption, and the living standards of society as a whole (as has historically been the case under the Fordist model). However, this new global SSA may not be
capable of sustaining an expansionary period (Kotz 2006; O’Hara 2001, 2004). This is supported by the data on declining or flat GDP growth rates for the world’s five largest economies (table 2). Although the national working-classes have been defeated since the 1970s, the capitalist global economy still has the normal contradictions found at the national level. Namely, regardless of the global financial and trading systems’ stability, the increased rate of exploitation through segmented international labor markets, and control of the means of ideological production and distribution, a sale must be made before any profits are realized. If consumers’ purchasing power is insufficient to clear markets, then stagnation is inevitable.

This is true because the mode of capitalist accumulation and thus economic growth depends on market based consumption leading to Marxist critiques of overproduction-underconsumption (Marx 1978a, 1978b). Specifically, 86 percent of global goods and services are consumed by the wealthiest 20 percent of the world’s population, generally in developed nations, especially the US (McMichael 2008: 1). This implies that the production of the new global SSA depends on consumption primarily by the US as Frank (2006) argues followed by the EU and Japan. Thus, although the financial system may be stable according to Panitch and Gindin (2005), the overall global SSA, of which it is a component, is not given a severely defeated US working class.

Could high US consumption needed by the global system be derived from shared productivity gains between capital and labor? As noted, the answer is no; businesses have kept virtually all of the productivity gains (Kotz 2006; Leicht and Fitzgerald 2007). What is even more troubling is that the gains themselves were derived not by technologically-induced productivity growth, but by corporate savings, compliments of flat wages and a disciplined contingent labor force due to neoliberal restructuring of the economy (Frank 2006; Kotz 2006; Peck 2002). Thus by definition it would be impossible to talk of shared productivity gains.
between labor and capital when they are derived at the expense of the former. Therefore, the historical trend of shared productivity gains that was expressed in the past Fordist expansionary SSA is no longer operative. Yet, Americans continue to consume at high levels. As Kotz states, ‘Here we arrive at the nub of the contradiction of accumulation in a neoliberal institutional structure. How can consumer spending continue to rise rapidly while real wages are repressed?’ (2006: 10). For example, from 2000 to 2005 US consumption has been increasing faster than growth in disposable personal income (table 3).

### Table 3. Growth Rates of Disposable Personal Income, Consumption, and Saving, 2000-5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2000</th>
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<th>2003</th>
<th>2004</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disposable personal income</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consumption</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gross Domestic Product</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal saving as a percentage of disposable personal income</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>-0.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Kotz 2006: 26*

The answer is debt. Harrison and Bluestone had argued that the growth of the 1980s and 1990s was fueled in large part by consumer credit/debt and government deficit spending (Peck 2002). Leicht and Fitzgerald (2007) also show how the disappearing US middle class has continued to maintain its high consumption levels through debt. They argue that as real wages started to stagnate from the 1970s, credit became easier to obtain. According to Kotz (2006) growth in the mid-1990s was fueled partially by the wealth effect of the stock market bubble, especially in technologies. Most of the growth though was accounted for by consumer spending due to low interest rates making borrowing more affordable. For example, in 2003 the real average credit card debt per household reached $9,000, up from $4,000 in 1990 (Leicht and
Once consumers maxed-out their credit cards at historic levels, new sources of debt continued to emerge such as home equity loans that also reached historic levels.

In 2001 a severe recession was avoided thanks to continued strength in consumer spending. Kotz (2006) explains this was partially due to the temporary effect of the Bush tax cuts which benefited some middle and upper middle income households. He found most of the consumer spending however was accounted for by still growing household debt. From 2003, the US economy has been driven by a continued rise in consumer spending despite flat incomes (table 3). This spending had been financed by historically low interest rates given the glut of liquidity/credit by the Fed’s easy monetary policy, contributing to the housing bubble. The illusion of wealth generated by the housing bubble coupled with low interest rates and flat incomes led to an explosion of home equity loans. For example, home equity loans in 1990 amounted to $150 billion versus over $300 billion in 1998 and $439 billion in 2006 while overall household debt (including credit cards and mortgages) as a percentage of after-tax income went from 30 percent in 1950 to over 90 percent in 2000 and 120 percent by 2005 (Conkey 2006; Leicht and Fitzgerald 2007: 59, 93; Kotz 2006: 11). Thus, the middle class has treated debt as income to sustain an unsustainable level of consumption while the working-class depends on debt to get by given stagnant and even declining real income. Therefore, the question remains how goods and services produced under globalization are going to be consumed when US consumer debt is maxed-out, the equity bubble deflates, and interest rates rise during the housing melt-down of 2007-08? Interestingly, Panitch and Gindin, who reflect the argument of Leicht and Fitzgerald (2007), point out that this new domestic debt regime became possible thanks to the deregulation of the financial sector in the 1980s:

The legislation facilitating competition in the financial services sector was also designed to expand consumer credit markets. The American working and middle classes maintained
their standards of living by working longer hours and going into debt. They often re-mortgaged their homes to do so… (2005: 66)

This is also the basis of the argument that although some financial data may indicate a good national economy, they do so by excluding large percentages of the population. In other words, when it comes to distribution there are increasingly two separate worlds of the *haves* and *have-nots*. ‘A mode of unequal growth [was established] in the mid-1980s, by which time it had become clear that income polarization and the associated phenomenon of the ‘disappearing middle’ of the employment distribution were structural rather than merely cyclical processes’ (Peck 2002: 180). Ultimately however, the global SSA cannot avoid the problem of inadequate demand since massive global production also requires massive market based consumption. Consequently, globalization is the realization of the classic problem of overproduction-underconsumption.

**REFORM VERSUS STRUCTURAL SOLUTIONS TO BOOM AND BUST**

The problem is that globalization is developing the forces of production beyond the limits of the existing relations of production (Marx 1978a, 1978b). Therefore the current relations of production are becoming ‘fetters’ to the full realization of the new productive forces. Stated differently, the emerging global SSA (unlike the Fordist model) lacks the necessary mechanism for consumption which can result in severe economic downturns. One solution would be to apply Keynesian stimulus policies on a global scale. Ironically, this does not seem feasible because the neoliberal ideology behind globalization includes privatization, minimal government spending, and tax cuts. These policies result in undermining the fiscal ability of states to engage in large scale Keynesian spending. Even if this were possible, it would not resolve the class contradictions inherent in the capitalist mode of production as it relates to distribution and purchasing power.
Another alternative proposed by theorists is to promote re-regulation of national economies. For example, Harrison and Bluestone (as cited in Peck 2002) argued that ‘red-hot’ growth would be the best way to reduce inequality. They proposed a ‘Main Street’ versus Wall Street model of Keynesian high-wage, pro-union, and anti-poverty programs to stimulate aggregate demand. They also advocated New Growth Theory, favoring supply-side growth through technological innovation to spur productivity growth. This though, is not possible for the same reasons that prohibit a global Keynesian strategy. In addition, technologically-driven productivity growth has not worked either (Frank 2006; Peck 2002; Kotz 2006). As mentioned earlier, growth in the 1990s and early 2000 was driven by savings from a low-paid and disciplined contingency workforce made possible by outsourcing and anti-labor neoliberal policies.

Wolfson (2003), proposed a re-regulation of the economy by government to balance the power between capitol and labor. His suggestion was based on the observation that stagnation was caused when either capital or labor obtained an upper hand. In periods when capital had the advantage, it led to low wages and a flexible workforce, causing stagnation due to inadequate aggregate demand. In periods when labor had the advantage, it led to higher wages, lower profit margins, and stagnation due to a profit squeeze. However, the capitalists’ control of the state would render government as part of the problem. In addition, it must be tacitly acknowledged that capital will always have a built-in advantage in that it owns the means of production. And although not overtly stated by Wolfson, it is implied that private productive property is the problem.

Another important fact is underscored by Wolfson’s argument of a profit squeeze. Even if labor obtains an upper-hand through revitalized movements and pro-labor government policies, it still would not provide a solution. Instead, this would lead to a temporary illusion of prosperity
and ephemeral gains. This because it would inevitably result in a profit squeeze thus recession and a realignment of class power anew. Such a seesaw between inadequate aggregate demand and a profit squeeze will continue as long as class conflict takes place within a capitalist framework.

A third possible solution is that corporations voluntarily increase wages while reducing consumer prices. But this is another way of saying that the rate of exploitation be reduced, which hits the problem at its heart: namely, capitalist relations in production and consumption. This in fact would be the natural conclusion of all the policies discussed above. Thus, all of the suggestions by various theorists are ultimately unworkable in that they do not state what is clear: stagnation is caused structurally by private ownership of the means of production. Therefore, their policy suggestions are aimed at softening the natural outcomes of capitalism’s class contradictions, while maintaining the capitalist mode of production. This point becomes more so important if this new capitalism includes the normalization of ever deeper crises and growing domestic and global inequalities which Panitch and Gindin (2005) argue should be accepted as here to stay. Either way, all this makes the need for structural change rather than a cycle of crisis-reform-crisis imperative.

A fourth rather dark possibility is that the emerging global elite have the ability and desire to consume at levels leading to market clearing or some sustainable level for a system to function. For example, Brazil and apartheid era South Africa have (had) functioning economies based on an impoverished racial working class. Similarly, we may see a core-periphery divide not based primarily on geography or race but global class apartheid. Such a condition would lead to a revolutionary downgrading of working class living standards in developed nations.
The alternative must be to create new economic models. But to create new models of production, distribution, and consumption, one would have to alter the fundamental relations in both production and consumption so as to allow a mechanism through which global output can be consumed. How can these relations be altered to achieve market clearing? This is where anarcho-communist forms of societal organization have a solution: alter the relations of production in $t_1$ through direct action to achieve self-organization, self-direction, and private productive property elimination ushering in a new epoch versus a new capitalist stage in $t_2$ (figure 3).

**Figure 3.** Dialectical Change

- **FP** $t_2$ → **RP** $t_2$
- **FP** $t_1$ → **RP** $t_1$

*Mode of Production (MP); Relations of Production (RP); Forces of Production (FP)*

Such a fundamental restructuring of national and global socioeconomic organization will not occur from impending collapse as Panitch and Gindin (2005) correctly pointed out, although I argue collapse is highly probable. The reason is that brutal oppressive regimes that are better armed than a national citizenry have proven capable of staying in power many years despite running their economies into grinding poverty as demonstrated by many African dictatorships.
such as Zimbabwe’s. Therefore, direct action by a renewed transnational working-class movement will be required for fundamental structural changes.

This is also true given that countries such as China, who’s own geopolitical and economic interests would be furthered by breaking-off from the current US global regime, choose not to because in the short-run it would plunge the Chinese and global economy into depression (Frank 2006). In turn, this would jeopardize the legitimacy of the elite’s ruling status possibly resulting in a revolt. Thus national elites and corporations in China and other nations may have no choice but to cooperate with the US and invest their export earnings in the latter in order to support the existing system (Panitch and Gindin 2005). Therefore, it is not likely that a global downturn will be caused by power politics. Panitch and Gindin conclude that this is why a renewed labor movement will probably be fuelled by delegitimization of a capitalist system that avoids crisis.

This paper has made the case that serious global crisis is still probable but agrees with the argument of delegitimization. In fact, this brings us full circle to the control model of national elites which is based on a legitimation process (figure 1). Rather, it is argued that the impetus for delegitimization will be the classic contradiction of overproduction-underconsumption (Moody 1997). This could lead to the renewed social movements predicted by Clawson (2003) and Silver (2003). However, it is hoped that such movements be built in time to prevent the ‘Brazilification’ of the developed world which some including Barbara Ehrenreich believe is already occurring in the US. This is a pending new Great Transformation on capitalist terms including a major degradation of living standards no less catastrophic than those discussed by Polanyi (2001) and reiterated by Silver (2003). Kotz concluded ‘…a crisis of overproduction is likely to break out. … the U.S. economy's neoliberal structure may be reaching a limit in its ability to promote economic expansion and avert severe economic crises. … If this occurs, the
neoliberal institutional structure may not survive such a crisis’ (2006: 14). According to Frank ‘The historically necessary transition out from under the Uncle Sam run doughnut world could bring the entire world into the deepest depression ever’ (2006: 32). If labor can obtain hegemony and accept the cataclysmic social changes ushered in by the forces of globalization based on human needs considerations instead (figure 3), we could experience not a dystopia but a renewed golden age of social and scientific evolution resulting from a historic epochal change in the mode of production-consumption.

CONCLUSION: STRATEGIES OF RESISTANCE AND STRUCTURAL CHANGE

The labor movement may be weakened but it is never dead (Clawson 2003; Moody 1997; Silver 2003). Today workers in developed nations (particularly the US as the hegemonic power) must demand initial structural changes that can eventually evolve into deeper socioeconomic changes leading to a new global model/epochal change. Examples may include full-employment policies, universal healthcare, guaranteed minimum living standards, fair trade, industrial democracy through work councils, repealing the corporate legal status of ‘person’ for accountability, prohibiting all corporate involvement in the political process, and independence of the news media from corporate governance. According to Asimakopoulos (2007) such demands can only be met by challenging the dominant ideology with a radical counter-ideology (echoing Gramsci and Panitch and Gindin’s call for delegitimization of capitalism); creating mass support and solidarity through societal education along Gramscian principles disseminated by worker owned and operated media; and engaging in direct action with civil disobedience, violent resistance, and even full-scale revolts. Asimakopoulos offers these strategies based on an analysis of US labor history showing that this was how workers obtained most, if not all, their fundamental gains like the eight hour work-day. Such actions though would require a renewed
and militant labor movement with an actual blue-print for an alternative form of socioeconomic organization or as Gramsci called it a *counter-hegemony*.

To this end, unions need to continue expanding their focus beyond the shopfloor toward activism and global social justice resisting existing legal, political, and economic structures instead of being co-opted (Clawson 2003; Moody 1997; Park 2007). Globally, workers of developed and developing nations have to further efforts for building a movement possibly based on the emerging strategies of transnational activism and social movement unionism (SMU) inclusive of gender, race, religion, culture, or geography (Clawson 2003). Silver (2003) also echoes the call to a global movement. In fact, she makes the argument that the labor struggle has always been global moving together with capital through global production sites and new product cycles. The importance of SMU is in that it can increase rank-and-file militancy in opposition to co-opted union bureaucracy (Moody 1997). Such renewed militancy will be pivotal in the fight for radical socioeconomic demands (Asimakopoulos 2007).

A classic example of a militant union with a global outlook is the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) formed by socialists and anarchists. Other examples include transnational labor organizing by the International Trade Union Confederation with over 300 affiliates representing 160 million workers in over 150 nations; Via Campesina, a transnational activist movement by rural women, landless peasants, small- to medium-scale farmers, and indigenous communities operating in the Americas, Europe, Africa, and Asia; The Transnationals Information Exchange (TIE) and the Canadian Auto Workers both of which practice SMU argued for by Moody (1997).

However, SMU alone cannot succeed without the conscious choice to build and be part of broader revolutionary movements demanding fundamental restructuring in the relations of production (Park 2007). This is why counter-ideology and societal education are needed to offer
a new model of society to be achieved with militant direct action fueled by global solidarity and
independent worker institutions e.g. media, schools/universities, and activist political
organizations (Asimakopoulos 2007). In conclusion, things are getting worse for the ‘workers of
the world.’ However, resistance is possible but based on the classic call for ‘workers of the
world to unite’ and challenge the legitimacy of the existing system. We need to reassert
ourselves and not be intimidated into accepting an emperor with ‘new cloths’ every time
capitalism goes through a transformation. Once this is all said and done then we may see new
direct actions that will usher in a long-overdue epochal change that will benefit mankind rather
than the elite alone.

POSTSCRIPT September 10, 2008

Much has occurred in the world since the original draft of this manuscript in 2006. Many of
the hypotheses either have been or are in the process of being empirically confirmed. This is
alarming. From 2006, the housing bubble burst exposing the pyramid schemes known as
“securitized mortgage assets” financed by easy monetary policy and neoliberal deregulation.
Consumer spending weakened, the dollar fell, national debt increased, yet experts declared
China’s economy was withstanding a weak US consumer market. This could not be according to
the paper. Now, Nouriel Roubini of NYU warns us on Charlie Rose of a potential “rough
landing for the Chinese economy” (PBS Broadcast September 8, 2008). This after the US
unemployment rate suddenly jumped to 6.1%, the highest in five years. Keep in mind all this is
occurring in a presidential election year during which governments have the political incentive to
prop up the economy to influence the election. Current news reports however announce the
slowing of all the world’s advanced economies.
On September 8, 2008 the US government re-nationalized Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac exposing tax payers to five point four trillion dollars in mortgage securities (debt) with a two hundred billion capital injection upon the nationalization. The reason was to prevent a total meltdown of the housing market and thus indirectly consumption. In earlier months the Federal Reserve purchased $30 billion of securitized mortgage assets to make the acquisition of Bear Stearns by J.P. Morgan Chase possible and prevent a global collapse of financial markets. Many reports are routinely announcing statistics with the comment “worse than the Great Depression…” The IMF has lost credibility and is at its lowest levels of financial health in years. This coupled with a global credit crunch and energy geopolitics that are redrawing global relationships. One of which is the slow abandonment of the WTO after the collapse of negotiations in 2008.

The SSAs of financial regulation and neoliberal trade are being challenged within a decade of their implementation not by a resurgence of labor militancy but by the predicted stagnation in consumption which this regime of accumulation had built-in. It could be that we are witnessing the grinding movement of the model from figure 2. If this is all true, then much needs to be done as global boarders will begin to shut down to trade and stagnation in advanced economies will be magnified throughout the global production chain in a self-intensifying feedback cycle. Should nations like China stop supporting the purchase of US treasury bills or begin unloading cheap dollars, things will become interesting indeed. Therefore, as the paper ultimately attempted to show, Marxist analysis is not dead. It is more relevant than ever since the current crisis is ultimately one of inadequate purchasing power, a necessary consequence of any capitalist system of accumulation together with the intensifying busts without the booms for the great majority of
the global population. The genie has escaped national boarders and has become global. Putting it back in may not be possible this time.

REFERENCES


Fighting Against the Conservative Agenda in the Academy: An Examination of the 4Ss of Academic Repression and Repressive Pedagogy Post-9/11/01¹

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With the recent repression on college campuses from the Dirty Thirty at UCLA, where Peter McLaren leads off as the number one threat at UCLA to Ward Churchill recently being fired from University of Colorado, Boulder, there is a need to call attention to a new conservative agenda unfolding throughout the nation on college campuses. There has been an increasing amount of articles in the Journal of Critical Education Policy Studies on the conservative agenda forcing its way on campus (Hill 2003; Leher 2004; Lipman 2004; and Malott 2006), but nothing specifically on academic repression. In this paper I will discuss the popularization of academic repression throughout the U.S. to professors post-September 11, 2001. As the academy becomes a battlefield of public opinion, which will in the end determine the war on terrorism and who is and who is not a terrorist and therefore a threat. This paper is not intended to provide a historical outline of academic repression in the U.S., but a brief overview, which acts as a stepping point to the main topic of the paper, the 4Ss of academic repression. After explaining the current political atmosphere and providing four examples of academic repression post-September 11, 2001, I discuss the possible future if repression is not resisted, by providing my examination of the FBI Academy. In closing, this article stressed the importance of solidarity between academics and activists in order to respond to academic repression affectively.

Introduction¹

The 21st century has begun as a time of war, violence, and terrorism on a global scale as social, political, and environmental problems continue to mount to crisis levels. If reality were a movie about terrorism, the United States would have the leading role, manufacturing fear in the world that a terrorist attack might be around any corner. The threat of terrorism is beyond subjective and closer to fantasy where the truth is a concept that does not exist and terrorism is Peter Pan. The powers that be in the U.S. go so far as to make citizens in the United States fear their own family members—those active citizens who involve themselves in protests against corporate domination and corrupt politics. In response to aggressive capitalist globalization policies, intense forms of resistance are mounting against the great endorsers of corporate domination such as the U.S. and the U.K. These resistance movements range from nonviolent anti-Iraq war and social justice protesters to animal liberation and environmentalists. Included in these ranks of resisters are professors who are developing analysis and theoretical works about and in support

¹ Originally published by the Journal for Critical Education Policy Studies, Volume 4, Number 2 (November 2006), http://www.jceps.com/?pageID=article&articleID=73

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of the resistance to global capitalism and imperialism based in the Western world, specifically the U.S. and U.K.

We have entered a neo-McCarthyist period rooted in witch-hunts against academics and critics of the ruling elites. In an interview with Clamor Magazine, Ward Churchill stated "the techniques have advanced. ... What that era [McCarthy's era] didn't have is an articulated plan to convert the institutions of higher learning to the dominant ideology." In an article "Under Attack: Free Speech on Campus" by Justin M. Park, Ellen Schrecher, states,

What's different between now and the McCarthy Era is that then attacks were on individual professors for extracurricular activities with communists groups or whatever. At no time was anybody's teaching or research brought into question. What's different today, and I think more scary, are things directed against curriculum and classroom and attempts by outside political forces to dictate the syllabus.

While Churchill's remarks are important, they simplify the complexity of financial influence on campuses during the McCarthy Era compared to now. During the McCarthy era the Atomic Energy Commission (AEC), which funded a great deal of research on military weaponry and nuclear, atomic, and other forms of bombs at universities and national laboratories, funded a large amount of military driven research on college campuses. In 1974 AEC went under serious criticism for their goals and mission, which forced Congress to dismantle it. The AEC's goals merged into the Energy Research and Development Administration, which later became the Department of Energy, which owns and conducts all testing of U.S. nuclear weapons. The AEC with the Department of Defense, Department of Homeland Security, and other private foundations, provides funding of directed research in the area of national security, counter-terrorism, and international relations with financial institutions. Consequently, the arts and humanities suffer the most, with cut backs on departments such as philosophy, a discipline which administration does not see as relevant because of the lack of "practical" and vocational skills. Antonio Gramsci fought against this similar curriculim shift, and stressed the importance of intellectual work (p. 27, 1989).

This blaze of repression is targeting anyone in alliance with the repressed as well (Best and Nocella 2006). Case in point: when Ward Churchill made news with his controversial article about the "technocrats" who worked in the Twin Towers in New York and were killed September 11, 2001 because of his schedule lecture at Hamilton College February 3, 2005. The following is an excerpt from Churchill's article "[Globalization] 'Some People Push Back' On the Justice of Roosting Chickens," the full article can be found at www.darknightpress.org:

The [Pentagon] and those inside comprised military targets, pure and simple. As to those in the World Trade Center: Well, really. Let's get a grip here, shall we? True enough, they were civilians of a sort. But innocent? Gimme a break. They formed a technocratic corps at the very heart of America's global financial empire--the 'mighty engine of profit' to which the military dimension of U.S. policy has always been enslaved--and they did so both willingly and knowingly. If there was a better, more effective, or in fact any other way of visiting some penalty
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befitting their participation upon the little Eichmanns inhabiting the sterile sanctuary of the twin
towers, I'd really be interested in hearing about it.

When the Hamilton College lecture was cancelled at the hand of the administration, alumni, and
conservative student body, he became an example to all by the powers that be on college
campuses that whomever speaks militantly critical of the elite are to meet the same doom as
Churchill. Suspiciously enough his academic colleague and fellow activist Adrienne Anderson
was shown the door (what does this euphemism mean) at the University of Colorado, Boulder
right after Churchill hit the news. The reasoning by administration was because of her
"curriculum changes."

The terms and players have changed, but the situation is much the same as in the 1950s: the
terrorist threat usurps the communist threat, Attorney General John Ashcroft dons the garb of
Senator Joseph McCarthy, and the Congressional Meetings on Eco-Terrorism stand in for the
House Un-American Activities Committee. Now as then, the government informs the public that
the nation is in a permanent state of danger, such that security, not freedom, must become our
overriding concern. As before, the state conjures up dangerous enemies everywhere, not only
outside our country, but more menacingly, ensconced within our borders, lurking in radical cells.
The alleged dangers posed by foreign terrorists are used to justify the attack on "domestic
terrorists" within, and in a hysterical climate, the domestic terrorist is any and every citizen
expressing dissent.

The purpose of this paper is to address the recent academic repression on campuses from the
Dirty Thirty at UCLA, where Peter McLaren leads off as the number one threat at UCLA to
Ward Churchill recently being fired from University of Colorado, Boulder. This article is broken
down into three sections. First, there is a brief overview of academic repression in the U.S. with
a section on the climate post-9-11; this acts as a stepping point to the main topic of this paper, -
the 4Ss of academic repression. Then secondly, the article provides a case study for each of the
4Ss of academic repression. Third, the article provides in-depth research on the potential for
drastic changes in public and private university settings if academic repression is successful in its
objective, - repressive pedagogy, controlled pedagogical design, and false-truths, by using the
FBI Academy as its example. Finally, as its conclusion, this article provides methods and
strategies on responding effectively to academic repression, by advocating for unity among
academics and activists.

A Brief Overview of Academic Repression in the U.S.

When the law, which supports capitalism and global imperialism cannot arrest, capture, destroy,
or neutralize terrorists, they go after people who support, sympathize, study, and are scholars of
them. This article addresses how the university has become a battlefield between academic
freedom and academic repression (Hill 2003; Leher 2004; Lipman 2004; and Malott 2006).
Academic Repression is becoming more and more familiar to non-conventional and critical
intellectuals. College administrations across the U.S. have been putting their campuses on
intellectual lockdown post September 11, 2001 (Hill 2003; Leher 2004; Lipman 2004; and
Malott 2006). There is an intellectual war, and conservative body on college campuses are
They believe that the academy is the last hold for the leftists and if they can eliminate that, this country will be a bastion of conservative thought. Do not be fooled, the ruling elite in the academy have been kicking out great controversial minds since day one of the Academy, during Socrates time, and as recent in the U.S. as blacklisting communist professors during the Red Scare in the 1940s and 50s. One of the most famous cases in U.S. history of academic repression occurred in 1969 when UCLA philosophy professor Angela Davis, a well-known international scholar against oppression in all forms, was fired from her teaching position because she was a communist. Ironically enough, Former Governor of California Ronald Reagan once vowed that Davis would in no way ever work for the University of California educational system again, today she is a honored tenured faculty and chair of the History of Consciousness Department at University of California Santa Cruz. Furthermore, in a memorandum written to all faculty of UC, Governor Ronald Regan wrote in June 19, 1970:

This memorandum is to inform everyone that, through extensive court cases and rebuttals, Angela Davis, Professor of Philosophy, will no longer be a part of the UCLA staff. As head of the Board of Regents, I, nor the board will not tolerate any Communist activities at any state institution. Communists are an endangerment to this wonderful system of government that we all share and are proud of. Please keep in mind that in 1949 it was reaffirmed that any member of the Communist Party is barred from teaching at this institution.

Cordially,
Ronald Reagan, Governor

In 1970, as if things were not bad enough for Davis, she was framed and placed on the FBI's Top Most Wanted List for charges of kidnapping three San Quentin prisoners and supplying the gun that killed four people during the incident, which drove her underground until her arrest. Her trial is one of the most famous modern U.S. political cases, which was watched internationally. She was acquitted in 1972.

It has been documented that in the 1970s and 80s University of California employees had to sign a statement saying that they are not a member of a group that seeks to overthrow the U.S. government. But, even in 1915, Scott Nearing, a socialist professor of economics, was fired from the University of Pennsylvania during the beginning of World War I. Nearing was an activist and academic who wrote against the war, including a pamphlet, *Great Madness*, which noted the commercialization of war and another, *The Menace of Militarism*, which discussed the war as a profitable investment. Along with his strong position against war, he also aided in the establishing in the U.S. of the "back-to-the-land movement," as a part of which he started the organic Kokopelli Farm in California. He was also very publicly opposed to the use of child labor in coalmines. A mine owner on the board of trustees at University of Pennsylvania influenced the president of the university to fire Nearing (Ollman August 31, 2006).

Another professor that was fired because of his actions and political beliefs was Edward Bemis, from the University of Chicago in 1894, who was a major influence in the Chicago School (Ollman August 31, 2006). He was fired because of his public and strong support of the 1894 Pullman railroad strike, although it was noted that Bemis did encourage the strikers to end the
strike rather than continue it, which he explained in writing to the president of the university. With the heightened anti-communism rhetoric by government, in 1940 the Rapp-Coudert Committee, officially known as the "Joint Legislative Committee to Investigate the Educational System of the State of New York," was established in Albany by the New York State legislature to investigate "subversive activities" at public and private colleges in New York. Between 1940 to 1941, more than a hundred staff, faculty, and students were subpoenaed and interrogated on their activities related to the Communist Party. In 1942, over forty professors were fired or denied renewal of their contract because they were members of a communist organization or because they refused to divulge their political ideology or party membership. These are just a few of the first cases of academic repression in the U.S., but of course not the last (Ollman August 31, 2006).

Today, academic repression is not only coming from offices of the administration, but from the voices in the university student body and alumni as well. Faculty members are being targeted for the actions of studying, supporting, sympathizing, or merely being a scholar of dissent to U.S. policy.

Case in point the Dirty Thirty, a list of thirty professors at University of California Los Angeles who are said to be a threat to the U.S. by the Bruin Alumni Association. This association is a small group run by one individual, Andrew Jones, a 2003 UCLA graduate who headed the campus Bruin Republicans and who was employed by conservative David Horowitz, until this controversy backfired when news found out that Jones was offering UCLA students up to $100 for tapes or notes of lectures that showed how "threatening" the given faculty members were with their thoughts in their classroom.\textsuperscript{ix}

Furthermore, we can look at the case of Middle Eastern Assistant Professor Joseph Massad of the Department of Middle East and Asian Languages and Cultures at Columbia University, who spoke, organized events, taught, and advocated against Zionism from a "Pro-Jewish" position. Massad, one of the University's most controversial professors, teaches courses on the Arab-Israeli conflict, Islam, and modern intellectual thought. He also speaks around the country, is the assistant editor of the Journal of Palestine Studies, and was listed among "Columbia's Worst Faculty" by the Columbia Conservative Alumni Association (Harris 2004). This case is only one of many that demonstrates that conservatives on and off college campuses are demanding that critical thinking and education for liberation marginalized, if not in full done away with. What they do want is to chase liberal and social justice teaching out of every corner of this country, from politics to teaching. It is clear that the right is in pursuit of hijacking all platforms of discourse in this country.

While many cases go unnoticed, in the realm of silencing, denying hire, eliminating funding, demoting, and even firing, this article will only address four cases. The trouble with academic repression and these various other forms of harassment is that they cannot always be proven; most of the time they are covered up and said to be for other reasons, usually lack of quality of teaching or research.
But do not be fooled academic repression has not begun recently, but has been a reality since the formation of the academy. It is for this reason that other academies were built, not merely for geographical convenience. I do not want the reader to believe that post-9/11 the following cases are the only individuals in the academy being repressed; there are countless victims of academic repression. Finally, but most importantly, I will provide an example of the possible ideal form of education by conservatives for the purpose of allowing people to understand what education might look like, i.e., FBI Academy, after most or all critical thought is absent from universities as a direct result of academic repression.

**Taking Our 1st Amendment Rights Away**

Thus, in the post-9/11 climate, intense controversy brews around the discourse of violence and terrorism. And so the questions arise: Who and what are "terrorists"? And, conversely, who and what are "freedom fighters"? What is "violence," and who are the main perpetrators of it? It is imperative that we resist corporate, state, and mass media definitions, propaganda, and conceptual conflations in order to distinguish between freedom fighters and so-called "terrorists." United States' history is entrenched in defending, by the protection of the Bill of Rights, a small group of individuals in re-shaping the direction of the whole country, be it through economic sabotage (e.g., Boston Tea Party) or violent revolts (e.g., Haymarket Riots). Today, these rights are being eroded by the efforts of law enforcement agencies and administrations that see political groups not as visionaries or patriots, but as terrorists and a threat to national interest (Hill 2003). So, the classic question must be asked, is the United States getting more conservative and repressive and if so, is there a solution to this repression, without the weakening of national interests?

The current political climate in the United States is no doubt hyper-sensitive to national security, but at what expense? What are U.S. citizens forced to give up in order to receive the Bush Administration's plans to provide national security? Further, are there certain people more at threat of being monitored than others? The answer to that question is yes. If you are resisting the Bush Administration's plans of implementing "national security," or are a resister of a capitalist company or agenda, a file by the FBI might be created on you, or your home might be searched without the process of filing for a warrant. Thus, this takes us to a specific question in the realm of political repression. While there has been much research on political repression carried out by law enforcement agencies, there has been little discussion on political repression from university administration, which we will refer to as academic repression. This article discusses the implications of academic repression toward verbal support of illegal actions, the right to sympathize with any group, event or action; support individuals you believe are highly ethical and just, but are breaking the law, such as the underground railroad; be a philosophical scholar, i.e., theoretician of any ideology, social movement, or belief one wishes; and the right to study any topic, issue, or field of study without being challenged or restricted from doing so.

In what follows I will introduce a new concept in the field of academic repression, the 4Ss of academic repression. The 4Ss are sympathizing, supporting, scholarship, and studying. This article is written in hopes of opening discussion of current methods of academic repression by university administration on four professors whom were academically repressed – Ward 6
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Churchill, University of Colorado, Boulder, sympathizer; Steven Best, University of Texas, El Paso, supporter; David Graeber, formerly with Yale University, scholar; and Victoria Fontan, formerly at Colgate University, studier. The 4Ss are to provide a general framework on how an faculty member at a university could by their intellectual work be repressed, no matter what their actions are if on the topic of resistances to U.S. imperialism.

Sympathizer

Academics study others not because of mere curiosity, but because of humanity. To sympathize is to relate to others' experience in order to understand events, conflicts, reasoning, and actions taken. Pastor Martin Niemöller, author of the famous poem about solidarity and supporting those that need voices of support, ended by noting that "When they came for me, there was no one left to speak out."

To arouse sympathy, for instance in the form of comparisons or analogies, is essential for freedom and liberation. Thus it is truly not surprising when influential individuals speak out publicly in sympathy of the oppressed or unpopular thoughts, events, or individuals. It must be stressed that to sympathize does not necessarily mean support, but rather to relate or respect. Sympathizing with a group or individual generally means that this individual understands and can see the justification of the given act or event.

One who is a sympathizer of an idea, action, or comment is common in intellectual communities, specifically the academy, because diverse thought is always praised. Furthermore, thinking critically and from a variety of positions or perspectives is also supported, until that sympathizing is for ideas that are not publicly supported or a threat to the government or the dominating institutions. One taboo I have found is sympathizing with (i.e., understanding) the attackers motivations and logic. One such sympathizer is professor Ward Churchill from University of Colorado, Boulder, who has also written the notable books Agents of Repression (2002) and The COINTELPRO Papers (2002) both with Jim Vander Wall. Churchill, like most leftist professors that are academically repressed, is an academic-activist. His activism and academic work specifically lies in the field of political repression, social movements, and Native American Studies. The limitation of freedom of speech exercised upon professor Ward Churchill, Native American, member of the American Indian Movement, and a sympathizer of armed struggle, is on trial by the media, his university, and the government for writing a book, "On the Justice of Roosting Chickens: Reflections on the Consequences of U.S. Imperial Arrogance and Criminality" (2003). The book has received a tremendous amount of attention because in it Churchill refers to the white-collared workers in the pentagon and the World Trade Center towers as "little Eichmanns." His comment led Hamilton College in New York to cancel a speaking appearance. In "AAUP [American Association for University Professors] Statement on Professor Ward Churchill Controversy," it states, 'We deplore threats of violence heaped upon Professor Churchill, and we reject the notion that some viewpoints are so offensive or disturbing that the academic community should not allow them to be heard and debated. Also reprehensible are inflammatory statements by public officials that interfere in the decisions of the academic community.' Most recently, The Chronicle of Higher Education (May 26, 2006) states in the opening sentence that Churchill, " ... the professor who once likened victims of the 2001
terrorists attacks to 'little Eichmanns,' plagiarized, falsified, and fabricated material in his own research, an investigative panel at the University of Colorado at Boulder has found. The finding moves the university one step closer to firing the controversial professor" (p. 1). In other words, University of Colorado is closer to firing professors that hold controversial positions, those who speak truth to power.

Supporter

To take sympathizers one-step further, supporters are individuals that actively and publicly support actions and organizations, not merely understand or relate to them. Support, for example, could be in the way of speaking, writing, or engaging in activities that promote and advocate for a group or actions. An individual that transports individuals, provides financial aid to active members, or is involved in a given campaign or action, is not a supporter anymore, but a member of that group. One individual that is clearly a supporter and not a member of a militant group is Dr. Steve Best, professor at University of Texas, El Paso who co-edited _Terrorists or Freedom Fighters? Reflections on the Liberation of Animals_ (2004), (which was forwarded by Ward Churchill), who began his public support of a militant underground transnational group, the Animal Liberation Front. Best has written more than a dozen articles, spoken on national radio stations and television, and was a co-founder and a former press officer of the Northern American Animal Liberation Press Office, which speaks out on communiqués and actions by the Animal Liberation Front. The Animal Liberation Front has been labeled as a domestic terrorist threat by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). Therefore, one can clearly argue that Steve Best is a public supporter of terrorists.

Recently, Steve Best has been banned from England, appeared in the Higher Education Chronicle, and has been asked to step down from his chairpersonship of the philosophy department at University of Texas, El Paso, with pressure by his peers in the department, external interests, and law enforcement. The Chronicle of Higher Education 2005, on the front cover has Best with the title of the article "Speaking Up for Animals" [with the full title being "Speaking for the Animals, or the Terrorists?," which is shown with the full article] with only a brief beginning statement of the article "A philosophy professor is the public face of the Animal Liberation Front. Critics say he is helping terrorists." He is said in the article to recruit students and "young people" by Mr. David Martosko, research director of the Center for Consumer Freedom, a Washington-based nonprofit that publicly is against the animal rights movement. Best rebuts by saying that Mr. Martosko is a "vulgar McCarthy-ite. ... I certainly do not recruit students into the ALF. ... I don't even know anyone in the ALF." He goes on to state, "History will be written about them [ALF]. They will be defamed now, but they will be taught to children later. They will write storybooks about these people, like Harriet Tubman. And I respect them infinitely more than I respect a philosopher lost in abstraction." Best is a great example of what neoconservatives and fascist administrations do not want on their ideal campus, for Best forces students to be critical and have hope for a more ethical and kind world (Giroux 1997; Giroux 1988).
Scholar

Since the rise of the anti-globalization movement, there has been an undertone of anarchism in present-day activism: black bandanas, patches on their pants, and black flags waving at every mass demonstration. Some organize so as to develop a Black Bloc, others conduct jail support such as the Anarchist Black Cross, and then there are others that are aiding in first aid such as the Black Cross Health Collective. It is clear that one cannot deny that the most common ideology, which has aided in the shaping of the anti-globalization movement is anarchism. Consequently, it should not be surprising that these anarchist activists are being taught and provided information about this ideology most often at conferences, gatherings, and camps, such as Ruckus Society, National Conference on Organized Resistance (NCOR), and Earth First! Round River Rendezvous. Along with these activist-organized forums, the outspoken prolific and brilliant intellectuals that write books, articles, and essays on the topic educate activists as well. Some of these authors can be found at universities and colleges. Today, anarchism is the popular social movement ideology, but of course the label has its side-effects, notably massive political repression to those that identify as anarchists. Such scholars who have felt or have been threatened with repression because of identifying as an anarchist include the infamous Noam Chomsky, as well as Luis Fernandez, Steven Best, Maxwell Schnurer, and David Graeber.

Another form of academic repression is targeting not the actions of what the activist-academic does outside of school, such as supporting militant groups, but what they do in school, such as writing and speaking (McLaren and Farahmandpur 2005). As we have recently found out, not all topics and issues are open for scholarship, especially anarchism. Not an anarchist as you might imagine, with fist raised high in all black yelling at police at a demonstration, but one that teaches at an Ivy League school on the importance of small communities based on consensus decision-making. David Graeber, a self-proclaimed anarchist as well as an anthropology professor at Yale University, has been informed that his contract with Yale will not be extended; many of course believe it is based on his political scholarship and not lack of it. Graeber (2001) has written *Toward an Anthropological Theory of Value: The False Coin of Our Own Dreams* and *Fragments of an Anarchist Anthropology*, along with many other publications that were noted as being a negative by his departments' review committee, which believed he was too published and publicly recognized. He stated in an interview, "One thing that I've learned in academia is no one much cares what your politics are as long as you don't do anything about them. You can espouse the most radical positions imaginable, as long as you're willing to be a hypocrite about them." Therefore, while it is fine to identify as an anarchist, do not dare profess anarchist theory or advocate action against capitalism or the powers that be.

Studier

In a recent invite to Colgate University by former Peace Studies faculty member Victoria Fontan to speak on peacemaking with revolutionaries, I learned of her conflict at the University concerning her research. Of course there is never a lack of academics studying (also referred to as research) and conducting investigations on militant groups identified by law enforcement and governments as terrorists. From the FARC in Colombia to the Irish Republican Army in Ireland, there are books, articles, documents, and more research on these groups. Some scholars are
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evident in their understanding of the use of violent tactics, in that violent tactics are a means to create social change. Not that the scholar necessarily supports violence, but understands that in fact violence does create change, for better or worse. It is at this moment that these scholars are questioned and criticized for suggesting such a notion, which of course is true, but should not be mentioned. When scholars provide different opinions from the current public stance, they are marginalized and seen as a threat - one that has an agenda to provide propaganda in the classroom. Consequently, they are not seen as a teacher, but a voice for violence. Fontan, who was a visiting Assistant Professor of Peace Studies, was fired from Colgate University by the pressure of fellow faculty, students, alumni, and right-wing think tanks. She was noted by the official Colgate University press release on her work in Iraq as being "'embedded' in one of Iraq's resistance groups."\footnote{14} In no time at all "embedded" became "supporting" and "resistance groups" became "terrorist cells". Her head was on the chopping block with her own University noting to the public that her research is not at all affiliated with Colgate. It left her a lone wolf to fend for herself. Today, Victoria Fontan is the Director of the Peace Studies Program at the United Nations' University of Peace in Costa Rica. Not all are as fortunate as Fontan, as we have noticed with other cases of academic repression, in which professors are not provided an alternative job. Rather, they are blacklisted from the field completely, to only struggle to find a job with the aid of fellow colleagues at other universities or departments. The dialogues I have found are common; these individuals are over-qualified scholars that are not even given an interview for a part-time instructor's position. The reason could be a number of factors: not qualified in the area the search committee is looking for, over-qualified, and of course, too public and controversial because of their politics.

The Goal of the Conservative Agenda

As critical thought is being repressed, conservative education is being applauded and tested by the U.S. government by their law enforcement agencies before it is implemented and/or complemented by universities (Hill 2003). Most recently, the FBI Academy -- which provides classes in motivation and psychology of terrorists, law enforcement, public relations, management, etc., along with training in combat, arms, and vehicle operations -- has targeted academics as guest lectures that are sympathetic or supportive of the Animal Liberation Front (ALF) and/or Earth Liberation Front (ELF) in the hopes of gleaning useful information to destroy these liberation groups. These groups protect the environment and liberate non-human animals from places of torture. Because they pose a threat to corporate exploiters and use tactics of economic sabotage, the FBI has identified them as the top domestic terrorist threats. Mass arrests have occurred and investigations are taking place around the country on people that defend the Earth nonviolently, but criticize capitalism and U.S. imperialism.\footnote{15}

Perhaps frustrated by their inability to catch any significant number of underground activists, the FBI recently began contacting academics and high-profile activists to invite them to speak at their academy. Under the guise of dialogue, their intention was somehow to glean information to use against the underground movement. I was told I had been invited not because of the ALF, but to quote the instructor, because of my "...studies in the areas of peacemaking and conflict resolution." Before deciding to accept their speaking invitation, I consulted the views of about 30 people -- former political prisoners, anti-imperialists, professors, animal liberationists, Earth
liberationists, and friends. As many long-time anti-imperialists and Black liberationists have told me, the old way is not working; we need to gather information on the FBI, as they have continue to investigate us.

After much discussion and debate, I decided, with the agreement of others\textsuperscript{\text{xvi}} that I would go for two main investigational purposes. The first was to investigate and experience repressive pedagogy; the second, to analyze law enforcements' strategies, tactics, and propaganda campaign.\textsuperscript{\text{xvii}} Noam Chomsky (1966/1987) notes the importance of using the academic legitimacy "... to expose the lies of governments, to analyze actions according to the their causes and motives and often hidden intentions. In the Western world at least, they have the power that comes from political liberty, from access to information and freedom of expression" (p. 60). I knew at that time that activists would say I should never have gone, and that an activist should never talk to the enemy.\textsuperscript{\text{xviii}} While I understand this critique, this instance was much different for a number of reasons. I did not speak on a trial, case, or before a grand jury. I made it clear I would not speak on the ALF, thereby preventing the FBI from somehow learning something useful from my talk that they could use against these groups. I as a researcher also found that I would be asking them questions about what they knew, how they believed they would "deal" with these movements, and ending false-truths about our movements being violent. I would speak for about 1 ½ hours on conflict resolution, specifically restorative justice, which I am more than willing to do and have done for military officers, ROTCs, public safety, law enforcement, and NGOs throughout the Americas, in aiding to significant conflict management skills.\textsuperscript{\text{xix}} I also said I would explain why there is no satisfactory definition of terrorism.\textsuperscript{\text{x}} I accepted the FBI's invitation to speak at their academy, along with their $800.00 payment, and donated it to grassroots groups and political prisoners.

The FBI Academy, established on a military base, is a controlled environment, which regulates the allowance of people in and out of buildings and campus and, has faculty and adjunct from University of Virginia teaching its courses. Similar to this controlled pedagogical design is the educational system in U.S. prisons that offer college courses from faculty and graduate students to prisoners. For example, Auburn Correctional Facility, which has a school built inside the walls of the prison, offers G.E.D. classes, basic first and secondary education, and college courses that are offered by faculty members and university students who come from the surrounding area. Before going into each of the places mentioned above, one must undergo an extensive background check and interview process in addition to showing valid identification, signing in at the door, walking through a metal detector, having an identification badge, and having your course physically monitored. Classes within both places resemble a university classroom, of course the prison classrooms typically do not have much technology, but that is to be expected, because of the limited budget.

At the FBI Academy there were approximately 25 students that were law enforcement or criminal justice students from all over the world with extensive history, but mostly from the U.S. The classroom at the Academy was much like any university at first, but what was significantly different was the lack of public access and diversity of thought and students. While many asked critical questions, the dilemma was they were never willing to shed their law enforcement
identity. To learn about (investigate and research) law enforcement or criminal justice, one must be critical of it in hopes to advance it, e.g., from retributive justice to restorative justice.

The Academy with two checkpoints and a visitors' center resembled a modern university, with video cameras on the quad, armed police walking the campus, and a jail to hold unwanted guests and unruly students. The FBI and DEA trained together, but conformed physically and mentally to their given agency. The DEA students dressed in black clothing (black shirt and cargo pants) and the FBI in tan (tan shirt and cargo pants). Again, this is similar to that of ROTC on campuses, to build unity, commonality, and a lack of difference. They also lived and ate together, similar to military boot camps. Consequently, universities are the same, forcing their freshman and sophomores to live on campus, which builds a community of sorts, but with strict regulations and rules. Only a certain amount of people, sometimes only the same gender, and at given times are allowed to enter the living quarters, i.e., dorms. At certain universities, males have to keep both feet on the ground at all times with the door open in female dorms. At the Academy, there was a large ropes course, firing range indoor and outdoor, plus a number of helicopters and four wheeled armed vehicles. Similar to the one that Fresno State University has in the center of their campus, a huge ROTC ropes course. It might have been built because of convenience, but university administration must have known the ramifications of the subliminal military mission it clearly delivered. While the FBI Academy class was cross-listed with University of Virginia, the critical thought, freedom of expression, and diversity of identities that one would expect from a university class was absent. This is not a unique academic case, but there are many classes around the country that teach privately military and law enforcement, with a specific agenda, which they would like to refer to as a syllabus. The one big difference, a syllabus is only a beginning point for discourse; in this case it is a governor of it. The Academy class did recognize and stress the importance of dialogue and the need for privacy with no transcripts (which is common in university classes).

Will the FBI take up nonviolent conflict resolution, in the form that the Alternatives to Violence Program uses? Most likely not. Most importantly, I saw repressive pedagogy, the counter to critical pedagogy (Freire 1970), which is fundamentally based in using false-truths. For example, students at the Academy are taught and memorandums are written that the Animal Liberation Front kills people and Stop Huntingdon Animal Cruelty (SHAC, a nonviolent animal rights campaign to close down an animal testing facility, Huntingdon Life Science)xxi flips over cars, which was stated by one student, and supported by others. I did, of course, explain to them the truth: that the ALF is a nonviolent group; and SHAC does not flip over cars, so that these false-truths will hopefully stop. Further, the class developed into a 'bad cop, good cop' structure, where someone would say something I identified as wrong, while others defended me, in possible hopes of building rapport with me. Students would try to get me off target, e.g., asking about future actions, to which I replied that it was impossible to answer or merely go back to discussing conflict resolution. In a true educational setting, one does not interrogate or plot an outcome. Education is a transformative and enriching experience. Consequently, repressive pedagogy is designed and used by military, fascist regimes, and dictatorial militia groups in hopes to have non-questioning agenda-driven members, which promote or conduct their actions under false-truths. Is the tactic of disseminating falsehood done intentionally or out of ignorance of the real nature of activist groups by the FBI? I believe politicians (the same individuals that
call for congressional hearings on environmental and animal rights activity), who are bought by corporate interests, truly spearhead this propaganda campaign in the form of passing repressive legislation, i.e., Animal Enterprise Protection Act of 1992. The FBI Academy, who is given a budget by this legislation, continues it, be it by their own conscious knowledge or not.

With high school administrations and Parent Teacher Organizations already placing in schools metal detectors, governing the type of clothing students wear, determining what textbooks are used in classrooms, and having oversight of all curriculum, the question must be asked, is conservative education, teaching false-truths, and repressive pedagogy the future of public and private universities? While it seems that there is a push in this direction by conservative think tanks at universities/colleges, there are too many critical scholars to allow this to happen without a fight. In contrast to law enforcement that advocates repressive pedagogy, there is hope in such places as the Army War College, West Point, and National Security Studies that are inviting university professors to diversify and aid in the training of military officers, so they are not trained in a groupthink private environment. I applaud such educational programs as the NSS for bringing their students (top ranking military officers) to universities, where they are challenged by fellow university students and protested by others. A diversity of courses and topics are adding to their broad education such as cultural awareness, international diplomacy, negotiations, and conflict management and resolution. This adds to the tools to be used in battle, hopefully to lessen the amount of violence and increase the amount of nonviolent interactions.

With higher education, which has become the battleground for the global information war, all are fighting for the control of public opinion, via blogs, books, articles, classrooms, magazines, newspapers, videos, and websites. Academic-activists are experts at this game, and in many ways are winning, but the result is mass academic repression. Academic repression has not hit the radar as it should, most likely because the journals and authors which expose repression are the ones being silenced, therefore leaving no one to write for them except for activists. Ironically enough, many activists have a preconceived notion that academics are detached and neutral in the fight for peace and justice. Academic-activists aid in research, theoretical justification, and serve as expert witnesses for street-line activists.

Conclusion

It is not new that the academy has with the hand of the U.S. government silenced voices of dissent on and off campus (Schultz, Shultz, and Navasky 1989; Goldstein 2001; and Schultz and Schultz 2001). Today we see it from the Dirty Thirty, which has direct connections with professors mentioned above, to the invisible blacklisting of professors and potential professors. One point that must be stressed is that before any productive action for massive social change takes place, there must be a theory to shape and sculpt the strategy of that action or possible revolution (Marcuse 1972; Tilly 2004). Therefore, if there is a theory, there must be a theorist, and theorists typically are professors, but of course not always. The powers that be understand this process, and strive to nip it in the bud before the theorist has the ability to put the pen to the paper. For if college administrations stops this, they stop a resistance movement from being conceived. To this point, few academics have helped these professors above, who are being repressed in any of the 4Ss. Rather, progressive, liberal, radical, and revolutionary faculty
members have kept on with their daily activities, with only a few writing letters in support of them in the Higher Education Chronicle, to the given university, or in a local newspaper. If these actions continue, universities will begin to enlist and replace non-tenured professors, adjuncts, and instructors, with individuals that will advocate for repressive pedagogy and a controlled pedagogical design. Professors who are tenured will be challenged on their form of pedagogy, curriculum, and topics of interest, with the goal of demotions and/or firing. This article is a call and a demand to academics to stand in solidarity with these above individuals. "Graeber agrees that awareness and reasoned opposition is key to deflecting attempts to squelch radical scholarship." Many such as McLaren (1997) are stressing the strengthening of alliances, not only among academics, but also among activists and academics. For, as we should know, repression does not only occur outside the academy, but inside it as well. Political repression is not governed by geographical or economic locations; it is only governed by politics. Where there is an agreement with the ruling elite, there will be avoidance of repression; consequently, where there is resistance to them, there will be repression. In closing, activists need to understand now more than ever that not all academic activists have it "good" and easy. We must be in solidarity with all repressed academics that have fallen victim to the conservative agenda, as much as we are with activists in similar circumstances.

Notes

i Parts of this Introduction have been taken from "Terrorists or Freedom Fighters? Reflections on the Liberation" (2004) Introduction authored by Steven Best and Anthony J. Nocella, II.


iii Ellen Schrecher is author of many books on the McCarthy era including, No Ivory Tower: McCarthyism and the Universities.


vi To find more on political repression see both of the books by Schultz, B. and Schultz, R. in the bibliography.

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http://humwww.ucsc.edu/HistCon/faculty_davis.htm
Fighting Against the Conservative Agenda in the Academy


xv To find more out about the political repression by U.S. law enforcement toward earth and animal liberationists please visit www.ecoprisoners.org, August 31, 2006.

xvi We can either be ignorant of the opposition and be dealt whatever blow they decide to deal us, or we can stop our part-time ill educated activism, which lacks knowledge of history, critical thought, theory, and tactical strategic analysis. We must learn from the repression that was handed out in mass quantity to groups such as the Black Panther Party and American Indian Movement, and not merely speak about what has happened or how to cope, but how to combat it. [I am working on a manuscript on responding to political repression].

xvii To build knowledge on political repression, one must know the strategies, tactics, and training methods that law enforcement and private contractors are employing, which has been the case for peace activists for hundreds of years, e.g., the School of America Watch, which conducted through investigations of the classes, curriculum, alumni, instructors, goals and objectives which also included meetings with staff of the School of the Americas. Just as animal rights activists investigate egg farms so do scholars of political repression investigate law enforcement practices from prison conditions to FBI classes. If not for investigations how would we have so much information and lawsuits? If activists want to take political repression seriously, it is not enough to read articles, books, websites, and journals, about tactics of political repression; one must also understand the reasoning, pedagogy, and how to combat it, which my manuscript for a book will discuss in-depth. I have over and over asked at activist forums: who is Robert Mueller? and no one knows; this needs to change. [Robert Mueller is the Director of the FBI]. Activists' knowledge and sophistication must change on the field of political repression; there is a whole field of literature out there on it, but not often used. While I do not advise fellow activists to attend the FBI Academy or work with the FBI at all, I do believe it was beneficial as a scholar of political repression (one who researches and writes on it).

xviii I hold to the belief that dialogue and critical examination (speaking truth to power) is the way to peace, not simplistic ideological positioning, e.g., kill cops or slaughterhouse workers are
our enemy. Therefore, we must look at our interests rather than our position when it comes to political repression. [See Getting to Yes: Negotiating Agreement Without Giving In, by Fisher, Ury, and Patton. 1991. New York: NY, Penguin]. We must not be against the individual, even though some individuals are horrible people, but against the repressive and oppressive formal systematic structures currently in place such as the prison industrial complex, diary industry, oil and petroleum industry, and the US criminal justice system. For example, to free a prisoner one must understand the criminal justice system, in and out, plus be willing to investigate and research the parole board, warden, case, and judge's reasoning and verdict. If repression is to be minimized it must be played similar to that of chess, where the players must think about the oppositions next five movements, not merely reflect and in this case write on the move they just made, e.g., an arrest of a member of your organization. Stokely Carmichael once asked a group of people at a forum (paraphrasing), "Who hates racism?" Everyone raised their hand. He asked, "Who knows who Adolph Hitler was?" Everyone raised their hand again. He asked, "Who has read Mein Kampf?" only a few people raised their hand.

xix More will be written on this experience.


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Reenchanting the World

Ali Shehzad Zaidi

Noting that our demythologized culture has been drained of meaning, Peter Lowentrout argues that the fiction of fantasy writers such as Mircea Eliade (1907-86) can restore a sense of the sacred to our lives and reenchant the world.¹ Imaginary worlds that revive wonder and religious awe are quintessential, for as Eliade tells us, it is through the imagination that “space becomes sacred, hence preeminently real.”² Eliade’s A Great Man, first published in 1948 and written three years earlier in his native Romanian, in what Eliade calls “the language of my dreams,”³ is a novella that, in the tradition of fantasy as metaphysical discovery, explores an existential dimension fraught with terror and wonder. Like H.G. Wells’ Invisible Man or Franz Kafka’s human cockroach, Eugen Cucoanes, the protagonist of “A Great Man,” becomes estranged from others because of an extraordinary change in his physical properties. Eugen disappears at the end of the novella, leaving the reader to imagine his fate.⁴

The unnamed first-person narrator of the novella describes how Eugen, his former classmate, turned up at his home one day to tell how he had inexplicably begun to grow taller within the last few days. Although Eugen proceeds to see many doctors, none can explain, let alone cure, his “macranthropy.” Rational explanations for his sudden growth, such as tuberculosis of the bones or possession of a gland that disappeared in the Pleistocene Age, lead nowhere. Soon, curious onlookers and journalists gather in front of his house. Although he hardly eats anymore, Eugen continues to grow by about a centimeter a day, and needs new garments.

Eugen’s fiancée, Lenora, and a friend, the narrator, are the sole visitors of Eugen, who is cloistered from public view. Eugen will soon experience a tragic inadequacy: he has difficulty hearing and his voice becomes almost unrecognizable: “His laugh seemed totally changed and was ceasing to resemble human laughter; it had taken on a strange overtone, of a tree snapping, or a forest bent double by the wind” (41).⁵ Rather than end his life, Eugen decides to abandon his home and head for the mountains “to see what Mother Nature is capable of doing to me, how far she is capable of going” (49). By then, the sounds of his voice had taken on non-human characteristics and “were beginning to resemble infra-phonic explosions, the hiss, the whispers and the groans familiar in the natural world. They seemed now the far-off murmur of a brook, now the fall of a cascade, now the wind passing over a cornfield or stormily bending the branches in a lofty forest” (53). Eugen has embarked on a primal elemental return.

Looking intensely at the narrator “as if he were trying for the last time to seal his lips and bury his secret” (47), Eugen asks him to look after Lenora. The secret heralds a new
consciousness: “Sometimes I have the feeling that I’ve lost my wits – but, there it is, I hear strange things. I seem to hear a clock ticking all the time, but it’s not exactly a clock; it seems to be something else, which beats regularly like a pulse and beats in everything at the same time” (45). This description of a pulsating world spurs our imagination as the animate and the inanimate disappear as conceptual categories. We sense that the world is alive, not just in the sense that molecules vibrate and pulsate, but because we belong to a living universe.

The narrator takes Eugen, who has the haggard “air of a prophet of apocalyptic horror,” first in a taxi to his house and then in a van to the mountains. The narrator creates the illusion of verisimilitude by alluding to the well-known press accounts about the trip. In the mountains, the narrator witnesses how Eugen “lifted his arms to heaven, creating a terrifying prophetic figure, and began to talk, to roar, to shout, to sing, addressing himself direct to the valleys and mountains” (59). In the midst of his cosmic communion, Eugen utters words resembling the expressions *Vox populi* and *Vox clamantis in deserto*. The latter expression recalls the story of St. John the Baptist, who preached in the desert, and certain biblical passages that illumine the exile of Eugen, who preaches in and to the wilderness:

There is a voice that cries:

Prepare a road for the LORD
through the wilderness,
clear a highway across the desert for
our God. (*Isaiah* 40:3)

We also recall those passages in *Isaiah* that conflate the life cycles of humanity and vegetation:

A voice says, ‘Cry,’
And another asks, ‘What shall I cry?’
‘That all mankind is grass,
they last no longer than a flower of
the field.
The grass withers, the flower fades,
when the breath of the Lord blows
upon them;
the grass withers, the flowers fade,
but the word of our God endures
for evermore.’ (*Isaiah* 40:6-8)
In another passage from *Isaiah*, perhaps the inspiration for this novella, we can envision Eugen striding across the land:

Who has gauged the waters in the
   palm of his hand,
or with its span set limits to the
   heavens?
Who has held all the soil of earth
   in a bushel,
or weighed the mountains on a
   balance
   and the hills on a pair of scales? (*Isaiah* 40:12) 

The narrator returns to Bucharest that day with papers for Lenora from Eugen. Lenora wants to see Eugen again, convinced that she will understand him. When Lenora and the narrator return to Eugen’s hiding place in the mountains a few days later, Eugen is already six or seven meters tall: “When he raised his shoulders from the valley, he looked like Neptune rising from the billows. Such a fearful sight ended by striking one dumb. It was not properly speaking terror, but a strange wonder which took one out of time and projected one into a mythical dawn” (65). Since Eugen can no longer hear him, the narrator gives Eugen a slate, on which Eugen writes cryptically, “It’s good.” The mystery deepens, as it should, for as Vladimir Solovyov tells us, “the distinguishing characteristic of the genuinely fantastic [is that] it is never … in full view,” for the fantastic insinuates rather than compels belief in a mystic interpretation of events. 

The narrator wants Eugen to elucidate the eternal questions: “Tell us whether God exists and what we ought to do so that we too may know him. Tell us whether life continues after death and how we are to prepare for it. *Tell us something!* Teach us!” Eugen can only hint at a momentous reality, for as Alfred North Whitehead observes, the nature of religion is something that is the “greatest of present facts … and yet is beyond all reach.” When he points to the sky, the narrator writes a question on the slate: “What exists *there*?” and receives the reply, written with difficulty, “Everything!” (69). Like the narrator, the reader is bewildered and this perplexity will turn into insight.

Eugen breaks off three twigs from a tree branch and gives one each to Lenora, the van driver and the narrator, who describes the moment: “We took them in great fear, as though we had guessed, as in a dream, that an earth-shaking mystery was being revealed to us” (69). The narrator does not elaborate, for it is the reader who must interpret the image of the twig, evoking
as it does the Tree of Original Knowledge and life’s cycle of growth, decay and renewal. The image recalls the Golden Bough, the magical branch of mistletoe that Aeneas gave Persephone in order to enter the underworld (Virgil recounts this episode in The Aeneid). It suggests that the self is illusory, that we are more than ourselves since we partake of a sentient universe.

The twig is a hierophany, an object in which the sacred is incarnated and revealed, and which, in the words of Eliade, “shows, makes manifest, the coexistence of contradictory essences: sacred and profane, spirit and matter, eternal and non-eternal.” The symbolic image of the twig overflows the limits of a system of thought, like a poem, and as Archibald MacLeish says, “A poem should not mean / But be.” The twig recalls the Buddha’s gift to a disciple, and the quest for meaning that Daud Kamal expresses in “The Gift”:

I have read somewhere
that Buddha
gave a handful
of yellow leaves
to Annanda
and told him
that besides those
there were
many thousands
of other truths
scattered
all over the earth.
It was autumn
and from far away
came the sounds
of oxen-bells.
I, too, have tried
to plumb
the depths
of my being
but found nothing –
neither
brittle truths
nor lush green
lies.  

Though the writer in him “refused any conscious collaboration with the scholar and interpreter of symbols,” 15 Eliade conjures myths and cosmogonies through his art. Eliade believed that his scholarship on religion, written in French, and his fantastic fiction, written in Romanian, sprang from a common impulse, since “art is nothing other than a magical transcendence of the object, its projection into another dimension, its liberation through magical realization and creativity.” 16 He regarded his scholarly research and literary imagination, respectively, as diurnal and nocturnal modes of the spirit, as interdependent categories of spiritual activity. 17 “The literary imagination is the continuation of mythological creativity and oneiric experience,” Eliade observed, and “just as all religious phenomena are hierophantic (in the sense that they reveal the sacred in a profane object or act), literary creation unveils the universal and exemplary meanings hidden in men and in the most commonplace events.” 18

Eugen gives the narrator and Lenora the twigs, laughing as if at a great cosmic joke. Lenora screams and covers her eyes in terror when Eugen tries to kiss her, and she realizes, like the narrator, that it is time to leave. Eugen spurns the last trappings of civilization when he refuses the tools and provisions that the narrator has brought. In the following days, the narrator hears many contradictory rumors regarding Eugen’s appearance and whereabouts, suggesting the limits of human knowledge and rational understanding.

Two weeks later, while traveling in a friend’s car, the narrator sees Eugen for the last time “outlined against the clear sky with his beard in the wind, like an apparition at the end of the world” (75). The final report of Eugen, seemingly unfounded, has him entering the sea, the source of life. The image of Eugen in the sea recalls both the Romanian title of the novella — “Un Om Mare” 19 — and Eliade’s own life as an exile. As Joseph M. Kitagawa notes, Eliade found in his own uprooted existence a metaphor for the modern religious experience of humanity. 20 When Eugen disappears, he leaves the reader, co-author of all stories, to imagine his fate and thus ponder humanity’s final anguish and first astonishment.

Published in the 2008 issue of *Balkanistica* (Vol. 21).

Notes


4. Maupassant uses a similar narrative technique in his novella *Le Horla*, in which the first-person narrator describes how a spirit takes possession of him, only to leave his narration unfinished as he resolves to end his life.


9. Quoted in Calinescu, p. 149.


13. In his diary, Eliade recalls an autumn day when he contemplated some trees as he lectured on Buddhism: “I seem to see once again those large trees, and especially that oak in the university quadrangle that was losing its golden-yellow leaves one by one, and which fascinated me so much that I feared not finishing my sentences due to looking out the window … Why was I thus so impressed by the context of my talk (autumn, falling leaves, the decline of all vegetation) when I was analyzing the therapeutic structure and function of the message of Gautama Buddha?” Mircea Eliade, *Journal III. 1970-78*. Trans. Teresa Lavender Fagan (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1989), p.65.


18. Quoted in Permenter, p. 102.

19. The Romanian adjective *mare* can mean ‘tall,’ ‘great,’ ‘vast,’ ‘renowned’ and ‘long’ (in time duration). The word is also a noun derived from Latin, meaning ‘sea.’

“I’m Lost But I’m Making Record Time”:
A Successful President Transforms Syracuse University
Ali Shehzad Zaidi

The Successful President

In 1999, the influential American Council of Education published a primer on university leadership by one of its board directors, Kenneth Shaw, Chancellor of Syracuse University (SU). Dedicated to “academic leaders… who have created the world’s best system of higher education,” The Successful President is the linchpin of a buoyant success narrative presenting SU, a private research university in central New York, as a bold experiment in educational innovation. Representing organizational change in a societal vacuum, Shaw’s success narrative is persuasive only to the extent that it conceals the decline of community, the looting of the academy, and such corollaries to the successful president as unsuccessful adjuncts, unsuccessful secretaries, unsuccessful librarians, unsuccessful custodians, and unsuccessful cafeteria workers.

SU, renowned for its top-ranked football and basketball teams, also vaunts five core values: quality, diversity, caring, innovation, and service. Visiting SU in July 2001 to interview Shaw, I researched the militarization, corporatization, and decline of the humanities at SU, developments related to the raw capitalism also transforming the city of Syracuse. Shaw proved to be an able communicator of a vision common to chief executive officers at research universities in the United States.

Before becoming SU Chancellor in 1991, Shaw had had a long career as university administrator, including a stint as president of the University of Wisconsin system. As he climbed the higher education ladder, Shaw found that his jokes became funnier. This humor is particularly evident in The Successful President. Executive profit sharing at research universities comes into sharp relief when Shaw advises prospective university presidents that the time to leave has come when “your board provides a Yugo as your company car.” For those “experiencing the highs and lows of leadership,” Shaw provides a concise definition of class in the words of a song that goes, “sometimes you’re windshield, sometimes you’re the bug” (17, 117, 120).
Restructuring The University

The 1990 search committee deliberately sought a sense of humor in the new SU chancellor who would soon carry out a major program of academic restructuring. Radiating earnest cheerfulness upon arrival, Shaw immediately cut several doctoral programs, including Spanish, foreign language teaching, and humanities, and substantially reduced the budgets of several schools, particularly that of the College of Arts and Sciences.

Although SU professors learned that SU had a $100 million reserve fund (whose existence had been denied to the faculty senate budget committee for years), Shaw informed them that he would not use the fund to ease SU’s budget cuts. About a fifth of SU’s tenured faculty took early retirement, including studio arts professor D. Lee Dussell who commented, “There’s much less idealism at the university now… things are more specialized and job-oriented. This is what they think the consumer is looking for. My leaving is perfect. I haven’t felt a part of the larger effort for a couple of years. Only recently have I felt they’ve tried to muscle me out.”

The Syracuse dailies, both owned by the Newhouse Corporation, were enthusiastic. “Shaw… announced plans to lay off more staff... than his predecessors had in the last 63 years, and still managed to project the image of a competent, likable leader,” gushed the Syracuse Post-Standard. “Administrators marvel at how fast and decisively the new chancellor went to work. Students admire his aw-shucks demeanor through it all.”

TQM In The Academy

Along with extensive academic restructuring, Shaw introduced a quality improvement initiative called Syracuse University Improving Quality (SUIQ). Described by SU administrators as a “paradigm of transformation” and “a state of mind,” SUIQ aims to identify and meet customer needs, foster group communication, and establish effective teamwork. This new environment of openness and candor, “intertwined with lessons in civility,” represents, according to Shaw, a hierarchical shift in which “the rigid, bureaucratic organization with the benevolent despot at the top has given way to a far more horizontal structure with many teams and many leaders.”

A 1998 SU administration report notes that although the basic concepts of Total Quality Management (TQM) are carried over to SUIQ, “some of the language and secondary concepts that are important in an industrial setting are not as relevant in the halls of academe.” Shaw concurs, acknowledging the limitations in a university setting of an industrial model that aims at zero defects, since “our products are educated citizens who are, of course, human beings with all the natural imperfections of the species.”

It is no coincidence that SUIQ appeared as SU employees were undergoing speed-up, downsizing, part-timing, and restructuring. The introduction of quality circles in the corporate workplace, observes Guillermo Grenier in his study *Inhuman Relations*, brought about innovations that exert control over workers. Grenier shows how the “new American managerial consciousness supposedly characterized by a renewed respect for the worker, a new and needed commitment to quality, and a new-design philosophy for organizing the work environment,” is meant to prevent workers from organizing unions to defend their interests. This “vision of unity, cooperation, purpose, and inspiration, of managerial wisdom operating unfettered in an expanding union-free utopia,” thwarts democracy in the workplace.

A recent SU administration report, faithfully reflecting SUIQ measurement and assessment, informs us that “by June 1997, 3,232 employees had spent an average of 34.5 hours in training; 120 trainers had spent an average of 23.5 days in professional development and had invested an average of 25 days in delivering SUIQ training in 625 classes.” This quantification reflects a behaviorism in which, to quote Robert Lichtman, “quality, uniqueness, creativity, and the moral dimension of existence fall before a reductive insistence upon measurement, quantification, and restrictive processes of infinitely tedious and irrelevant observation.” The viewpoint which emerges is “ahistorical, atomistic, mechanical, disjunctive, and ... ostensibly neutral.”

**The Market Knows Best**

This seemingly objective viewpoint facilitates change at U. S. universities, which Shaw sees as driven foremost by the world economy and technology. “Our students and their parents...”

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4 “Staff Roles and Development,” *Transforming Syracuse University*: 2
7 “Staff Roles,” *Transforming*: 3
are more market-oriented, the people who give us money are more pointed in what they want,” he said during our July 12, 2001 interview. Given this “world market mentality,” Shaw wants to create “a culture amenable to change” by strengthening those aspects of SU which are prone to change.

Disciplines that hasten technology transfer to the private sector are flourishing these days at SU. In 2001, SU won a $15.9 million New York State grant to develop products for indoor air quality technology at its new Environmental Quality Systems Center. Increasingly enmeshed in the system of global finance, SU recently won drilling rights to the bed of Lake Malawi and is seeking financial support from oil companies for its exploration.

The primacy of the market has turned most faculty in the U. S. into adjuncts or non-tenure track lecturers, the academic equivalent of migrant labor. While he believes in hiring part-timers for specialized knowledge, as in business or journalism, Shaw sees universities using them purely to cut costs. “It’s not our finest hour,” he acknowledged during our interview, adding that although SU has increased its use of part-timers, the administration was “monitoring it carefully.”

Disparities in faculty pay, Shaw believes, are inevitable. “We’re driven by the market and it’s easy to say we just forget about it and do our thing and create this happy place where each achieve according to their abilities and take according to their wants,” he said. An outstanding assistant professor in accounting costs SU over $100,000 a year, Shaw explained, and if SU were to pay accounting professors what it paid those in the Romance languages, it would be left without accounting professors.

Calling market shifts “the yin and the yang of economic systems,” Shaw said that “the pendulum sometimes goes too far one way or the other.” The most SU can do, Shaw believes, is to somewhat improve salaries falling below the norm in certain disciplines. “You’re kind of tinkering around the edge, because in essence we’re not a socialist economy,” he said.

SU may not be “tinkering around the edge” enough nowadays in SU humanities departments heavily dependent on cheap labor. In 1998, languages, literatures, and linguistics employed twenty-two adjuncts and twenty-five teaching assistants; visual and performing arts, ninety-two adjuncts and eighty teaching assistants; and regular part-time writing program instructors were paid just $2,386 to $3,620 per course, to give just a few examples.9 Despite an

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endowment that rose from $641 million in June 1999 to $825 million in June 2000 – a 28.7% increase in just a single year -- SU lost three full-time philosophy professors whom Rutgers University lured with higher salaries in fall 2001.

For Shaw, the market is the natural order of things and its idiom permeates The Successful President, particularly in its behavioral model of “exchanges in human interaction” that Shaw calls “currencies.” Nevertheless, Shaw understands the injustices of the market. “I can’t explain how a daycare center worker who spends time with my grandchild, who has to be loyal, loving, caring… is making the minimum wage,” Shaw said in our interview. “I can’t explain that, but it’s market. I don’t like it… but if I were running a daycare center, I know I couldn’t afford to pay people twice that much which is probably still not enough.”

The same market that cheats nurturing teachers and daycare workers, also rewards faithful servants of capital to the point where a CEO in the United States now earns 531 times as much as the average worker. This market necessitates change in the academy, whose pace today, Shaw tells us in The Successful President, “is so accelerated that to resist it is akin to standing firm in the face of a hurricane, and just about as effective” (15).

But is change compelling simply because it is happening? If a world economy that wreaks ecological devastation and immiserates billions of people can be an appropriate model for a university, then why does a recent administration report state that “the anti-intellectual and socially damaging forces of society are so strong that the University must actively create a countervailing culture on campus”? Might not such corporate practices being replicated at SU - - temping, outsourcing, downsizing, and TQM -- be some of those very forces against which the report cautions?

Keeping The Faith

Shaw’s belief in market-induced change makes him more of a follower than a leader, much in the tradition of James Roscoe Day, SU Chancellor from 1894 to 1922. Day, a Methodist minister, was a close friend of John Archbold, president of both Standard Oil and the SU trustee board. Day’s faith might be summed up in his own words: “I believe in capital. I believe in it fundamentally and thoroughly.”

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10 “Introduction,” Transforming: 3
11 “Chancellor Day Lays Idleness To Labor Agitators,” Daily Orange, July 13, 1921: 3
A relentless foe of anti-trust legislation, Day believed that technological advances and the fortunes of tycoons herald humanity’s highest stage. “The magnitudes of the business of the present age are logical events,” he declared. “The man who is shouting himself hoarse over trusts and corporations and swollen fortunes will take his place in history with the men who smashed Arkwright’s loom and Whitney’s cotton gin.” Trusting in the understanding of the elect and the preservation of mysteries, Day warned: “Men must not take liberties with business. That high privilege of large interpretations is the sole prerogative of politicians.”

Like his predecessor Day, Shaw veils the economic relations of his day, as in a recent New York Times essay titled “Why College Costs So Much,” and subtitled “And Will Only Get Worse.” Shaw presents an angry parent complaining about soaring tuition which increased 57% at a particular private university and 79% at public universities in the past ten years while median family income and the Consumer Price Index rose just 38% and 27% respectively. Citing declining enrollment and a large deficit, Shaw explains how SU cut $66 million from its budget, eliminated 350 staff positions, and created 170 resignations for faculty between 1990 and 1998, but still needed to increase tuition in order to improve student financial aid and compensation for staff and faculty.

Shaw’s main rationales for tuition increases – student financial aid and faculty pay -- are unconvincing. First, universities, like the federal government, moved from grants to loans during the nineties. Loans, which comprised just 41% of student aid in 1980, made up 58% by 2001. Second, since nearly half the faculty at four-year colleges and 65% of the faculty at two-year colleges are now part-timers, and since barely a quarter of full-time professors are tenured, universities are spending considerably less on salaries and benefits. After freezing salaries during the 1991-2 academic year, SU has only increased faculty salaries at the rate of inflation.

Nevertheless, tuition continues to outpace inflation to the extent that during the 2000-2001 academic year, private college tuition increased 5.5%, public college tuition 7.7%, and inflation a mere 2.6%. SU tuition, having already risen 82% since 1990-91, is slated to rise 6% for the 2002-03 academic year, an increase more than three times the current inflation rate.

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17 Brownstein: A52.
During the 2000-01 academic year, Williams College, with tuition and fees at $31,520 a year, and an endowment that has tripled to $1 billion in the past decade, became the first elite college in a generation to keep its tuition flat for two consecutive years. The step was so unusual for a top-ranked college that it became a major news story.19

Shaw suggests that increased enrollment in costly technological disciplines may also be a factor in tuition increases and here he may be at least partly right. SU’s fiscal crisis, like that of other research universities, emerged after the growth of its technology centers in the early eighties. Recipients of corporate largesse such as SU’s Center for Advanced Technology in Computer Applications and Software Engineering grew at the expense of traditional disciplines, and for good reason. After the 1980 Bayh-Dole Act gave corporations exclusive monopoly rights to patents and inventions developed at universities, corporate trustees began diverting money from instruction and student services to sponsored research, resulting in higher tuition.

Shaw is not about to tell where tuition money goes; his explanations explain nothing; elucidation only deepens the mystery, which is perhaps how it is meant to be. Shaw’s salary depends on his discretion, and during the 1999-00 academic year, Shaw earned $317,298 in pay and benefits.20 Shaw does well in relation to his peers, earning, in 1996-97, 156% of the median salary of chief executives at doctoral granting institutions.

Although Shaw’s ties to the financial industry might inform his views on university tuition, the Times essay identifies Shaw as SU Chancellor, but not as a member of the board of directors of the recently privatized Sallie Mae. This lending institution recently joined several others in a lawsuit to prevent the federal government from reducing interest rates and fees on student loans. The federal government’s direct lending program, which eliminates the role of banks and guarantee agencies in student loans, threatens the guaranteed-loan program that since 1994 has subsidized lenders by reimbursing them for loans in default. The American Council of Education (ACE), home to the Business-Higher Education Forum and on whose board Shaw also sits, recently refused to provide a legal brief to defend the federal government against the lending institutions that provide the ACE with much of its funding.21 Lending institutions wield considerable political and financial clout and the individuals who run them are, rather predictably, pursuing profits to the detriment of indebted students. According to a July 31, 2001

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Sallie Mae press release, Sallie Mae executives and members of its board of directors have significantly increased their stock ownership in the company in recent months.

As with his explanation for higher tuition, Shaw’s SU success story, highlighting improved national rankings, retention rates, and freshmen test scores, is highly suspect. Take, for instance, the Association of Research Libraries index which considers such factors as volumes added, current serials, size of permanent library staff, and operating expenditures of major university libraries in the United States and Canada. SU, ranked 64th in the 1994-95 academic year, dropped to 91st in 1999-2000, with the second lowest increase in expenditures among libraries.22 Or take the sixty-six graduate students who transferred from SU in 1998 because the New York State Education Department had neither registered nor approved their family nurse practitioner program. Or that SU has the lowest pass rate among New York’s fourteen law schools with just 58% of its students passing the July 2000 state bar exam on the first try.23 Or the steady slide in the reputation of SU’s engineering programs since the mid-sixties, hastened by the whopping 40% cut in the engineering school budget during the early nineties. Or the dismal 17% four-year graduation rate of the men’s basketball team that is the pride of SU.24

SU’s latest acquisitions include study abroad centers, a shopping mall, and the last privately-owned residence on University Hill, which was finally sold after SU discouraged the owner from applying for landmark status. Indeed, the picture at SU mirrors Shaw’s summary of higher education in the words of a pilot over the Atlantic: “I’m lost but I’m making record time.”25 With adjunctified instructors, downsized employees, entrepreneurial professors, and the community of scholars becoming an industrial park, SU, like other research universities, can truly said to be making “record time.”

Feeding The War Machine

Speaking of which, the growing military presence at SU is spawning numerous high tech “dual use” projects that serve both corporations and the Pentagon. In October ’97, sixty people attended two ceremonies at SU in which “General Pentagon” married “Miss Maxwell” and “Miss Newhouse.” The events publicized a $8.1 million Department of Defense contract with

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SU’s Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs to train military personnel in security management, and a $4 million contract with SU’s Newhouse School of Journalism to train military journalists in broadcast journalism and still photography. As human rights journalist Allan Nairn observed at one of the symbolic weddings, “You can’t do independent schooling or journalism when you are on the payroll of the Pentagon.” The arrival of military officers who mentor SU students during their stay at Maxwell happened to coincide with elimination of SU’s undergraduate major in Peace Studies.  

The militarization of Newhouse brings to mind its dedication ceremony on August 5, 1964, when President Lyndon Johnson delivered his infamous Gulf of Tonkin address justifying full-scale U.S. aggression in Vietnam. During the war, SU’s student newspaper, the *Daily Orange*, detailed SU’s unclassified military research contracts, but could not expose classified research at SU’s sister agency, the Syracuse University Research Corporation. One particularly secretive SU project was the East European Language Training Program, whose purpose was classified, as were participants’ identities. The *Daily Orange* questioned the benefit of this project, from whose site SU students were restricted, noting that SU was sharing the costs of many military research projects and grants, leading to reduced teaching loads and increased class sizes.

The lead article in Maxwell’s summer 2001 alumni magazine, titled “Crib Notes for a New World Order,” lauds the new $8.7 million, five year extension of Maxwell’s security management program providing “practical and philosophical grounding to defense professionals.”27 Asked whether military involvement threatened SU’s integrity, Shaw replied, “It doesn’t have to be that way.” He did not elaborate. With sixty percent of federal funding for research and development now devoted to military research, it is hard to see how it can be any other way.

**The Vanishing Classics**

“SU has long seemed to me a kind of expanding empire out of touch with human needs,” comments Ed Kinane, a ’67 Maxwell School alumnus who portrayed “Mister Pentagon” at the 1997 Maxwell protest. The rise of SU’s corporate-military partnership does in fact coincide with the decline of the humanities at SU. Concerned about the consequent loss of a sense of the past, I

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asked Shaw during our interview whether he would restore the suspended SU graduate program in classics if, for example, SU were given a billion dollar donation. In response, Shaw pointed out that a gift of that magnitude would be improbable, since SU fundraising only nets about $55 million annually and since large donations are almost invariably restricted.

Assuming, however, for argument’s sake, that 30% of the hypothetical billion dollar gift was unrestricted, Shaw said that he would fashion the humanities according to SU’s mission, needs, strengths, and existing programs. As a change agent, said Shaw, SU ought to fund the humanities in new and different ways, rather than buttress what the humanities were thirty years ago. Shaw takes pride in a new speakers series and interdisciplinary initiatives in the humanities.

In other words, not even three hundred million dollars would revive the classics program. As the classics disappear from SU, the motto on the SU seal, “Suos Cultores Scientia Coronat” (“Knowledge crowns those who seek her”), rings increasingly hollow. SU tried to replace the seal with a corporate logo in 1988, but encountered widespread student opposition because of the logo’s resemblance to, among other things, a design for a toilet deodorizer.

**Who Runs The University**

By what right do corporate executives decide the fate of entire disciplines and set the wages of university employees? The idea of electing students, faculty, staff employees, and community representatives to university boards does not appeal to Shaw. “I don’t think that universities can work that are democratic,” he said during our interview, citing a gridlocked federal government, dominated by special interests, to describe how a university should not work.

Shaw firmly believes in the impartiality and disinterestedness of the mostly white male business executives on university boards. But what brings them there? Is it a deep and abiding interest in the quality of American higher education? Or is it to choose the banks in which universities deposit student tuition, the companies in which universities invest endowment funds, and the sponsored research that universities carry out?

And do university presidents sit on corporate boards as a form of community service, much like sponsoring the Little League or the Girl Scouts? Or is to network, swing deals, and

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leverage institutions? Why, for instance, would Shaw sit on the board of the Unity Mutual Life Insurance Company when his duties as SU Chancellor surely suffice to keep him busy?

**The Leading S. C. R. U.**

Shaw recognizes that the essence of the leadership process remains elusive.\(^{28}\) This elusiveness is hardly incidental in U.S. research universities where a lofty ideal like democracy might obstruct change.

A centerpiece of change at SU is the vision to become the nation’s “leading student-centered research university,” for which SU won the 1996 TIAA/CREF Theodore Hesburg Award for the enhancement of undergraduate learning. In a recent article in *Change*, Barbara D. Wright finds that SU has been “brilliantly successful… in creating a consensus for its redefined mission, building an infrastructure to support it, and changing its campus culture.” However, Wright also found discomfiture with the administration’s most cherished description of SU:

There’s some fatigue with the phrase “student-centered research university” on the part of both students and staff. In fact, when I randomly asked people on campus whether they had ever heard it, reactions ranged from “Oh God, yes!” “All the time,” or “Please, not again” to an eloquent rolling of the eyes. Recognizing this, the university is trying to use the phrase more sparingly these days and come up with other language. The president himself admits that it has been reduced (in many quarters) to its acronym, SCRU, or “screw.”

With SU planning to more than double sponsored research in the next decade, the question is how research fits into SU’s learning environment. “Even as we’ve cut the number of faculty… we increased the amount of sponsored research, because in order to be a student-centered research university… we have to be a place where there’s a lot of exciting research going on,” Shaw explained in our interview. “And what makes our market niche is that we can be that, and still be student focused.”

Nevertheless, students seem at a loss as to how research enhances their learning, as Wright, despite her otherwise glowing assessment of SU, discovered:

One student suggested that it meant that it was easy for him to do research from his dorm room via the Internet. Several did mention professors bringing their research into the classroom, but one reasoned that professors gave students projects to work on so that they, the professors, could

\(^{28}\) Shaw, *Successful*: ix.
go off and do their own research. Several students assumed that “research” had nothing to do with them because they weren’t majoring in the natural sciences. Another common reaction was to discount the phrase as a mere buzzword, a marketing ploy, an advertising gimmick. “Parents really like it,” one said dismissively. A few disagreed with the premise that the university was student-centered at all. The most passionate students I spoke to accused the university of actually being administration-centered and wished students had the power to increase services or decrease tuition. Another student complained that “they collect the money, teach us what we need to know, pump us out, and take in the next class. It’s all about money.”

The Larger Picture: Syracuse In Decline

“Shaw and SU are like metal filings aligned in the magnetic field of globalization and corporate colonization not only of academia, but of our cities,” observes Kinane. In The Successful President, Shaw ignores the unraveling of community in Syracuse whose population dropped from 250,000 in 1950 to just over 150,000 today. During the nineties, home values in Syracuse dropped 11%, despite a 46% increase in U.S. home prices; the vacancy rate in Syracuse tripled to nearly one in twenty homes. Not withstanding the demolition of over three thousand housing units, eleven hundred abandoned homes still remain in New York’s fifth largest city.

In 1998, the year Shaw wrote The Successful President, Syracuse’s long-term bond ratings fell to their lowest point in sixty years, increasing rates on the city’s debt, as Syracuse officials agreed to a settlement with the Federal Securities and Exchange Commission for leading investors to believe that the city budget faced a surplus instead of a $9.4 million shortfall. That year, Syracuse’s thirty-six public schools, faced with a $6.7 million budget reduction, laid off 122 teachers and 94 teaching assistants, eliminated art class supplies, and shortened school library hours.

Given changes in funding formulas for city and school budgets, the public schools will continue to deteriorate. In 1990, Onondaga County began shifting tax revenue from Syracuse to its suburbs, and in 2000 further weakened city finances when it capped municipal sales tax revenue. Whereas in 1978, Syracuse property owners paid more than two percent of their property value directly to the schools, by 1998 they paid less than one and a quarter percent.

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33 Sandberg: 6A.
Starved for funds, the Syracuse school district receives $270,000 each year from Pepsi for granting the company exclusive selling rights to its students.

As elsewhere, rewards in Syracuse accrue to the powerful. Timothy Smeeding, director of SU’s Center for Policy Research concludes, “The winners increasingly are less interested in public goods that support everybody and more interested in segregating themselves from social problems which they will never experience.”34 In a letter to the Syracuse Post-Standard, two parents wondered: “What are we to make of a city school budget shaped, in large part, by the efforts of men who choose to send their children to private schools? What tone is set when elected leaders who enjoy a high degree of privilege, exercise that privilege by placing their children into settings beyond the reach of budget decisions like those our city has just been forced to accept?”35

These days, corporate welfare drives public policy in Syracuse, as Shaw, who serves as vice president of the local Metropolitan Development Association, must surely know. A recent Forbes article notes that Syracuse doled out $2 billion in tax breaks and corporate subsidies in the past five years with little to show for it. Sixty percent of all Syracuse real estate is now tax-exempt or tax-abated, causing the city’s property tax rate, which is twice the national average, to fall disproportionately on homeowners and small businesses. In 1997, the city granted $3.1 million in loan forgiveness and debt deferral for the new headquarters of the Greater Syracuse Chamber of Commerce on whose board sits Shaw.36

**Corporate Welfare Exhibit A: Landis**

Another instance of corporate welfare is that of Landis Plastics, a plastic food container manufacturer that opened a plant in the Syracuse suburb of Solvay in August 1994. The Onondaga County Industrial Development Agency gave Landis $6.5 million in bonds to finance plant construction and $300,000 to demolish an old plant on the site. New York State provided Landis $2.5 million in grants and low-interest loans and the village of Solvay supplied low-cost electricity to the company. In addition, Landis was given a ten-year tax abatement on its new plant.

36 Barrett.
Plagued with worker injuries from its inception, the Landis plant had an amputation rate nearly 100 times the New York State factory average. In 1996, half the plant’s 180 employees received injuries serious enough to warrant medical treatment or time away from work; during one thirteen month period, four Landis employees lost fingers in machinery.37 As a result, Landis employee Kathy Saumier began organizing union meetings through the United Steelworkers of America. In February ’97, Landis, whose website boasts “Total Quality Management has been our philosophy from day one,”38 responded by firing Saumier, a 36-year old single mother of two, for allegedly sexually harassing two male employees, in one case supposedly pulling down the man’s pants and groping him. It also fired another pro-union female employee, Clara Sullivan, likewise accusing her of sexually harassing a male employee. The following year, a federal judge reinstated both Saumier and Sullivan, finding that “prior to the union organizing effort, Landis exhibited a pattern of acquiescence with respect to workplace harassment.”39 Two months later, an administrative law judge concurred, noting that Landis had treated sexual harassment complaints by female employees with “disbelief, indifference and antagonism.” The judge determined that one of the two allegedly harassed male workers had denied that Saumier had ever harassed him, while the other said that he had always had good relations with Saumier. The judge also found that Landis had illegally interrogated employees about their views on unionization, had threatened to close the factory if workers unionized, had installed a video camera in the room where workers took breaks so as to monitor pro-union activities, and had fired Saumier for her union advocacy.40

Hailed as the Norma Rae of Syracuse, Saumier fought back. With the support of the Central New York Labor-Religion Coalition and the United Steelworkers of America, she reported plant injuries to regulatory agencies. Saumier later said that she stood her ground so that her children would not have to someday go through what she did. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) cited Landis for failing to report 64 injuries between January ’95 and July ’96 and for failing to install necessary machine safety guards. Initially, a Landis official called the citations “the workplace equivalent of old parking tickets,” but the company soon agreed to pay a $425,520 fine, the largest ever issued by the Syracuse OSHA office, and to

37 Keeping Score (report), New York State Labor and Environmental Network, March 1998. Appendix I.
38 www.landisplastics.com/quality.htm
implement a safety and health program for its employees. Landis also agreed to a $782,000 settlement with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission for steering women to dangerous, low-paying jobs on the production line. In doing so, Landis denied wrongdoing, claiming that it had settled, as with OSHA, only to avoid litigation.

**Corporate Welfare Exhibit B: Carousel**

Despite the decisive intervention of regulatory agencies and the ensuing publicity, there is still no union at the Landis plant. And corporate welfare persists in Syracuse. For spring ’02, city fathers intend a $1.3 billion expansion of the Carousel Center shopping mall onto land polluted by oil tanks, making it, at 103 acres, the country’s largest mega-mall.

The developer of the Carousel mall is Pyramid Companies, whose primary owner, Robert Congel, has, since 1995, donated $94,900 to the New York State Republican party and $15,500 to the campaign of Governor George Pataki. Pyramid recently hired former U. S. Senator Alfonse D’Amato and John F. O’Mara, a top Pataki aide, to lobby the Pataki administration for a $25 million project to build a high-tech center at the mall. O’Mara also serves as a lobbyist for Niagara Mohawk, a utility that he used to regulate when he served as chairman of the state Public Service Commission, underscoring the need for a law that forbids the hiring of state officials as lobbyists.

Critics of the Carousel expansion, in which the city would forego $300 million in taxes for 30 years, expect the mall to create more minimum wage jobs, to fail to attract enough affluent consumers given its location, and to harm other Syracuse malls. At a recent public hearing, supporters of the deal confronted critics with signs that read, “Do you have a better alternative?”

**Imagining Alternatives**

One person who imagines civic alternatives to a shopping mall is Craig Schaub, pastor of the Plymouth Congregational Church, who sees a race to the bottom in Syracuse, with the social safety net in tatters and people barely subsisting on two or three jobs. With brutal working conditions destroying family and community, the struggle for economic security, Schaub believes, has replaced religion as the structure of peoples’ lives. Convinced that people are in

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need of rest, a time for restoration in which they can live differently and reconnect spiritually, Schaub participates in prayer vigils to support worker organizing. As a member of the Central New York Labor-Religion Coalition, Schaub campaigns for universal health insurance, campaign finance reform, workplace safety, and a living wage ordinance in Syracuse.

Another such individual is Howard Hawkins, Green candidate for Syracuse city councilor in 2001, who would rather invest in schools, libraries, and parks, than in corporate welfare masquerading as community development. Hawkins wants to reverse the steep decline in public services such as that in the Department of Park and Recreation whose employees dwindled from 125 to 25 during the nineties. He notes that the New York Board of Regents recently cited Syracuse for having the lowest school funding among New York’s five upstate cities. Barely a third of the students entering Syracuse public high schools will graduate, and in Syracuse’s impoverished South Side neighborhood, unemployment can reach 40% during recessions.

As sales tax for Syracuse disappears, Hawkins believes that a progressive income tax, consolidated city and county revenue, and a tax on suburban commuters, can provide sorely needed public funds. He would both reduce and make more equitable the property tax, and would eliminate the county sales tax that falls disproportionately on the poor.

Hawkins also wants Syracuse to subsidize locally-owned enterprises instead of national chains such as the South Side KFC franchise which public funds recently helped expand into a KFC/Taco Bell of dubious benefit to Syracuse. Hawkins would create a municipal bank with a business development arm to train employees to run cooperatives that they would eventually purchase from the bank.

A Weighty Responsibility

Although he omits the troubles of Syracuse from his book, Shaw does invite SU students to ponder their social responsibilities. In his August 28, 1998 convocation speech to incoming freshmen, Shaw cited a well-known fact, namely that if one could shrink the world into a global village of 100 people, “half of the village’s wealth would be in the hands of six people, and all would be from the United States. Seventy of the 100 would not be able to read; 50 would suffer from some form of malnutrition; 80 would live in substandard housing. And out of all these, just
one… would have a college education.” Shaw then admonished the students, “This is your opportunity, your privilege, and your very weighty responsibility.”

Asked in our interview what forms of action students might take in the light of that statement, Shaw replied that each year three thousand SU students do community service: tutoring in schools, mentoring boys and girls clubs, and helping to design parks for community groups. Aware of the limitations of service in remedying injustice, Shaw said that he told some volunteer SU students who were mentoring schoolchildren that the students “should be developing some understanding of the conditions that resulted in their being in the place where [the children] need to have mentoring and tutoring.”

What might be the SU administration’s own “weighty responsibility” to Syracuse given its overuse of temporary employees, insistence on flexibility for outsourcing, and meager wages for library employees and parking attendants? Despite its stated concern for the well-being of Syracuse, the SU administration tried to have the retirement home of former SU Chancellor Melvin Eggers taken off the tax rolls in 1991, claiming that the home was used for educational purposes. SU’s downsizing of its faculty, staff, and student body led to business closures and declines in property values in the adjacent Westcott Nation, an integrated neighborhood known for its artists, musicians, and lively counterculture.

Shaw’s conscience resembles those of corporate managers who, as Lawrence Mitchell explains, are “increasingly driven by faceless, soulless capital markets… composed of individuals with consciences but creating a collective that lacks one.” As for SU students, just a handful assume their responsibility for the world by supporting labor struggles. As one undergraduate finance major memorably put it during the September 1998 SU strike, “I’m not paying $28,000 a year to stand in a picket line.”

The Strike

That strike of the SU Service Employees International Union Local 200A was the first major challenge to Shaw. In The Successful President, the strike merits just two parenthetical sentences: “(As I write, we are recovering from a week-long strike by our service worker’s union, which was followed by a storm packing 75-mile-an-hour winds that downed trees and electrical wires all over the city. I’ve been credited with both)” (1). Thus Shaw, with a chuckle,

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evades responsibility for labor conflict at SU, conflating the strike with the fierce storm that caused $15 million in damages at SU on Labor Day, the day after the strike concluded. While the union cited outsourcing as the main point of contention with the administration, Shaw denied that was the reason for the strike. During our interview, he understandably refused to specify what he believed to be its cause, for conflict defies explanation in his management paradigm. As Grenier explains,

Conflict between the interests of managers and workers is seen as an aberration in a new-design corporation, and so is the idea that workers shall organize into independent labor organizations to protect their interests. Conflict is a type of sickness that individuals bring into the work environment from outside, from their home lives or from union organizers…. It does not grow normally inside the organizational structures of an innovative organization; and when it does appear, as it always does…it is the individual that has to be treated, not the organization.46

After the SU administration refused to negotiate its demand that it be given the flexibility to outsource at will, the union informed the university community: “We have been subjected to the kind of sham bargaining and disrespect that the powerful reserve for the weak. Ultimatums and stonewalling, instead of problem solving (the method promoted in SUIQ) are the hallmark of the university’s chief negotiator, Vince Scicchitano.”47

As a strike loomed, professors urged the administration to reconsider its final offer to the union. “None of us, I believe, would expect the university to engage in uncalled-for extravagance,” wrote anthropology professor Deborah Pellow in a letter to Shaw during the September 1998 strike. “But to balance the university’s checkbook at the expense of those who keep it going – the heart and soul of our infrastructure – is simply immoral. Paying our workers a living wage, affording them the respect and dignity due them, negotiating with them in good faith – these elements are not extravagant. They are not privileges – they are rights.” In another letter sent during the strike, law library director M. Louise Lantzy informed Shaw that the seven unionized law library employees were all earning under $20,000 a year, with one earning just $12,878. In contrast, SU head football coach Paul Pasqualoni earned $508,728 in compensation and $107,211 in benefits during the 1999-00 academic year.48

This SU of winners and losers troubled those who believed that SU staff employees could not be outsourced without tarnishing that carefully cultivated image of family designed to

46 Grenier: xiv.
48 Nicklin: A34. IRS 990 forms, which discloses the compensation of the five most highly paid employees of an institution, can be viewed at www.guidestar.org
maximize alumni donations. “One cannot hope to create a sense of family in the face of major inequity among its members,” wrote Karen Kirkhart, professor of social work, in a letter to Shaw. At a teach-in at SU’s Hendricks Chapel in support of the strikers, Cornell English professor Paul Sawyer commented, “A place where some people are making more than $300,000 and others are hitting the food lines is not a community in any sense of the word.”

**Threats and Defiance**

During the strike, the SU administration used coercion, what Shaw calls “the least effective but, sadly, the most used kind of power.” In an August 25, 1998 memo to SU deans, Gershon Vincow, then Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, warned that “those who do not carry out their responsibilities should expect a reduction in pay” and that staff employees and faculty who refused to cross the picket lines had to notify their supervisors. According to the *Syracuse Post-Standard*, SU Communications Director Kevin Morrow stated that faculty would not be allowed to conduct teach-ins about the strike. An e-mail, which apparently originated within the SU administration, stated that students would not be allowed to distribute pro-union flyers on campus and could only act through recognized student organizations, and only then if the organization as a whole supported union issues.

These threats angered those who believed that free expression defined a university. They also contradicted the administration’s stated belief that “debate, even if it is sometimes acrimonious, should characterize an academic institution,” and Shaw’s description of diversity, a core SU value, as “a commitment being to a place where no person’s thoughts are deemed inappropriate for expression.” In a September 2, 1998 letter to Shaw, political science professor Gavin Duffy warned:

As you know, the relationship between the administration and faculty differs from the relationship between employers and employees in typical business enterprises. Strictly speaking, administrators are not faculty employers and faculty are not administrators’ employees. Administrators are faculty members entrusted by their colleagues to act as their agents. For this reason, strikebreaking tactics that have succeeded in the context of private enterprises may well produce unintended consequences when applied within an academic context.

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50 Shaw, *Successful*: 33.
One such consequence was a series of defiant pro-labor actions. Seventy-five students protested at the SU Administration Building, chanting things like “put Shaw part-time” and “student-centered my ass.” Several students blocked building entrances, lying down, one undergraduate explained, to remind administrators how they were stepping on employees and students.54 Also, fifty professors demonstrated in front of SU’s Bird Library, holding picket signs. When Robby Robinson, the head of SU security, informed them that they could not stand on campus with signs, the professors decided to sit down with their signs instead. They refused to budge even after Robinson brought the city police and read them Riot Act. Finally, Robinson informed the professors that he could take action if he so wished but that he chose not to do so.

After a week of bitter charges and countercharges, the strike ended. The union accepted minimal pay raises while the SU administration dropped its insistence on the freedom to outsource and promised not to retaliate against strikers returning to work. In a purportedly conciliatory message to returning staff employees, Shaw recognized that hardship and the need “to reconcile their loyalty to the University with their loyalty to the union” had caused them great stress. The employees, however, saw no conflict between loyalty to the union and loyalty to SU.

Ending his annual address to faculty on September 23, 1998 “on a more solemn note than usual,” Shaw said,

During the course of the recent strike, we heard from many students and parents the complaint that the primary purpose in being here – “learning and growing” – was being thwarted by a very small group of faculty and graduate students who refused to teach their classes. I do understand that it was out of a strong conviction that these colleagues acted. I also understand these actions in the context of this country’s proud tradition of civil disobedience. The great teachers of civil disobedience – Gandhi, Thoreau, and Martin Luther King Jr., among others – emphasized both the obligation to resist perceived injustice and the obligation to accept the consequences of that action. It is in this context that I ask those who chose not to meet their classes … to voluntarily inform their deans of the time missed so that their paychecks can be adjusted accordingly. I am motivated not by a desire to punish, but to ensure that the lesson of civil disobedience is not lost on our students.

He concluded by quoting Hannah Arendt: “Education is the point at which we decide whether we love the world enough to assume responsibility for it and by the same token save it from ruin which, except for the coming of the new and young, would be inevitable.”55

It is the very measure of his affability that Shaw could threaten to dock the pay of faculty labor supporters and make it appear like a civic lesson. Shaw is likable: faculty address him by his nickname, “Buzz,” and a reporter who visited SU found him happily exchanging snowballs with undergraduates, a scene, let it be said, which effectively conceals the excesses of capital. Shaw certainly differs from some of the curmudgeons of yore who served as SU Chancellors, including Day. When, at a faculty meeting, a professor suggested that an industrial magnate, whom Day had chosen for a Doctor of Science degree, be awarded an honorary doctorate instead, Day shouted at him to “sit down and shut up.” Another such chancellor was William Tolley who struck a protester with a cane at SU’s 1964 ROTC review, which churlishness was immortalized in a photo splashed on the front page of SU’s student newspaper, the Daily Orange.

In an e-mail to the pro-labor SU Faculty Support Group, sent on September 24, 1998, shortly after Shaw’s speech, law professor Leslie Bender noted that civil disobedience involves violating a law out of moral principle and that refusing to cross a picket line is not illegal. Those professors who refused to cross the picket line not only affirmed the dignity of staff employees who made learning at SU possible, but fulfilled their obligations to their students by teaching classes off campus, creating websites with class material, or conducting instruction by e-mail. They exemplified, at personal risk, the meaning of caring, a core SU value that Shaw evoked in his inaugural address: “Caring means that we embrace the University community and all the people in it… that we look to the larger world as the final repository of our knowledge.”

A Unique University?

Upon becoming Chancellor, Shaw promised a SU like no other university. That memorable day, as the combined choirs of the soon-to-be-downsized School of Music sang “O Clap Your Hands,” a procession of trustees, administrators, and faculty escorted Shaw to his inaugural address. Wearing the SU blue and orange colors beneath his ceremonial gown, Shaw declared, “I say, let the Big Name University be the Big Name University. Let us be Syracuse University, unique and complete in our own right. Syracuse University has its own values; it would be folly for us to pattern ourselves after someone else.”

But is SU unique in any meaningful sense of the word? From its academic restructuring and managerial jargon, to its military contracts and big-time sports, SU is actually a typical U.S.

research university, as even Shaw himself knows. In fact, in his inaugural address, Shaw undercut his assertion of SU’s uniqueness with an anecdote of a candidate for dean who, after touring SU, said to then Chancellor Melvin Eggers, “This place is different – different from any place I’ve seen.” Eggers reportedly answered, “Yes it is, and when you find out how it is different, let me know.”

Change at SU, hardly a singular response to student needs, and still less a triumph of executive thinking, is but a script written by big money. Today, universities remain as much under the thumb of the “captains of industry” as in Upton Sinclair’s 1923 portrait of higher education, *The Goosestep*. As corporate executives, rife with conflicts of interest, dictate change from on high, turning universities into gigantic biomedical enterprises and manufacturing facilities for weaponry components, a counter-movement is building across the country.

No longer merely seeking a larger slice of the pie nor simply asking for education for citizenship instead of vocational training, many students, faculty and staff now want to determine who runs the university and whose interest the university will serve. Their efforts herald a great struggle to liberate universities from capitalism. As university communities awaken to the swindle perpetrated in the name of quality and excellence, SU’s strike and Labor Day Storm herald academia’s coming upheaval.

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Societal Education, Direct Action, and Working-Class Gains: An Anarchist Perspective

John Asimakopoulos

Using an anarchist theoretical framework, it is argued that the working class would obtain greater gains through militant direct action modeled on the labor movement of the past. The history of the 8-hour workday is reviewed as a case study showing that it was won because of radical leaders who challenged existing legal institutional frameworks through societal education, militant ideology, direct action, and violent resistance against state attacks. Positive changes did not occur politically, peacefully, or voluntarily. Instead, oftentimes the threat of or use of violent resistance and even rebellion had preceded major concessions for the working class. doi: 10.1300/J134v11n02_01

KEYWORDS. Anarchy, societal education, civil disobedience, direct action, violence, unions, AFL, 8-hour workday, ideology, social movements.

Poverty has been on the rise as the overall living-standards of the working-class population have been steadily deteriorating over the past decades (Aronowitz, 2005; Mishel, Bernstein, & Schmitt, 1997). Increasingly, workers are left without healthcare or other basic benefits while the feminization of poverty, the working-poor, and contingent employment are all on the rise (Peck, 2002; U.S. Census Bureau, Historical Poverty Tables, Table 4, n.d.; Wolfson, 2003). For example, “in 1968, one person working full-time at the minimum wage would come pretty close to the federal poverty level for a family of four. Today that same full-time, minimum-wage job takes a worker up to just 56% of the poverty line” (Zepezauer, 2004, pp. 136-137). This is reflected in the increasing Gini Ratio of inequality which reached .466 in 2004—the highest since 1967 when it was .394 (U.S. Census Bureau, Historical Income Tables-Households, Table H-4, n.d.).

Using the struggle for the 8-hour workday as a case study, the radical pre-1940s labor movement is reviewed through an anarchist framework in search of class action(s) that can increase working-class gains. The evidence will demonstrate that the old labor movement

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1 Originally published by the Journal of Poverty, Vol. 11(2) 2007 © 2007 by The Haworth Press, Inc
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obtained many of its gains by challenging the dominant ideology with its own radical counter-
ideology emanating from socialists, anarchists, and other radical activists; it created mass
support by promoting societal education along Anarcho-Gramscian principles; and engaged in
direct action at the grassroots level with civil disobedience, violent resistance, and even full-
scale revolts. Overall, significant gains where not obtained politically, peacefully, or voluntarily.
Unfortunately, confrontation through direct action was needed (backed by the threat or ultimate
use of violent resistance and revolt by the working class) which was the only recourse that
preceded major concessions.

The analysis of the historical record indicates that new radical solutions to poverty and
inequality along anarchist principles warrant consideration. Accordingly, it is argued that the
working class would obtain greater gains today through direct action spurred by radical
ideological challenges to the capitalist principles governing distribution instead of working
exclusively within the capitalist institutional/legal framework. However, this requires building a
new movement that will incorporate a strategy of grass-roots societal education and the
willingness to engage in Direct Economic Civil Disobedience (DECD) with resistance to potential
reactionary state violence.

Unfortunately, given the limitations of space, the impact of issues such as immigration,
globalization, class-cleavages, new technologies, and historical circumstances such as 9/11 are
not specifically addressed here. However, the working class always faced severe obstacles and
while these obstacles may have changed, the fundamental principles governing distribution
have not. For example, is the Patriot Act more restrictive of radical working-class direct action
today compared to the 1800s legislation that outlawed even forming a union or the routine use
of armed forces to subdue working-class actions? It is acknowledged that the current
environment relative to terrorism creates significant state obstacles to militant working-class
direct action that might be branded as terrorist. However, this demonstrates the importance of
societal education so as to address the issue and inform the public that government may be part
of the problem and that this is a legitimate societal movement which may, if pressed, have to
resort to self-defense or violent resistance when alternative means of peaceful resolution have
been fully exhausted.

This, to some extent, was also what spurred the civil rights protests as a supplement to
legislative efforts when the latter were blocked by a clearly racist government. In fact, the
government itself has routinely used violence as a legitimate means to an end as with the War
of Independence, World War I, and World War II, when violence was seen as the only
alternative to capitulation. Furthermore, it will be shown that when the working class engaged in
radical action, it was government which was mostly responsible for using violence against
protestors and strikers. This was why protesters would find it necessary to arm themselves for self-defense against government-directed military suppression. Hopefully, today such extreme levels of conflict would not be necessary, but history has indicated otherwise (Graham & Gurr, 1969).

**The Anarchist Framework**

For the purposes of this paper, working class and labor will be used interchangeably and will refer to any person or household that does not own sufficient means of production as to have a relatively high living standard without dependency on paid work. As known, the anarchist principle of self-organization refers to a form of direct democracy (people representing themselves), while self-direction refers to worker owned and operated collective production (Guerin, 1970; Rocker, 1938). DECD is defined as disobeying anti-labor and anti-consumer laws with direct action and the determination to resist potential reactionary state violence by engaging in self-defense. DECD combines Thoreau's (1969) classic analysis of civil disobedience with anarchist direct action defined as the use of strikes, workplace occupations, boycotts, mass movements, sabotage, and revolutions (Rocker, 1938). Direct action also includes violent resistance to reactionary state violence and suppression.

In addition, anarchism seeks the elimination of all forms of government in favor of self-organization, arguing that any government by definition results in the suppression of the many by the few. This is held to be true of democracies as well in that they are also dominated by elites and therefore will not benefit the working class (Domhoff, 2002). Democracies are acknowledged to provide some benefits as a result of working-class participation but these are seen as minor and perpetually under attack by elite interests (Guerin, 1970). According to Rocker, one of the most articulate exponents of anarchist theory:

> Political rights do not originate in parliaments, they are . . . forced upon parliaments from without. . . . even their enactment into law has for a long time been no guarantee of their security. Just as the employers always try to nullify every concession they had made to labour as soon as opportunity offered, as soon as any signs of weakness were observable in the workers’ organisations, so governments also are always inclined to restrict or to abrogate completely rights and freedoms that have been achieved if they imagine that the people will put up no resistance. . . . Political rights do not exist because they have been legally set down on a piece of paper, but only when they have become the ingrown habit of a people, and when any attempt to impair them will meet with the violent resistance of the populace. (1938, pp. 111-112)
This is supported by U.S. data indicating a long-term trend from 1970 in declining real wages and benefits due to the rise of and attacks by neoliberal ideologies including the Reagan and all Bush administrations (Peck, 2002; Wolfson, 2003; Young, 2006;). Therefore, anarchism argues that the working class can obtain meaningful gains and preserve them only through direct action:

The peoples owe all the political rights and privileges . . . not to the good will of their governments, but to their own strength. Governments have employed every means that lay in their power to prevent the attainment of these rights or to render them illusory. Great mass movements among the people and whole revolutions have been necessary to wrest these rights from the ruling classes, who would never have consented to them voluntarily. . . . Only after the workers had by direct action confronted parliament with accomplished facts, did the government see itself obliged to take the new situation into account and give legal sanction to the trade unions. What is important is not that governments have decided to concede certain rights to the people, but the reason why they have had to do this. (Rocker, 1938, pp. 112-113)

As for fundamental changes benefiting the working class, anarchists argue direct action would have to be revolutionary, leading to new radical forms of societal organization based on the principles of self-organization in civil society and self-direction in production. Such societal change can be both revolutionary and evolutionary. One way of measuring societal change is by the extent to which personnel in positions of domination are exchanged (Dahrendorf, 1959). This results in a continuum of structural change ranging from total change of personnel (sudden) to no exchange (evolutionary change) with partial exchange being the midpoint. However, sudden change may not necessarily be radical but radical change can be sudden or evolutionary. For example, the Industrial Revolution ushered radical yet evolutionary change, whereas the Bolshevik revolution was sudden but left the basic form of authoritarian production and governance unchanged. Thus revolutionary change could refer to and is used interchangeably in the literature to describe both sudden and radical change. What then determines sudden versus radical change? Radical change is positively correlated with the intensity of class conflict, whereas sudden change is positively correlated with the level of violence:

The category of intensity refers to the energy expenditure and degree of involvement of conflicting parties. A particular conflict may be said to be of high intensity if the cost of victory or defeat is high for the parties concerned. The more importance the individual
participants of a conflict attach to its issues and substance, the more intense is the conflict. . . . The violence of conflict relates rather to its manifestations than to its causes; it is a matter of the weapons that are chosen by conflict groups to express their hostilities. Again, a continuum can be constructed ranging from peaceful discussions to militant struggles such as strikes and civil wars. . . . The scale of degree of violence, including discussion and debate, contest and competition, struggle and war, displays its own patterns and regularities. Violent class struggles, or class wars, are but one point on this scale. (Dahrendorf, 1959, p. 212)

Although sudden and radical change can occur together as with high levels of violence and intensity these concepts could also be mutually exclusive. This paper argues in favor of evolutionary radical change to prevent the rise of new totalitarian regimes as with the Bolsheviks. Also, evolutionary change would avoid great societal dislocations which often accompany sudden radical changes.

Analysis of the Historical Record

First, the historical record supports the argument that societal education increases class-consciousness and solidarity within the working class, which in turn functions to increase the intensity of class-conflict and therefore radical change. Second, history has proven that when attempting to obtain and maintain meaningful gains, the working-class has had to engage in self-defense against violent suppression by the state itself. Moreover, when the labor movement has engaged in significant direct action, its failures have been accounted for by the overwhelming use of government military force. In cases where labor's actual or perceived force and determination exceeded that of state capabilities, concessions where made. In addition, there is increasing theoretical and empirical evidence supporting that direct action, with the unfortunate need of violence for self-defense, may result in greater concessions from the state and employers for the disprivileged rather than political action alone (Asimakopoulos, 2000; Brecher, 1997; Fording, 1997; Piven & Cloward, 1971). The review of the struggle for the 8-hour workday also supports these arguments. However, when labor does not engage in radical action the outcome has been the formation of policies and legal structures that disprivilege the working class and institutionalize its defeat. This has been demonstrated during the past 30 years by the lack of radical action, resulting in significant reductions of working-class gains (Peck, 2002; Wolfson, 2003).

As such, what could be done to spur the working class to engage in such radical actions? According to anarchists such as Bakunin, Malatesta, and Proudhon, the basis for action is
societal education (as cited in Guerin, 1970). For example, Gramsci (1971) argued in his theory of hegemony that a precondition for socialism includes the ideological development of a feasible alternative or counter-hegemony to existing forms of societal organization. This would be accomplished through the objective societal education of the working class and experience functioning with alternative forms of organization. Rocker (1938) also emphasized worker education as a precondition for action. Thus, the arguments of this paper also address the motivational basis for the working class to engage in DECD through societal education to increase class-consciousness and in turn, solidarity (minimizing working-class cleavages) that can then be transformed into direct action. This is summarized as education, class-consciousness, solidarity, action.

**Societal Education & Class-Consciousness**

What made direct action possible by the old labor movement was an active agenda by radical activists of raising class-consciousness through programs of societal education including an independent media, schools, art, and socio-political organizations (Altenbaugh, 1990; Shore, 1992; Teitelbaum, 1993; Weinstein, 1984). Although many working-class organizations and unions would often experience internal disagreement over how to allocate limited resources between societal education and other activities, nevertheless funds would be made available for the former. It was through this outreach to the general public that labor was able to get its message out, raise class-consciousness, and obtain broad community support for direct action along Gramscian principles of developing a counter-hegemony (Gramsci, 1971; Shore, 1992). It is characteristic that historically the mainstream media would misrepresent and attack labor while exhorting violent actions by policemen, national guards, and federal troops (Krajnc, 2000; Lindsey, 1994). Consequently, it was fortuitous that the labor movement had its own independently owned and operated media outlets so as to get its own message to the public. By the early 1900s there were over 323 socialist publications ranging from daily to monthly newspapers and academic publications with a circulation of over two million (Weinstein, 1984). There were also at least three national publications *Appeal to Reason*; the *National Rip Saw*; and the *International Socialist Review* with a combined circulation of roughly one million (Krajnc, 2000).

Also at this time labor unions, socialist parties, and other worker organizations would establish and support schools, college programs, and a host of worker education programs (Altenbaugh, 1990; Krajnc, 2000; Teitelbaum, 1993). Among these programs were the Worker Education Bureau which was affiliated with forty labor schools; the Highlander Folk School; the Rand School of Social Science; the Brookwood Labor College; the Commonwealth Labor
College; and Work Peoples’ College. The last two even offered full-time residential programs. These schools would train future labor leaders, teach workers how to organize, and raise class-consciousness.

Beyond training in the above milieus, songs, theatre, film, and literature were also employed by the labor movement to promote class-consciousness and solidarity (Greenway, 1970; Krajnc, 2000; Zaniello, 2003). In terms of literature and theatre there was Upton Sinclair’s novel *The Jungle*; Clifford Odet’s *Waiting for Leftie*; and a host of plays performed around the country by labor colleges and groups such as Brookwood, which had three companies. Also, “For ten cents, workers could find themselves heroically portrayed in stories like *Larry Locke: Man of Iron, Or, A Fight for Fortune, A Story of Labor and Capital, and Jasper Ray: The Journeyman Carpenter, Or, One Man as Good as Another in America*” (Montgomery, 1976, p. 116). Furthermore, songs such as *Solidarity Forever* and *Father Was Killed by the Pinkerton Men* have been recognized by the labor movement as some of the most moving and powerful. It has been said that the (anarchist) Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) were the “singingest” American union (Greenway, 1970). It is worth noting that the organizations which had the most voluminous and passionate song repertoires were those which faced higher levels of conflict, such as industrial unions like the IWW. In contrast, more peaceful craft unions of the time like the American Federation of Labor (AFL) lacked virtually any songs. Thus, through the arts, labor raised class-consciousness while the participatory nature and themes of the work promoted solidarity (Krajnc, 2000; Montgomery, 1976).

There was even a vibrant Socialist Party headed by the charismatic Eugene Debs who argued, as did Gramsci, that people had to understand socialism before they supported it (Morgan, 1973; Young, 1999). More importantly, “two major anarcho-communist groups had followings greater than that of the SLP [Socialist Labor Party] in the mid-eighties—the Social Revolutionaries, led by Johann Most, and the Home Club of the Knights of Labor, whose fifty members were all leading officers of local assemblies in New York City” (Montgomery, 1976, p. 123). Overall, a host of anarchist and other radical groups produced leaders which in turn would infiltrate unions and political parties providing ideological leadership while encouraging agitation. Often these radical leaders faced government persecutions and executions as with August Spies, Albert Parsons, Adolph Fischer, and George Engel, who were all hanged on November 11, 1887, after being falsely convicted for the bombing at Haymarket Square. In addition, radical leaders, who were widely respected by the rank-and-file were purged even by union officials who saw them as a threat to their own power.
Violent Times & Solidarity

In order to understand how the working class obtained specific demands, it is important to understand the broader social context of the times which was characterized by high levels of intense and violent class conflict. Societal education and the high levels of class-consciousness and solidarity which it produced made it possible for the old labor movement to engage in violent direct actions in defiance of the law, challenging private property and state authority, even turning to full-blown revolts with worker self-organization and self-directed economic activity. The typical government response was to deploy troops, shoot protestors, and violate the law itself. These full fledged battles were supplemented by executions of labor leaders and left-wing witch hunts and purges. Attacks on strikers were answered by workers and citizens with battles of resistance using rifles, knives, clubs, dynamite, and even canons (Brecher, 1997). This is exemplified by the historical record of the following strikes: the Great Railroad Strike of 1877 (Dacus, 1969; Foner, 2002; Stowell, 1999); the Pennsylvania Homestead Strike of 1892 (Krause, 1992; Wolff, 1965); the Illinois Pullman Strike of 1894 (Carwardine, 1994; Hirsch, 2003; Lindsey, 1994); the Seattle General Strike of 1919 (Friedheim, 1964); and the Flint Sit-Down Strike of 1936/7 (Fine, 1969; Linder, 1963). These general strikes led to a de facto functioning state of anarchism where worker-citizens self-organized and directed their own production and operated their own cities.

Clearly, the old labor movement was able to engage in mass strikes despite significant obstacles such as injunctions and armed suppression by the state. For example, the Great Railroad Strike of 1877 spread from Texas to New York, and involved tens of thousands of workers in multiple cities (Dacus, 1969; Foner, 2002; Stowell, 1999). The Pullman strike of 1894 involved 27 states and over 260,000 workers (Lindsey, 1994). Although these strikes originated within specific companies or industries, they quickly spread to other industries in the form of sympathy/secondary strikes. Inter- and intra- industry sympathy strikes were common as an effective tool to exact economic costs on the targeted company. They also forced other impacted companies to pressure the targeted firm to resolve the dispute. Thus, strikes were used strategically to raise the overall economic cost of labor disputes not only for particular businesses, but for business owners as a class. Sympathy strikes also contributed to and demonstrated increasing workers’ class-consciousness and solidarity (Brecher, 1997; Montgomery, 1976).

In addition, the high levels of solidarity and class-consciousness in the 1800s were exemplified in many cases, although not all, by cutting across racial and ethnic lines (Brecher, 1997). According to Montgomery:
Because the weakest links in the chain of labor solidarity were found at the points where the white, black, and yellow races met, the numerous episodes of cooperation between white and black workers during the 1880s provided a noteworthy feature of the labor upsurge. . . . The Knights alone had some 60,000 black members by 1886. More than a fifth of the early members of United Mine Workers in the bituminous fields were black. In 1896, Richard L. Davis, a black leader from Ohio, won the highest vote of any candidate for that union's National Executive Board. The New Orleans docks were a stronghold of biracial unionism. When the white scalemen and packers there allied with the black teamsters to strike for a ten-hour day in October, 1892, the city's Board of Trade offered concessions to the whites but refused to negotiate with blacks. In response, forty-nine unions shut down the entire city and kept it shut, despite venomous attacks on the blacks in the local press. In the end, the Board of Trade capitulated entirely, giving labor one of its greatest victories of the century. (1976, p. 128)

Class-consciousness and solidarity were further demonstrated by the high levels of working-class citizen support. In these cases, strikes would often transform into spontaneous armed rebellions along Anarcho-Syndicalist principles. Cities such as Pittsburgh, St. Louis, and Los Angeles in 1877; Homestead in 1892; Pullman in 1894; Seattle in 1919; and Flint in 1936 were taken over by citizens who engaged in self-rule and self-directed production. These actions were often so effective that institutional power holders considered them a challenge to the capitalist system itself. Workers and citizens also armed themselves and organized into military units in order to defend against state reactionary suppressive violence. For example:

In late July, 1877, train crews on the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad struck against a wage cut, triggering a chain . . . of events which President Hayes was to condemn as an "insurrection." Popular anger over the dispatch of troops to reopen the line spread the strike to Baltimore, where huge crowds clashed with the militia. Simultaneously, work stoppages followed the rail lines across Pennsylvania from both ends of the state into the smallest mill and mining towns. Thousands of Pittsburgh iron workers and other residents defeated soldiers sent from Philadelphia in pitched battle, subsequently burning all property of the Pennsylvania Railroad. Across Ohio and Indiana, workers' committees simply took over their towns, halting all work until their demands were met by employers. A quickly organized strike in Chicago brought troops and artillery to the city, and shots rang out at the Halstead Street viaduct. In St. Louis, thousands of workers closed down the city's industry for several days. Governmental authorities fled the town. (Montgomery, 1976, pp. 124-125)
In 1892, Homestead’s governance was taken over by its armed working class, which organized into their own military units:

‘The Committee has . . . decided to organize their forces on a truly military basis. The force of four thousand men has been divided into three divisions or watches, each of these divisions is to devote eight hours of the twenty-four to the task of watching the plant. The Commanders of these divisions are to have as assistants eight captains composed of one trusted man from each of the eight local lodges. These Captains will report to the Division Commanders, who in turn will receive the orders of the Advisory Committee. . . . The girdle of pickets will file reports to the main headquarters every half hour, and so complete and detailed is the plan of campaign that in ten minutes’ time the Committee can communicate with the men at any given point within a radius of five miles. In addition to all this, there will be held in reserve a force of 800 Slavs and Hungarians. The brigade of foreigners will be under the command of two Hungarians and two interpreters.’ (cited in Wolff, 1965, p. 90)

The Chicago Tribune called the Pullman situation in 1894 an “insurrection” (Lindsey, 1994). Meanwhile, in the same year in Los Angeles, Attorney General Olney was warned of pending open rebellion while the commander of the U.S. troops in Chicago, General Nelson Miles, believed the United States Government itself was in danger of being overthrown (Lindsey).

Ultimately, the striking workers at Pullman were defeated because of overwhelming government military forces:

By early July, a total strike had settled in over the railroads of the middle and far West, bringing in quick sequence a federal injunction against the strike, the stationing of troops at all vital junctions of the lines, martial law in Chicago, and the imprisonment of Debs and other strike leaders. . . . After intense debate, the leaders advised their members not to strike. Noting the ‘array of armed force and brutal monied aristocracy,’ represented by ‘United States Marshals, injunctions of courts, proclamations by the President, and . . . bayonets of soldiers.’ (Montgomery, 1976, p. 128)

Following the insurrection described above, the city of Seattle in 1919 was taken over by its citizens, leading Mayor Hanson to state it “was an attempted revolution which they [the strikers] attempted to spread all over the United States” (cited in Friedheim, 1964, p. 132). Subsequent to Seattle, in Flint in 1936, the city manager was literal when he stated “we are going down
there shooting. The strikers have taken over this town and we are going to take it back” (cited in Brecher, 1997, p. 221).

Workers would also blow up factories and buildings to exact an economic toll upon Capitalists. Pittsburgh in 1877 saw over 2,000 railroad cars burn while citizens made sure the fire did not spread to nearby tenements (Dacus, 1969; Foner, 2002). The attack on private property also included mass lootings. Strikers assisted by townspeople would capture railroad cars distributing their contents to the masses. In other instances, citizens would appropriate and operate businesses under their own management as in the Seattle General Strike of 1919 (Friedheim, 1964). According to the Seattle Union Record:

The closing down of the capitalistically controlled industries of Seattle, while the WORKERS ORGANIZE to feed the people, to care for the babies and the sick, to preserve order-THIS will move them, for this looks too much like the taking over of POWER by the workers. Labor will not only SHUT DOWN the industries, but Labor will REOPEN, under the management of the appropriate trades, such activities as are needed to preserve public health and public peace. If the strike continues, Labor may feel led to avoid public suffering by reopening more and more activities, UNDER ITS OWN MANAGEMENT. (cited in Friedheim, 1964, p. 111)

Therefore, engaging in mass revolt had the impact of challenging power holders not only financially but also politically. When entire cities were run and operated directly by their citizens, it became a real life experiment in anarchist self-organization as with the Spanish Revolution of 1936. More importantly, it became a functioning example of alternative politico-economic forms of societal organization. This is why the power holders would often have to regain control of entire regions through military expeditions against the American people in the name of capitalist private property rights.

**The 8-Hour Workday**

The history of the 8-hour workday in America demonstrates that working-class gains were obtained through violent direct action with legislation forced to follow accomplished facts on the ground. An early promoter of the 8-hour movement was Ira Steward, who lived in 1860s Boston. With the Civil War as the background, Steward’s ideology was abolitionist, recognizing that labor’s interests cut across race and ethnicity. A number of prominent 8-hour activists like George E. McNeill, Edward H. Rogers, and Wendell Phillips also recognized the importance of class solidarity inclusive of race (Roediger & Foner, 1989). The movement was fueled by
numerous 8-hour leagues and unions which relied primarily on working through the legislative process with signed petitions, lobbying, and supporting candidates for the 8-hour workday. Strikes supplemented the agitation as a secondary tool. Originally, the movement focused on state legislatures rather than the federal government.

In 1864, Chicago became the center of the fight for an 8-hour workday. According to Roediger and Foner (1989), by 1865 there were six 8-hour demonstrations which included 67,000 workers in Northeastern states, while 4,000 people marched in Chicago. In response, Illinois was the first state to pass 8-hour legislation in 1867, which in practice proved virtually ineffective. Workers in Chicago reacted with a demonstration numbering 10,000 declaring a general strike on May 1, 1867, which brought the city’s economy to a standstill. Troops were called in and the strike was broken. In 1868, Congress responded with a law which provided an 8-hour day to some federal employees. Unfortunately, all these legislative measures lacked enforcement mechanisms, prompting the National Labor Union to declare in 1867 that 8-hour laws “. . . have been passed by the legislatures [but] . . . for all practical purposes they might as well have never been placed on the statute books, and can only be described as frauds on the labouring class” (Roediger & Foner, 1989, p. 112).

In response to the political defeats of 1867-68, Steward and the labor leaders realized the importance of societal education in order to obtain broader support. This signaled a shift away from the failed legislative process into one favoring a more radical approach based on direct action cultivated by societal education through 8-hour leagues, social clubs, and union halls.

For example, New York passed 8-hour laws in 1867 in response to threats of massive strikes by New York City workers. By 1872, the ineffectiveness of the laws also prompted massive strikes in Philadelphia, Buffalo, Chicago, Jersey City, and Albany. In New York City 100,000 workers went on strike demanding 8-hour laws be enforced. The agitation was led by the anarchist International Worker’s Association (IWA), Marxists, and various radical leaders winning an effective 8-hour workday for the building trades, resulting in victory marches involving 150,000 people. These victories together with the historical ineffectiveness of 8-hour state laws led the Federation of Organized Trades and Labor Unions (FOTLU), predecessor of the AFL, to demand with direct action an 8-hour workday. This was after President Arthur in an 1881 meeting with FOTLU delegates refused to enforce the federal 8-hour law. This prompted the FOTLU to issue a resolution in 1885:

It would be in vain to expect the introduction of the eight-hour rule through legislative measures . . . [A] united demand to reduce the hours of labor, supported by a firmly established and determined organization, would be far more effective than a thousand
laws, whose execution depends upon the good will of aspiring politicians or sycophantic department officials . . . the workmen in their endeavor to reform the prevailing economic conditions must rely upon themselves and their own power exclusively. (cited in Brecher, 1997, p. 54)

As a result, workers increased their agitation, escalating the number of strikes and participation dramatically in 1886 (Table 1).

Table 1. Strike Activity 1883-1886

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of Strikes</th>
<th>Number of Establishments</th>
<th>Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1886</td>
<td>1,411</td>
<td>9,891</td>
<td>499,489</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1885</td>
<td>645</td>
<td>2,284</td>
<td>242,705</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1884</td>
<td>443</td>
<td>2,367</td>
<td>147,054</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1883</td>
<td>478</td>
<td>2,759</td>
<td>149,763</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: Brecher, 1997, p. 47)

Strikers also armed themselves in anticipation of intervention by state and federal troops as was done during the Great Railroad Strike of 1877. “Such brigades of armed workers had grown up in a number of cities, largely in response to the use of police and military forces in 1877. By 1886 they existed . . . in Cincinnati, . . . Detroit, Chicago, St. Louis, Omaha, Newark, New York, San Francisco, Denver, and other cities” (Brecher, 1997, p. 57). It is important to note that leadership for nationally organizing the 1886 agitation was undertaken by a small core of anarchists working together with local craft unions and the relatively small FOTLU. “The [Anarcho]-syndicalists provided skilled organizers . . . [they] also made a contribution by organizing armed workers’ militias ostensibly capable of defending strikes. . . . they were the lone attempts by a labor organization to speak to what was a prime concern of prospective strikers—the possibility of attacks by private and public police” (Roediger & Foner, 1989, p. 138). In contrast, the major national union (the Knights of Labor under Powderly) was in opposition to strikes favoring societal education and the legislative process.

In anticipation of the fight for shorter hours, many workers also established 8-hour leagues. The leaders of the leagues included many anarchists, socialists, and revolutionaries. Local unions also began preparations for agitation, despite half-hearted support by national union officials. Prior to May 1886, thousands of workers around the country had already begun agitation by striking and demonstrating. On May 1, there were massive demonstrations in most
major cities including Boston, Chicago, Cincinnati, San Francisco, Milwaukee, and New York. As a result of the demonstration of mass force, over 185,000 workers obtained concessions for reduced work hours by their employers in various industries (Montgomery, 1976, p. 126).

It quickly became clear that the working class would be able to exert its power and obtain greater gains than shorter hours. But, things came to a halt by May 4 with the Haymarket Square bombing. The government used the event as a pretext to crack down on anarchists and other radical leaders which were behind the agitation. Leaders and strikers were arrested without warrants and held for long periods without charges (Roediger & Foner, 1989). Many concluded that the government voided freedom of speech and association. May Day had casualties as well. Protesters and strikers in many cities were confronted by armed state and federal forces. In some cases, troops were given orders to fire on the crowds and they did. For example, Wisconsin’s Governor Rusk ordered state troops to shoot protesters in Milwaukee, killing 9; in Chicago police killed 4 strikers at the McCormick plant (Brecher, 1997).

Subsequently, the period from 1890 to the early 1900s was characterized by legal challenges to 8-hour laws. The limited response to this was in part due to the chilling effect of the Haymarket crack-down and the elimination of radical anarchist leadership. Another reason was the half-hearted efforts by the AFL under Gompers. Although the AFL declared its intention to fight for the 8-hour workday as of May 1, 1890, Gompers refused to engage in national agitation. He preferred a strategy of allowing specific local craft unions to act alone often with no central direction or help (Roediger & Foner, 1989).

According to Roediger and Foner (1989) the biggest reductions in hours were obtained between 1905-1920 with continued direct action. In 1919, for example, 22.5% of the labor force was involved in strikes. The agitation was organized by a small yet radical core of anarchists, including the IWW that cooperated with local unions while the AFL under Gompers caused more harm than good. For example, the IWW organized successfully the miners strike of 1906 at Goldfield Nevada; the successful 1909 ‘uprising’ of 20,000 NYC garment workers; the successful 1912 textile strikes at Lawrence involving 275,000; the 1913 Paterson silk strikes involving 25,000 which failed due to police violence and arrests of leadership; the 1916 Mesabi Range strike involving 10,000. Overall, they were involved in over 150 strikes including the coal wars of 1912-13 in West Virginia and the uprising after the Ludlow Massacre of 1914 where troops using machine guns killed over 32 people. IWW activity also prompted Henry Ford’s preemptive granting of the 8-hour day and passing of the Adamson Act (1916) extending the 8-hour workday to railroad workers of private companies. The latter was a major success because it was the first time federal law covered workers in private companies. However, the law was passed in response to a pending nationwide strike by 400,000 railroad workers for shorter
hours. The government though, used WWI to crack down on anarchist and communist leadership as it did with Haymarket.

So, by the 1930s, government had to solve the problems of restarting the economy and avoiding revolution due to the Great Depression (Roediger & Foner, 1989). According to one journalist in 1933, “capitalism itself was at the point of dissolution” (cited in Alter, 2006, p. 3). Bank runs and general civil unrest were reaching a crisis point:

For the first time since the Civil War, armed men patrolled the entrances to federal buildings, while machine gunners perched on rooftops. . . . Unrest was already growing in the farm belt, where mobs had broken up bankruptcy auctions. Four thousand men had occupied the Nebraska statehouse and five thousand stormed Seattle’s county building. The governor of North Carolina predicted a violent revolution, and police in Chicago clubbed teachers who had not been paid all school year. (Alter, 2006, pp. 3-4)

As a result, it was anticipated that Roosevelt would declare martial law in his inauguration speech to keep the nation from revolution. This led the New York Herald-Tribune on March 5 to print ‘FOR DICTATORSHIP IF NECESSARY’ with other papers running similar headlines (cited in Alter, 2006, p. 4).

At the time, the popular consensus held that depression was caused by insufficient purchasing power—ironically, a Marxist argument. Roosevelt felt that an independent union movement would be successful in raising workers’ wages, which would then stimulate the economy and ease revolutionary pressures without suspending democracy (Perlman, 1939). However, most union actions such as establishing or joining a union, engaging in a strike, mass protests, distributing union information, and collective bargaining were illegal up until this time, taking place in defiance of law. It was not until the Norris-LaGuardia Act (1932) that workers were given basic protections against Yellow Dog contracts (employment on the condition of not joining a union) and injunctions against strikes. Consequently, a number of measures were passed after the Norris-LaGuardia Act as a means of increasing aggregate demand via purchasing power and encouraging union growth. It took the National Labor Relations Act (1935), popularly known as the Wagner Act, to allow workers to legally join unions while forcing employers to recognize collective bargaining. The New Deal also passed legislation establishing the first social safety nets with the Social Security Act (1935).

The government finally legalized the 8-hour workday with the Fair Labor Standards Act (1938) as part of Roosevelt’s New Deal. However, it was passed after shorter work hours were
de facto won by workers in many industries through often necessarily violent struggles. Overall, these laws had been approved in response to years of agitation with violent direct action. For example, in the midst of the Great Depression, the level of underlying civil unrest was so high that the threat of a popular revolt was believed to be great enough to overwhelm government forces. “With so many banks involved, the U.S. Army—including National Guard and Reserve units—might not be large enough to respond” (Alter, 2006, p. 4). This was unlike the 1800s when government troops usually sufficed to subdue citizen uprisings. As a result of this credible threat of violent revolt against the capitalist system itself, the power holders were forced to offer these concessions. “During the Great Depression, the insurgent group (labor) constituted a much larger proportion of the electorate, and therefore left political elites with little choice but to respond to political violence in a beneficent manner” (Fording, 1997, p. 23). Consequently, the purpose of the New Deal Legislation was clearly to alleviate poverty and hardship caused by the depression to avoid the potential of a renewed people’s revolution as in the late 1800s (Alter, 2006; Asimakopoulos, 2000; Roediger & Foner, 1989).

Therefore, the 8-hour workday demonstrates that even basic demands were met only after a prolonged period of agitation from the 1860s to the 1930s, including mass strikes and armed rebellion often led by anarchists (Roediger & Foner, 1989). This exemplifies Rocker’s (1938) argument that even democracies, which represent capitalist interests, did not concede labor rights until after they were confronted by accomplished facts on the ground, resulting from citizens’ direct action. It also demonstrates that favorable labor legislation in America has been forced by years of agitation based on direct action and the determination to violently resist state suppression. Strikers were also joined by citizens, often of all races and ethnicities, providing an example of not only worker, but working-class solidarity. Finally, the 8-hour movement also demonstrates the important role played by radical leaders and ideology disseminated through societal education to promote class solidarity.

Conclusion

First, societal education through independent media, schools, and art has been, and continue to be important in terms of obtaining popular support, developing class-consciousness beyond race or industry, and mobilizing people. Without it, developing class-consciousness would be difficult. Without class-consciousness, there is no solidarity and without solidarity, movements fail. It was through this solidarity that workers of the old labor movement would engage in sympathy strikes and obtain the support of entire communities. Consequently, societal education increased the intensity of class-conflict and challenged capitalist ideology, making education another form of revolutionary action.
Societal education, in turn, relied heavily on an independent media which was often run, managed, and owned by the movement itself. Currently, media concentration and pro-capitalist bias have become a well-documented obstruction to objective information and democracy (Chomsky, 1994, 2002; Greenwald, 2004). This is why it will be crucial for the labor movement to develop an independent mass media so as to get its message out and raise support for radical direct action. A current example of media controlled and run by progressive liberals are moveon.org and Jobs with Justice (jwj.org). In addition, progressive filmmaker and director Robert Greenwald’s finance strategy for producing activist documentaries by pre-selling DVD’s directly to the concerned public offers an example of grass-roots activist film-making.

Furthermore, in order for people to support radical action, the left needs to demonstrate a feasible working alternative to existing structures. People will not engage in action without knowing where it is expected to lead them. This was why Gramsci (1971) advocated developing an ethical state and a disinterested culture. However, in order for this to take place, there must not only be a free state, but also a free media to provide objective information that could educate the working class. It is through education that people can learn of a viable counter-hegemony to the existing economic and political relations. To complicate things, all this would have to be done ultimately at the global level. As Cox (1987) argued, the fact that we now have a global state of capitalism requires that we develop a transnational historic bloc.

Second, ideology matters. This is closely related to societal education. Radical educators, labor leaders, and activists have played an invaluable role. Third, economic direct action has been a core strategy in the past. For example, it was through inflicting financial losses upon power holders through mass strikes, sit-ins, and boycotts that forced previous concessions. This oftentimes included the destruction of private corporate property and the real threat of revolution. Violent economic direct action was revolutionary in that it complimented challenging the power holders’ economic base with challenges to their political authority as well.

Fourth, legislation has been repressive of the labor movement, forcing it to operate outside of, and in direct opposition to existing legal frameworks. Labor rights were not given through voluntary changes in law in the name of progress and social justice. Instead, major legislative changes took place in response to a long history of agitation based on high levels of intense violent direct action and the threat of broader civil unrest. Interestingly, law was violated by the power holders as well. As demonstrated, (when sufficiently threatened), capitalists and government violated existing laws and violently suppressed mass protests. Private guards, police, state and federal troops were all utilized, including heavy artillery and machine gun units,
regularly resulting in civilian deaths. This was a standard response any time the power holders felt their institutional grasp loosened by mass movements.

Consequently, history indicates that the working class today could benefit by direct action designed to bring about radical change. Examples of radical goals to be obtained through direct action would include: a guaranteed minimum living standard for all (including housing and income); universal healthcare; full-employment policies; fair trade legislation; industrial democracy through work councils; elimination of welfare; repeal of corporate status as legal persons for accountability; total prohibition of corporate involvement in the political process; legislation of independent news media, free from corporate control/governance. These stipulations alone could revitalize the labor movement and hopefully bring much needed change for society’s poor, underprivileged, and invisible.

References


Destruction and Resistance at SUNY

by

Ali Shehzad Zaidi

THE STATE UNIVERSITY of New York turned fifty in 1998, but its mission-to provide New Yorkers with quality education at low cost-is endangered. Earlier this spring, SUNY faculty finally responded by revolting and issuing an unprecedented demand for the removal of the state-appointed university trustees.

New York public college tuition increased at three times the national average-from $1,350 a year in 1989-90 to $3,400 in ’95-96. This hike is particularly glaring because the income gap between the rich and poor in New York now surpasses that of any other state. In a recent study, the New York Public Interest Research Group noted that the percentage of average family income needed to pay college tuition at New York public universities more than doubled from 4.6% in ’89-90 to 11.25% in ’95-96. Consequently, between 1995 and 1997, there was a 20% drop in freshmen enrollment from families earning between $21,000 and $45,000 a year, and a 14% drop from those earning between $45,000 and $85,000. Meanwhile, 14% more freshmen enrolled whose families earned more than $105,000.

SUNY’s crisis began in the 1980s when Governor Mario Cuomo and the state legislature enacted tax cuts, particularly for corporations and the wealthy. Together with a recession, these tax cuts led to New York State budget shortfalls. New York public college tuition more than doubled between 1990 and 1992 for SUNY students, 73% of whom receive financial aid. Cuomo’s Republican successor, George Pataki, immediately enacted for the ’95-96 school year the largest tuition increase in SUNY history-a $750 hike accompanied by a $200 million cut in SUNY’s operating budget. That year, SUNY student enrollment dropped by 10,000.

By 1995, most SUNY trustees were Pataki appointees, including E. E. Kailbourne, chair of Fleet Bank, Edward Cox, son-in-law of Richard Nixon, and Candace DeRussy, co-founder of Change New York, a powerful anti-tax organization. In January 1996, the new trustees forced Frederick Salerno, a Cuomo appointee, to resign as board chair. Afterwards, they denied SUNY Chancellor Thomas Bartlett the authority to appoint his own staff. Bartlett had disagreed with the governor’s plans to cap Tuition Assistance Program (TAP) grants, saying “We cannot turn our backs on those who need our help the most.” Deprived of decision-making power, Bartlett resigned in June 1996.

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1 This article was originally published by Against The Current (#82) at: http://www.solidarity-us.org/node/915.

2 Ali Shehzad Zaidi writes frequently on education issues in New York. His essays have appeared in Against the Current as well as Z and Covert Action Quarterly, among others.


5 Rethinking SUNY. December 1, 1995.


7 Ibid.
Destruction and Resistance at SUNY

State support to SUNY's operating budget dropped from 90% in 1988 to 45% in 1996. In "Rethinking SUNY," a plan submitted to the New York State legislature in December 1995, the new trustees called for SUNY to become "more self-sufficient, more entrepreneurial, more focused and more creative." In a statement issued together with the heads of other New York State universities, SUNY's new chancellor John Ryan explained: "Just as the businesses and industries we support must be flexible to meet the constantly changing demands of the economic and academic marketplace, so must our own institutions be given the managerial and financial flexibility to operate effectively and efficiently."9

"Financial flexibility" suits Chancellor Ryan. During his first year in office, the trustees gave Ryan a 45% raise, bringing his salary to twice that of the governor. SUNY presidents were given pay-for-performance salary packages and will be paid according to how they carry out the new agenda. The incentives are not strictly personal; campuses will receive extra funds for increasing teaching productivity.

Touting "greater management autonomy" and "empowerment" for individual campuses, Pataki's appointees recently attempted to introduce variable tuition rates at SUNY campuses. While these currently exist only at SUNY's two-year technical colleges, the aim is clearly to extend them. A new "operating freedom" is the right to name buildings and grounds after living individuals. Instead of honoring the deceased, SUNY now honors the highest bidder.

The trustees also granted such "freedoms" as waivers for five community colleges to exceed their annual tuition limit, and permission for individual campuses to set their own dormitory rates. They attempted to introduce "management flexibility" for SUNY's teaching hospitals to enable them to compete in today's managed care environment. These initiatives are fragmenting SUNY and are eroding broad and equal access to higher education in New York.

In the latest SUNY budget, adopted in June 1998, the trustees determined that colleges will no longer receive funds solely from a central budget, and will keep their own tuition and fees. SUNY's new financing scheme is called "Resource Allocation Methodology" (RAM). Previously, colleges received funds according to their purpose, mission and need. Today, student enrollment and market-driven imperatives determine campus budgets. Nineteen SUNY campuses stand to lose funding because of RAM and will have to either cut programs or raise mandated student fees, which now average $485. The fees, which are not covered by TAP, are a covert means of introducing variable campus tuition.

In a 1999 study on RAM, Thomas Kriger observes:

RAM must be understood in the context of the managerial reform movement that is currently transforming the world of higher education budgeting. These reforms mark the influence of a new generation of more conservative, "activist," university trustees. They also illustrate the widening influence of neoclassical economics (an emphasis on competition, the maximization of self-interest as a prime factor in human behavior, the primacy of profit as a value in human interactions) on higher education policy making. . . . As with RAM, performance funding is a method for SUNY to gain greater managerial control -or flexibility in the consultants' language-in the workplace. It is not by coincidence that SUNY's recent move toward performance-based

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9 "State University Chancellor and University Presidents Emphasize the Importance of Higher Education to New York" (SUNY press release), February 26, 1997.
13 "UUP President Charges SUNY Trustees' Plan Cuts 19 Campuses by $1.5 million" (UUP news release), June 29, 1998.
funding is associated with RAM; both originate in the Total Quality Management (TQM) movement.

These developments underscore a growing sense of crisis among SUNY faculty. From 1994 to 1996, SUNY lost 1,597 full-time professors-14% of its faculty.\(^{14}\) SUNY adjuncts now teach 40% of SUNY’s courses.\(^{15}\) Tenure at SUNY, already eroded by the growing use of part-timers, is further threatened by SUNY’s investments in distance learning technology. In the past two years, the SUNY Learning Network has tripled the number of courses it offers through the Internet. SUNY faculty may see their control over the curriculum diminished by the increasing use of distance learning.

Faculty recruitment at SUNY is in decline. In 1990, SUNY outbid 80% of the nations’ colleges and universities in the salaries it offered to new faculty; by 1996, SUNY could only outbid 40%.\(^ {16}\) SUNY faculty went without a contract from 1995 to 1997. Negotiations stalled when the faculty union, United University Professionals (UUP), refused to allow outsourcing of faculty positions to corporations.

As SUNY shifts from full to part-time labor, it is also undergoing changes in the education it provides. Federal and state tax dollars, not to mention student tuition, are flowing into technology centers such as the Center for Environmental Sciences and Technology Management. The aim, says SUNY Albany President Karen Hitchcock, is “to help move the best ideas of university researchers into the marketplace.”\(^ {17}\) SUNY has increased matching funds for sponsored research at its colleges. A new budget initiative for 1999-2000, “SMART-NY,” would match sponsored research funding with SUNY money. Meanwhile, traditional disciplines are being scaled back.

The corporate presence takes different forms at more liberal arts-oriented schools like SUNY Geneseo. “You won’t see as much corporate-sponsored research here as you would at, say SUNY Binghamton or Albany,” says Jay Hamilton, an assistant professor in the Department of Communications at SUNY Geneseo. “Instead, many of our learning resources are corporate sponsored.”\(^ {18}\)

The school, like most throughout the nation, receives equipment that has been donated by large corporations in exchange for what Hamilton describes as “an increased corporate presence on campus.” Last fall semester, Hamilton says, Kodak supplied his department with three low-line digital cameras. In exchange, Kodak was permitted to provide a presentation to the communications students. “There were probably about 100 people there,” Hamilton says. “What I thought was going to be a discussion about new technology and advancements in the field turned into a bald-faced sales presentation for Kodak products.”

Last year, the Department of Communications at SUNY Geneseo reduced its five tracks of study to two combined tracks. During her senior year Maria Lambert, an organizing director for the Student Association of the State University of New York (SASU) and recent graduate of SUNY Geneseo, had her track, rhetorical studies, eliminated from the department.

“I still graduated with rhetorical studies on my diploma, but I never had a chance to take a number of courses that were part of that track,” she says. “Instead I had to enroll in lower-level

\(^{14}\) SUNY Faculty Union Documents Salary Slippage, Faculty Exodus” (UUP press release), April 21, 1997.
\(^{16}\) “SUNY Faculty Union . . . .” op. cit.
\(^{17}\) Governor Pataki Lauds New Research Center at the University at Albany (SUNY press release), June 30, 1997.
\(^{18}\) All quotations without footnotes are from interviews conducted in spring 1998.
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courses for additional information." Lambert says even the threat that low-enrollment majors may be eliminated has a "chilling effect" on campus because students are fearful of enrolling in majors that may not exist in the next academic year.

Bruce Van Hise, executive director of college advancement at SUNY Brockport, where only 3% of outside funding comes from private sources, says a "significant increase" in corporate funding can be expected in the next ten years. Still, Van Hise, who was involved in raising private funds for the new Bausch and Lomb Public Library, says he has never "experienced any pressure from private sources who donate funds." "For us to change our organization to raise funds would be improper and foolish," says Van Hise.

At SUNY Old Westbury, a four-year college on Long Island, the administration eliminated French language instruction, faculty positions for the writing center, the program in English as a Second Language, and the college's unique performing arts program in African-American music and dance. The number of full time faculty declined from 146 in `89-90 to 107 in `96-97, leading to a steep rise in the student-faculty ratio, from 22.2 in `89-90 to 30.2 in `95-96.19

SUNY's research universities are also being restructured. Last year, SUNY Albany's administration closed down the German department, fired its four tenured professors, and merged the French department into a newly created Modern European Languages department. It simultaneously hired nineteen new professors in other disciplines as part of what it called a "strategy of investment in strength." Invariably, strong disciplines are those that engage in corporate sponsored research.

In an open letter in the November 7, 1997 Albany Student Press, French professor Helen Regueiro Elam wrote that the SUNY Albany administration "has transformed the university into a country club . . . with utter disregard for intellectual values, pedagogical priorities, or the larger role of a university in a democratic culture." Students at SUNY Albany, she believes, are becoming processors of information rather than critical thinkers, as corporations increasingly dictate SUNY's curriculum.20

Another critic of recent developments at SUNY Albany, English professor Teresa Ebert, described in an essay the economic pressures on humanities departments, which include "cutting their budgets, limiting new hiring, increasing the teaching loads of their faculty, suspending admissions to their graduate programs or eliminating them altogether, and substituting part-time contingent knowledge workers for full-time positions."

These pressures will jeopardize more than the well-being of SUNY. As Ebert points out, educational issues are at "the very matrix of the forces shaping citizenship, and affect the shape of labor relations, the structure of the distribution of wealth and access, and the very forms of daily life."21

Errol Schweizer, a SUNY Binghamton senior who edits the student publication Off!, describes the formidable obstacles to activism at SUNY. "I think even worse than the apathy," he says, "is the anomy, the profound alienation that we all feel towards our culture, towards one another." There is a growing sense of powerlessness, says Schweizer, "as more people get shoved by

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19 "Trends in FTE Faculty and SFR," Figure No. 6, Presidential Review Report (report of SUNY Old Westbury's Presidential Review Preparation Committee), February 21, 1997.
the wayside, and as the gains by the middle class and the unions during the '50s and '60s slowly get rolled back.'

Students have difficulty imagining alternatives to the system that conditions their very thinking. As Ralph Nader observed during an October 1996 talk at SUNY Binghamton, "We have to imagine the manufacturing of suppressed imagination is part of the consequence of growing up corporate, growing up looking at the world through the eyes of the dominant institution of society."22

The changes at SUNY affect Schweizer, who hails from the Bronx, in a personal way. "Although I can pay for school," he says, "I have siblings who may not be able to because of the constant tuition increases, because of the privatization and the neoliberalization of the academy that is really making it hard for urban, working class people to pay for school."

SUNY Binghamton's fading public identity is symbolized by its recent name change to "Binghamton University." The transition from state-supported to state-assisted university is having lasting repercussions. "Departments in the humanities are being drastically scaled back as part of the Rethinking SUNY plan," notes Jennifer Lutzenburger, a graduate student in English. "Our university . . . is being shifted to a business and vocationally-oriented center. The English department received two funding lines [for two faculty positions] to replace the eight faculty members we have lost and are planning to lose through retirement. There is no indication from the dean that we will receive more lines."

This story is being repeated elsewhere. At Monroe Community College (MCC), the faculty and staff voted last year to allow increases in class sizes, reduced salary raises, and fewer earned vacation days in order to avert layoffs.23 With state subsidies in decline, MCC recently entered into partnership with the optics industry and the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, a key player in nuclear weapons development.

Pataki's tuition hikes, budget cuts and appointments dismayed many who remembered and cherished SUNY's early years. Among them was Samuel Gould, who headed the SUNY system from 1964 to 1971, when its enrollment doubled.

In October 1995, Gould, in retirement in Florida, called his former assistant, John Mather and urged, "Drive the Vandals from the gates." A month later, Mather responded by founding Preservation of SUNY, which now includes fifteen former SUNY trustees, fourteen former campus presidents, and twenty-four former university administrators as well as alumni, students, businessmen and former state officials.24 Mather has published op-ed pieces in the Legislative Gazette, the Albany Times-Union, and the Binghamton Sun and Press Bulletin, taking the SUNY trustees to task for abrogating their responsibilities to the university system.

John Mather regards himself as both an idealist and a pragmatist, and has set out to defend the public stake in SUNY. He opposes the decision to fire 300 administrators at SUNY Central Administration, a move he believes will cause SUNY's sixty-four campuses to duplicate their functions with a proliferation of local administrators. Mather is troubled by what he calls the "RAM scam," by the cuts to the Tuition Assistance Program, and by attempts to eliminate the Equal Opportunity Program (EOP), a program for disadvantaged students that Mather, then a SUNY official, helped create in 1966.

Maple Sweeney, a New York City native and International Relations senior at SUNY Brockport, says she wouldn't be at Brockport if it weren't for EOP. "I am qualified," says Sweeney. "I have the grades. I just don't have the means. It's unfortunate that my mother doesn't have a lot of money, but people of misfortune need help reaching their potential. If the cuts to EOP continue, people like me won't even be able to consider coming to Brockport."

Many SUNY students feel the same way. Student debt is on the rise. Between 1990 and 1995, there was a 65% increase in the amount of federal loans owed by SUNY graduates. Among Mather's allies is SASU, which brought 15,000 students and their supporters to Albany on February 15, 1995 for SUNY's lobbying day. SASU organized a protest at State Senator Joseph Bruno's 1997 graduation speech at SUNY Albany. Last year, SASU initiated a letter-writing campaign in an effort to persuade legislators to restore SUNY's funding.

This sort of activism is becoming a necessary part of SUNY campus life. Students at SUNY Geneseo hold an annual, week-long "Budget Advocacy" campaign, where they distribute information about state budget cuts, organize letter-writing campaigns to legislators, and hold a rally. This past academic year, students at SUNY Geneseo focused on making the public aware of tuition increases and cutbacks in TAP and EOP.

Over the past four years, as state funding of EOP has diminished, students at SUNY Brockport launched a letter-writing campaign and lobbied in Albany. Nearly 8,000 letters were sent from the Brockport campus to state legislators, and EOP was restored to three-fourths of its initial operating level, says SUNY Brockport EOP Director Terrence Barnes. Students continued to lobby for the final 25% of funding, which passed the legislature but was ultimately vetoed by Pataki.

Mather hopes that the lobbying efforts of SASU, together with growing public awareness of SUNY's importance, will reverse the neglect and abuse of the university system. "Before Pataki became governor in '95, appointees checked their corporate connections at the door," said Mather in a recent interview. "They functioned independently in the discharge of their fiduciary responsibilities, recognizing that the shareholders of SUNY are the people of New York." As Mather sees it, SUNY's new trustees "believe in a stratified society in which there is a permanent underclass."

From his perspective as a former SUNY administrator in the '60s, Mather is dismayed at the attitudes of today's public officials. Governor Nelson Rockefeller, Mather recalls, placed full trust in SUNY administrators, says Mather, and would not attempt to influence their decisions. That trust has evaporated under Pataki, who has placed Republican operatives in key administrative positions at SUNY.

Donald Dunn, a First Deputy to the Governor, was appointed Executive Vice Chancellor without a search for the position. David Farren, the husband of New York State Health Commissioner Barbara DeBuono, was appointed Associate Vice Chancellor for Marketing and Enrollment Management. David Bilett, a former staff member of John Faso, the Republican Assembly Minority Leader, was named Associate Vice Chancellor for Governmental Relations. Michael Clemente, a former assistant to Jim Natoli, Pataki's Director of State Operations, was named the General Manager of SUNY's Construction Fund.

27 Chad Oliveira contributed these paragraphs on SUNY Brockport and SUNY Geneseo.
In May 1997, Vincent Aceto, president of the SUNY Faculty Senate, expressed his concern to the trustees that "a subtle, but pervasive, political litmus test is being used to appoint personnel at SUNY System Administration."\textsuperscript{29} The appointment of Peter Salins as SUNY's new provost was, however, none too subtle. Salins is a senior fellow at the Manhattan Institute, a well-funded right-wing think tank.

It had become increasingly apparent that the trustees were loyal not to SUNY but to the man who appointed them. In a June 28, 1998 letter to Chancellor Ryan, UUP President William Scheuerman wrote that SUNY's trustees were the "leaders of the only public university system in the nation in 1997-98 not to request a budget increase."\textsuperscript{30}

Recently, the state legislature passed a bill to guarantee that at least four of SUNY's sixteen trustees would be SUNY alumni. The assumption was that alumni would act in the best interests of SUNY and temper the agenda of political appointees. Pataki, however, vetoed the legislation. With SUNY administrators often appointed without searches, affirmative action guidelines waived throughout the system, and plans underway to place all SUNY research under the auspices of the SUNY Research Foundation (where public disclosure laws do not apply), the need for public dialogue and accountability at SUNY increases.

To this end, Mather has introduced a "Magna Carta" for SUNY, outlined in a six page supplement to the \textit{Legislative Gazette}. (The original Magna Carta, extracted by the barons of England from King John in 1215, guaranteed civil liberties for the English people.) Preservation of SUNY will soon convene a panel to inform the public as to the actions and voting records of SUNY's trustees.

SUNY's Magna Carta would insure that trustees owe their full loyalty to SUNY and act consistently in its interest. It states that SUNY "belongs to all the people of the Empire State," that the politicization of SUNY "is diserving of public higher education requirements in the preservation of a democratic society," that SUNY must comply with federal and state regulations, including those regarding affirmative action, and that SUNY "is an entity at law, not subject to actions that would fragment or dismantle it."\textsuperscript{31}

Many hoped that the record $2 billion surplus in the 1998 New York State budget, would improve SUNY's fortunes, which had been subjected to fifteen consecutive budget cuts. In April 1998, Pataki vetoed many of the state legislature's appropriations for SUNY, including an $8.8 million increase to hire new faculty, a $3.8 million EOP restoration, a $150 per student increase in state aid to community colleges, and a $65 per student book purchase credit for public college students.\textsuperscript{32}

Matters came to a head on December 15, 1998, when the trustees approved a SUNY core curriculum, effective fall 2000. Four trustees, working with two administrators, had drafted the curriculum without consulting the Faculty Senate, campus presidents, or other trustees.

Earlier, in January 1998, the Faculty Senate had sent the trustees a policy report on general education which had been endorsed by all campus presidents and faculty senates. The senate's request to discuss the report with the trustees was ignored.\textsuperscript{33} The vote on the new

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{29} Vincent Aceto. "Testimony Delivered to SUNY Board of Trustees," May 28, 1997, SUNY Faculty Senate Bulletin 1997-98, No. 2, Appendix H: 3.
  \item \textsuperscript{30} William E. Scheuerman. Letter to John W. Ryan, June 29, 1998: 3.
  \item \textsuperscript{31} "The SUNY Magna Carta," \textit{The Legislative Gazette}. May 18, 1998: 25.
  \item \textsuperscript{32} "Students Outraged at the Latest Pataki Attack" (SASU press release), April 27, 1998.
  \item \textsuperscript{33} Vincent Aceto. "SUNY Faculty Wants A Say In Curriculum," \textit{Albany Times-Union}. April 22, 1999: A15.
\end{itemize}
Destruction and Resistance at SUNY

curriculum took place at a time when the faculty were busy grading papers. Details of the proposed curriculum had been faxed to the trustees less than a week before. The few professors who turned up at the December 15 meeting were not allowed to comment until after the trustees had finished voting.

The hastily passed curriculum, consisting of ten courses in different subject areas, might have benefitted from faculty advice. A month after the passage of the core curriculum, campus presidents met with SUNY administrators to inform them that there were not enough faculty to teach the mandated core curriculum, since faculty lines depended on the number of student majors in a particular subject. Chancellor Ryan, however, declined to promise the presidents more resources.

The new curriculum made little pedagogical sense. Most SUNY campuses already had rigorous core curricula. Jane Altes, the interim president of Empire State College, observed that a single course in a foreign language or a science, consisting of three credit hours, "has no academic meaning." Justyna Berger, a SUNY Albany senior wondered: "How valuable is one course in foreign language or math? In my experience, taking so few courses in such a wide variety of disciplines has no lasting intellectual impact."

Pataki’s appointees had usurped the role of the faculty in determining SUNY’s curriculum. As the policies of the SUNY Board of Trustees state: "The University faculty shall be responsible for the conduct of the University's instruction."

What followed was the most massive professors' revolt in SUNY history. In April 1999, the Faculty Senate joined with the SUNY faculty union to declare "no-confidence" in the trustees and to ask the governor to remove them.

Their joint resolution censures the Board of Trustees for, among other things, "failing to conduct fair and open searches for the most senior administrative positions in the University and disregarding affirmative action guidelines," "allowing ideological views to dictate the academic direction of the University," "failing to advocate for strong financial support for the University," "seeking to significantly disrupt the public mission of high quality health care delivery to the people of the State of New York by attempting to remove State University of New York's teaching hospitals from the University," and "violating its own policies by imposing a mandated general education policy for all campuses without the direct involvement of legitimate faculty representatives, chief academic officers, or presidents."

The faculty addressed the governor, legislature and the people of New York: "Never before have we so spoken and we do so now only from the deep conviction that the University is in a time of great jeopardy."

Shortly afterwards, in a April 5, 1999 letter to the trustees, Chancellor Ryan wrote: "All of us are engaged in a renaissance of the State University that is both challenging and, at times, contentious. But we cannot step back from the challenge simply because some people are made uncomfortable by change."

In a similar letter to the campus presidents, Ryan stated that the Faculty Senate appeared to be "trading its historic and collegial role as a vital participant in University governance for the adversarial role inherent in the union-management contract-negotiation process," adding that if the Faculty Senate came "to be viewed as a part of the union-representing individual faculty

members, and not as the scholarly and academic representative of the faculty as a whole," then
the administration would have to "review the role of the Senate in a much different light."³⁶ On
April 20, professors throughout SUNY wore black armbands in protest.

In his 1999-2000 budget, Pataki proposed a $133 million cut in TAP, which would result in a
$510 reduction in the maximum award to SUNY students-which now covers only 26% of tuition.
He also proposed reducing TAP eligibility at community colleges from six to four semesters and
requiring students to take at least fifteen credits instead of twelve in order to maintain their TAP
eligibility.³⁷ In June 1999, Pataki completed his stacking of the SUNY trustee board with the
addition of Bernard Conners, an Albany businessman and former FBI agent.

The New York legislature, after record delay, has just passed its budget. Most of Pataki's cuts
to higher education have been rescinded, although specifics are not yet available. What is clear
is that SUNY will spend $3 billion during the next five years for campus construction projects, an
agenda that Vincent Tirelli, a labor organizer at the City University of New York, describes as "a
neutron bomb in reverse," since it builds buildings but doesn't put people in them.

That kind of planning may please construction firms, many of which contribute to Pataki's
campaign, but will do little for the students for whom Nelson Rockefeller had vowed in 1969 to
preserve SUNY as "the open gateway to opportunity in American life."³⁸

Sentimentality and Responsibility in the University

Ali S. Zaidi

The hidden history of the University of Rochester (UR) includes plutonium and uranium injection experiments during the late forties, CIA-sponsored mind-control experiments during the fifties, and lead injection experiments during the sixties. UR's problems with human medical experimentation continue well into the nineties.

Since their perceptions are conditioned to a great extent by the upbeat pronouncements in university publications, UR alumni and students remain largely unaware of their university's moral crisis.

Rochester Review is such a publication, containing features that enhance the appeal and reputation of the University of Rochester. The Spring-Summer 1996 Review, for instance, noted that U.S. News & World Report ranked Strong Memorial Hospital, UR's teaching hospital, among the 100 best hospitals in the country. The Spring-Summer 1998 Review, to take another example, celebrated the UR School of Medicine and Dentistry's third place ranking among the nation's top primary-care schools in the 1998 U.S. News & World Report.

In The Moral and Spiritual Crisis in Education, David Purpel distinguishes between sentimentality, which does not acknowledge how one's actions contribute to a moral crisis, and responsibility, which acknowledges how those actions shape that crisis. Recent events at the University of Rochester serve to illustrate Purpel's thesis and raise questions about the ethics of human experimentation and the adequacy of regulatory oversight at university teaching hospitals.

Campus Deaths

On March 29, 1996, a symposium on the ethics of medical experimentation on human subjects was held at the University. That same day, a sophomore, Nicole Wan, took part in a UR-sponsored medical experiment that cost her life.

Wan had been paid $150 for participating in an experiment at Strong Memorial Hospital, UR's teaching hospital, which involved having cells extracted from her lungs in order to study the effects of smoking and pollution. Wan left the bronchoscopy unit trembling from an overdose of lidocaine, an anesthetic. A couple of hours later, Wan had a seizure and was rushed to Strong, where she was placed on life support. She died a few days later.

Calling Wan's death an "isolated, very unfortunate incident," UR President Thomas Jackson offered what he called "an imperfect analogy." "If a student or somebody was hit by a car, would that lead people to think the campus was not safe? I hope not."4

Was Wan's death comparable, however imperfectly, to a car accident? The facts speak for themselves. The autopsy by the Monroe County medical examiner revealed lesions in Wan's lungs. The doctors failed to record the amount of lidocaine administered to Wan, who was given four times the maximum allowable dosage that UR had established in 1981. This maximum

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1 This article was originally published in the Spring/Summer 1999 Covert Action Quarterly.
dosage was inexplicably absent from the research protocol of the experiment in which Wan participated. Finally, the hospital staff failed to assess Wan's condition before she left the bronchoscopy unit.5

Just seven months prior to Wan's death, an inspector from the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) warned UR that its failure to follow proper procedures for human experimentation placed subjects at risk. UR officials denied that there was a link between Wan's death and the deficiencies cited by the FDA inspector.6

In October 1996, evaluators from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) visited UR and found that many research projects lacked the files that would enable their proper review. The NIH ordered UR to provide more staff and resources for UR's Human Subjects Review Board, and to write quarterly reports regarding progress in safeguarding research subjects.7

In his condolence letter, published in the April 4, 1996 Campus Times, UR's student newspaper, UR President Thomas Jackson wrote that Wan's death "occurred following her willing participation in support of one of the basic missions of the university-research that will enable individuals to live better."8

Jackson claimed in his letter that UR would "immediately and rigorously explore the circumstances" of Wan's death, and would "continue to press for all relevant facts." (The administration has never released the findings of its internal investigation into Wan's death.) In April 1996, Wan's family filed a $100 million lawsuit against UR, which later settled the case for an undisclosed sum.

Around the time of Wan's death, Strong underwent a major restructuring. In the Winter 1996-97 Review, readers learned of changes in store for UR's hospital. Jay Stein, UR vice provost for health affairs, wrote: "The challenge to hospitals is clear: Cut your costs or you will be out of business... The University of Rochester Medical Center and the rest of the nation's academic medical centers must adapt if we are to continue to fulfill our role as the keystone of the health care system that is the envy of the world."9 Lost on the Review's readers were the implications of the UR administration's sentimental view of a corporatized health care system in which profit takes precedence over human well-being.

The UR administration cut $40 million from Strong's $360 million budget in just two years, eliminating 412 hospital jobs, including 114 nurse positions. It also eliminated the nurses' contractual weekend pay, and, according to many nurses, was forcing them to do "mandatory voluntary overtime."10 Nurses complained that lower-paid aides were being hired to do bedside care formerly undertaken by themselves,11 that patient units were dangerously understaffed, and that they were being assigned to new units without adequate training or sufficient advance notice of unit closings.12 The staff cuts left many nurses feeling isolated and unable to ask for help in the event of an emergency. The solution of the administration was to give the nurses walkie-talkies.13

In spring 1996, contract negotiations stalled between UR and Local 1199, the Hospital and Health Care Employees Union, which represents clerical and cleaning crew workers at Strong. The UR administration sought to reduce vacation pay, compensation for overtime, and tuition assistance for its union health care workers, most of whom earn between $17,000 and $19,000 a year. The UR administration wanted workers to contribute $150 a month for their health
benefits package, and intended to cut health benefits for its future retirees who were 50 or older. UR, meanwhile, was doubling its contribution to the retirement fund of its managers.

The following year, 1997, saw a unionization drive for Strong nurses fail because of a barrage of UR administration anti-union propaganda and the lack of a student-labor coalition at UR to support the nurses. The nurses' concerns about patient safety at Strong did, however, become a public issue.

In the spring of that year, two health care workers and three patients in Strong's maternity unit were infected with a strain of invasive Group A streptococcus. One patient, Susan Doughtery, died after developing necrotizing fascitis, the flesh-eating form of the disease. In the ensuing panic, some patients canceled operations at Strong, which was deluged with phone calls from individuals seeking information about the disease. A Rochester Democrat and Chronicle editorial criticized Strong for contributing to the panic by not releasing enough information about the outbreak:

It's not the first time the University of Rochester's teaching hospital has opted for the silent treatment. A year after a student died in a medical research study, the hospital has yet to disclose exactly what went wrong and what precautions have been put in place to prevent it happening again.14

New York Health Commissioner Barbara DeBuono hastened to reassure the public that Strong was "perfectly safe." "I would have no hesitation," she said, "in recommending any member of my family [to] go there."15 Nonetheless, the New York State Health Department cited several deficiencies in the care given to Doughtery and another patient. There had been a delay in recognizing Doughtery's condition and in aggressively treating it. Doughtery's attending physician had failed to see her for almost 60 hours. Even though they knew that Doughtery was allergic to latex, hospital staff twice used the substance in treating her. When Doughtery's heart stopped beating, it took ten minutes for personnel to locate emergency equipment.16 No cardiac monitor or defibrillator was on hand in the maternity unit. Strong's Chief Medical Officer, Raymond Mayewski, later explained that the equipment had been moved a few days earlier when a unit closed.17

At a press conference, Mayewski refused UR's responsibility for Doughtery's death even while confirming the state health department's findings:

Today, I would like to tell you and the public what I've already told Susan's family: We let you down. And we are deeply, deeply sorry. And we are going to do whatever is necessary to make sure that these problems never happen again in this institution. Could we have prevented Susan's death? We believe the answer is no. We believe that there was nothing we could have done because of the horrible nature of this infection. But we're not asking anyone to accept that. The fact is she died, the fact is we made mistakes.18

In July 1997, the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education issued a warning letter to UR for its deficiencies in seven residency programs, for its inadequate supervision of residents, and for failing to conduct internal reviews of its programs until 1995, 13 years after the reviews were first required.19 Interviewed by the Campus Times, UR Provost Charles Phelps denied that the deficiencies cited in the report jeopardized patient care.20
In March 1998, state health department inspectors visited Strong in response to patient complaints concerning the lack of resident supervision. Residents told inspectors that they often worked 10 to 30 hours beyond the 80 hour a week limit mandated by state regulations.21

Thanks to a 1976 National Labor Relations Board decision, the status of medical residents in private hospitals is that of students rather than employees. That decision is up for review soon. As matters stand, many UR medical residents are reluctant to bring institutional shortcomings to the attention of superiors whose letters of recommendation and evaluations will determine their suitability for the profession.22

A History of Human Experimentation

UR's moral crisis in medicine has a long history. During the late 1940s, UR physicians injected uranium, plutonium, and polonium in unwitting human subjects. Eileen Welsome's 1993 Pulitzer Prize-winning series on the plutonium experiments drew attention to Atomic Energy Project activities at UR, which, in 1943, was chosen to host the medical division of the Manhattan Project and to monitor workers at nuclear plants around the country.

Eleven of the nation's 18 plutonium injection experiments took place at UR's Strong Memorial Hospital. UR research teams prepared an experimental plan for injecting human subjects with radioisotopes and following up the injections with the collection of tissue, urine, and stool samples. Researchers used the codeword "product" for "plutonium" in all communications and documents. The human subjects had code numbers preceded by the letters "HP"-for "Human Product."

Henry Slack, a 69-year-old alcoholic suffering from liver disease and pneumonia, was admitted to Strong on December 12, 1945. In a report, a UR physician described Slack as a "poorly nourished, weak, thin male who is slightly confused." After spending two months in the metabolism ward, Slack was injected with 6.5 micrograms of plutonium, subjecting him to about 56 times the radiation the average person could expect in a lifetime. Slack, a veteran of the Spanish-American War, died six days later, having served his country for the last time. The cause of death given was cirrhosis of the liver.23

After doctors had taken tissue samples from Slack's corpse to trace plutonium, Wright Langham, group leader in radiobiology at the Los Alamos National Laboratory, who coordinated the plutonium injection experiments nationally, wrote to Samuel Bassett, head of UR's metabolism ward and the head of the plutonium and uranium injection experiments at UR. He recommended that terminal cases be injected with 10 times more plutonium than healthier patients. "In case you should decide to do another terminal case, I suggest you do 50 micrograms instead of 5. This would permit the analysis of much smaller samples and would make my work considerably easier... I feel reasonably certain there would be no harm in using larger amounts of material if you are sure the case is a terminal one...."24

In his March 27, 1946 reply to Langham, Bassett wrote: "This case did turn out to be terminal but at the time I started the experimental period, there was sufficient uncertainty regarding the outcome to make me feel that the dose would be within the range of tolerance.... The larger doses that you mention, particularly 50 micrograms, might be given if a suitable opportunity occurred and if you are anxious that I should carry it through. I will see what can be done."25
Janice Stadt, a hairdresser, was another unwitting guinea pig at Strong. UR physicians injected Stadt with plutonium-239 dissolved in a citrate complex so that the isotope would be effectively deposited in her muscles and bones. Milton Stadt, her son, commented at a 1995 public hearing on the radiation experiments:

My mother, Janice Stadt, had a number, HP-8. She was injected with plutonium on March 9th, 1946. She was forty-one years old, and I was eleven years old at the time. My mother and father were never told or asked for any kind of consent to have this done to them. My mother went in [to the hospital] for scleroderma...and a duodenal ulcer, and somehow she got pushed into this lab where these monsters were.

In 1974, three survivors of the plutonium experiments came to Strong to provide blood, urine, and stool samples, not knowing that the purpose of the follow-up tests was to trace the plutonium remaining in their bodies. The patient-subjects were provided with first-class hotels, limousines, and fresh flowers-sentimental touches indeed. Two UR research scientists even gave their autographs to a patient-subject.

UR researchers also injected or fed radium, polonium, uranium, and lead to human subjects. The uranium experiments at Strong were explicitly designed to harm the subjects. The researchers stated in a 1948 report that the experiments were "designed to find the dose of a soluble uranium salt that when introduced intravenously would produce a just detectable renal injury."

Mary Jean Connell is the only living survivor of the uranium experiments. Connell, a farmer's daughter who weighed only 81 pounds at the time of the experiment, went to Strong at the request of a physician who believed that she needed to gain weight. Upon her arrival at Strong in September 1946, Connell immediately gained 584 micrograms—the amount of uranium that a Strong doctor injected into her vein. In later years, Connell suffered from urinary tract infections and kidney pain. After she got an apology and a $400,000 settlement from the federal government in 1996, Connell commented, "I'm afraid it's going to happen again you know."

Condemnation - 50 Years Later

The federal Advisory Committee on Human Radiation Experiments, which was established early in Clinton's presidency, concluded in its 1995 final report that there was "no expectation that the patient-subjects would benefit medically from the plutonium injections" and that the recollections of those involved in the plutonium experiments "all suggest that the patients did not know they had been injected with radioactive material or even that they were subjects of an experiment." While guidelines for human medical experimentation during the 40s and 50s were lax by today's standards, the need for informed consent was understood even then. In 1942, the chair of the federal Committee on Medical Research advised a UR researcher who sought to "work out a human experiment on the chemical prophylaxis of gonorrhea," as follows: "When any risks are involved, volunteers only should be utilized as subjects, and these only after the risks have been fully explained and after signed statements have been obtained which shall prove that the volunteer offered his services with full knowledge and that claims for damage will be waived. An accurate record should be kept of the terms in which the risks involved were described."

The Advisory Committee summed up the ethics of the radioisotope injection experiments in this way:
The egregiousness of the disrespectful way in which the subjects of the injection experiments and their families were treated is heightened by the fact that the subjects were hospitalized patients. Their being ill and institutionalized left them vulnerable to exploitation. As patients, it would have been reasonable for them to assume that their physicians were acting in their best interests, even if they were being given "experimental" interventions. Instead, the physicians violated their fiduciary responsibilities by giving the patients substances from which there was no expectation they would benefit and whose effects were uncertain. This is clearest at Rochester where at least the uranium subjects, and perhaps the plutonium subjects, were apparently the personal patients of the principal investigator.33

A legacy of the radiation experiments is the contamination of the UR campus. In 1945 or 1946, UR researchers buried rat carcasses and waste contaminated with plutonium, radium and polonium, at a remote point on UR grounds, 50 to 100 yards from a barge canal. A UR spokesman recently described the incident as a "historical footnote." UR officials foresee no health hazards.34

In another historical footnote, UR Manhattan Project researchers deliberately contaminated a field next to the UR medical school with radiosodium in order to ascertain the shielding requirements for radiation-measuring equipment. In a 1980 interview, UR researcher Harold Hodge recalled what happened after the researchers mixed sodium-24 with water and poured it into sprinklers:

We walked along and sprinkled the driveway. This was after dark.... The next thing, we went out and sprayed a considerable part of the field.... It was sprayed and then after a while sprayed again, so there was a second and third application. We were all in rubber, so we didn't get wet with the stuff...then Staff [Stafford Warren, head of the medical division of the Manhattan Project] said that one of the things we needed was to see what would be the effect on the inside of a wooden building. So we took the end of the parking garage, and we sprinkled that up about as high as our shoulders, and somebody went inside and made measurements, and we sprinkled it again. Then we wanted to know about the inside of a brick building, and so we sprinkled the side of the animal house.... I had no idea what the readings were.... I hadn't the foggiest idea of what we were doing, except that obviously it was something radioactive.35

**Mind CIA Control**

During the 1950s and 1960s, UR participated in CIA-sponsored mind-control experiments, for which it has yet to accept responsibility. The experiments, codenamed MK-ULTRA, were intended to develop surreptitious means to cause amnesia, shock, confusion, or impulsive behavior in individuals, to program people to carry out instructions, to incapacitate individuals with a knockout pill, and to publicly discredit individuals through the use of chemical substances. CIA director Richard Helms destroyed the MK-ULTRA records in 1973, shortly before congressional committees began investigating the CIA.

UR psychology chairman Richard Wendt, who served on 25 national defense committees, participated in Operation Chatter, an MK-ULTRA program designed to find methods of eliminating free will in others. The CIA was particularly interested in finding a "truth serum" that would make subjects dependent on their interrogators.

Using the Office of Naval Research as a front, the CIA funded Wendt's research under the guise of continuing his grant to study motion sickness. Wendt and his colleagues experimented on UR
students in a testing facility in the university library attic. They observed the test subjects through a two-way mirror and took notes on their reactions.

John Marks recounts Wendt's 1952 trip to West Germany on behalf of the CIA in his book on the MK-ULTRA experiments, The Search for the "Manchurian Candidate." Wendt had developed a concoction consisting of seconal, a depressant; dexedrine, a stimulant; and tetrahydrocannabinol, the active ingredient in marijuana. Tested on involuntary subjects who were defectors and double agents, the drug combination proved useless for interrogatory purposes of the CIA.36

A Department of Defense document on Wendt's CIA project concluded that while he "is producing certain results, he has lost sight of the original requirement and has become enthralled by research on human behavior." Consequently, Wendt's CIA grant was terminated. His private assistant destroyed the heroin, morphine and mescaline that were found in Wendt's private safe after his death in 1977.37

Besides the MK-ULTRA experiments, there were dangerous experiments at Strong that involved children. In 1963, a UR researcher under an Atomic Energy contract studied the intake of iodine-131 in children, including a six-year-old, who were given milk from a cow that had been fed the element. While iodine concentrates in the human thyroid gland and is essential to human health, its unstable form, known as I-131, has four extra neutrons, is radioactive, and can alter the DNA gene code or cause cancer. One of the children involved in the UR I-131 experiment subsequently developed thyroid cancer.38

Fears for the Future

The tragedies at Strong underscore the need for better regulation of human subject experimentation and patient care at teaching hospitals. Institutions that violate research guidelines or federal and state laws ought to suffer consequences, whether in the form of hefty fines, loss of institutional research grants, suspension of the professional licenses of researchers, or public embarrassment. There is little indication that federal or state regulatory agencies are up to the task. The state health department failed to fine UR for the deficiencies that led to Wan's death, and waived the $8,000 fine it imposed on UR in the Doughery case.

UR recently announced that it would construct a state-of-the-art research facility estimated to cost $73 million and would spend $40 million in renovations to existing laboratories and offices. The project will be funded by donations, grants, loans, and medical center operating funds.39 The extravagance underscores UR's phenomenal growth in corporate-sponsored research.

Until UR comes to terms with its past, it may never come to terms with its present. For now, questions remain. What is the human toll of cost-cutting? What has UR sacrificed on the altar of science and profit? When will public relations sniffles give way to acceptance of responsibility?

Endnotes:


13. Ibid.


32. Ibid., p. 97.

33. Ibid., p. 268.

34. Steve Mills and Corydon Ireland, "Radium Buried at UR," Democrat and Chronicle, May 4, 1994, pp. 1A, 6A.


Adjuncts Arise

Ali Shehzad Zaidi

Earning as little as $1,000 per course, adjuncts now teach about half of the university courses in the U.S. Because so few have health and retirement benefits, job security, intellectual freedom, or involvement in the decision-making process of their institutions, adjuncts are organizing to improve their lives. Part-timers recently won representation at New Jersey City University and Columbia College in Illinois. Combined with nascent graduate student employee unions at public research universities, and with student-labor coalitions at colleges such as Bard and Oberlin, organized adjuncts hope to reverse the slide in academic working conditions.

In April 1998, a new and as yet unnamed advocacy group for non-tenured and adjunct faculty emerged from a labor conference at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York (CUNY). CUNY is surely an appropriate venue to jump-start an academic labor movement. CUNY’s full-time faculty declined from 11,300 in 1974 to 5,300 in 1998; the university system’s 7,200 adjuncts now comprise 60 percent of the faculty but make up only 10 percent of the faculty union, the Professional Staff Congress (PSC).

Tenured in 1985, English professor Barbara Bowen, who represents the PSC chapter at Queens College, belongs to the last generation of CUNY professors to enjoy the full privileges of their profession. In her conference speech, Bowen called for a rethinking of the prevailing model of business trade unionism which tends to focus on pacting with management rather than on broad mobilization. The practice of securing across-the-board percentage increases, Bowen noted, only widens the gap between faculty salary tiers.

Another speaker, Stanley Aronowitz, suggested that adjuncts take their cue from the recent UPS strike in which the demand was not so much for money as for full-time jobs. “When you have been working as a part-timer for more than seven years,” quipped Brodie Dollinger, who represents the National Association of Graduate and Professional Students, “then you are no longer part-time.”

University administrators claim that tight budgets necessitate increased flexibility—in other words, the hiring of more adjuncts. However, flush state budgets and soaring endowments belie their claims. “I will believe them about the budget,” said Dollinger, “when they hire the first part-time dean.”

The key to successful organizing drives is the building of coalitions with labor, student, and progressive groups. Vicky Smallman, who represents the MLA Graduate Student Caucus, described coalition-building efforts in Ontario, where rotating strikes shut down nine cities for a day. “Take the fight out of the classrooms and into the boardrooms,” she urged conference participants, echoing the slogan of a successful 55-day faculty strike at York University in Toronto.

Cary Nelson, English professor at the University of Illinois, identified part-time labor as central to such issues as tenure, affirmative action, and distance learning. He warned of a future in which tenure will be limited to those who accept their supervisory and punitive responsibilities as managers of personnel.

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1 This article was originally published in October 1998 by ZMagazine at: http://www.zcommunications.org/zmag/viewArticle/13531.
Nelson urged conference participants to fight for an adjunct minimum wage through their professional associations, while cautioning those who might still harbor illusions about winning concessions through moral persuasion. “Administrators will grant nothing on their own initiative,” he said. “Asking them to look into the depths of their souls is to plumb the shallows.” Nelson believes that persistent pressure alone will improve the working conditions of adjuncts. “You will win what you take.”
Rochester, Radiation, and Repression

Ali Shehzad Zaidi

"I feel a sense of closure," said Energy Secretary Hazel O'Leary as she announced a recent settlement awarding $4.8 million to the families of 12 patients injected with radioactive substances in experiments sponsored by the U. S. Atomic Energy Commission (AEC). The legal agreement absolves the federal government of blame. In the October 24, 1996 Times-Union, Gerald Mousso, whose uncle was injected with plutonium at the University of Rochester (UR) in 1946, comments: "I guess the government really won. All the culprits that planned and executed this thing got away with it."

Altogether, about 16,000 people were subjects in radiation experiments that Congressman Edward Markey of Massachusetts calls "a gruesome testament to the nuclear naivete and paranoia" of the Cold War. Eleven of the eighteen plutonium injection experiments on human subjects in the 1940s were done at UR. Among other things, the experiments led to the momentous discovery that humans excrete plutonium more slowly than rats. In other UR experiments during that decade, six patients had uranium salts injected into their kidneys to determine how it would affect their renal function; and five other patients were injected with polonium, another radioactive substance, to see how it was metabolized and excreted.

In one of her Pulitzer Prize-winning articles on the plutonium experiments, Eileen Welsome explains: "Plutonium emits from its nucleus an extremely high-energy alpha particle, which is composed of two protons and two neutrons... The energy is called ionizing radiation, a process in which negatively charged electrons are separated from their neutral atoms... Once an electron is knocked out of orbit, it careens great distances, breaking the intricate latticework of chemical bonds in the body and producing new chemical reactions, especially in cell nuclei... The first alpha particle or the hundred-millionth could be the one that causes the crucial mutation that leads to cancer. Thus any amount of plutonium, however small, can potentially cause cancer... Cell culture experiments suggest that exposure to alpha particles can lead to chromosomal instability that could affect future generations."

Most of the plutonium in human bodies comes, of course, not from university experiments but from deliberate releases of the substance into the air. Atmospheric atom bomb tests ended in 1962. However, thousands of pounds of plutonium radionuclides had been released by then. John Gofman, an expert on the dangers of radiation, estimates that close to a million lung-cancer deaths will result from plutonium fallout, and that the resultant disruption of genes and chromosomes will cause such diseases as heart disease and schizophrenia.

As for the plutonium medical experiments, the UR administration denies responsibility for them because they were, in the words of UR Medical Center spokesperson Robert Loeb, "government-created and government-funded." This attribution of sole responsibility to the government ignores the "circulation of elites" between government, corporations, and universities, particularly at UR which was built in the shadow of Kodak and the national security state. Loeb claims that UR neither knew of nor approved the plutonium experiments, which he describes as a
"covert extracurricular activity." This notion, that UR doctors acted without the approval of administrators, contradicts what is known about the experiments.

As William Neumann, a former UR Radiation Biology Department chair, recalls in a 1975 UR Medical Center publication titled To Each His Farthest Star, the AEC experiments came to UR in 1943 when Dr. Albert K. Chapman, the vice president of Eastman Kodak, introduced Dr. Stafford Warren, the UR chief of radiology who later devised the single plutonium injection experiments, to high-ranking military officers in the Manhattan District, the program later known as the Manhattan Project. The officers questioned Dr. Warren on his experience with radiation, after which "...Dr. Chapman left, after advising Dr. Warren to do whatever the officers requested. Then, according to Dr. Warren’s account, the officers took him to a private room where after locking the door, closing the transom, and examining a closet, they asked him if he would consider working on a medical program of great importance to the government but which involved the utmost secrecy. Following consultation with [UR] President Valentine and Dean Whipple on March 2, 1943, Dr. Warren accepted an appointment as civilian consultant to the Manhattan District."

UR officials maintain that because the radiation experiments were conducted long ago, they are not representative of research at UR. In an interview, former UR President Robert Sproull relegated the experiments to a past where unpleasantness just tended to happen: "Things were done then during the war that would not be done at all now. You don’t use the word ‘nigger’ now at all. But if you uncovered something 50 years old and somebody used the word ‘nigger,’ it would sound as if he was a terrible person. So it was done in a different society, a different world, really."

Despite Sproull’s assurances about the difference between then and now, UR has always valued profitable research over human well-being. According to the Occupational Safety and Health Reporter, "In 1967, researchers at the University of Rochester examined the uptake and retention of lead in red blood cells of three subjects who were fed lead, and compared excretion rates of lead between subjects who were given lead by mouth and those given it intravenously." Last spring, UR sophomore Nicole Wan died in a university medical experiment, despite warnings from the Food and Drug Administration, just months prior to Wan’s death, that UR’s failure to follow proper experiment procedures placed human subjects at risk. Around the same time, UR’s involvement in the Westfall Health Facility, where a comatose woman was raped and impregnated, became public knowledge. Lately, controversy has erupted at UR over the presence of Dr. Ron Wood, a researcher whose experiments involve feeding crack to monkeys. Wood left NYU a few years ago, after the U.S. Department of Agriculture fined the university for 378 violations of the Animal Welfare Act which took place at Wood’s laboratory.

These scandals accompany UR’s move toward profitable research and corporatized medicine. Just a few years ago, President Clinton touted Rochester as a model for national health insurance. Today, this model is a fading memory. Powerful corporate interests are corrupting medicine and education at UR and elsewhere in Rochester.

In his 1991 speech at UR announcing the shifting of Pentagon money from federal laboratories to universities, Allen Bromley, science advisor to George Bush, warned of the dangers that
would befall "a nation that draws too sharp a distinction between its scholars and its warriors."
The distinction is lost on UR’s corporate trustees who can not even distinguish their own business interests from the needs of the university.

The plutonium experiments and other medical scandals have provoked little discussion or soul-searching at UR, where institutional silence and repression continue to prevail over the voices of memory. What the university needs is not the closure that Hazel O’Leary and UR officials want, but a thawing of the glacial numbness and amnesia that afflicts its professors, doctors, and students alike.
IN THE SHADOW OF KODAK

Ali Shehzad Zaidi

Deferring to "Great Yellow Father" was the title The New York Times gave to its November 17, 1997 whitewash of Kodak's actions in Rochester, New York. In the article, subtitled "Kodak Workers Say Layoffs May Be Necessary Medicine," the Times' Raymond Hernandez reported Kodak's disclosure that it would shortly fire 10,000 employees. A month later, that figure rose to 16,000 - the largest job cut announcement by a U.S. company in 1997. "Ever since George Eastman, the company's founder, set up shop here at the turn of the century... Kodak has been regarded as an important and model corporate citizen," wrote Hernandez.

A model corporate citizen? Well, Kodak is a model of sorts. It laid off 18,000 employees in Rochester alone between 1984 and 1990, setting a precedent for other Rochester-based corporations. Bausch and Lomb announced last spring that it would eliminate 14% of its workforce, a total of 1,900 jobs. Meanwhile, Kodak CEO George Fisher made $11 million in 1995.

Several years ago, Kodak successfully pressured Rochester and surrounding communities to cut its taxes. Now, Xerox is suing the town of Webster, a Rochester suburb, to reduce taxes on its manufacturing center by $100 million. To appease the corporation, the Monroe County Water Authority is offering to build Xerox a multimillion dollar water-cooling system.

With this sort of corporate ethic, it's no wonder that labor disputes are on the rise in Rochester. When Rochester Telephone, the main subsidiary of the Frontier Corporation, decided to replace the pension funds of its employees with stocks, the workers' union, the Communications Workers of America, began airing radio ads in opposition. Rochester Telephone tried to intimidate radio stations that ran the union ads by pulling out its own ads. Rochester Telephone's strong-arming was so blatant that even sectors of the business community objected to it.

Hernandez claimed that the Rochester metropolitan region "has been among the most economically robust" in New York State, citing its 4% unemployment rate compared to 6.1% in the state and 4.7% in the nation. But he misses the point. More than a third of Rochester area employees are temporary or contract workers. Many are doing overtime to supplement their low pay. Few can afford a decent home.

Rochester's unemployment rate is one whole percentage point lower than that of "comparable cities," namely, Utica and Buffalo, notes the Times. Accordingly, Hernandez talks about the "relative prosperity in Rochester," which he attributes to the presence of Kodak.

Relative prosperity? Rochester's population dropped from 332,000 in 1950 to 232,000 in 1990. The downtown workforce alone dropped from 48,000 to 44,000 in the past decade. Rochester now has the highest rates of poverty and teenage pregnancy among the cities of New York State. Unemployment among blacks doubled from 8% to 16% between 1970 and 1990. The poverty rates of Rochester's children are 25% for whites, 48% for blacks, and 58% for Latinos. True,
Rochester is not Buffalo, which lost 6% of its population in the last decade; nor Utica, whose recent budget crunch forced it to close libraries and fire stations.

But "relative prosperity" will not save the six community health centers which care for the poor and the uninsured in Rochester and which have been operating at a net loss for the past three years. They face further cutbacks and possible closure now that Monroe County is requiring 26,000 Medicaid patients to enroll in HMOs. The community centers do not belong to the HMOs, which would only pay the centers around $9 per month per patient. To make things worse, local officials want to sell Monroe County's public hospital.

Kodak has begun to withdraw from Rochester's "community rating" system for health insurance rates, under which big and small businesses pay the same for their employees' health benefits. By pooling risks across all local companies, small businesses get lower rates. They can pass the savings on to their employees, who in turn can afford health care plans. This reduces the number of uninsured, whose unpaid bills drive up insurance rates for everyone.

But Kodak expects to save even more by switching to an experience-rated plan based on the medical histories of its employees. Kodak's withdrawal will help to raise the number of uninsured, driving up insurance rates, so that fewer companies and people will be able to afford health insurance.

"Kodak is the strength of the fabric of this community," the Times quoted one employee as saying. "It is in everything." Including the air, land, and water. According to the Federal Toxic Release Inventory, Kodak ranked first in the nation from 1990 to 1994 in discharges of cancer-causing chemicals into waterways. Kodak has EPA permits to discharge 2.8 million pounds of pollutants into the Genesee River, which flows through Rochester. These discharges, which have made the Genesee by far the most polluted river in New York State, account for a third of the waterborne toxins in New York State. The fact that Kodak released 7.9 million pounds of pollutants in 1995 tells only part of the story, since the government requires companies to report the emissions of just a small fraction of the thousands of commercial chemicals in use. Women who live near Kodak Park are twice as likely to get pancreatic cancer as women in the rest of Monroe County.

Rochester's decline leaves mayor William Johnson with few choices. He wants to sell the naming rights to the Rochester War Memorial, a newly renovated arena, for $2 million. Monroe County simply proposes more corporate giveaways as the solution to Rochester's problems. The county's Industrial Development Agency, which gives tax abatements to companies that invest in enterprise zones in Rochester, has even granted waivers to companies that failed to qualify by creating the minimum 25 jobs over a three-year period.

Fortunately, there are still signs of vitality in Rochester. One is the public market where you can buy produce from local farmers and olives from a man wearing a fez. Another is City, the superb alternative weekly whose publisher, Mary Anna Towler, writes on metropolitan government as a solution to Rochester's problems. Towler suggests that consolidating services and school systems would reduce poverty in the region, as would halting the diversion of public resources to corporate profit. Thanks to City, people in Rochester are beginning to imagine alternatives to
"deferring to Great Yellow Father," and bearing the health, environmental, and social costs of living in Kodak's shadow.

**Published in *Dollars and Sense* Issue # 216, March-April 1998**
When Jim Keady came to St. John’s University in 1997 to study pastoral theology, serving simultaneously as assistant soccer coach, he did not imagine that he would take center stage in the debate on globalization. It all began after a fellow graduate student, in a letter to a St. John’s publication, questioned the morality of an impending university deal with Nike. Sensing Keady’s interest in the matter, Father Paul Surlis, who teaches a course on Catholic social teaching, suggested that his student write a paper combining theology and sports. Intrigued, Keady decided to research Nike’s labor practices.

In 1997, Nike negotiated a $3.5 million contract with the St. John’s athletic department in which Nike agreed to supply sportswear and equipment to St. John’s in return for the athletic department’s sponsorship of Nike products. That year, the personal fortune of Nike CEO Phil Knight climbed to $5.4 billion. Nike was paying Michael Jordan $20 million a year in promotional fees, an amount that exceeded the annual earnings of all 25,000 workers in the Indonesian shoe industry. Defending Nike’s $200 million advertising deal with the Brazilian national soccer team, Nike President Thomas Clarke said: “You never overpay for things that are good.”

In the course of his research, Keady found a predictable pattern in Nike’s movement to countries with cheap labor. After democracy movements improved the wages of workers in Taiwan, South Korea, Thailand, and the Philippines, Nike moved production to Indonesia, and more recently, to China and Vietnam where workers earn as little as twenty cents an hour. Nike defended its low wages by claiming that national governments, not Nike, set minimum wages. Father Surlis found Nike’s argument disingenuous. “It does not take an act of parliament for a corporation to pay a just wage,” he said. “It’s an executive decision that can be conveyed to the floor and put into practice in a matter of days.”

Keady found that the minimum wage in countries such as Indonesia did not meet the minimum physical needs of an adult. A 1988-89 study, for instance, found that 88
percent of minimum wage workers in manufacturing facilities around Jakarta were malnourished. Keady concluded that Nike could easily afford to pay its subcontractors significantly more for labor costs but simply chose not to. He believed that Catholic universities had a heightened obligation to insist on ethical standards from the companies with which they did business. Certain that “action on behalf of justice is a constitutive element of what it means to be a Catholic,” as states the pastoral of a 1971 synod of American bishops, Keady attempted to meet with university trustees to discuss the Nike issue, but was rebuffed.

Since members of the St. John’s University soccer team were required to wear Nike sportswear, Keady was soon confronted with a dilemma. According to Keady, the head soccer coach told him in May 1998 to wear Nike sportswear or resign. Keady chose to resign, believing that he had acted according to the fundamental principles of both the Church and St. John’s whose mission statement reads: “We embrace the Judeo-Christian ideals of respect for the rights and dignity of every person and each individual’s responsibility for the world in which we live.”

Responding to the growing criticism of labor practices in the factories of its subcontractors, Nike finally agreed in 1998 to raise the minimum age of workers to 18 and to improve the air quality in the factories. Keady was not mollified, however, since he believes that Nike, with over $9 billion in revenue and nearly $800 million in profit in 1997, must pay its workers a living wage.

In May 1999, Keady asked Nike to employ him in one of its Asian supplier factories. After Nike declined his offer, Keady formed the Living Wage Project together with Leslie Kretzu. The two spent a summer in Indonesia living on $1.25 a day, the wages of a typical Nike factory worker. Eating just one or two meager meals of rice and vegetables a day, Keady and Kretzu, neither of whom were overweight, lost 25 and 15 pounds respectively.

During their ordeal, they met shoe factory workers, typically young women, forced to work 12 hours a day, six or seven days a week, for mere physical subsistence. The women told Keady and Kretzu about their wish for an education and a better life and about the sexual abuse from factory supervisors. Union organizers, who are often raped or murdered for their efforts, described the pervasive fear in factories. Upon their return
to the United States, Keady and Kretzu began a series of annual speaking tours that has brought the reality of sweatshop labor to over 20,000 people at 120 high schools, colleges and universities. The Living Wage Project will soon release a full-length documentary on the lives of Nike workers in Indonesia.

As the free flow of capital wreaks havoc around the globe, resistance to the abuses of globalization is emerging among those who, as Keady puts it, “call others to a standard that dignifies humanity in its fullest sense.” In a recent pastoral letter, the Latin American Jesuit council, citing the impoverishment of millions, called neoliberalism a sin and a violation of the religious principles of social justice. A growing student movement against sweatshop labor has led to sit-ins, knit-ins and rallies at campuses across the United States, bringing home the truth of Andre Gorz’s prophecy that “it is in education that industrial capitalism will provoke revolts which it attempts to avoid in its factories.”

Published in Political Affairs Vol. 81 No. 9 (September-October 2002)
Forum on Democracy and Education

Ali Shehzad Zaidi

1. My perspective on democratizing education. My background in working to democratize education.

If democracy is participation in power, then our universities can only be said to be undemocratic, since corporate executives and attorneys, rather than educators and students, dominate university boards and make the important decisions.

My activism began with the downsizing of the humanities at the University of Rochester in 1995, when my own doctoral program in comparative literature was suspended as part of the “Renaissance Plan.” Over the next five years, I wrote about such matters as the elimination of arts and crafts programs at the Rochester Institute of Technology in 1996, the removal of university trustees at Adelphi University by the New York State Board of Regents in 1997, the strike at Syracuse University in 1998, and the faculty revolt at the State University of New York in 1999.

2. Opening statement on democratizing education.

As Paulo Freire has said, any situation in which one is prevented from inquiry is one of violence. In our universities, faculty and students are blocked from the deliberations of university trustees, details of the university budget, contracts for corporate-sponsored projects, and the decision-making process of the institutions in which they teach and study. These barriers to knowledge need to be seen as forms of violence.

University trustees and administrators in the United States have decided, as if by common consent, that higher education must adjust to the market, ostensibly to meet the needs of students. Peter Denning, a spokesman for this managerial consensus, claims that students want “a more customer-oriented relationship” with their “educational organizations” (a term he prefers to “universities”). If students are indeed the “customers” of educational managed organizations, then corporations are surely the proprietors of these EMOs. Denning’s viewpoint reflects, in the words of Robert Paul Wolff, “a failure to draw a sharp distinction between the concepts of effective or market demand and human or social need.”

The corporate executives who run our universities understand what a university ought to be. After all, they use family metaphors to describe the university. However, these metaphors do not reflect the reality of universities, whose “family members” are often outsourced. By tapping into a deep need for meaning and belonging, university administrators persuade alumni into parting with their money. The corporate executives who control the universities have reduced them to a nexus of capital, rife with conflicts of interests. These days, executive profit-sharing is in vogue. College presidents get bonuses for finding ways to shortchange students and teachers.

3. Important campaigns for democracy in education today.

A heartening development is the student mobilization for the anti-sweatshop movement, which includes such fine outfits as Educating for Justice (www.educatingforjustice.org) Student labor
groups have helped improve working conditions for janitors, secretaries, security guards, and cafeteria workers at such universities as the New School, Harvard, and Fairfield University. Given the demise of the Center for Campus Organizing, the recent revival of Students for a Democratic Society is especially welcome.

4. **How education has changed in the U.S.A. during my lifetime.**

During the eighties, Congress granted tax breaks and exclusive patent rights to businesses involved in university ventures. Through an executive order, President Ronald Reagan extended this legislation to include large corporations, thereby inducing them to take over university boards. With university professors and even entire departments at their disposal, large corporations could dispense with hiring research scientists and laboratories.

The corporate reorientation of higher education has hit students hard. For the past two decades, tuition has increased at more than twice the rate of inflation. The value of the federal Pell Grant dwindled even as universities shifted from need-based to merit-based financial aid. Textbook prices soared. Wages stagnated. Working students were unable to participate in extracurricular activities or in the polemics of their time as they scurried from job to job. Leisure time, so necessary to a democracy, fell victim to speed-up in the workplace.

During the nineties, the humanities took quite a beating in New York, where I live. The City University of New York eliminated the graduate program in Russian Area Studies at Hunter College, the graduate program in Latin American Studies at Queens College and several ethnic studies programs at City College. The University of Rochester shut down graduate programs in German, French, Spanish, comparative literature and linguistics. The State University of New York shut down its Doctor of Arts programs in humanities and foreign language teaching at Stony Brook and Albany. It also terminated the German program at Albany, firing several of tenured professors of German, supposedly because of financial exigency.

The humanities were not only downsized, but also reconfigured. Graduate programs in English literature were replaced by ones in composition, rhetoric, and skills training. Organizational sociology, the kind that ensures the smooth functioning of the corporate workplace, rose into prominence. Meanwhile, the critical analysis of society fell by the wayside.

5. **Threats to public education in the U.S.A. today.**

The primary threat to public education today comes from the corporatization of our culture and institutions. These days, corporations exist mostly to make a profit, rather than to serve the public interest. To run a university like a business corporation defeats the very purpose of a university.

The disengagement of faculty from the fate of their profession is also a threat to public education. Thirty years ago, nearly three quarters of faculty members were on tenure track lines. Today, less than a quarter of the faculty is on such lines, spelling the death of academic freedom. In a phone conversation with me during the nineties, Leonard Minsky, who led the National Coalition of Universities in the Public Interest, likened the collective predicament of faculty to the disintegration of a raft. As the raft breaks apart into bits and pieces that float away, and some professors drown, others try to secure their places on what is left of the raft. Until those on the
raft concern themselves with the seaworthiness of their vessel, the disintegration of the raft and the sordid scramble for safety will continue.

6. Three Steps Towards Democratizing Education.

First, student groups, faculty unions, educational advocates, and professional organizations must unite to repeal legislation that gives corporations incentives to muscle academics aside in order to leverage universities. We must rescind the Bayh-Dole Act which gave universities the right to sell to corporations those patents that were derived from federally funded research.

Second, we must democratize our educational institutions. Faculty, staff, and students should run the institutions in which they work, teach, or study. For this purpose, they must elect representative and democratic trustee boards.

Finally, we must restore the institutional memory of our schools and universities, and imagine alternatives to our predicament. We must evolve new means of communication, creating publications and forums for discussion.

7. A Vision for Education in the Future

I envision universities as participatory and democratic places that foster ethical and imaginative dimensions of learning - those “magic casements” through which future generations will view our environmental and social challenges. Students will internalize an ethic that enables them, as teachers, public interest lawyers, poets, artists, social workers, or doctors, to nurture others. Universities will foster the search for truth and justice. Education will be a shared adventure rather than an ordeal of solitary confinement. Faculty will finally find their missing courage. Students will speak for the voiceless. They will bear witness to, and assume responsibility for, their times.

Published in Liberty Tree, Vol. 2, Issue 2 (Summer 2007)
Adelphi Recovers "The Lengthening View"

Ali Shehzad Zaidi

Adelphi University is a rare instance in which state regulators intervened to halt egregious academic repression. The university is recovering thanks to its dedicated faculty and staff, and its capable president. Nonetheless, the story of Adelphi is a cautionary tale of what can happen when right wing ideologues seize control of trustee boards. It also bears telling as a reminder of the need for better state and federal regulation of higher education. Hopefully, the story of Adelphi will spur a nationwide movement to empower university employees, students, and faculty to run the institutions in which they work, study, and teach.

In 1985, Peter Diamandopoulos became Adelphi's seventh president, ushering in an entire decade of "shock therapy" for the small commuter school on Long Island. Opposition to Diamandopoulos grew when it was disclosed that he was the second highest paid university president in the United States. Adelphi had purchased a $1.2 million Manhattan condominium for his use at a time when it was shedding employees and course offerings.

The Committee to Save Adelphi (CSA), an advocacy group of faculty, students and alumni, held its first press conference in October 1995. Around that time, the faculty voted 131-14 for Diamandopoulos to resign. After a New York Times editorial called for an investigation into Adelphi's finances, the New York State Attorney General began to look into the perks of President Diamandopoulos and the process of awarding contracts at Adelphi.

The Adelphi administration filed suit to halt the investigation, claiming that New York's "business judgment rule" barred judicial inquiry into good-faith actions of corporate directors. The administration claimed that the attorney general had no jurisdiction over Adelphi, that his "witchhunt" threatened the independence of private educational institutions in New York, and that the attorney general's office had deliberately leaked to the media details of the purchase agreement of Diamandopoulos' apartment.¹

Diamandopoulos' earnings would remain at the center of the Adelphi controversy. His first year salary of $95,000 in 1985-86 rose to $145,000 the following year, well above the average for presidents at comparable universities. By the 1995-96 academic year, his total compensation, which included fringe benefits and deferred salary, had soared to $837,000. Diamandopoulos had refused to disclose his income to the IRS between 1988 and 1994, preferring to pay $11,850 in fines. He later explained that the secrecy was meant to strengthen his hand with the faculty union.

Adelphi also provided Diamandopoulos with a severance contract worth $3 million, country club membership, first class trips to France, England, Switzerland, and Greece, and the use of an $82,000 Mercedes Benz. It reimbursed him for a $1,000 contribution to the 1992 presidential campaign of former Texas Republican senator Phil Gramm; the premiums on his personal art collection; expensive dinners with fellow trustees John Silber and Hilton Kramer, which included $150 glasses of cognac; and thousands of dollars in tips to his Manhattan apartment building staff. Adelphi furnished Diamandopoulos’ Manhattan apartment with wall-washer lighting, electrified snow melting grids on the terrace, and $1,800 in bathroom accessories, while giving Diamandopoulos the option of buying the apartment for $300,000 less than its purchase price.

The trustees also enjoyed the good life. In 1994, they took an expenses-paid trip to Greece. Diamandopoulos claimed that the trip helped the trustees to "think about the connection between democracy and education." Diamandopoulos, himself an Adelphi trustee, brought business executives and right-wing ideologues to the board. They, in turn, adhered to the corporate model of university governance that Diamandopoulos admired. In an October 1992 letter to Donald Koster, Professor Emeritus of English, Diamandopoulos wrote: “The University is neither a polity nor a convenient umbrella for a collective of autonomous professionals. The University is a corporation legally and a hierarchy in terms of leadership, educational responsibility, and authority.”

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In a letter to The New York Times, anthropology professor Norman Ashcraft expressed the disenchantment of the faculty with this model of university governance:

Some people think of a university as a corporation with a strict hierarchical structure. Power passes from a board of trustees through a chief executive officer and then assistants, provosts and deans, down to employees (faculty), who serve solely to carry out the management's vision. The more we favor this model, the more we release responsibility for education to managers. Teaching and scholarly pursuits are valued less than managing funds, people and curriculum… If other institutions pick up on these developments, education will be reduced to a pedestrian activity and the university will become a place where mandates are issued from a self-ordained cadre of managers.³

The presence of former Secretary of the Treasury William Simon as honorary trustee underscored the extent of Adelphi's corporate reorientation. Simon had personally amassed hundreds of millions of dollars by financing hostile takeovers with junk bonds and then asset-stripping the companies. He also attracted negative publicity from his involvement in a pyramid scheme.⁴ Simon, who died in 2000 at the age of 72, headed the John F. Olin Foundation, which was created by a munitions manufacturer in 1953 to awaken "business and the public. . . to the creeping stranglehold that socialism has gained" in the United States.⁵ The foundation undertook a new mission when Simon became its president in 1977, as he declared in his bestseller, A Time for Truth:

Foundations imbued with the philosophy of freedom. . . must take pains to funnel desperately needed funds to scholars, social scientists, writers and journalists who understand the relationship between political and economic liberty. . . This philanthropy must not capitulate to soft-minded pleas for the support of "dissent." Indeed, it is the economics and the philosophy of capitalism which represent "dissent" — dissent from a dominant socialist-statist-collectivist orthodoxy which prevails in much of the media, in most of our large universities, among many of our politicians and, tragically, among not a few of our top business executives.⁶

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In 1995, the year that the Adelphi controversy became public, Olin gave over $16 million to university think tanks, institutes, publications, and fellowships. The foundation financed numerous programs at prestigious law schools, including those of Columbia, Cornell, Harvard, Yale, Georgetown, George Mason, Stanford, Berkeley, Toronto, and the University of Chicago. Olin sought to transform public policy by diminishing the regulatory role of government, in effect leaving the environment, consumer protection, and workplace safety to the mercy of "the magic of the market."

Olin gave out its last grants in 2005 and ceased to exist shortly thereafter, but not before leaving its mark on academia. At Adelphi, Olin funded ten visiting professorships between 1992 and 1996, creating a class of privileged faculty. The Olin scholars, who earned about $100,000 a year, about twice the average Adelphi professor's salary, included Carnes Lord, a former national security advisor to Vice President Dan Quayle; Edith Kurzweil, editor of the *Partisan Review*; and Ronald Radosh, author of a revisionist history of the Rosenbergs, the couple who were framed and executed for espionage in 1953. Among the "scholars in residence" without teaching duties, were two right-wing former editors, Brad Miner of the *National Review* and Bruce Bawer of the *New Criterion*. Olin also funded a lecture series, which brought Simon, William Buckley Jr., and Irving Kristol to Adelphi.

Diamandopoulos, in turn, gave Olin associates important positions at Adelphi. Newly appointed Adelphi trustees included James Piereson, Olin executive director, and Hilton Kramer, publisher of *New Criterion*, a journal which began with a $100,000 Olin grant and whose offices were initially housed within Olin's. Mark Blitz, from the Olin-backed Hudson Institute, was named Adelphi's acting provost. In Spring 1996, however, with the Regents investigation approaching, Olin abruptly departed from Adelphi. Simon and Piereson resigned as trustees, thus avoiding the public embarrassment that would soon befall the other Adelphi trustees.

Under Diamandopoulos, Adelphi's students, like its faculty, were stratified into haves and have-nots. Diamandopoulos created an Honors College, an elite institution within the institution, in which students were given twenty-four hour access to state-of-the-art computers, and generous

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financial assistance that included full scholarships. Diamandopoulos simultaneously cut back financial aid and support services, a move that severely affected minority students. "I have heard that the President and his administration vow their commitment to intellect," noted David Smith, a business major. "One can't help but wonder whose intellect they are committed to. As a black student on this campus, I can assure you it is not mine. . . . All the cuts in aid, the reduction of courses offered, and the president's outrageous salary have shown me that the president is only committed to his pocket."8

At the same time, the administration lavished funds on projects of scant educational value. When Adelphi hosted the Greek soccer team during the 1994 World Cup tournament, the administration spent $250,000 to construct a grandstand, press box, public address system, goal posts, and signs in Greek. Students, meanwhile, were complaining about cuts in athletic scholarships.

Under Diamandopoulos, undergraduate enrollment plummeted from 4,049 in 1987 to 1,895 in 1997. Course offerings were sharply reduced, and many students had to spend an extra semester or year to earn their degrees.9 When asked about the class reductions, Diamandopoulos replied: “There is a silly and melancholy perception on the part of students, which is exploited by fighting faculty, that the more courses you have, the better education you get.”10

During Diamandopoulos’ presidency, tuition rose one hundred and forty percent, while the proportion of university expenditures devoted to instruction dropped nearly fifteen percent. Between 1983 and 1993, there was a nineteen percent decline in number of full-time faculty, from 329 to 267, while the size of Adelphi’s administration nearly tripled.11 In 1985, the year that Diamandopoulos became president, 958 freshmen enrolled at Adelphi. By 1996, only 311 freshmen enrolled, a sixty seven percent decline that threatened Adelphi’s very existence.12

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12 Lewis 123.
Because of its minuscule endowment, Adelphi depended on student tuition and fees for virtually all its budget.

Students were upset over the phasing out of the New York State Higher Education Opportunity Program (HEOP) at Adelphi. HEOP provides counseling and financial aid to academically and financially disadvantaged students, those with SAT verbal scores below 600 and low family incomes; at the time, $18,650 was the eligibility limit for a family of three. Adelphi was supposed to guarantee university matching funds for state HEOP awards. Instead, the university demanded that HEOP students take out loans while Diamandopoulos attacked HEOP as "charity." In response, student newspaper editor Marie Alzi noted that HEOP support services simply gave students the means to complete college.\(^\text{13}\) The HEOP cuts led many to conclude that Adelphi was simply casting off minority students.

On August 23, 1995, a terse notice appeared on the bulletin board outside Adelphi's student radio station: "WBAU-FM has ceased broadcasting." The night before, the administration had changed the locks to the entrance of WBAU, having sold the station to Nassau Community College for $30,000 — a fraction of its actual value — without any bids. The student government association, which funded WBAU, had not been consulted. About half of the station's programming had been Black-oriented. WBAU, Dean Carl Rheins explained, was "at variance with the university's academic mission and philosophy."\(^\text{14}\)

At a March 1996 forum, Diamandopoulos finally addressed student concerns, which included the phasing out of HEOP, the closing of WBAU, the lack of fundraising to augment the meager $9 million endowment, the elimination of academic programs (including Italian and the masters program in English), and the drop in library acquisitions to twenty percent of what they had been prior to Diamandopoulos' arrival. He dismissed the concerns, saying, "I have very strong views about what you need. I don’t need to know what you think you need."\(^\text{15}\) Diamandopoulos also refused to consider the inclusion of a student on Adelphi’s trustee board.

When students pointed out that other private institutions on Long Island had student trustees, Diamandopoulos simply said that he wished them luck.16

Nor did the Adelphi trustees inspire confidence. There was, for instance, Nicholas Samios, the director of the scandal-ridden Brookhaven National Laboratory, where workers were contaminated with radiation and where radioactive materials including tritium and cobalt-60 were allowed to leech into the groundwater.

And there was Leonard Riggio, the CEO of Barnes & Noble, which owns hundreds of university bookstores, including Adelphi’s. At a forum on book publishing at which short story writer Cynthia Ozick was his copanelist, Riggio pointedly told the audience, in what New York Times columnist Kennedy Fraser called "a bullying moment of shattered privacy," that his chain had only sold a few hundred of Ozick's volume, The Shawl. As Fraser wrote of Riggio, "He is a true Horatio Alger, who has risen from work as a bookstore clerk to being the head of a giant corporation that has gobbled up its competitors like a killer shark. A stocky, feisty fellow in his 50s, he looks like a man who spent his youth prepared to knock down anyone who called him poor and in his maturity is prepared to knock down anyone who thinks he got too rich."17

John Silber, the chancellor of Boston University, was arguably Adelphi's most controversial trustee. During the 1994-95 academic year, he was the only university president to earn more than Diamandopoulos. Daniel Gross wrote in Lingua Franca:

Setting himself as the ultimate expert on all matters relating to the university, and operating without meaningful oversight from the school's board of trustees, Silber has systematically shut the faculty out of every significant decision… Silber is in many ways a tangle of contradictions: a Kantian moral philosopher who has reaped immense personal gain from his stewardship of a nonprofit institution; a high-minded thinker capable of astonishing pettiness; a relentless promoter of standards who has appointed cronies with questionable credentials.18

These words might have been written of Diamandopoulos who, taking his cue from his mentor Silber, sought to intimidate his opponents at every opportunity. Harassing phone messages were left on the answering machine of the American Association of University Professors union that represents Adelphi's faculty and librarians. Telephone service to the union office was cut, and the union's executive director, Cathy Cleaver, barred from campus. Adelphi petitioned the National Relations Labor Board to decertify the union. It sued five CSA members and threatened student editor Sara Hajduk with legal action. The intimidation backfired, as it demonstrated the breakdown of the principles of shared governance at Adelphi.

The Regents hearings, which began in July 1996, ended, in the words of Regent Saul Cohen, with a "positive wake-up call to all sectors of the academic community to observe with greater diligence their governance guidelines, as well as other areas of conduct." The Regents chastised the trustees for their conflicts of interest and lack of oversight. A firm owned by a trustee, George Lois, had carried out Adelphi's advertising campaign, for which the university trustees had failed to seek competitive bidding. Diamandopoulos apparently concealed from other trustees the fact that Lois had received $155,000 in commissions for that advertising. The chair of the Adelphi trustee board, Ernesta Procope, had acted as the broker for Adelphi's insurance policies, awarding lucrative contracts to E. G. Bowman, a company which she owned and of which she was the director.

The Regents also criticized the trustees for failing to disclose pertinent information to those entrusted with overseeing Adelphi’s finances. In 1990, William Borten, chair of the trustee finance committee, discovered that during the previous three years administrative salaries had increased fifty seven percent while faculty salaries increased by a mere six percent. Borten decided to investigate the matter further, but when he sought specifics regarding administrative salaries he was rebuffed by both Diamandopoulos and James Byrne, who was then the chair of the trustee board.

At a trustee meeting in December 1990, Borten expressed his dismay about not getting the requested data. Byrne told Borten that he didn’t need it. A week later, Byrne sent Borten a

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20 Lewis 52.
letter informing him that his resignation from the board of trustees had been accepted. Borten, in fact, had not resigned but found that he had been kicked off the trustee board.\textsuperscript{21} During the Regents hearings, it was revealed that Byrne’s wife, Carolyn, was earning $100,000 a year as Adelphi vice president of community relations and external affairs. What was at issue was not Carolyn Byrne’s salary, but the fact that Borten had been unable to obtain that information as head of the finance committee.

Borten was not the only former trustee disenchanted with Diamandopoulos. William Nadel, who chaired the search committee that chose Diamandopoulos, described Adelphi’s president as “a dangerous man who functions as a despot,” adding that the decision to hire him was “the single worst example of poor judgment that a number of us exercised in our professional careers, one that I will always regret.”\textsuperscript{22}

Some Adelphi faculty surmised that the trustees had hired Diamandopoulos to take on Adelphi’s faculty union, one of the very few at a private university.\textsuperscript{23} Before coming to Adelphi, Diamandopoulos had served as president of Sonoma State University (SSU) from 1977 to 1983. In his study on Adelphi, \textit{When Power Corrupts}, Lionel S. Lewis writes that “Diamandopoulos spent a good deal of time during his first few years at Sonoma State writing verbose and largely impenetrable memoranda… He continually referred to change, progress, and how much more he needed to accomplish, while what he actually did to promote teaching, education, or academic life was hardly discernible.”\textsuperscript{24}

As president of SSU, Diamandopoulos displayed the same contempt for shared governance that he would later show at Adelphi. SSU faculty were upset that Diamandopoulos had granted tenure to the Vice President for Academic Affairs and the Dean of Humanities despite the objections of their academic departments. Another concern was the fact that Diamandopoulos had failed to consult with the faculty before deciding to terminate twenty four

\textsuperscript{21} Lewis 52-53.
\textsuperscript{22} Lewis 56.
\textsuperscript{23} Lewis 114.
\textsuperscript{24} Lewis 99-100
tenured professors due to financial exigency. As a result, the SSU faculty senate twice voted overwhelmingly to censure Diamandopoulos.25

The Regents hearings highlighted the extent of the corruption at Adelphi. Gerald Jodice, executive director of facilities and planning, who oversaw many bids at Adelphi, had already been imprisoned for embezzlement when Diamandopoulos hired him. Despite warnings from an internal auditor that Jodice had a criminal history and was defrauding Adelphi, Diamandopoulos promoted Jodice, giving him the opportunity to steal even more.

At the Regents hearings, the ever combative John Silber described the Adelphi faculty as “a rather large boil in a very sensitive spot that needs to be lanced,” assuring the Regents that “once that boil is lanced there will be a very fine and effective operating University.” He warned the Regents that should they dismiss the Adelphi trustees “there will be a rash of boils throughout higher education in New York State and around the country.”26 On February 10, 1997, the Regents removed eighteen of Adelphi’s nineteen trustees, citing violations of the university’s articles of governance and state laws governing non-profit organizations. By this action, the Regents fulfilled the prophecy on Adelphi’s seal: “The Truth Shall Make Us Free.”

The Adelphi controversy sparked a debate over the regulatory role of government in higher education, particularly that of the Board of Regents, which oversees New York's educational and cultural institutions. Robert Atwell, president emeritus of the American Council on Education, claimed that the creation of regulatory bodies would jeopardize the independence of private institutions. Instead, Atwell suggested, "the governing boards of private colleges should police themselves, by adopting policies to insure that they are operating in the public interest.”27 Adelphi, however, already had such policies in place. The problem lay with those charged with implementing them.

At issue during the Adelphi controversy was the university's century-long tradition of liberal education. In 1995, Adelphi commemorated its centennial as an institution of higher

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25 Lewis 102-103.
26 Lewis 154.
learning with an exhibit of giant photographs that traced Adelphi’s history from its founding as a college in 1896 by Charles Levermore. The introductory text to the exhibit read: "As the quotations from Adelphi's founding and current presidents demonstrate, the University's history, despite all its twists, turns and returns, finally can be seen to represent the consistent pursuit of the liberal ideal in education."

The exhibit highlighted two quotes, one from Levermore at Adelphi's first convocation at the turn of the century, the other from Diamandopoulos in 1995. Levermore's advice to Adelphi's first graduating class expresses the ideal of liberal education:

Hold fast to the lengthening view, to the widening interest in all the world. Cleave to the broad culture for which you have been so faithfully and wisely prepared in the Adelphi halls. The narrow, practical purpose, however necessary it may be, must yet never stifle your love for things of the spirit, human and divine… Such a thorough yet comprehensive culture has been the object of the Adelphi training for you—experiment rather than recitation, discussion rather than memorizing, ideas rather than repetition, the liberal before the special culture.

Compare this philosophy to the outlook of Diamandopoulos:

The clue to becoming strong in the face of our overpowering and infinitely complex world is deliberately to fit select aspects of the world into your own educated world view; into your construct; into your own determination of who you are and what the lasting pursuits of your lives will be. That is how human beings have dealt creatively over the millennia with their vulnerabilities and fragility, and that is how they have made, despite their limitations, lasting and powerfully significant civilizations.

In contrast to Levermore, Diamandopoulos conceives of education as a means to power and wealth, "to becoming strong." His advice, to "fit select aspects of the world… into your construct," evokes that "narrow, practical purpose" that Levermore admonishes his students to forsake.

During Diamandopoulos' decade as president, Adelphi ran full page ads in The New York Times proclaiming, “Good Is The Enemy of Great” (faculty would alter the ones posted on
campus to read “Greed is the Enemy of Great”). Other ads touted Harvard as the "Adelphi of Massachusetts."

Harvard epitomizes the contradictions in our universities. The pride of classicists and humanists, Harvard was also the biggest recipient of Olin money among U.S. colleges and universities. The first university in this country to offer elective courses, Harvard retains its reputation for innovation even as it represents the status quo. Richard Nixon and Joseph McCarthy may have castigated Harvard as the "Kremlin on the Charles," but its degrees are credentials of privilege.28

At Adelphi, the Harvard analogy existed both as an image of excellence and as an example of the fatuous distortions wrought by power. Diamandopoulos, who studied philosophy at Harvard, appears to have been convinced that he was the embattled standard bearer of a meritocracy, the notion of which, writes John Trumpbour, is "a convenient rationalization for entitlement to power, status, security and personal gain."29 Adelphi had never compared itself to Harvard until Diamandopoulos and his friends came along. They betrayed Levermore's legacy by shortchanging the students that Adelphi had traditionally served, and by turning Adelphi into a parody of a community of scholars.

The new trustees appointed by the regents promptly fired Diamandopoulos, froze tuition, named faculty leaders as deans, and dropped the attempt to decertify the union. Despite these long-overdue measures, Adelphi continued to face severe financial problems after Diamandopoulos’ removal. The old trustees had squandered millions of dollars of university funds on their legal expenses. The new Adelphi administration reached a financial settlement with Diamandopoulos, paying him $1.4 million to avoid protracted legal battles.

The faculty union agreed to accept pay cuts and to allow the administration to lay off tenured professors in case of financial need. Although the professors were willing to make sacrifices on behalf of their university, others simply could not afford to do so. In September

2000, clerical workers at Adelphi went on strike for fourteen weeks. Their average annual salary was just $23,400, a pittance given the cost of housing on Long Island. To make matters worse, the administration had decided to eliminate their free tuition benefits.

Adelphi faced a crisis of leadership for three years after the removal of Diamandopoulos in February 1997. Adelphi’s provost, Igor Webb, became the acting president for the remaining three months of the academic year. Because Webb was tied to Diamandopoulos’ corrupt administration, Adelphi’s new trustees appointed an interim president, James A. Norton, for the 1997-98 academic year. Students were delighted to see on the president’s office door, which had previously guarded Diamandopoulos’ bunker, a sign that read, “Open, Please Come In.” Norton appointed history professor Armstrong Starkey as provost. He also named other dedicated faculty members as deans, including biology professor Gayle Insler, who is now the acting provost at Adelphi. Soon, Adelphi began to recover. The size of the freshman class doubled within a year of Diamandopoulos’ departure.

In fall 1998, Matthew Goldstein, the former president of Baruch College, was named the new permanent president. Many hoped that Goldstein, who had nearly doubled his salary by moving to Adelphi, would revive the university’s fortunes. However, in August 1999, with four years still left in his contract, Goldstein left Adelphi to become the Chancellor of the City University of New York which was already being savaged by the conservative trustees appointed by Governor George Pataki and Mayor Rudy Giuliani. The new CUNY trustees ended open admissions and privatized the university system.

After Goldstein’s departure, Steven L. Isenberg, a former publisher of Newsday and chair of the new Adelphi trustee board, served as interim president for a year. He helped stabilize

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31 During the eight years that I taught at CUNY, from 1999 until 2007, I witnessed numerous violations of academic freedom, the most recent instance of which was the non-reappointment of sociology professor John Asimakopoulos at Bronx Community College despite his eminent qualifications for promotion on all possible criteria. In August 2008, however, a labor arbitrator reinstated Asimakopulos in his teaching position. Goldstein must share responsibility for the brutal atmosphere at CUNY. Adelphi was indeed fortunate that Goldstein moved on.
Adelphi’s precarious finances. Adelphi finally got the president it deserved in the person of Robert A. Scott, the former president of Ramapo College and a scholar on public policy and higher education. Scott joined Adelphi as president and as a professor of anthropology and sociology in July 2000. Facing a labor crisis, Adelphi did not celebrate Scott’s inauguration until the following summer.

Since then, Adelphi has created new initiatives such as *Levermore Global Scholars*, which fosters civic awareness in students through community-based internships, study abroad programs, and two speaker series, “Human Rights in Global Perspective” and “Living with Conflict and Working for Peace.” Student participants have donated food to local charities, presented alternative plays, and performed volunteer work abroad. Also noteworthy is *Vital Signs*, a partnership between Adelphi’s School of Social Work and the Long Island community, which seeks to identify and address local health needs in order to inform public policy.

The liberal arts are on the mend. Adelphi has resurrected undergraduate majors in Spanish and French and has started new graduate programs in creative writing and environmental studies. The English department, which had dwindled from twenty-seven to just five faculty members, is back on its feet, with fourteen faculty members in 2008. A new performing arts center, funded in part by a $5 million New York State grant, opened in fall 2008.

Adelphi is greening its campus. The new sports and performing arts centers will use geothermal heating and cooling systems to avoid burning fossil fuels. The university has eliminated the use of petroleum-based fertilizers and chemical pesticides and herbicides on university grounds. It has reduced automobile use on campus by creating a shuttle service and a storage area for bicycles.

Scott’s articles and speeches on Adelphi’s website, reveal a thoughtful and compassionate academic who honors Adelphi’s legacy as an engaged university. In an essay on the university as a moral force, Scott envisions the university as a “culture of conscience” which

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is “dedicated to the search for truth, the transformation of meaning, the examination of intended and unintended consequences, and the concern for equity, equality, fairness, and justice.”

Sometimes misperceived as an ordinary commuter school, Adelphi in fact has a history of educational innovation. Adelphi created the first university program in dance in 1938, and the first university program in clinical psychology in 1952. The present Adelphi administration continues to honor that tradition. In his 2007 State of the University address, Scott noted that Adelphi’s legacy of public engagement is hardly recent, describing how sociology professor Annie Marion MacLean, who taught at Adelphi between 1907 and 1912, conducted her research posing as a factory worker, department store clerk, and farmhand. Scott also celebrated the contradictions inherent in the university, central to society in its roles as creator of knowledge and as curator of its cultural heritage, yet on the margins as its critic. Scott appears to enjoy his job immensely and he has even found the time to act in a student production of Thornton Wilder’s “Our Town.”

In 2005, Adelphi raised more than $9.5 million. To put that in perspective, during his eleven years as president, Diamandopoulos raised less than three million dollars in private gifts and grants for Adelphi’s endowment. Adelphi’s endowment is now over one hundred and five million dollars and likely to grow at a hefty clip as students begin to give back to the institution that nurtured them. According to the latest information from Adelphi’s Office of Research Assessment and Planning, between 2000 and 2006 undergraduate enrollment increased fifty two percent and alumni giving by nearly six hundred and twenty percent. The number of full-time faculty members rose from 201 in 2000 to 293 in 2007, a forty six percent increase that bodes well for Adelphi.

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34 Lewis 127.
The memory of the Diamandopoulos years is fast fading. Adelphi has again become a participatory space that fosters ethical and imaginative dimensions of learning. Despite a decade of pillage, "the lengthening view" has triumphed over entitlement and privilege at Adelphi.\(^{35}\)

\(^{35}\) This is an updated version of an essay that appeared in *Thought and Action* (Spring 1998) and *Against The Current* (November/December 1998).
Introduction

Your Problem Is My Problem

We have taken the great leap forward and said, “Let’s pretend we’re a corporation.”
—John Lombardi, president, University of Florida, 1997

Over the past forty years, the administration of higher education has changed considerably. Campus administrations have steadily diverged from the ideals of faculty governance, collegiality, and professional self-determination. Instead they have embraced the values and practices of corporate management. Consequently, the new realities of managed education strongly correspond to the better-understood realities of managed health care. For example, both education and health have been increasingly marketized—transformed into sites of unprecedented capital accumulation by way of the commodification of activities and relationships. Public assets and activities intended for the public good have been transferred into private hands. Workers in both health and education have seen the compulsory acceleration of market behaviors (such as competition for resources and profit-seeking) in their professional cultures. In both fields, the management of professional activities has resulted in the return of the sort of dizzying inequalities formerly associated with the Gilded Age. Under the principle of revenue maximization, managers direct professionals to provide ever more elaborate boutique services to the wealthy. At the same time, under the principle of cost containment, they constrain professionals to offer degraded service or even deny service to the vast majority of the working class.

Most people intuitively understand the consequences for health of managed care. Because the calculus of profit demands continuous reduction in the costs of care, especially the expensive labor time of highly
trained professionals, the “management” of care implies the substitution of lesser-skilled and lesser-paid workers, such as nurse’s aides, for highly skilled and higher-paid physicians. Fewer people get to see doctors. Doctors have fewer options for treatment and diagnosis. Many critical health care decisions are made by nonmedical management or by doctors with strong incentives to accommodate their managers. More of the expense and burden of care is shifted to patients and families. Under a profit regime, the standards of care are established not by the measure of lives saved but by the measure of financial risk: At what point do the fiscal liabilities for malpractice exceed the dollar savings of using fewer, cheaper, less experienced, and less elaborately trained personnel? Up to the limit of malpractice exposure, health-care providers have real incentives to use older equipment, take smaller precautions against infection and complication, shorten hospital stays, and deny access to the best procedures in favor of cheap procedures.

Less well understood is how the logic of the HMO increasingly rules higher education. For example, management closely rations professor time. Thirty-five years ago, nearly 75 percent of all college teachers were tenurable; only a quarter worked on an adjunct, part-time, or nontenurable basis. Today, those proportions are reversed. If you’re enrolled in four college classes right now, you have a pretty good chance that one of the four will be taught by someone who has earned a doctorate and whose teaching, scholarship, and service to the profession has undergone the intensive peer scrutiny associated with the tenure system. In your other three classes, however, you are likely to be taught by someone who has started a degree but not finished it; was hired by a manager, not professional peers; may never publish in the field she is teaching; got into the pool of persons being considered for the job because she was willing to work for wages around the official poverty line (often under the delusion that she could “work her way into” a tenurable position); and does not plan to be working at your institution three years from now. In almost all courses in most disciplines using nontenurable or adjunct faculty, a person with a recently earned Ph.D. was available, and would gladly have taught your other three courses, but could not afford to pay their loans and house themselves on the wage being offered.

Most undergraduate education is conducted by a superexploited corps of disposable workers that Cary Nelson describes as a “lumpen professoriate” (Nelson and Watt, Academic Keywords, 208), often col-
lecting wages and benefits inferior to those of fast-food clerks and bellhops. According to the Coalition on the Academic Workforce survey of 2000, for instance, fewer than one-third of the responding programs paid first-year writing instructors more than $2,500 a class; nearly half (47.6 percent) paid these instructors less than $2,000 per class (American Historical Association). At that rate, teaching a full-time load of eight classes nets less than $16,000 annually and includes no benefits. By comparison, research faculty with half their workload in “publish or perish” activities usually teach four or fewer classes in a year. Persons who have acquired $30,000 to $100,000 in debt en route to a Ph.D. cannot afford to work for those wages. More often than not, working for those wages is the reason they acquired debt in the first place. In fact, without some kind of assistance, few can afford to work for two or three times that amount.

Higher education employers can only pay those wages in the knowledge that their employees are subsidized in a variety of ways. In the case of student employees, the massive debt load subsidizes the wage. For poorly paid adjunct, or contingent, faculty, who are women by a substantial majority, the strategies vary but include consumer debt and reliance on another job or the income from a domestic partner. Like Wal-Mart employees, the majority female contingent academic workforce relies on a patchwork of other sources of income, including such forms of public assistance as food stamps and unemployment compensation. It is perfectly common for contingent university faculty to work as grocery clerks and restaurant servers, earning higher salaries at those positions, or to have been retired from such former occupations as bus driving, steelwork, and auto assembly, enjoying from those better-compensated professions a sufficient pension to enable them to serve a second career as college faculty. The system of cheap teaching doesn’t sort for the best teachers; it sorts for persons who are in a financial position to accept compensation below the living wage.

As a result of management’s irresponsible staffing practices, more students drop out, take longer to graduate, and fail to acquire essential literacies, often spending tens of thousands of dollars on a credential that has little merit in the eyes of employers. The real “prof scam” isn’t the imaginary one depicted in Charles Sykes’s fanciful 1988 book by that title, which concocted the image of a lazy tenured faculty voluntarily absenting themselves from teaching. Instead, the prof scam turns out to be a shell game conducted by management, who keep a tenurable
stratum around for marketing purposes and to generate funded research. The tenured are spread so thin with respect to undergraduate teaching, however, that even the most privileged undergraduates spend most of their education with parafaculty working in increasingly unprofessional circumstances. As the union activists of the nontenurable will tell you, the problem is not with the intellectual quality, talent, or commitment of the individual persons working on a nonprofessorial basis; it’s the degraded circumstances in which higher education management compels them to work: teaching too many students in too many classes too quickly, without security, status, or an office; working from standardized syllabi; using outsourced tutorial, remedial, and even grading services; providing no time for research and professional development. Working in McDonald’s “kitchen,” even the talent of Wolfgang Puck is pressed into service of the Quarter Pounder.

Despite the tens of billions saved on faculty wages by substituting a throwaway workforce for professionals scrutinized by the tenure system, managed higher education grows ever more expensive. Tuition soared 38 percent between 2000 and 2005, outpacing nearly every other economic indicator. Where does the money from stratospheric tuition and slashed faculty salaries go?

At for-profit institutions, the answer is obvious: it goes into shareholder pockets. Currently enrolling about 8 percent of the 20 million students in financial-aid-eligible institutions, publicly traded education corporations have shown eye-popping return on investment. Between 2001 and 2003, for instance, the average annual return on publicly traded education corporations ranged from 63 to 75 percent (Cho). Since a sizable fraction of these large profits come from tax dollars in the form of financial aid, there has been growing scrutiny of nearly every major player in the for-profit sector. Recently, ITT, Corinthian, and Apollo have all endured substantial federal or state investigation; Career Education underwent investigation by both the Department of Justice and the Securities Exchange Commission, while simultaneously defending a rush of lawsuits from investors and employees (Morgenson; Blumenstyk, “For-Profit Colleges”). In early 2006, the New York State Board of Regents placed a moratorium on new programs by for-profit vendors, after “perceived abuses” at institutions enrolling 60,000 students and receiving more than $100 million in aid from the state (LeDerman). I’m persuaded by Jeff Williams’s elegant formulation describing the defunding, privatization, and commoditization of higher education
as the creation of a “post welfare-state” university. But I wonder if we
might not press even harder at the matter by describing this restruc-
turing of higher education as the “corporate welfare” university?

The explosive growth in the profits of education corporations comes
at a time of intensifying corporate profits globally. In the five years af-
fter 2001, the Standard and Poor’s 500 showed a record-setting twelve
straight quarters of profit gains averaging 10 percent or more. In 2005,
the United States, United Kingdom, and Japan each showed all-time
highs in profit share as a percentage of gross domestic product. This
could mean that education corporations were lifted by a generally rising
tide of profitability. Alternatively, insofar as education profits were well
ahead of most other industries, there might be features unique to higher
education, enabling it to take special advantage of the conditions partic-
ular to this historical profit opportunity. The latter seems more likely.
Goldman Sachs, which reported most of these figures, attributes at least
40 percent of the record expansion of corporate profit margin directly
to corresponding financial losses by workers, especially the erosion of
wages and benefits due to casualization, outsourcing, deregulation, and
globalization (Greenhouse and Leonhardt).

It seems probable that the larger-than-average success of education
profiteers has quite a bit to do with a larger-than-average ability to ex-
tact concessions from its workforce. Lacking even the veneer of a ten-
urable stratum, the dollars squeezed from a 100 percent casual faculty
joined tax money and tuition from the country’s poorest families in en-
riching the shareholders of education vendors.

But in nonprofit education, which only “pretends” to “act like” a
 corporation, where have the billions gone? At first glance, there are no
shareholders and no dividends. However, the uses to which the uni-
versity has been put do benefit corporate shareholders. These include
shouldering the cost of job training, generation of patentable intellec-
tual property, provision of sports spectacle, vending goods and services
to captive student markets, and conversion of student aid into a cheap
or even free labor pool. So one sizable trail to follow is the relationship
between the financial transactions of nonprofits and the ballooning div-
idends enjoyed by the shareholder class.

The shareholders of private corporations aren’t the only beneficiaries
of faculty proletarianization and the tuition gold rush. Because public
nonprofits have been receiving steadily lower direct subsidies from fed-
eral and state sources, there has been a general belief that higher tuition
and staff exploitation have somehow been accomplished by sharp-eyed, tight-fisted managers with at least one version of public well-being in mind, if only within the narrow framework of “reduced spending.” But that belief is open to question, since managers have been spending fairly freely in a number of areas.

One area in which nonprofit education management has been freely spending is on themselves. Over three decades, the number of administrators has skyrocketed, in close correspondence to the ever-growing population of the undercompensated. Especially at the upper levels, administrative pay has soared as well, also in close relation to the shrinking compensation of other campus workers. In a couple of decades, administrative work has morphed from an occasional service component in a professorial life to a “desirable career path” in its own right (Lazerson et al.). Nonprofits support arts and sciences deans, chairs, associate deans, and program heads comfortably in six figures. Salaries rise into the mid six figures for many medical, engineering, business, and legal administrators. University presidents have begun to earn seven figures, close on the heels of their basketball coaches, who can earn $3 million annually and are often the highest-paid public employees in their states. There are also notably those who directly administer capital. In 2003, the administration of Harvard University compensated the individual who managed just one sector of their endowment to the tune of $17 million. This rate of pay was 1,000 times higher than the compensation doled out by that same administration to Harvard’s lowest-paid workers. In thirty years of managed higher education, the typical faculty member has become a female nontenurable part-timer earning a few thousand dollars a year without health benefits. The typical administrator is male, enjoys tenure, a six-figure income, little or no teaching, generous vacations, and great health care. Nontenurable faculty are moderately more likely, and nonteaching staff substantially more likely, to identify themselves as belonging to an ethnic or racial minority than the tenure-stream faculty. Administrators are less likely to identify themselves with minority status the farther they are up the food chain.

There are lots of other areas in which nonprofit administrators have spent even more. With the support of activist legislatures, they’ve especially enjoyed playing venture capitalist with campus resources and tax dollars by engaging in “corporate partnerships” that generally yield financial benefit to the corporation involved but not the actual campus
More prosaically, they’ve engaged in what most observers call an “arms race” of spending on the expansion of facilities. And as Murray Sperber and others have documented, they’ve spent recklessly on sports activities that—despite in some cases millions in broadcast revenue—generally lose huge sums of money. The commercialization of college sport has raised the bar for participation so high that students who’d like to play can’t afford the time required for practice, and students who’d like to watch can’t afford the ticket prices. Traditionally, the phenomenon known as “cross-subsidy,” the support of one program by revenue generated by another program, primarily meant a modest surplus provided by the higher tuition and lower salaries associated with undergraduate education; this income was used to support research activity that was unlikely to find an outside funding agent. Under managed higher education, cross-subsidy has eroded undergraduate learning throughout the curriculum and become a gold mine supporting the entrepreneurial urges, vanity, and hobbyhorses of administrators: Digitize the curriculum! Build the best pool/golf course/stadium in the state! Bring more souls to God! Win the all-conference championship!

Why have those who control nonprofit colleges and universities so readily fallen into the idea that the institution should act like a profit-seeking corporation? At least part of our answer must be that it offers individuals in that position some compelling gratifications, both material and emotional. This is an age of executive license. In addition to a decent salary and splendid benefits, George W. Bush enjoys the privilege of declaring war on Afghanistan and Iraq. College administrators commonly enjoy larger salaries and comparable benefits. They, too, have the privilege of declaring war—on their sports rivals or on illiteracy, teen pregnancy, and industrial pollution. It feels good to be president. As a “decision maker,” one can often arrange to strike a blow on behalf of at least some of one’s values. What must be swept under the rug is that the ability to do these things is founded on their willingness to continuously squeeze the compensation of nearly all other campus workers. The university under managerial domination is an accumulation machine. If in nonprofits it accumulates in some form other than dividends, there’s all the more surplus for administrators, trustees, local politicians, and a handful of influential faculty to spend on a discretionary basis. It’s often assumed that some vaguely defined yet all-powerful force called
“economics” or “market pressure,” perhaps from the above-mentioned for-profit education corporations, has made all of this pain, the degradation of teaching and learning, “necessary.”

For instance, in what is otherwise one of the better essays on the rise of for-profit education, Ana Cox suggests that for-profit institutions have a profound influence on the management of nonprofit higher education. As she puts it, a “creeping for-profit ethos” has spread from the University of Phoenix outward, to the nonprofits.

This is a very commonsensical assumption, and it is correct in the general sense that nonprofits have adopted revenue-maximizing principles borrowed from the larger world of profit seeking. But it’s wrong about the heart of the matter. Who is influencing whom? While for-profits enroll about 8 percent of students in institutions receiving financial aid, they capture only 2.4 percent of those enrolled in institutions granting degrees. For-profits collect just 5 percent of the $395 billion spent on higher education in the United States (Blumenstyk, “For-Profit Education”). They remain strongest in distance and nondegree education, in the tradition of correspondence schools such as Donald Trump’s 10,000-student “Trump University” (Osterman). There are certainly some ways that the low, single-digit market share of degree-seeking students enjoyed by the for-profits places pressure on certain segments of nonprofit education, especially community colleges. But it is hardly the case that for-profit schools taught nonprofit higher education how to cheaply deliver a standardized, vocationally oriented curriculum designed by tenured administrators and implemented by a massively casual instructional force. That practice was perfected decades earlier by the nonprofits themselves, while billionaire University of Phoenix founder John Sperling was still a labor activist and president of a chapter of the American Federation of Teachers, struggling to better the situation of faculty exploited by his nonprofit higher education employer. The dishonest staffing of the nonprofits taught Sperling, a one-time idealist and faculty unionist, how to harvest surplus value more ruthlessly than Nike and DeBeers, not the other way around.

As a matter of policy, accreditation, and sometimes law, the nonprofit institutions themselves intentionally crafted the low standard of a majority nonprofessorial faculty between 1972 and the 1990s. It was this low standard, set by the nonprofits for themselves, that, in turn, permitted the explosive profits of commercial education providers circa 2000. As a result, the accreditation system, dominated and ultimately
corrupted by the administrator class that had engineered these low standards in the first place, was fundamentally helpless to protest that the for-profits had too few highly qualified faculty members. While the Big Ten and the Ivy League were aggressively expanding the meaning of “faculty” to include untrained graduate students, retirees, moonlighters, and anyone else able to work for Wal-Mart wages, who could argue that the for-profit competitors to community colleges should be held to higher standards?

The Culture of the “Corporate University”

There are many ways of understanding what we mean when we speak of the “corporatization” of the university. One valuable approach focuses on the ways campuses actually relate to business and industry in quest of revenue enhancement and cost containment: apparel sales; sports marketing; corporate-financed research, curriculum, endowment, and building; job training; direct financial investment via portfolios, pensions, and cooperative venture; the production and enclosure of intellectual property; the selection of vendors for books, information technology, soda pop, and construction; the purchase and provision of non-standard labor; and so forth (e.g., Barrow; Bok; Kirp; Newfield, *Ivy and Industry*; Noble, *Digital Diploma Mills*; Sperber; Washburn, *University Inc.*; White). Through these activities, most individual campuses and all of the various independent and self-governing institutions of the profession are commercialized: they are inextricably implicated in profoundly capitalist objectives, however “nonprofit” their missions.

Included in this line of analysis are diverse bedfellows. The unabashed right wing of this approach celebrates commercialization, especially the annual $17 billion for-profit education industry itself; such adherents include, in addition to Trump and Sperling, celebrity junk-bond felon Michael Milken. The left wing of this approach is led by such contributions as *Campus, Inc.* and *University, Inc.*, respectively, Geoffrey White’s scathing collection of exposes of “corporate power in the ivory tower” and Jennifer Washburn’s monograph on the “corporate corruption of higher education.” There is also a “center” to this discourse. The center comprises widely read recent efforts by prominent university administrators such as Harvard president Derek Bok (*Universities and the Marketplace*) and the acting dean of Berkeley’s Goldman School of
Public Policy, David Kirp (*Shakespeare, Einstein and the Bottom Line*). The common theme of centrist efforts is the claim that there is no alternative to “partnership” with business and “making peace with the marketplace.” Distressingly, more than a few unions of the tenure-stream faculty have adopted a position similar to those of Bok and Kirp, accepting the partnership with corporate enterprise as a “necessity” and adopting the protection of tenure-stream faculty rights to intellectual property as a higher priority than, for instance, addressing casualization and the installation of a radically multi-tiered workforce.

An important alternative understanding of the transformation of the university focuses not on commercialization but on organizational culture. Among the best-known examples of this approach include Bill Readings’s study of the ideology of excellence, in connection with the active effort by university administrations to transform institutional culture, and Sheila Slaughter and Larry Leslie’s and Gary Rhoades and Sheila Slaughter’s examinations of “academic capitalism,” the phenomenon through which university management both encourage and command faculty to engage in market behaviors (competition, entrepreneurship, profit-motivated curiosity, etc.). In both cases, the particular merit of the projects is the sense of human agency. Changes in the academic workplace come about as a consequence of clearly understood and clearly intended managerial, corporate, and political initiatives with the explicit intention of inducing the faculty to relinquish certain values and practices. Individually and collectively, faculty members make choices when they adopt new organizational cultures.

The organizational culture approach avoids the “victim of history” narrative popularized by Bok and Kirp, in which there is no alternative to commercialization. It also sees the university as a complex and contradictory place, in contrast to the vestal-virgin or ivory-tower tropes dominating such accounts (Newfield, “Jurassic U.”). At least since the early 1970s, when labor economist Clark Kerr theorized the “multiversity” and David Reisman chronicled the rise of “student power” over “faculty dominance,” it has been extremely useful to view the academy as a complex organization hosting multiple, generally competing, institutional groups, each with its own evolving culture, and, further, to see cultural change as related to the struggle between the groups—to see the vigor of 1960s student culture, for instance, as closely connected to the rise of student power relative to the powers of administration.

Most studies follow the lead of 1970s scholarship in considering the
rise, through the 1960s, of at least three increasingly distinct cultures: faculty, student, and administration. During that period, the lion’s share of the attention was on student and faculty cultures. However, the circumstances supporting the flourishing of those cultures have eroded. With the increasing economic segmentation of higher education, and the long period of political reaction beginning circa 1980, the sense of a vital “student culture” is generally absent from U.S. mass culture and scholarly literature alike (with the exception of the graduate-employee labor movement, of which more below). Because the traditional figure of the tenure-track professor is now a small minority of the instructional force in U.S. higher education, the sense of a “faculty culture” has also been undermined. As a result, investigating faculty culture means investigating the multiple subcultures of the persons doing the work formerly done by the tenurable faculty: part-time pieceworkers, graduate-student employees, undergraduate tutors, and full-time non-tenurable instructors.

Even as the 1970s sense of strong faculty and student cultures has dissipated, management culture has moved in the other direction entirely—becoming ever more internally consistent and cohesive. The culture of university management has the power and, crucially, the intention to remake competing campus cultures in its own image. In fact, the extent to which we increasingly see campus administrations as dominant over other campus groups has much to do with what we see as the success of administrative culture: that is, its capacity to transmit its values and norms to other groups. As I relate in chapter 3, since the 1960s the faculty have certainly organized—with greater and lesser success, depending on immense variables—but, in the same period, campus administrations have enjoyed a massively increasing sense of solidarity. The managerial caste has grown by leaps and bounds and is tightly knit. Through a complex and vigorous culture of administrative solidarity, university management sees itself as a culture apart from faculty. More than just “apart,” management is often aligned against the faculty (say, when the faculty seek to bargain collectively or to make “shared” governance meaningful). Even when it is not aimed at defeating a particular faculty initiative, management culture is pitched toward continuous struggle with faculty culture. Informed by the rhetoric of “change,” an administrative solidarity continuously shores itself up in opposition to the attitudes, behaviors, and norms felt to describe traditional faculty culture. Faculty values and practices targeted for change generally
include those associated with relative autonomy over the direction of research and conduct of teaching.

In large part, the self-recognition by management of an emerging culture of its own flowed from the extent to which university administration through the 1970s increasingly took traditional faculty beliefs and practices as an object of study. Informed by trends in corporate management, the “educational leadership” discourse increasingly zeroed in on what Ellen Chaffee and William Tierney dub “the cultural drama of organizational life” (1988). Management theory turned away from the human-resources model of developing individual potential. Turning to a more social-psychological frame, managerial discourse began to describe “the underlying cultural norms that frame daily life at the college” (37) as the root of most managerial problems (i.e., as an obstacle to organizational change). This phase of management theory—the leadership discourse—also saw organizational culture as the wellspring of all possibilities. As the new crop of “institutional leaders,” “change agents,” and “decision makers” saw it, transforming institutional culture could accelerate change, reduce opposition, and sweepingly create in individuals the desire to change themselves to greater conformity with the institutional mission.

If this sounds Orwellian, or a bit like Foucault goes to business school, it should. In adopting a management theory founded on the dissemination of a carefully designed organizational culture, campus administrations were like most U.S. corporate management in putting to practical use the lessons in cultural materialism they’d learned in humanities classes. It’s no exaggeration to say that, through management theory, the ranks of corporate executives and campus upper administrators are wholeheartedly cultural materialists to a greater extent than the faculty of most humanities departments.

Rather than as dedicated cultivators of human resources, they now envision themselves as an intellectual vanguard—as the institution’s meta-culture: change agents whose change agency is expressed through cultural invention, whose leadership strategies are aimed primarily at “the social construction of collegiate reality” (Neumann, 389). Plainly put, higher education administration pervasively and self-consciously seeks control of the institution by seeking to retool the values, practices, and sense of institutional reality that comprise faculty and student culture. And they have succeeded wildly. A significant fraction of tenure-stream faculty readily engage directly in the commercialization of re-
search, the enclosure of intellectual property, market behavior such as competition for scraps of “merit pay” rather than a collective demand to keep up with the cost of living, an increasingly managerial role over other campus workers in connection with the continual downsizing and deskilling of traditional faculty work, and so forth. And as they do, we are seeing them embrace exactly the “culture of quality” and “pursuit of excellence” that the administration has intentionally designed for them.

One tantalizing question begged by management’s wildly successful social engineering of faculty culture is this: Under current conditions, to what extent do the tenure-stream faculty represent the possibility of an opposition, a counterculture? With the spread of acceptance among the tenure-stream faculty of academic-capitalist values and behaviors, and acquiescence to an increasingly managerial role with respect to the contingent, there is little evidence of anything that resembles an oppositional culture. Indeed, it has become increasingly difficult to speak of anything resembling faculty culture apart from the competitive, market-based, high-performance habitus designed for them by management.

One study of this question regarding community college faculties in the United States and Canada concluded that, despite evidence of antagonism between the faculty and administrations on individual issues, and a degree of concrete opposition located in faculty unions, tenure-stream faculty were generally subject to a profound “corporatization of the self” that produced a pervasive “environment of employee compliance with institutional purposes” founded in management’s success at fostering a primary identification with the employing institution “over and above” an alternative affiliation with, for instance, one’s discipline, any sense of a separate faculty culture, or even the union (Levin, 80–81). Of course, there are exceptions, and self-consciously militant faculties have made their mark in California, New York, Vermont, and elsewhere, including the South. But even most collective-bargaining faculties have not fully addressed such core issues of administrative control of the workplace as the massive creation, over the past twenty years, of a majority contingent workforce.

There is nonetheless an emergent and vigorous culture of faculty opposition—just not in the tenurable minority. Instead, the rising faculty culture belongs to the unionization movements of contingent faculty and graduate employees, who together comprise what the American Association of University Professors accurately terms the “new majority faculty.” On the face of it, it would seem even more difficult to speak of
a “culture” of the contingent workforce. This is a group whose precarious position is overwhelmingly designed to disable solidarity, face-to-face encounters, and the emergence of a sense of common culture and communal interest. Moreover, graduate employees and adjunct faculty face not only the employer as a challenge when organizing but also other workers, including tenure-stream faculty and their unions who, Keith Hoeller points out, have in many cases bargained the multi-tier system of academic labor into existence (Hoeller, “Treat Fairly”). It is a group whose hold on the term “faculty” itself is precarious, as Joe Berry has underlined: “Every time a [tenure-track faculty member] or administrator uses the word ‘faculty’ to refer only to the full time tenure track faculty, one more piece of grit is ground into the eye of any contingent within earshot” (187). Still, they have succeeded in forging an emergent culture of opposition—a culture that sustains and promotes a movement to transform policy, standards, knowledge, appropriations, and the law itself.

This book is a product of that culture. As a graduate student employee and contingent faculty member on several New York campuses in the early and mid 1990s, I participated in campaigns for representation in my union and in my disciplinary association, founded a journal devoted to the struggle (Workplace: A Journal for Academic Labor), and circulated an analysis of the particular role that graduate education plays in academe’s uniquely successful system of superexploitation (this eventually appeared as “The Waste Product of Graduate Education: Toward a Dictatorship of the Flexible,” partly included below). That participation was itself a major part of my graduate education. In the process, I discovered that those of us in the movement understood the system of academic labor far better than the vast majority of senior scholars writing about it in a discourse that I came to label “job-market theory.” This discourse was peculiarly detached from our working reality, yet many of us (and all of our faculty mentors) accepted it as a description of our lives and prospects. The leading text of “job-market theory” throughout this period was the contribution of labor economist and Princeton President William G. Bowen who, in a book coauthored with an undergraduate, erroneously projected a major increase in the “demand” for teachers with the Ph.D. (Bowen and Sosa).

As I relate below, the interesting question is not whether Bowen was wrong and the contingent workers were right in a particular instance. The better question is: Why were we right? None of us were econo-
mists, and no authorities disputed Bowen. (Other than, fascinatingly, novelist, then-director of the National Endowment for the Humanities, and English Ph.D. Lynne Cheney, who did so from her experience as a contingent worker, not from her pulpit in the administration.)

Ultimately, I came to believe that we were right because the academy’s contingent workforce has a superior standpoint for understanding the system of our work. This isn’t a theoretical claim. Over the past twenty years, the analysis of the academic labor system provided by contingent faculty and graduate employees—including those who have reported that oppositional knowledge and contributed to it, especially Cary Nelson, Gordon Lafer, Eileen Schell, Randy Martin, Joe Berry, Barbara Wolfe, and Michael Bérubé—consistently provides a superior description of academic workplace reality than such official sources of information as the disciplinary associations, the Council of Graduate Schools, and the managerial discourse.

In addition to more accurate description, I also believe the standpoint of the contingent faculty and graduate employee generates a more just claim on our attention and action than the standpoints occupied by administration or even the faculty in the tenure stream. The commitment of administration to continuously eject the graduate employees and contingent faculty from the system is one dimension of their overriding ambition: to render all employees other than themselves “permanently temporary.”

Job-Market Theory

Like many scholars of my cohort, I entered graduate school in 1991 informed by a common sense about academic work that was significantly influenced by the 1989 Bowen report, which projected what it emphasized would be “a substantial excess demand for faculty in the arts and sciences” by the mid 1990s, with the consequence that early in the new millenium we could expect “roughly four candidates for every five positions.” The department administrators who recruited me into the profession were of the thoughtful and concerned variety: they were up on the literature and very glad to inform me that something called the “job market” would radically improve just six years in the future. There had been a cycle of bad times for holders of the Ph.D., they admitted, but prosperity was just around the corner. During the early 1990s, buoyed
in part by the election of a Democrat to the White House, liberal newspapers and major disciplinary associations recirculated the Bowen projections with a sense of relief and general optimism: With the certain onset of universal health coverage, could full employment for English faculty be far behind?

David Lawrence, MLA’s staffer for its association of chairs of English departments (ADE) wrote with typical emotion when he enthused, “Friends, the future we’ve all been waiting for is about to arrive” (1). For a decade afterward, disciplinary associations and scholars on the state of the profession, such as David Damrosch, gave serious credence to the Bowen projections of “increased demand” for the academic employment of holders of the doctoral degree. As late as 2001, the report of the American Philosophical Association on employment issues, republished on many department websites, continued to give credence to the Bowen projections, even though the first years of the projected boom had instead conclusively showed only a massively intensifying bust. It wasn’t until five years after the report—shortly before it was quite clear that the projections would fail to materialize—that the Chronicle of Higher Education finally ran a short item questioning the validity of the report (Magner, “Job-Market Blues”). Slowly through the second half of the decade, most disciplinary associations somewhat reluctantly gave up favorably citing the Bowen projections of a rosy future.

As many readers will know, instead of a jobs bonanza, the 1990s and the first decade of the new millennium have seen an intensification of the pattern established in the 1970s and 1980s. In many academic fields, especially the humanities, as few as one in every three holders of the Ph.D. can expect to eventually find tenure-track employment. Those who do succeed will spend more time toward the degree (bulking the curriculum vita, teaching more, racking up debt), and more time in non-tenurable positions after receiving the doctorate. It is easy enough to measure the gulf between the 1.25 jobs per candidate projected by Bowen and the reality of 0.33 job per candidate. The reporters of the Chronicle of Higher Education and one or two angry reviewers of Bowen’s subsequent work have made a point of revisiting the rather startling gap between projection and reality (Magner, “Job Market Blues,” “Study Says”; Rice).

But the more important and interesting question is analytical: What was wrong with Bowen’s assumptions that he strayed so outrageously into fantasy? And what was it about these projections that generated
such a warm and uncritical welcome? In chapter 6 of this volume, I pro-
vide a detailed critique of Bowen’s breathtakingly flawed methodology
and examine the way his flawed results were taken up by the most visi-
ble disciplinary association in the arts and sciences, the Modern Lan-
guage Association, from whose Manhattan digs, then in Astor Place,
job-market theory was dispensed to the mainstream press.

In brief, Bowen’s method was to impose neoliberal market ideology
on data that, instead of demonstrating a stable “market” in tenure-
track jobs, attests to the unfolding process of casualization. Most egregious,
for instance, when confronted with data that increasing num-
bers of doctoral degree holders had been accepting nonacademic work
since the 1970s, Bowen ignores the abundant testimony by graduate
students that this dislocation from the academy was involuntary. In-
stead, he imposes the ideology of “free choice” on the phenomenon,
generating the fallacious claim that this ever-upward “trend” showed
that even more people will “choose” similarly. The result of this tautol-
ogy was that he projected a spiraling need to increase graduate school
admissions—in order to compensate for the imaginary, ever-increasing
cohort of people that he wrongly portrayed as choosing nonacademic
work. Although all of the available testimony from graduate students
themselves suggested an involuntary dislocation from their plans of ten-
ure-stream employment, Bowen opted to present the traditional, deeply
ideological figure so central to his disciplinary knowledge—the “freely
choosing” figure of “homo economicus,” which was widespread in neo-
classical economic modeling and a mainstay of neoliberal policy thought
after 1980.

This error was only one element in an overall set of ideological as-
sumptions. In modeling the academic labor system as a market, Bowen
introduced an unwarranted analogy to other markets in the business cy-
cle and assumed a “natural” boom-bust pattern. He also excluded the
majority of academic workers. In order to manufacture an empirically
existing “job market” out of data that indicated a labor system running
on the continuous substitution of student and casual labor for tenure-
stream faculty, Bowen had to virtually exclude the labor of students,
full-time lecturers, and part-time faculty from his model of the labor
system. Somehow he manages to populate his “universe of faculty” with
only 12,000 part-timers. By contrast, the 1993 National Study of Post-
Secondary Faculty (NSOPF) saw more than 250,000 and felt this num-
ber was deeply undercounted (National Center for Education Statistics).
Furthermore, Bowen’s projections rest on the counterfactual assumption that “institutions always want to have more faculty and will add faculty positions when they can afford to do so” (Bowen and Sosa, 153; emphasis theirs). In reality, every nook and cranny of the public discourse on the question held reams of evidence attesting that what institutions really wanted was to accumulate capital and conserve labor costs by casualizing faculty positions by any means available: early retirement, expanded graduate programs, outsourcing, distance education, deskill- ing, and the like. Bowen’s response to the “bear market” in academic hiring during 1970–1989 was, in a sense, predetermined: he started out looking for the complementary swing of the pendulum, what he viewed as the inevitable bull market in academic hiring, and he found it. Sometime between 1994 and 2012, Bowen was sure, things would turn around. After all, “markets” always do.

Bowen is hardly alone in erroneously imposing market ideology on data about the structure and relations of academic labor. The interpretive engine driving Bowen’s projections—the notion that there is a “job market” in academic labor (a notion which in its folk-academic usage has to be held distinct from the better applications of labor market analysis) remains nearly universal throughout the academy. Job-market theory is a significant vector through which managerial thought spread to faculty and graduate students as part of what I call a second wave of dominant thought about the situation of academic labor after 1945. (There is an earlier, prewar period of struggle over academic labor that was emblematized by John Dewey’s cofounding of both the American Federation of Teachers and the American Association of University Professors. Surveyed by Clyde Barrow and Christopher Newfield, as well as by education historian John Thelin, this is the period of white-collar industrialization from which we derive such managerial innovations as the credit hour and such labor victories as “academic freedom.”) Originating in the surging self-confidence of higher education management, managerial thought after 1970 became a “wave” insofar as it entered the culture, thought, and scholarship of other education constituencies. During the past quarter century, the worldview of faculty and students has repeatedly threatened to collapse entirely into the management viewpoint.

Nonetheless, there are many lines of alternative thought. Often, quite strong formations survive in connection with an earlier first wave of dominant thought about the situation of academic labor after 1945;
these include the analysis and commitments associated with the movement for unionization of the tenure-stream faculty in the 1960s and 1970s. The once-vigorous movement for unionization of the tenurable, now in a phase of “survivor institutions,” was itself largely a component of a much larger surge of organizing activity that gathered momentum in the 1950s, the radicalization of and movement to unionize public employees, including schoolteachers. It cannot be said that the professoriate provided leadership to this movement. Rather clearly, schoolteachers, municipal clerks, firefighters, police officers, and their unions showed professors the way. During its heyday, however, the ideas of faculty unionists pervasively infiltrated the thinking of management, students, and the public. As I note in chapter 3, Clark Kerr and the Carnegie Foundation gazed at the movement for unionization of the tenurable faculty with intense trepidation, projecting that the decades of student power would be followed by decades of faculty power.

Originating as management’s oppositional knowledge in response to the emergence of faculty and student power, second-wave knowledge about higher education working conditions gained currency steadily through the 1970s, achieved dominance through the 1980s, and remains dominant at this writing. The intellectual roots of the managerial second wave are in neoclassical economics, the neoliberal political regime, and the pervasive discourse of management theory. For the vast majority of working managers, as well as most nonmanagerial persons indoctrinated by management thought, this second-wave ideology is more of a “vulgar liberalism” than a committed neoliberalism—a kind of accidental neoliberalism produced by the wildly inaccurate application to higher education working conditions of dimly remembered chestnuts from Econ 101.

One of the earliest, most adopted, and least contested discourses of the managerial second wave, job-market theory captured the imagination of most faculty and many graduate employees with the clarity and elegance of its central tenet: tenure-track job advertisements can be considered the “demand,” and recent degree holders the “supply,” for an annual job “market,” overseen by professional associations such as the MLA. While this language originally served as analogy, for most producers and consumers of job-market theory the terms hardened under neoliberalism into a positive heuristic, serving as a kind of half-baked approximation of labor-market analysis. (Responsible labor-market analysis, for starters, would have accounted for casualization.) This

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language appealed to the tenure-stream faculty, including the organized faculty. The notion of a “market in jobs” allowed tenure-stream faculty to approach the problems of graduate employment in ways entirely separate from the ways they approached their own workplace issues. Even faculty who saw the need to bargain collectively on their own behalf took up job-market theory with relief. Through it, the issues of graduate employment appeared susceptible to a simple solution—the balancing of supply and demand by concerned academic citizens (perhaps administrators or graduate faculty). As a result, it was possible to believe that these were not issues that had to be confronted by the unions themselves.

Job-market theory separates the workplace issues of the graduate employee from the workplace issues of the faculty and sweepingly defines the workplace relation of faculty to students in paternal, administrative, and managerial terms. Whatever actions faculty might take to secure their own working conditions, job-market theory defines their responsibility toward graduate students and former graduate students not as a relationship of solidarity with coworkers but, instead, as a managerial responsibility. In multiple roles—as graduate faculty, in professional associations, as management—the tenured saw their responsibility to graduate employees through the lens of participating in the administration of the “market.”

From a labor perspective, job-market theory disables the practice of solidarity and helps to legitimate the tiering of the workforce. Even to the most idealistic and committed observer, the job-market model offered the seductions of a quick, technocratic fix. For more than three decades, the model has sustained the general conviction that the system of graduate education produces more degree holders than necessary, and that this “overproduction” can be controlled “from the demand side” by encouraging early retirements and “from the supply side” by shrinking graduate programs.

Reality is very different from the model. In the reality of structural casualization, the jobs of professors taking early retirement are often eliminated, not filled with new degree holders. Nor does reducing graduate school admissions magically create tenure-track jobs. Most graduate schools admit students to fill specific labor needs. One of the core functions of graduate programs is to enhance flexibility, always presenting just enough labor, just in time. As a result, management cannot reduce graduate-employee admissions without making other arrange-
ments for the work that graduate employees would otherwise have performed. Universities that have cut their graduate employee rolls have consistently preferred to make other flexible arrangements, hiring part-timers or nontenurable lecturers and not new tenurable faculty. Insofar as these new flex workers are themselves inevitably former graduate employees, there can hardly be said to be any net improvement.

In this context, the idea of a job market operates rhetorically and not descriptively, serving largely to legitimate faculty passivity in the face of this wholesale restructuring of the academic workplace by activist legislatures and administrations. By offering faculty the fantasy of supply-side control from the desktop, the job-market fiction provides an imaginary solution—the invisible hand—to a real problem.

Under casualization, it makes very little sense to view the graduate student as potentially a “product” for a “market” in tenure-track jobs. For many graduate employees, the receipt of the Ph.D. signifies the end, and not the beginning, of a long teaching career. Most graduate students are already laboring at the only academic job they’ll ever have—hence, the importance for organized graduate student labor of inscribing the designation “graduate employee” in law and discourse.

From the standpoint of the organized graduate employee, the situation is clear. Increasingly, the holders of the doctoral degree are not so much the products of the graduate-employee labor system as its by-products, insofar as that labor system exists primarily to recruit, train, supervise, and legitimate the employment of nondegreed students and contingent faculty.

This is not to say that the system doesn’t produce and employ holders of the Ph.D. in tenurable positions, only that this operation has become secondary to its extraction of teaching labor from persons who are nondegreed or not yet degreed, or whose degrees are now represented as an “overqualification” for their contingent circumstances.

**The Waste Product of Graduate Education**

Grad students existed not to learn things but to relieve the tenured faculty members of tiresome burdens such as educating people and doing research. Within a month of his arrival, Randy solved some trivial computer problems for one of the other grad students. A week later, the chairman of the astronomy department called him over and said, “So,
you’re the UNIX guru.” At the time, Randy was still stupid enough to be flattered by the attention, when he should have recognized them as bone-chilling words.

Three years later, he left the Astronomy Department without a degree, and with nothing to show for his labors except six hundred dollars in his bank account and a staggeringly comprehensive knowledge of UNIX. Later, he was to calculate that, at the going rates for programmers, the department had extracted about a quarter of a million dollars’ worth of work from him, in return for an outlay of less than twenty thousand. (Stephenson, Cryptonomicon, 97)

Discussing the enthusiasm he and the Sloan Foundation had for funding William Massy’s Virtual U management training game, Jesse Ausubel wrote that “everyone else” in the university has “a very partial view of a complex system,” but one person—the president—“finally sees the institution synoptically [through] financial flows.” Through the game, newly appointed presidents and upper administrators “can see totality in a few minutes or hours that in real life would take decades.” The medium through which this synoptic view is possible, Ausubel confesses, “is basic: money.” Every decision in the game “translates directly or indirectly into a revenue or expense.” Under the general neoliberal onslaught, this managerial conversion of all values into financial flows and the corresponding understanding of all human systems via market logic serves as the only available heuristic for thinking at the level of totality.

In this airless environment, even the slightest displacement of management’s logic yields insight into a very different underlying reality. For instance, it is perfectly common for scholars of professional work more generally to employ the heuristic of a labor monopoly rather than a labor market. (The best application of a labor-market mode of analysis to academic work might include the concept of segmentation—asking, for example, how is it that women comprise a vast majority in the casual sector and a distinct minority in the tenured sector?) Monopoly control of professional labor generally reflects a social bargain made by professional associations that exchange a service mission with the public for substantial control over the conditions of their work, generally including deciding who gets to practice. In a professional police culture, for instance, only the graduates of police academies may practice, and the police unions, like professional associations, supervise this instruction and apprenticeship, thereby safeguarding the employment conditions of
these recruits against the deprivations of would-be amateur and volunteer police practitioners (and the city managers who would employ them). From this perspective, the ideology of the job-market analogy may be seen as having obscured the very useful description of the academic labor system in perfectly scholarly and conventional terms as a failed monopoly of professional labor.

That is, postsecondary educators generally fulfill the service mission that constitutes their half of the bargain; in return, society continues to grant them monopoly control over degrees. But the labor monopoly fails because degree holding no longer represents control over who may practice. Indeed, the inescapable observation must be this: under casuarization, degree holding increasingly represents a disqualification from practice. The ultimate refutation to job-market theory is that, in observing that the holder of the doctoral degree is the “waste product of graduate education,” we are only moving toward an acknowledgment of simple fact.

Degree holders frequently serve as university teachers for eight or ten years before earning their doctorate. In English departments, a degree holder will have taught many writing classes, perhaps also a literature survey or theme class, even an upper-division seminar related to her field of study. Many degree holders have served as adjunct lecturers at other campuses, sometimes teaching master’s degree students and advising their theses en route to their own degrees. Some will have taught thirty to forty sections, or the equivalent of five to seven years’ full-time teaching work. During this time, they received frequent mentoring and regular evaluation; most will have a large portfolio of enthusiastic observations and warm student commendations. A large fraction will have published essays and book reviews and authored their departmental web pages. Yet at precisely the juncture that this “preparation” should end and regular employment begin—the acquisition of the Ph.D.—the system embarrasses itself and discloses a systematic truth that every recent degree holder knows and few administrators wish to acknowledge: in many disciplines, for the majority of graduates, the Ph.D. indicates the logical conclusion of an academic career.

As presently constructed, the system of academic work requires instructors to have the terminal M.A. or M.Phil. or to have the doctorate “ABD” (all but the dissertation). Ideally, these teachers will have a well-paid partner or other means of support enabling them to teach for wages below the poverty line for an extended period of time without
undue suffering. Without a degree and presupposing another source of income, people of this description can and do teach virtually forever. The system cannot run without people who are doing or who have done graduate study, quite frequently persons who can be represented as on some long trajectory toward the terminal doctorate. As presently constructed, the academic labor system requires few if any new degree holders—but it gasps and sputters when there is a tiny interruption in the steady stream of new graduate students (hence, the appearance of employment contracts in admittance packets). The system “really needs” a continuous flow of replaceable nondegreed labor. It can also use degreed labor willing and financially equipped to serve in the subprofessional conditions established for the nondegreed, but the majority of people with degrees cannot afford to do so.

What needs to be quite clear is that this is not a “system out of control,” a machine with a thrown rod or a blown gasket. Quite the contrary: it’s a smoothly functioning new system with its own easily comprehensible logic, premised entirely on the continuous replacement of degree holders with nondegreed labor (or persons with degrees willing to work on unfavorable terms). The plight of recent degree holders encapsulates this logic. Let us say that Jane Doe has taught sections English 101-97 and 101-98 for the past seven years and, for the past four, women’s studies 205, a special topics course fulfilling a university-wide diversity requirement. Upon earning the degree (or in many circumstances much earlier), Doe becomes ineligible to teach those sections, unless given a special waiver or postdoctoral invitation. The reason most universities limit the number of years a graduate student is “eligible to teach” is to ensure that a smooth flow of new persons is brought into the system. The many “exceptions” to these eligibility rules are the expression of this labor pool’s flexibility, enabling the administration to be confident that it can deliver low-cost teaching labor “just in time” to any point on the factory floor.

Because of the related erosion of secure employment opportunity for young workers throughout the global economy, this system has no trouble bringing in new persons. Applications to graduate programs primarily designed to prepare future faculty have steadily climbed, despite the poor chances of finding tenurable employment.

The system’s only problem is disposing of these self-subsidizing student teachers after it has extracted six to ten years of their labor, to make room for a new crop of the same. This logic of replacement cre-
ates many local ironies. Because people who are declared “ineligible to
teach” by a graduate program frequently serve as flexible labor at other
campuses, it is often at the junior colleges and other less-prestigious lo-
cations where the most experienced and dedicated flexible faculty can
be found. The flexible labor at research universities with graduate pro-
grams are primarily new graduate employees and therefore will gener-
ally have between zero and five years’ part-time experience. By contrast,
the flexible labor at most other campuses, including junior colleges, will
often consist of persons who have exhausted their fellowship years (and
may or may not have received a degree as a result). They will therefore
commonly have between five and twenty years of experience. These lo-
cal ironies are important because they make clear that the system’s logic
is not designed to provide better teaching even at the richest schools:
It is designed to accommodate capital accumulation, which transpires
with greater efficiency at the richest schools. At wealthier private re-
search schools, where grad employees may teach one or two courses in
only two or three years of their fellowship, parents, students, and schol-
arship donors will pay tuition and expenses that approach $50,000 a
year in order to be taught by trainees, nearly all with less than the
equivalent of one year’s full-time pedagogical experience.

The academic labor system creates holders of the Ph.D., but it does-
n’t have much use for them. This buildup of degree holders in the sys-

tem represents a potentially toxic blockage. The system produces degree
holders largely in the sense that a car’s engine produces heat—a tiny
fraction of which is recycled into the car’s interior by the cabin heater,
but the vast majority of which figures as waste energy that the system
urgently requires to be radiated away. The system of academic labor
only creates degree holders out of a tiny fraction of the employees it
takes in by way of graduate education. Leaving aside the use of M.A.
students as instructional staff, doctoral programs in the humanities
commonly award the Ph.D. to between 20 and 40 percent of their en-
trants. In many disciplines, the system only employs perhaps a third of
the degree holders it makes. Like a car’s engine idling in the takeout
food line, the system’s greatest urgency is to dispel most of the degree-
holding waste product.

From the perspective of casualization, the possibility of a toxic build-
up of degree holders is not, as commonly maintained by job-market the-
orists, the result of “too many” graduate students. On the contrary, it is
precisely the nature of permatemping to arrange that there are always
“just enough” graduate students and other nondegree flex workers to be delivered “just in time” to serve the university’s labor needs. It is in the interest and logic of the system to have as many graduate students as it can employ while producing the fewest number of degrees—or, better yet, to produce persons with degrees who don’t make a claim for permanent academic employment. This is one reason that graduate-school administrations have recently promoted the Marie Antoinette or “let them eat cake” theory of graduate education: “Why, if they cannot find teaching work, let them be screenwriters!” This is a kind of excrement theory for managers, through which the degree holder figures as a horrible stain or blot, an embarrassment that the system is hysterically trying to scrape from its shoes. By institutionalizing the practice of preparing degree holders for “alternate careers,” the system’s managers are creating a radiator or waste pipe to flush away persons whose teaching services are no longer required precisely because they now hold the degree.

Persons who actually hold the terminal degree are the traumatic Real puncturing the collective fantasy that powers this system. Degree in hand, loans coming due, the working partner expecting a more fair financial contribution, perhaps the question of children growing relevant, the degree holder asks a question to which the system has no answer: If I have been a splendid teacher and scholar while nondegree for the past ten years, why am I suddenly unsuitable?

Nearly all of the administrative responses to the degree holder can already be understood as responses to waste: flush it, ship it to the provinces, recycle it through another industry, keep it away from the fresh meat. Unorganized graduate employees and contingent faculty have a tendency to grasp their circumstance incompletely—that is, they feel “treated like shit”—without grasping the systemic reality that they are waste. Insofar as graduate employees feel treated like waste, they can maintain the fantasy that they really exist elsewhere, in some place other than the overwhelmingly excremental testimony of their experience. This fantasy becomes an alibi for inaction, because in this construction agency lies elsewhere, with the administrative touch on the flush-chain. The effect of people who feel treated like waste is an appeal to some other agent: please stop treating us this way—which is to say to that outside agent, “please recognize that we are not waste,” even when that benevolent recognition is contrary to the testimony of our understanding. (And, of course, it is only good management to tell the
exploited and superexploited, “Yes, I recognize your dignity. You are special.”)

By contrast, the organized graduate employee and contingent faculty share the grasp of the totality of the system that proceeds from the understanding that they are indeed the waste of that system. They know they are not merely treated like waste but, in fact, are the actual shit of the system—being churned inexorably toward the outside: not merely “disposable” labor (Walzer) but labor that must be disposed of for the system to work. These are persons who can perform acts of blockage. Without expelling the degree holder, the system could not be what it is. Imagine what would happen to “graduate programs preparing future faculty” if they were held responsible for degree-granting by a requirement to continue the employment of every person to whom they granted a Ph.D. but who was unable to find academic employment elsewhere. In many locations, the pipeline would jam in the first year!

The difference in consciousness between feeling treated like waste and knowing one’s excremental condition is the difference between experiencing casualization as “local disorder” (that authority will soon rectify) and having the grasp of one’s potential for transforming the systemic realities of an actually existing new order. Where the degree-holding waste product understands its capacity for blockage and refuses to be expelled, the system organizing the inside must rapidly succumb.

**Theorizing Blockage**

There are many ways of writing about the casualization of academic work. As I elaborate in chapter 2, the most inclusive frame is one that addresses the malignant casualization of the work process globally. In this frame, the designation “student,” including undergraduate and even child labor, emerges as a bonanza in global capital’s voracious quest for low-cost, underregulated labor. In chapter 4, I explore how in the United States and globally the designation “student” has evolved into a legal fiction designating a form of “worker which is not one”: someone who can be put to work but does not enjoy the rights of labor. Students are just one category of workers without rights—persons who work but who, in a growing web of law in service of exploitation, are construed as “not workers” for purposes of the statutes that provide worker protections, such as the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA).
This global “informalization” of the work process can only be met by the most inclusive forms of unionization. Mobilization of the academic community will inevitably require tearing down the barriers between academic work and other kinds of work. We will have to set aside the often-crippling exceptionalism associated with “mental” labor generally. Ultimately, the most helpful standpoint from which to initiate action will be one that sees contingency as a global condition engineered by capital for labor, and which understands the university as a dynamic node of post-Fordist employment from the sweatshop to the classroom.

In this enlarged context, it is fair to ask, Why bother to talk about the doctoral degree holder at all, when the experience of contingency is general, or at least generational? Isn’t it frivolous to speak of an “excrement theory” of graduate education when the democratic promise of higher education is eroding everywhere around us? Don’t we just need more clear positive knowledge regarding flex work? In the big picture of global exploitation, just how important are the problems of underemployed holders of doctoral degrees anyway?

Alternatively, without a theory of the waste product—the system’s constitutive exterior—we have so far utterly failed to see that the effects of academic casualization are immanent throughout the system (not merely “local” to the casualized). For thirty years, the bad knowledge of “markets” for degree holders has enabled faculty unions and disciplinary associations alike to accommodate the creation of a multi-tier labor system, the most dramatically tiered labor system in North America. Faculty bargaining agents have accepted the collective fantasy regarding the waste of the labor system: that graduate employees are being “trained” for future jobs, not toiling in the only academic job they will ever have. Subtract the largely imaginary relationship of most graduate-employee laborers to a future job, and the systemic effects of that labor are visible as the effects of casualized second-tier labor in any workplace: management domination of the work rules, speedup, moonlighting, and grossly depressed wages for everyone.

The system of disposable labor has been consistently mistaken as a problem only for the relatively small constituency of the graduate student and other contingent faculty.

For instance, the total compatibility of the cheap teaching system with capital accumulation has enabled most schools (or the public funding them) to either (a) pay off shareholders handsomely or (b) spend money on other things besides teaching labor—engage in vast building
programs, create enormous endowments, launch new programs and services, and so on. From this perspective, one might sentimentally deplore the way that graduate students are exploited by being cycled out of the system after a period of service and debt accumulation, but then go on to feel that “other constituencies” are surely benefiting from new stadiums, business centers, and prisons. This view suggests that the money saved by cheap teaching surely benefits some people, and if the only people harmed are a few graduate students, or persons whose other sources of income allow them to teach as a kind of philanthropy, what’s the big deal?

One of the most useful aspects of the knowledge of graduate-employee and contingent faculty unionists is the way it addresses the system as a totality, enabling us to see that few people situated in the education ecology really benefit from the system of cheap teaching.

*From “I Feel Your Pain” to “Oh Shit! Your Problem Is My Problem!”*

It is declared to be the policy of the United States to eliminate the causes of certain substantial obstructions to the free flow of commerce and to mitigate and eliminate those obstructions when they have occurred by encouraging the practice and procedure of collective bargaining and by protecting the exercise by workers of full freedom of association, self-organization, and designation of representatives of their own choosing, for the purpose of negotiating the terms and conditions of their employment. (Daniel Silverman, Director, NLRB Region 2, applying the language of the NLRA to the NYU case; emphasis in the original)

The “third wave” of knowledge regarding the academic labor system emerged in the early part of the 1990s. It is grounded in what has grown into a fifty-campus movement of graduate-employee unions (GEUs) and the flourishing campaign to organize contingent faculty, which has racked up a string of successful drives at both public and private campuses in the past several years. Many aspects of both movements have been documented in the legal literature surrounding the struggle for recognition, in an important series of films by Barbara Wolf and in well-known books since 1994 by Cary Nelson, Steve Watt, Michael Bérubé, David Downing, and Eileen Schell, together with two special issues of
Social Text edited by Randy Martin (one of which appeared, expanded and republished as *Chalk Lines: The Politics of Work in the Managed University*). The movement has given rise to collections of its own, notably Deborah Herman and Julie Schmid’s *Cogs in the Classroom*, Michael Dubson’s *Ghosts in the Classroom*, Eileen Schell and Patricia Lambert Stock’s *Moving a Mountain*, and my own effort with Tony Scott and Leo Parascondola, *Tenured Bosses and Disposable Teachers*.

The medium most associated with the movement is the Internet, which hosts, in real time, the unfolding knowledge and burgeoning solidarity of the movement. Especially significant are the websites of various contingent faculty bargaining units and campaigns cooperating in the Coalition of Contingent Academic Labor (COCAL), and the graduate-employee websites indexed by Jon Curtiss’s Coalition of Graduate Employee Unions (CGEU). The Internet also hosts noteworthy weblog commentary by the “Invisible Adjunct,” among others, and *Workplace: A Journal for Academic Labor* (at www.workplace-gsc.com), at this writing entering its tenth year of continuous publication.

During union activity, such as organizing campaigns or the landmark strike of New York University graduate employees beginning in November 2005, Internet commentary effloresces. These typically involve independent, organizer, and institutional sites and weblogs. In the most visible events, debate will also spike in the weblog-powered “commentary” functions attached to reporting in online media, such as the institution’s student newspaper, alumni publications, the web portals of local mainstream media, and the trade press. The onset of the NYU graduate employees’ strike gave rise to a blizzard of online debate, largely mediated by the undergraduate newspaper and such venues as the discussion forums attached to *Inside Higher Education*. These debates involved undergraduates, tenured and contingent faculty, anti-union graduate employees, organizers, activists, New Yorkers living nearby, and alumnae from across the country.

Despite its vigor, third-wave academic labor knowledge is continuously under active erasure by the positive and commonsensical knowledge of the foundations, disciplines, institutes, and media. To some extent, this erasure takes the simple, ideological form of the power of second-wave market knowledge to interpellate concerned faculty, undergraduates, taxpayers, and public analysts, not to mention graduate employees themselves. As I try to make clear in chapter 5, the relationship of a discipline’s intellectual content to its structural role in the la-
Labor system shapes even the most sympathetic adherents’ sense of what can be said and thought, not just what can be done.

For graduate employees, the overwhelming consciousness of one’s disposability all too frequently lends the aura of concreteness to the ideology of “market.” But the erasure of graduate-employee labor knowledge also takes the more active forms of direct suppression. In organizing campaigns, the suppression of labor knowledge by administrations can take the form of nonrenewal of the fellowships and assistantships of organizers, as well as punitive recommendations by advisers—even, occasionally, expulsion. It can take the form of illegal harassment, as Joel Westheimer charged in the NLRB complaint he successfully settled with NYU after being denied tenure at NYU subsequent to testifying in support of graduate-employee unionists (Fogg). Most often, though, direct suppression of labor knowledge by administrations and disciplinary institutions takes the form of the kind of pervasive information warfare conducted, for example, by MLA’s staff and executive council in response to resolutions by the organization’s assembly in support of Yale University’s GEU. In this instance, typical of the control that the staff and officers of MLA sought to impose on the organization’s processes of self-governance throughout the 1990s, organization staffers mailed out a twelve-page propaganda leaflet attempting to shore up the administrative position on the labor dispute (hoping, unsuccessfully, that the membership would decline to ratify the measure). As Bérubé notes, this completely one-sided document was circulated, without any sense of irony, under the claim that it attempted to preserve “diversity of opinion” on the question, and it became part of a continuing pattern by MLA officers and staff of containing graduate-employee dissent (56–58).

The fundamental unit of third-wave or graduate-employee consciousness regarding the structure of academic labor can be contained in two words: We Work. But coming to this fundamental consciousness is not only a question of overcoming the ideology of apprenticeship and the disciplinary powers of academic institutions, it is a question of struggling with the apparatus of the state itself. That is, until very recently, university employers consistently enjoyed the support of federal and state courts in maintaining that graduate students working as teachers were “apprentices” and “primarily students” and denied them the rights of labor, especially the right to bargain collectively. As Randy Martin puts it: academic labor generally and graduate-employee organizers in particular “meet the State head on” in contesting “the claim of the
In recognizing that their work is, in fact, labor, graduate employees have been able to get beyond the fetish of “the economy,” “the market,” and “the law” that bedevils second-wave knowledge. Graduate employees understand that all of these forces do not transpire in a distant field of titans but, instead, occur in the arena of everyday struggle with the employer for control of the workplace. For the graduate employee, it has not been a question of forecasting the economy or learning the limits established by the law but, rather, of making the law responsive to their understanding. Despite setbacks in state courts and before the National Labor Relations Board in the 1970s, and the extraordinary, sustained, and frequently illegal opposition by university employers, graduate-employee unionists throughout the 1990s continuously won victories writing their knowledge (“we work”) into law. Just as importantly, they introduced that principle into the consciousness of individuals comprising the political apparatus in many of the largest “education states” in the country. Because the National Labor Relations Act specifically excludes government employees from its protections, the circumstances of workers at publicly funded universities—including tenure-stream faculty, nonacademic workers, and student employees—are addressed primarily by state laws.

The organization of graduate-employee unions at public universities has therefore depended on an arduous legal and political campaign conducted on a state-by-state basis. Despite great variety in state labor law and political climate, there are significant commonalities in successful campaigns to force public universities to the bargaining table. In order to win recognition, organizers have commonly had to initiate decades-long campaigns of litigation in public employee relations boards (PERBs) and appellate courts, or even appeal to state legislators to draft
new laws. Inspired and often supported by the movement to unionize tenure-stream faculty, graduate employees in public universities began to unionize in the 1960s, beginning with a successful campaign at the University of Wisconsin.7

More typical efforts took longer, often over decades and dozens of graduate-employee “generations,” as at the University of California, where graduate employees formed locals affiliated with the AFT in the early and mid 1970s, but failed to win recognition or negotiate a first contract for the next quarter century. In a 1980s resurgence, many of the California locals switched to the United Auto Workers and won a “temporary” recognition in 1989, until a hostile PERB ruled in favor of the university’s appeal. The road to a first University of California contract in May 2000 required a series of legal victories in the 1990s. These included favorable PERB interpretation of state laws providing bargaining rights to other higher education employees and multiple successful appellate lawsuits.

One core lesson is that these repeated legal victories were not sufficient in themselves. Even after a series of decisive opinions in administrative and appellate courts, the UC campus administration refused to bargain until the union acted politically, engaging in awareness-raising job actions and appealing to state legislators and the public for assistance. Spurred by the mobilization and will to direct action by the graduate employee locals, and the concern of the electorate for stability and labor peace on campus, the California legislature threatened to shut down university appropriations until the administration complied with state law. This threat finally forced six UC campuses to the bargaining table, resulting in a first contract in May 2000.

Entering its fifth decade, the movement to unionize graduate employees in publicly funded universities has learned that “the law” is a field of political struggle, deeply dependent on the vagaries of the political party that controls appointments to the PERB in each state at any given time. In consequence, they have learned the importance of educating lawmakers and the public served by those lawmakers. Even with the electorate and the legislature on their side, graduate employees have come to understand the astonishing persistence, arrogance, ingenuity, and determination of their employers. The will of public-university employers to defy lawmakers and flout the intentions of labor law rivals the most ruthless union busting of any commercial enterprise (generally hiring, at public expense, the same corporate law firms to guide them).
For example, home to some of the most vigorously oppositional labor and management cultures in the United States, Illinois has a labor-relations board that is dedicated exclusively to education labor, the Illinois Education Labor Relations Board (IELRB). As in California and elsewhere, initial organizing in Illinois began in the 1970s but did not gain significant momentum until the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (UIUC) graduate employees affiliated with the AFT. Losing its first round before the IELRB, in 1996, the graduate-employee organization chose to hold a union election anyway. As yet without substantial legal status, the solid 2–1 vote in favor of unionization supported the determination of the organizers to contest both the IELRB ruling and the statute on which it was based. The UI-Chicago graduate employees joined the struggle, and activists on both campuses worked together to generate the interest of pro-union state legislators and the support of other Illinois educator unions, especially the Illinois Federation of Teachers, the AFT affiliate representing K–12 educators statewide.

The university fought the union hard. Guided by a well-known anti-union law firm, the administration intimidated graduate employees by subpoenaing the records of those graduate employees who had filed affidavits regarding working conditions, then notifying their advisors (and potential recommenders) of the legal proceedings. Independent election monitors reported the circulation of rumors among international graduate employees, specifically targeting Asian students, that a union victory would mean cutbacks in their ranks. When graduate employees won the IELRB ruling on administrative appeal, and again before the State Supreme Court, the University of Illinois still refused to bargain. The graduate employees wrote a bill, passed by the state legislature in March 2000, guaranteeing them bargaining rights. The university continued to stonewall, bringing an action before the original labor board (which remained hostile to graduate employees) that resulted in the fanciful delineation of a bargaining unit that would have excluded 90 percent of graduate employees.

The UIUC and UIC unions continued to work with friendly state legislators and the Illinois Federation of Teachers (IFT). In 2003, new card-check legislation conferred automatic recognition of unions upon state-board certification. And in July 2004, the state senate passed the graduate employee bargaining-rights bill. By the time their bill became law, however, UIUC grad employees had already ratified their first contract. Part of their success was political: as in California, the unions’ success-
ful appeal to the public and legislature swiftly eroded the administration’s capacity to burn public money on corporate lawyers in increasingly desperate and underhanded efforts to postpone bargaining.

Another significant factor was the graduate employees’ decision to engage in direct action. In 2001, they held a series of walkouts; in March 2002, they occupied the UIUC campus administration building. As reported to Nelson and Watt by participants, the occupation was an expression of militant determination to compel recognition: “It’s our building now. You get your office back after the union is recognized” (Office Hours, 142). Carefully planned and executed, the occupation was timed to coincide with a Board of Trustees meeting and the presence of news media, and the administration gave in before the day was out. Surveying other graduate-employee and contingent-faculty direct actions in California and New York, Nelson and Watt conclude that the will to creatively disrupt university business as usual holds important lessons for the entire campus community, including “rethinking” the professional culture of the tenured professoriate: “We need as faculty members to rethink our relation to ambition, achievement, competition and careerism” (Office Hours, 163).

The necessity for continuous organizing and mobilization for action is a lesson that the longest-running graduate-employee unions have fully absorbed over the years. The institutional history of the union at the University of Michigan, for instance, features a thirty-year string of near-continuous job actions, featuring at least one in every successful contract cycle. These began with a series of strike votes during 1970–1974 that forced the university into recognizing the union, despite difficulties with the state public-employee relations board over the shape of the bargaining unit. With recognition, the union had to strike in February and March 1975 to force the university to bargain seriously toward a first contract and then, even after contract ratification, was forced to continue the strike to gain assurance that there would be no reprisals. In 1976, in the midst of negotiating a second contract, the university attempted to backtrack and make the case that graduate employees were not real workers and therefore “could not commit unfair labor practice” in relation to them. Losing at every stage in Michigan administrative hearings and appellate courts, the administration nonetheless protracted its appeal process for five years and was not compelled to sign the 1976 contract until 1981. Winning continuous courtroom victories over five years but without significant contract gains and with its
organization in decay, the experience of this litigated contract cycle caused Michigan graduate employees to shift to a “grassroots” stewardship model of collecting the dues in face-to-face encounters every semester in 1983. Building solidarity through continuous organizing became a central commitment. Yearly rallies on economic issues commenced, and contract negotiations involved strike authorizations, walkouts, or work stoppages in 1987, 1991, 1993, 1996, 1999, and 2002. The result is one of the strongest graduate-employee contracts in the nation.

By 2007, employing militancy, inventive direct action, canny alliance, the principle of continuous organizing, and the will to make both law and lawmakers respect their workplace realities, U.S. graduate employees had forced public university employers to the bargaining table in all of the largest education states: California, New York, Florida, Michigan, Oregon, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Illinois, Massachusetts, Iowa, Kansas, Wisconsin, Washington, and even the smaller Rhode Island. During this period, graduate employees formed unions at publicly funded universities in Indiana, Ohio, Maryland, and Virginia, though these have yet to succeed in compelling recognition from the employer.

Occupying the national news in the 1990s and well into the subsequent decade was the efforts of graduate students in private universities, especially Yale and, subsequently, NYU. These experiences have also demonstrated the need for the “continuous organizing” model, direct action, strong alliances with other unions and constituencies, and close relationships with communities. Perhaps most importantly, the NYU experiences have underlined another key feature that private university organizers share with their publicly funded colleagues: the overtly political nature of the struggle.

Spurred by the victories of their publicly employed counterparts, unionization efforts among graduate employees at private universities sharply accelerated throughout the 1990s. In this decade, efforts began or renewed themselves on as many as two dozen privately funded campuses and resulted in nationally affiliated unions at Brandeis, Columbia, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, Brown, Yale, and elsewhere. Notably, two groups succeeded in forcing recognition and compelling the employer to negotiate: NYU and Temple (one of the largest “state-related” universities resulting from activist restructuring: it receives public funding but is under independent control).

The culmination of these efforts appeared in the form of an eloquently composed decision by NLRB Regional Director Daniel Silver-
man on April 3, 2000, finding that NYU teaching assistants were in fact employees “within the meaning of the [National Labor Relations] Act.” Silverman dispensed quickly with such outright prevarications on the part of the administration as the claim that the services performed by graduate employees are “simply part of their education” and that NYU “runs the graduate teaching program for the benefit of the graduate students and not to facilitate its teaching of undergraduates.” He brushed off the NYU attorneys’ efforts to claim as irrelevant the massive evidence pertaining to collective bargaining in public higher education while attempting to claim relevant precedent in cases involving the Arkansas Lighthouse for the Blind and Goodwill Industries of Denver (i.e., suggesting that the workplace experience of private-university graduate employees had more in common with this “rehabilitation setting” than public universities). He concluded that NYU’s expressions of concern about the potential impact of collective bargaining on academic freedom was “essentially a rejection of the appropriateness of graduate students speaking with a common voice.”

Most significant from a legal and rhetorical point of view, Silverman’s decision set aside NYU’s claims that students couldn’t simultaneously be considered employees. This point may seem obvious to an average reader. Of course, persons occupying the category students can also occupy the category employees, just as “senior citizens,” “women,” “wine lovers,” and “Red Sox fans” can be all of those things without giving up their rights as employees. However, in the early and mid 1970s, a tenuous thread in NLRB case law had emerged in connection with exactly this claim—just as it had, during the same period, in a number of state boards, where it has consistently been eventually overturned in court rulings sought by graduate employees. Even though the claim that graduate employees are “primarily students” or that the purpose of their work was “primarily educational” had been set aside in the majority of state-court rulings by this time, the NLRB hearing fulfilled Caesar’s fantasy for all private-university employers: because the board covered all private universities nationally, all present and potentially future organizing on private campuses presented itself at the hearing with just one neck (instead of the many-headed hydra offered by the state-law-governed public university campaigns). The administrations of private universities across the country swarmed in support of the effort to breathe life into this particular legal fiction.

Pursuing recent NLRB precedent in postgraduate medical education,
Silverman rejected all of the arguments attempting to exclude graduate employee “from the statutory definition of employee on the sole basis that they are also students.” Instead, he applied the common-law (and commonsense) meaning of the term “employee,” observing that since 1995 the NLRB had held that “a broad and literal interpretation of the word ‘employee’ is consistent with the legislative history and with the Act’s stated purpose of ‘encouraging and protecting the collective bargaining process.’” In this context, after an exhaustive and painstaking survey of NYU’s own documents and practices in the employment of graduate students, Silverman found that by every reasonable test these students were also workers:

The graduate assistants perform services under the control and direction of the Employer, in exchange for compensation. The Employer has specific expectations of graduate assistants that are often spelled out in departmental or program handbooks, by job descriptions, or by NYU representatives. NYU representatives supervise the work of graduate assistants. The Employer provides the supplies and the place of work for the graduate assistants. In the case of TAs, NYU provides extensive training as to the nature of the services to be provided, including training on the application of NYU policies to the undergraduates. As for their compensation, graduate assistants’ stipends are treated like any other personnel salary in that they are processed through the payroll department and distributed in biweekly checks. The IRS treats the stipends as taxable income or “salary for services rendered.” Graduate assistants must complete certain forms, such as the INS I-9 form, which are required of employees, but which are not required of other graduate students. Finally, graduate assistants are subject to removal or transfer. Based on the foregoing, it is clear that the graduate assistants sought by the Petitioner meet the statutory definition of employee under Section 2(2) of the Act.

On Halloween of the same year, the NLRB unanimously upheld Silverman’s ruling and ordered the administration to hold elections. Even a board member who had dissented in the precedent-setting case (involving residents and interns at Boston Medical Center) joined this ruling. This member felt in the previous case, for policy reasons, that collective bargaining would harm certain “educational relationships” such as the necessary period of postgraduate medical training. But he felt the
NYU case “clearly demonstrates” a contrasting situation, in which “the graduate students involved herein do not perform their services as a necessary and fundamental part of their studies. Thus, I regard [them] as employees who should have the right to bargain collectively.”

In the days after Halloween 2000, two things happened. First, the NLRB ruling resulted in the prompt election of UAW as the bargaining agent for a large group of NYU graduate employees. They negotiated an extremely favorable first contract at that institution, one of the best graduate-employee contracts ever negotiated. Grad employees at Temple organized a first contract and subsequently a second and third. Organizing on private campuses across the country shot into high gear.

Second, George Bush was awarded the presidency of the United States by decision of the U.S. Supreme Court. In consequence, three Republicans were appointed to the NLRB, constituting a majority over the two Democrats, one of whom (Wilma Liebman) had served during Bill Clinton’s presidency and had served in the original review of the NYU case. Over 90 percent of NLRB cases are decided unanimously, but the remaining 10 percent are “high impact” debates that are generally decided along political party lines, so that shifting partisan majorities can result in radical reversals in NLRB interpretations of labor law (Runkel). In the first six years of domination by Bush appointees, the NLRB overturned a series of key advances made by labor during the Clinton administration, including restrictions on threatening speech by employers, the rights of workers employed by temp agencies to organize, and the rights of all workers to representation in disciplinary hearings.

As professional unionists and commentators digested this political reality, the drive to organize private universities began to sputter, anticipating the likelihood that university employers would take the political recomposition of the board as an opportunity to revisit NYU. The board quickly indicated its intention to do so in the case of Brown University. Once more, graduate-employee labor relations at all private universities presented itself with one neck. This was perhaps a final opportunity. If the administrations could not win in a Bush-appointed venue, they were unlikely to win anywhere. Accordingly, Harvard, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Stanford, George Washington University, Tufts, the University of Pennsylvania, the University of Southern California, Washington University of St. Louis, and Yale filed a joint brief, joining forces with such company as the National Right to Work Legal Defense Foundation and the trustees of Boston University.
In a decision that the dissenting members characterized, scathingly, as “woefully out of touch with today’s contemporary academic reality, based on an image of the university that was already outdated [in] the 1970s,” the new Republican majority had little to say about the circumstances of graduate employees at Brown. Instead, they openly employed the case as an opportunity to reconsider NYU, baldly concluding that “NYU was wrongly decided and should be overruled.” In an unusually impassioned dissent (republished here as appendix B), the minority excoriated the “choice” of the Republican nominees both as bad law and a fundamental error, “in seeing the academic world as somehow removed from the economic realm that labor law addresses.” As law, the Republican majority relies on a handful of cases from the 1970s, none of which concerned graduate employees as teachers, and which it construes, somewhat fancifully, as supporting the view, rebutted in a dozen other legal venues, that persons who are “primarily students” can’t also be “employees.”

As the dissent notes and the majority openly confesses, the majority opinion is founded not in law but in ideology. The ideological arrogance of the majority can be most charitably described as an unusually broad application of the board’s discretion, intruding on policy-making powers. Essentially, they imposed their partisan, theoretical, and a priori judgment that collective bargaining is somehow “incompatible” with “the nature and mission of the university.” Ignoring substantial evidence that collective bargaining in public higher education has not harmed academic freedom or education, including two empirical studies, the Republican appointees speculate, entirely without foundation and against all of the available evidence, including at NYU itself, that collective bargaining might have different consequences on privately funded campuses. They conclude with a frank, paternalistic, and ideological acknowledgment of the wide latitude in which they’ve indulged: “Although under a variety of state laws, some states permit collective bargaining at public universities, we choose to interpret and apply a single federal law differently to the large numbers of private universities under our jurisdiction” (Battista, 11).

Implicit in the understanding “we work” and the corollary understanding that the consciousness of work has to be materialized in law, social policy, and workplace practice, are a set of important realizations:

1. We are not “overproducing Ph.D.s”; we are underproducing jobs. There is plenty of work in higher education for everyone who wants to
do it. The problem is that this enormous quantity of work no longer comes in the bundle of tenure, dignity, scholarship, and a living wage that we call “a job.” The concrete aura of the claim that degree holders are “overproduced” conceals the necessary understanding that, in fact, there is a huge shortage of degree holders. If degree holders were doing the teaching, there would be far too few of them. Graduate employees understand that labor markets are socially structured: with a single stroke (by, say, restoring the 1972 proportion of tenurable to nontenurable faculty in a major state, such as New York or California), all of the “surplus” degree holders in many disciplines could be immediately employed. Even a modest “reconversion” plan designed to re-create tenurable jobs out of part-time piecework would swiftly generate a real shortage of degreed persons. The intervening official knowledge, informed by liberal economic determinism, works to conceal the operation of a policy universe (social, legal, institutional) that shapes academic working conditions—a policy universe that organized graduate employees and contingent faculty understand they can and must transform.

2. **Cheap teaching is not a victimless crime.** Graduate employees understand that the system of cheap teaching hurts everyone, not just the persons who teach cheaply. The cheapness of their labor holds down salaries in the ladder ranks: professorial salaries have stagnated against per capita gains since 1970 and have stagnated most in the disciplines that rely primarily on graduate employee labor. The cheapness and disorganization of flexible labor supports speedup throughout the system: assistant and associate professors teach more, serve more, and publish more in return for lower compensation than any previous generation of faculty. You have to look pretty hard to find avenues of employment where sixty-year-old persons who have distinguished themselves at their work get paid less than college faculty. In the most casualized disciplines, such as English, this means that a sixty-year-old distinguished scholar with a national reputation and three books (and three children in college) earns a salary similar to that of junior faculty in many other disciplines. She earns about as much as either a good accountant with two or three years of experience or a twenty-five-year-old district attorney. At the end of a career covered with distinction, she earns about half of what moderately accomplished professionals in law and medicine earn at the beginning of their careers. She frequently earns less than a secondary-school teacher, civil servant, factory employee, or bartender with the same term of service. In many ways, she also has less control
over her work and fewer rights to due process, despite the fantasies of unfirable tenured faculty. And cheap teaching hasn’t only reduced salaries: it has diminished the dignity, research support, and academic freedom of the tenured, as well as their morale and their capacity to govern the academy.

The system of graduate education has also radically altered the experience of general education for nearly all undergraduate students. Ask any thirty-seven-year-old graduate employee, with her ten or more years of service and just beginning to peak in her pedagogical and scholarly powers, yet soon to be replaced by a twenty-two-year-old master’s degree candidate: Is this a system that teaches well? And she will answer: Heck, no, it is just a system that teaches cheaply. Accomplishing its marvelous cheapness by allocating an ever-larger section of the curriculum to flexible instructors who typically have between zero and four years of teaching experience, or who have brought their graduate studies to early termination, the system of disposable faculty continuously replaces its most experienced and accomplished teachers with persons who are less accomplished and less experienced.

In English departments, it is now typical for students to take nearly all first-year, many lower-division, and some advanced topics courses from nondegreed persons who are imperfectly attuned to disciplinary knowledge and who may or may not have an active research agenda or a future in the profession. The whole zone of general education—that is, the education that most people who go to college have in common with each other—has been radically evacuated. The proletarianized teachers who will be the only experience that most students have of a language department are commonly deprived of such necessities as offices, telephones, and photocopying privileges—much less the protections of due process that guarantee academic freedom. It is usual practice for administrations to simply dispense with the services of flexible teachers who exercise academic freedom: those who teach controversial material, of course, but also those who generate student complaints by teaching difficult material. Flexible teachers cannot afford to provide an obstacle to the advancing administrative ideal of an ultimately education-free transfer of cash for course credits. Most citizens wouldn’t dream of employing an accountant without an office or a telephone—or go to a lawyer who practiced avocationally—but they regularly send their children for writing and liberal arts instruction to a person working out of the trunk of her car.
To paraphrase Emma Goldman: Cheap teaching is a social crime and failure. This is true even if the injuries to all persons who teach are excluded from the equation. Even the persons who seemingly benefit from the labor savings—students and the public they serve and also become—are substantially injured. Nor is it just a matter of teaching. The whole complex of research production is diminished by the elimination of tenurable faculty positions. Casualization systematically replaces the scholarly activity of the professoriate with new management tasks, and it profoundly degrades the undergraduate educational experience, producing such “efficiencies” as a reduced variety of course offerings, reduced access to faculty doing active scholarship in their field, and the regular replacement of experienced professionals with students and avocational labor.

3. Casualization is an issue of racial, gendered, and class justice. Frequently, the cheap teachers are people who can afford to teach with little or no compensation, as idealized in such manifestations of mass corporate culture as the financial-services commercial illustrating the corporate employee taking a plush early retirement so he can “afford” to realize his “dream” of being a teacher.

What does it mean that increasingly only people “who can afford to teach” are entering higher education as a profession? Surely one reason the neoliberal second-wave knowledge took such hold of the academy during the 1980s and 1990s is the degree to which academic casualization has increasingly closed the profession to people who rely on waged work to live—and replaced them with individuals for whom teaching figures as a secondary income.

If it typically requires family support to become a teacher, how do factors such as class and the racialized wealth gap affect the composition of the professoriate? Today’s graduate-employee unionists are at least half women, and they understand that casualization is a feminist issue. The CGEU Casual Nation report headlines the fact that women take about 40 percent of the doctorates, but they represent about 58 percent of the full-time temporary instructors and only 25 percent of senior professors. There is a sharp generational break: women who joined the faculty during 1985–1992 were much less likely to join the faculty as members of the ladder ranks than were women who joined the faculty in earlier cohorts. Despite a plentiful “surplus” of women holding the doctorate, junior faculty women are substantially more likely to work in poorer-paying and less-satisfying higher education sectors than
junior-faculty men. The NSOPF New Entrants analysis shows that fewer than half of the women who began full-time work during 1985–1992 held the Ph.D.: women were about as likely to hold the M.A. (44.2 percent) as the Ph.D. (48.4 percent), whereas male “new entrants” overwhelmingly hold the Ph.D. (71.0 percent) (Finkelstein et al.). The only fields in which women have achieved near parity in numbers with male faculty in the upper ranks are the most ill-paid fields, primarily language, literature, and writing instruction.

The sectors in which women outnumber men in the academy are uniformly the worst paid, frequently involving lessened autonomy—as in writing instruction, where the largely female staff is generally not rewarded for research, usually excluded from governance and even union representation, and frequently barred even from such basic expressions of academic discretion as choosing course texts, syllabus, requirements, and pedagogy (see chapter 5).

4. Late capitalism doesn’t just happen to the university; the university makes late capitalism happen. The flexible faculty are just one dimension of an informationalized higher ed—the transformation of the university into an efficient and thoroughly accountable environment through which streaming education can be made available in the way that information is delivered: just in time, on demand, in spasms synchronized to the work rhythm of student labor on the shop floor. The university has not only casualized its own labor force; it continuously operates as a kind of fusion reactor for casualization more generally, directly serving the casual economy by supplying it with flexible student labor (that is, by providing flex workers with the identity of “student”), normalizing and generalizing the experience of casual work. The casualization of the higher education teacher has been accompanied by the wholesale reinventing of what it means to be an undergraduate: the identity of “student” has been disarticulated from the concept and possibility of leisure and vigorously rearticulated to contingent labor. In the twenty-first century, “being a student” names a way of work. The graduate employee understands that the gen-x and millenial structure of feeling proceeds from the generational register of the economic order, insofar as casualization colonizes the experience and possibilities of “youth,” cheerfully extending the term of youth and youthful “enjoyment” into the fourth decade of life—because youth now delimits a term of availability for superexploitation.

This knowledge of the graduate employee conditions the political
subjectivity of antagonism to the actually existing system of academic labor. Everyone with an interest in transforming that system will inevitably attempt to share into, or even ventriloquize, that knowledge. The one or two attempts to ventriloquize that knowledge have resulted in classic cases of incorporation, reinstalling the neoliberal fetish of “the market” and “the economy”—as when the Final Report of the MLA Committee on Professional Employment (December 1997) struggled visibly to deploy the graduate-employee critique of the “job-market” heuristic, developing the compromise language of “job system” (GSC “labor system” + MLA “job market” = “job system”), only to fail to deliver any analysis at the level of system.

Refraining from attributing the critique to the graduate caucus in its own midst and failing even to mention either the graduate-employee union movement or faculty unionism more generally—and conspicuously leaving Cary Nelson, Michael Bérubé, and others from its bibliography—the CPE report attempts to “sound like” the GEU/GSO critique while obscuring the political reality and general experience of faculty unionism: about 44 percent of all faculty (two of three faculty members on publicly funded campuses) are unionized (Rhoades 9–10). In this ventriloquism and disappearing act, the CPE ultimately reinstalls the “imperative” of the “realities of the job market” (6) and offers the same set of “solutions” that David Orr offered in 1970: supply-side balancing of “the market,” alternate careers, more teacher training, “buyer beware” labels on admission letters, and so on. Any analysis at the level of system suggests that all of these “solutions” actually contribute to the well-being of casualization—especially the fantasy of “alternate” careers, which enables administrations to flush away the degree-holding waste product. These official disciplinary “solutions” all proceed out of the primary ventriloquism of the Clinton era, “I feel your pain” (see, for instance, Sandra Gilbert’s performance in “Bob’s Jobs”), but which vigorously reinstalls the market logic that produced that pain in the first place.

**Toward a Dictatorship of the Flexible**

Basically, I just want to say to your President, the Board, that the stories I’ve heard tonight baffle me. [voice breaking] I have a personal story, but I’m not going to share it with you because you’ve heard enough
personal stories. I had no idea this problem was an issue. I talked about it with my (student council) president. She had no idea. We students rely on teachers. We rely on them being there. We rely on their service—and they provide it! I’ve had part-time teachers, many part-time teachers. I’m in a professional/technical program, and they give you service. They put in more hours than they ever get paid for. Twelve—thousand—dollars makes me sick! Oh—my—gosh.

I—I didn’t even know how to react to that. Teachers going from one campus to the other? Four and five different colleges? What is this country coming to? Where is this school—I know it’s not just at PCC, I know it’s across the nation—but it starts at one school. We can, we can start a trend for other schools. We can make a difference. I mean—[applause] Just think about, think about everything you’ve heard tonight, because—it made a difference to me. (Serrou)

**Administrator:** Please allow me to introduce myself, I’m a man of wealth and taste. I go by many names. Doctor, Boss, Sir, Chairman, Gentleman, Scholar, Dean, Pillar of the Community, Cheap Bastard, but you can call me the Administrator. (Camhi)

Moving from the discourse of “I feel your pain” to the collective recognition that our problems are mutual ultimately means acknowledging the intellectual and political leadership of the union movements of the casualized, of graduate employees and former graduate employees working part-time and nontenurably in subprofessorial conditions.

Acting at the level of system means acting as graduate employees have acted—writing their knowledge into law and policy at every level of social organization, from the campus and community to state and federal statute, and developing linkages to labor on a global scale. This means that everyone else implicated in the system of academic work will benefit from “acting with” the casual employee (rather than “sounding like” them while “acting with” administration). Against the domi native totality of higher ed marketization—the flexible dictatorship of university administration—the possibility of antagonism at the same level of systemic totality is emergent in the GEU and contingent-faculty movements. Acting with the movement of the contingent, we are privileging the perspective of the graduate employee (as incipient degree holder) and former graduate employee working contingently, and doing so in the belief that accomplishing the particular agenda of the contingent
will address the problems that are general to the system (but feel “specific” to other locations). That is, in re-creating jobs out of the piecework done by the contingent workforce, we address with one stroke the problems experienced by everyone else: tenure-stream faculty benefit because eliminating cheap teaching raises the price of experienced teaching and reinstalls the value of research in pedagogy; undergraduates benefit by receiving experienced, secure faculty (who “do knowledge” rather than “provide information”) in the first two years, when they are most vulnerable; other movement activists benefit from a more diverse and demarketized professoriate; the public, taxpayers, and employers receive a more literate, accomplished, thoughtful, and civically oriented citizenry—the embodied and political subjects of education, not the reactive “meatware” of information capitalism.

We of the academic system would in a way, then, be submitting to a “dictatorship of the flexible,” saying instead of “I feel your pain” something more like this: “Oh, heck, now I realize that your problems are intimately related to my own difficulties. Solving your problem is solving my problem.” To the extent that the system of academic labor is a system interlocking in a plane with other systems, it seems plausible that a dictatorship of the knowledge proletariat could be articulated to the proletarian struggles elaborating themselves elsewhere. (The GEU movement, for instance, might be the basis for an important evolution in the undergraduate movement against sweatshops, which in my view would acquire even greater vitality by becoming conscious of the North American student’s own status as flexible labor.) The articulation of the GEU movement to other proletarian movements could take place on a more horizontal plane, the shared consciousness of contingency. But the articulation of the GEU movement within “the knowledge class” itself would take place in a hierarchical relation—a revived apprenticeship, if you will—except that this apprenticeship would reverse the traditional relationship. In my view, we can only have a workers’ movement in the academy when the professoriate (and their unions and institutions) are willing to politically and intellectually indenture themselves to the graduate employee.

The surge in graduate-employee organizing in the 1990s was accompanied by a growing interest in the major academic unions in organizing contingent faculty, who have become the majority workforce. Part of a growing interest in organizing contingent workforces globally, the effort involves challenges that are unique to contingency (difficulties in
communication, lower salaries that mean lower dues, etc.), but also special opportunities: there are far fewer legal barriers to unionization. As a result, a string of contingent faculty union successes emerged in the past decade.

The plays, films, testimony, and propaganda of contingent faculty are components of a faculty culture in transition. They are active contributions to a culture war with management, each event an element in the struggle over the meaning of the language that structures our working lives—terms like “faculty,” “fairness,” “part-time,” and “quality.” On a Washington State campus, activists sold full-time and part-time cookies, with the part-time cookies identical to full-time cookies—except that they cost at least 50 percent less. In California, COCAL activists dressed as “freeway fliers” disrupted public spaces and distributed “scholar dollars,” valued illustratively at the 37 cents paid contingent faculty for the same work performed by the tenured (Nelson, “Contingent Faculty”). One of the street theater pieces performed at Oregon’s Portland Community College with the intention of “organizing the community” as well as the workforce is the simple device of asking real adjunct faculty to schedule their office hours at an outdoor trash can (labeled “AD-JUNKED FACULTY OFFICE”), sometimes involving the instructor wearing a sign “AD-JUNKED FACULTY” and the wearing of sandwich boards by willing “STUDENTS” as well. (Guerrilla theater appears to be an established feature of the union culture in Portland, where union janitors protested their intended replacement by convict labor by performing their jobs in black-and-white striped uniforms on the steps of county buildings, and where 100 protestors dressed as bananas occupied a Safeway grocery store to dramatize the efforts by Del Monte to break one of its unions in Guatemala [McIntosh, “Skit Protests”].)

Also scripted for the Portland Community College events, Joe Camhi’s Screw U. introduces an archetypal administrator, costumed in business suit and horns, employing quotations from the Rolling Stones’ “Sympathy for the Devil.” Camhi’s managerial fiend engages in a classic Modern Times–style illustration of managerial speedup of the work process. The administrator permits negligible time to prepare for class and respond to student work, barking “hurry!” and “shift gears!” at a hapless contingent faculty member who has a more thoughtful (and moderately slower-paced) idea of “quality” in the educational process. The curricular demands that “total-quality” management place on an overstressed contingent faculty quickly push the meaning of “academic
specialty” into the realm of the absurd. Camhi’s administrator continuously interrupts the adjunct’s lecture with a sequence of syllabi for a dozen classes with eight different specializations. “How many damned classes am I teaching?” the “part-time” adjunct finally explodes in protest. “How many classes do full-time faculty teach?” The truth of the administrator’s answer—that “full-time” faculty often teach just two or three classes—is an extraordinary moment in the skit, one that defamiliarizes the part-time/full-time distinction even for those who “know” why part-time teaching can mean much more than a full-time load. It’s an absurd moment in the narrow, technical sense of literary absurdity—the dizzying contingency of the adjunct’s existence, structured by language and policy that are continuously available to radical evacuation by administration, becomes, for a moment, a window into the common condition, fast capitalism’s permanently temporary structure of feeling.

The confrontational dimension of Camhi’s skit—naming the administration as the horned devil—is a common thread in the organizing culture of contingent faculty. Julie Ivey’s song parody, “We Are Teachers!” rewrites Helen Reddy’s “I Am Woman” by way of The Who with an emphasis on collective defiance: “Hear us roar. . . . No one’s ever gonna make us beg or crawl again!” And the image of faculty “begging” and “crawling” before administration has its effect, not just on the faculty but on students for whom the notion of faculty as authority is a core belief. Among the most compelling of the contingent-faculty productions are the images penned by John Kloss, adjunct instructor at several California campuses, and editorial cartoonist for the Sacramento News and Review. A member of the California Federation of Teachers (CFT), Kloss has gone on record noting the union’s failure to fully address the concerns of its contingent membership. His images for COCAL/Campus Equity Week display a command of diverse graphic styles, sometimes recalling elements of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) graphic tradition. This is particularly the case with his “107 Campuses—An Amazing Circus!” which features a huge and menacing tiger encompassing 85 percent of the horizontal visual field. Labeled “2/3 of Instructors are PART-TIME!” the snarling cat leaps through a flaming hoop labeled “FINANCIAL EXPLOITATION,” but arches its head and shoulders in the direction of the ringmaster, who bears on hat and cape the legend “THE CHANCELLOR.”

Recalling the Wobblies’ use of the black cat symbol for direct action against the employer in the workplace (especially sabotage), Kloss’s
Tiger unmistakably voices the militant strain of contingent faculty culture. The cat is an agent—trained to perform management’s tricks, but whose training has eroded to the margins of compliance—a powerful agent on the cusp of realizing that bones labeled “summer classes” and tins of cat food (suggesting the contingent faculty domestic food budget) are hardly sufficient inducements to continued obedience.

Kloss’s other militant images are equally striking. His “It’s Alive!” features a version of Frankenstein’s monster in academic robes, square-headed under a mortarboard, labeled “30,000 Part-Time Faculty” (i.e., of the California community college system), coming to life and snapping its chains while electricity courses through the air. It is a quintessentially romantic trope: the monstrous agency of the contingent awaits only the coming-to-life of militant self-consciousness and also recalls numerous IWW images of the sleeping giant awakening to agency.

Drawn in a deceptively innocuous style different from much of his other work, it takes a minute to realize that Kloss’s “Part-Time Instructor/Full-Time Activist!” bears perhaps the most overtly militant message of all, as it features a clean-cut student in robes and mortarboard this time, with his clenched fist emerging from the frame, bearing a “class ring” with the legend “CLASH OF 2000.” Less busy than Kloss’s other work, this sketch draws together the “CLASH” with just two other typographic elements, a diploma case labeled “PAY EQUITY” and the ubiquitous “37 cents” logo (from the “scholar dollar”). Here, as else-
where, the target of contingent faculty culture is the culture of academia itself, and the oppressive, silencing, norms of “collegiality,” ubiquitous faith in meritocracy, and so on: the “CLASH OF 2000” is as much a clash with the beliefs and institutions of the tenure stream faculty as it is with the administration.

The project of creating a contingent faculty culture involves transforming the contingent faculty culture that is already there. Kloss’s “Misadventures of a Freeway Flier” targets the self-conception of the contingent faculty by showing the “freeway flier” as a chicken who is the victim of his own beliefs: “I’m s-o-o Smart! I teach at 5 caw-caw-cawleges!” crows one of Kloss’s fliers, pulling open academic robes to show a joke superhero’s logo (“PT,” for part-time). Above a landscape littered with the “flier’s” broken-down car (labeled “OFFICE”) and the state capitol, from which snores ensue, Kloss’s editorial comment is written in the sky: “Yes . . . It’s the loyal fowl that saves the day for college deans but loses his shirt at the end of the Month!”

Graduating from guerrilla performer to guerrilla filmmaker, Santa Monica College contingent faculty activist Linda Janakos created Teachers on Wheels to illustrate the fourteen-hour workdays of the full-time part-timers and to build militance in the community. One of her film’s more memorable shots shows the 45,000 petitions that had been painstakingly collected and presented to then-governor Gray Davis, now dumped in a state capitol trash can (American Federation of Teachers). One of the core techniques of contributors to an activist culture for
contingent faculty is rewriting the given tropes of identity, most of which are pejorative: the “invisible” faculty (Gappa and Leslie), “freeway fliers,” a “lost generation” (Heller), who figure in the Chronicle of Higher Education and the Washington Post as victims of history. That is, if the contingent faculty are indeed invisible, despite their status as the overwhelming majority of the faculty workforce, increasingly the contingent faculty are seizing—and recolonizing the meaning of—the tropes of invisibility, victimhood, and loss to become visible, to become agents in history, and to make gains, as in Michael Dubson’s collection of contingent faculty experiences, Ghosts in the Classroom, and in such widely read weblogs as “Invisible Adjunct.” As Dubson writes of his experience of collecting “adjunct horror stories,” even in the context of his own project—which is an attempt to tap into “the power of adjuncts sharing their stories with each other, bonding by offering support and solidarity, creating a text that we can use to cry over or fight with”—the project of coming to consciousness is a continuously renewed
challenge. As he was editing the stories comprising his book, he says, “I kept thinking, ‘These poor people. These poor people.’ But these people were me” (Dubson, “Address”). In connection with the release of Dubson’s book at COCAL IV in San Jose, faculty dressed as ghosts haunted the campus.

Do these skits, cartoons, films, weblogs, moments of witness, and guerrilla theater pieces “work”? What do we mean by that question? Their effectiveness has to be seen in the context of building a culture of opposition—of “naming the enemy,” raising the consciousness of those who work, and reaching the sensibilities of those potentially in alliance, such as students, parents, legislators, and tenure-stream faculty. At Oregon’s Portland Community College, where Camhi’s administrator-as-devil skit was performed, student and community consciousness was abruptly and permanently raised, as the unmistakably shocked tones of the recorded testimony from Melanie Serrou and other students indicates. Serrou: “Twelve—thousand—dollars makes me sick! Oh—my—gosh. I—I didn’t even know how to react to that. Teachers going from one campus to the other? Four and five different colleges? What is this country coming to?” In the aftermath of this realization, Serrou went to work as a legislative assistant for the union.

The militant strain of contingent faculty culture is having an effect on the culture of the tenured and their unions. Historically, the relationship between contingent faculty and the unions of tenure-stream faculty serving directly as their bargaining agents is checkered; often enough, the unions of the tenured have collaborated with management in the creation of multiple tiers of employment (Tirelli; Hoeller, “Treat Fairly”). For many of the same reasons, some graduate employees have historically elected to work with representatives outside of the three unions that together represent nearly all organized tenure-stream faculty (AFT, NEA, and AAUP), instead working with representation as diverse as the Communication Workers of America (CWA), the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), the Service Employees International Union (SEIU), and, notably, UAW. But that is changing.

Now the major bargaining agents in higher education are increasingly eager to organize the contingent—because they are the majority of faculty and because there are far fewer legal barriers than is the case with graduate employees or tenure-stream faculty on private campuses. Nonetheless, a major part of the shifting priority is due to the agency of
the contingent themselves, in authoring an activist culture that has per-
vaded the higher education establishment; the disciplinary associations, 
faculty unions, and senates; and the myriad forms of organization dom-
inated by the tenurable. The sense of the angry and increasingly organ-
ized contingent faculty as the specters haunting the academic status 
quo has been seized as a trope by the major institutions of faculty labor: 
by 2005, AAUP organizing kits included instructions for campus con-
tingent-faculty “ghost rallies.” Steadily over the past several years, the 
culture and commitments of contingent faculty have pervaded the lit-
erature of the major higher ed unions—the articles, analysis, autobio-
graphical accounts, organizing tips, and bargaining strategies of the or-
ganized and organizing. Of at least equal import is that the culture of 
the contingent is reaching the communities served by their campuses 
with a compelling vision of an other-than-corporate culture informing 
the university. If any group on the campus is asking the pressing ques-
tions of the moment, it is the contingent faculty: as Linda Janakos’s skit 
has it, the university president can make television commercials, but the 
contingent faculty captures the community by asking the right question: 
“Oh Equity, Oh Equity, wherefore art thou Equity?”\textsuperscript{10}
Students Are Already Workers

I know that I haven’t updated in about two and a half weeks, but I have an excuse. UPS is just a tiring job. You see, before, I had an extra 31 hours to play games, draw things, compose music . . . do homework. But now, 31+ hours of my life is devoted to UPS.

I hate working there. But I need the money for college, so I don’t have the option of quitting. My job at UPS is a loader. I check the zip codes on the box, I scan them into the database, and then I load them into the truck, making a brick wall out of boxes.

—“Kody” (pseud.), high-school blogger in a UPS “school-to-work” program, 2005

The alarm sounds at 2:00 AM. Together with half a dozen of her colleagues, the workday has begun for Prof. Susan Erdmann, a tenure-track assistant professor of English at Jefferson Community College in Louisville, Kentucky. She rises carefully to avoid waking her infant son and husband, who commutes forty miles each way to his own tenure-track community college job in the neighboring rural county. She makes coffee, showers, dresses for work. With their combined income of around $60,000 and substantial education debt, they have a thirty-year mortgage on a tiny home of about 1,000 square feet: galley kitchen, dining alcove, one bedroom for them and another for their two sons to share. The front door opens onto a “living room” of a hundred square feet; entering or leaving the house means passing in between the couch and television. They feel fortunate to be able to afford any mortgage at all in this historically Catholic neighborhood that was originally populated by Louisville factory workers. It is winter; the sun will not rise for hours. She drives to the airport. Overhead, air-freight 747s barrel into the sky, about one plane every minute or so. Surrounded by the empty school buildings, boarded storefronts, and dilapidated underclass homes of south-central Louisville, the jets launch in post-midnight
salvos. Their engines lack the sophisticated noise-abatement technology required of air traffic in middle-class communities. Every twelve or eighteen months, the city agrees to buy a handful of the valueless residences within earshot.1

Turning into the airport complex, Susan never comes near the shuttered passenger terminals. She follows a four-lane private roadway toward the rising jets. After parking, a shuttle bus weaves among blindingly lit aircraft hangars and drops her by the immense corrugated sorting facility that is the United Parcel Service main air hub, where she will begin her faculty duties at 3:00 AM, greeting UPS’s undergraduate workforce directly as they come off the sort. “You would have a sense that you were there, lifting packages,” Erdmann recalls. “They would come off sweaty, and hot, directly off the line into the class. It was very immediate, and sort of awkward. They’d had no moment of downtime. They hadn’t had their cigarette. They had no time to pull themselves together as student-person rather than package-thrower.” Unlike her students, Susan and other faculty teaching and advising at the hub are not issued a plastic ID card and door pass. She waits on the windy tarmac for one of her students or colleagues to hear her knocking at the door. Inside, the noise of the sorting facility is, literally, deafening: the shouts, forklift alarms, whistles, and rumble of the sorting machinery actually drown out the noise of the jets rising overhead. “Teaching in the hub was horrible,” recalled one of Erdmann’s colleagues. “Being in the hub was just hell. I’d work at McDonald’s before I’d teach there again. The noise level was just incredible. The classroom was just as noisy as if it didn’t have any walls.” In addition to the sorting machinery, UPS floor supervisors were constantly “screaming, yelling back and forth, ‘Get this done, get that done, where’s so and so.’”

Susan is just one of a dozen faculty arriving at the hub after midnight. Some are colleagues from Jefferson Community College and the associated technical institution; others are from the University of Louisville. Their task tonight is to provide on-site advising and registration for some of the nearly 6,000 undergraduate students working for UPS at this facility. About 3,000 of those students work a midnight shift that ends at UPS’s convenience—typically 3:00 or 4:00 AM, although the shift is longer during the holiday and other peak shipping seasons.

Nearly all of the third-shift workers are undergraduate students who have signed employment contracts with something called the “Metropolitan College.” The name is misleading, since it’s not a college at all.
An “enterprise” partnership between UPS, the city of Louisville, and the campuses that employ Susan and her colleagues, Metropolitan College is, in fact, little more than a labor contractor. Supported by public funds, this “college” offers no degrees and does no educating. Its sole function is to entice students to sign contracts that commit them to provide cheap labor in exchange for education benefits at the partner institutions. The arrangement has provided UPS with over 10,000 ultralow-cost student workers since 1997, the same year that the Teamsters launched a crippling strike against the carrier. The Louisville arrangement is the vanguard of UPS’s efforts to convert its part-time payroll, as far as possible, to a “financial aid” package for student workers in partnership with campuses near its sorting and loading facilities. Other low-wage Louisville employers, such as Norton and ResCare have joined on a trial basis.

As a result of carefully planned corporate strategy, between 1997 and 2003, UPS hired undergraduate students to staff more than half of its 130,000 part-time positions (Hammers). Students are currently the majority of all part-timers, and the overwhelming majority on the least desirable shifts. Part of UPS’s strategy is that only some student employees receive education benefits. By reserving the education benefits of its “earn and learn” programs to workers who are willing to work undesirable hours, UPS has over the past decade recruited approximately 50,000 part-time workers to its least desirable shifts without raising the pay (in fact, while pushing them to work harder for continually lower pay against inflation) (“Earn and Learn Factsheet”). The largest benefit promises are reserved for students who think they can handle working after midnight every night of the school week.

Between 1998 and 2005, UPS claims to have “assisted” 10,000 students through the Metropolitan College arrangement (Conway). Of the 7,500 part-time employees at UPS’s Louisville hub in May 2006, some were welfare-to-work recipients picked up in company buses from the city and even surrounding rural counties. A few hundred were Louisville-area high school students in school-to-work programs. Three-quarters of the part-timers—5,600—were college students (Howington). More than half of the students—about 3,000—were enrolled in Metropolitan College, which, with few exceptions, accepts only those willing to work the night shift. Metropolitan College “enrollment” and “recruitment” activities are entirely driven by UPS’s staffing needs. Ditto for scheduling: all of the benefits enjoyed by Metro College students are
contingent on showing up at the facility every weeknight of the school year at midnight and performing physically strenuous labor for as long as they are needed.

The consequences of night-shift work are well documented, and the preponderance of available evidence suggests markedly negative effects for the Louisville students. Every instructor to whom I spoke reported excessive fatigue and absenteeism (due to fatigue, but also an extraordinarily high physical injury rate: “They all got hurt,” Erdmann reports). Students who signed employment contracts with Metro College showed substantial failure to persist academically. “I would lose students midterm, or they would never complete final assignments,” Erdmann said. “They would just stop coming at some point.” Erdmann served as chair of a faculty committee that attempted to improve the academic success of students employed by UPS at her institution. The group scheduled special UPS-only sections between 5:00 and 11:00 PM, both on campus and at the hub, and began the ritual of 3:00 AM advising. Since nearly all of the faculty involved taught and served on committees five days a week, their efforts to keep students from dropping out by teaching evenings and advising before dawn resulted in a bizarre twenty-four-hour cycle of work for themselves. The institutions even experimented with ending the fall semester before Thanksgiving for the thousands of UPS employees, in order to keep their finals from conflicting with the holiday shipping rush (and the one season a year when the students could be assured of a shift lasting longer than four hours). Even in the specially scheduled classes and shortened terms, Erdmann recalls classes with dropout rates of 30 to 40 percent. “It was most definitely worse for those with children,” she concluded:

It was a disaster for those with children. Students who had family obligations tended to do poorly. When you had younger, more traditional age students with a very clear and limited goal—and they were often men—if they had a limited goal, such as “I am going to get Microsoft certified,” and if they were healthy and young, and physically active, those individuals might be okay.

Whenever you had people with children—you know, people who can’t sleep all day, they would get tremendously stressed out. I feel like very few of them actually did well with the program, the ones with family.
Pressed to offer instances of individual students who undisputably benefited from the program, Erdmann described just two individuals, both at the extreme margins of economic and social life. One was a single mother who worked multiple jobs and saved some of her wages toward a down payment on a residential trailer, thus escaping an abusive domestic life. The other was a young man coping with severe mental illness.

Rather than relieving economic pressure, Metropolitan College appears to have increased the economic distress of the majority of participants. According to the company’s own fact sheet, those student workers who give up five nights’ sleep are typically paid for just fifteen to twenty hours a week. Since the wage ranges from just $8.50 at the start to no more than $9.50 for the majority of the most experienced, this can mean net pay below $100 in a week, and averaging out to a little over $120. The rate of pay bears emphasizing: because the students must report five nights a week and are commonly let go after just three hours each night, their take-home pay for sleep deprivation and physically hazardous toil will commonly be less than $25 per shift.

In fact, most UPS part-timers earn little more than $6,000 in a year. Most have at least one other job, because their typical earnings from UPS in 2006–2007 would generally have covered little more than the worker’s car payment, insurance, gasoline, and other transportation-related expenses. “Everyone had another job,” Erdmann says. “Even the high school students had another job. The high school students were working two jobs. For some people, that meant working Saturday nights as a waitress, but for others, it was much more extensive. For a lot of people, it meant that they got up every day and went to work in the afternoon before going in to classes and UPS in the evening.” Every instructor to whom I spoke confirmed the pressure that the ultralow wage added to the unreasonable working hours and physical hazards as a detriment to students’ chances for academic persistence. “That was when they skipped class,” affirmed another instructor, “when they were going to another job. I was just amazed how many of them were going to another job.”

UPS presents a triple threat to students’ prospects for academic persistence: sleep deprivation and family-unfriendly scheduling; ultralow compensation, resulting in secondary and tertiary part-time employment; and a high injury rate. Student employees report being pressured to skip class. Especially at the end of the fall term, the night sorts can
run four or five hours beyond the anticipated 4:00 AM completion: “Each time I said I was unwilling to miss class for an extended sort, the supe would tell me to ‘think long and hard about my priorities,’” reports one student employee. “I got the message.”

UPS refuses to provide standard statistics that would permit evaluation of the impact that this triple threat is actually having on the students it employs. None of its partner institutions appears to have responsibly studied the consequences of the program for its students in terms of such major measures as persistence to degree, dropout rate, and so on.

Amazingly, all of the press coverage of the UPS earn and learn programs in general, and the Louisville Metropolitan College arrangement in particular, has been positive. In fact, most of the coverage appears to have been drawn closely from UPS press releases themselves or conducted with students selected for their success stories. Acknowledging that the night shift “took some getting used to,” one local newspaper’s coverage is typical in quoting a student shrugging off the challenges, “I just schedule my classes for the afternoon” (Howington). Other stories are more meretricious, suggesting that the UPS jobs keep students from partying too much. One quotes a UPS supervisor who suggests that college students “are staying up until dawn anyway” (Karman).

Ironically, UPS has received numerous awards for “corporate citizenship” and was named one of the “best companies for minorities” in connection with the program. It emphasizes recruitment among Latino students, and numerous Hispanic organizations have either endorsed the program or published unedited UPS press releases marketing the program to “nontraditional students, such as retirees and moms re-entering the workforce” (LatinoLA).

“I Dread Work Every Day”

UPS has long pioneered low-cost benefitless employment, abetted by the Teamsters themselves, who under Jimmy Hoffa Sr. signed one of the first contracts in American industry to permit the regular use of part-time employees in 1962. This second tier of employment was massively expanded after the Teamsters agreed to 1982 protocols that raised the wages of full-time workers while freezing those of part-timers. In that year, part-time UPS employees started at $8 an hour, the equivalent in
2007 of about $17 per hour ($34,000 a year). Similarly, in 1982, part-time employees averaged about $10 per hour, the equivalent in 2007 of $22 per hour ($44,000 a year).

Not incidentally, at the 1982 wages, a UPS part-time worker could indeed successfully fund a college education. One employee from the 1970s recalls:

At the old full and fair rate prior to the 1982 UPS wage reduction, despite soaring volume and profits, a part-time worker in exchange for back-breaking work could afford to rent a room, pay tuition, buy food and clothing, and afford to own and operate a used car. This was a good deal that was profitable to the student and society, as well as profitable to UPS. I went through six years of college that way and am very grateful to the Teamsters for the good pay. I find it a national disgrace that UPS has effectively reduced the pay by nearly 65% adjusted for inflation since 1982 and destroyed a positive job for over a hundred thousand workers and for society as well. There are [UPS] part-time workers living in homeless shelters in Richmond, California, and other parts of the country. (“saintteamo,” Brown Café weblog, 2003; punctuation regularized)

As with Wal-Mart and other predatory super low-wage employers, many of UPS’s student workers are homeless. At the Louisville hub, “I knew people sleeping in their cars,” Erdmann recalled.

After the union’s concession to a radically cheaper second tier of employment, 80 percent of all new UPS jobs were created in the “permanent part-time” category. While the pay between part-time and full-time diverged slowly between 1962 and 1982, the differential accelerated rapidly in the 1980s and 1990s. Serving as a UPS driver is still a coveted blue-collar position. From the Reagan years to the present, these full-time Teamsters continued to enjoy raises, job security, due process with respect to their grievances, and substantial benefits, including a pension. But over the same period of time, these and other full-time positions became the minority of employees covered by the contract.

In less than fifteen years, permanent part-timers became the majority of the UPS workforce in the United States. The ratio of permanent part-timers was particularly pronounced at the Louisville main hub, where a high-speed, high-pressure night sort was conducted. As the wages of the part-time majority steadily shrank against inflation, opportunities to
join the full-time tier all but disappeared. Today, even the company’s human resources recruiters admit that while full-time positions “still exist,” it can take “six to seven years or even longer” to get on full-time. A single-digit percentage of the company’s part-time employees last that long. Few of those who do persist are actually offered full-time work. During the long night of Reagan-Bush-Clinton reaction, according to employees, the company unilaterally abrogated work rules, including safety limits on package size and weight. Injuries soared to two and a half times the industry average, in especial disproportion among part-time employees in the first year.

As jointly bargained by UPS and the Teamsters, the part-time positions devolved into one of the least desirable forms of work in the country, with one of the highest turnover rates in history. Featuring poor wages, limited benefits, a high injury rate, and unreasonable scheduling, the Teamster-UPS agreement created compensation and working conditions for the part-time majority so abysmal that most rational persons preferred virtually any other form of employment or even not working at all.

Most part-timers departed within weeks of being hired. According to George Poling, director of the Louisville Metropolitan College, the average term of employment for part-time workers on the night sort was just eight weeks. At the Louisville facility, 90 percent of part-time hires quit before serving a year. Across the country in 1996, UPS hired 180,000 part-timers on all shifts, but only 40,000 were still with the company at the year’s end. In part as a result of steadily accelerating turnover, UPS agreed in just sixteen days to the most publicized core demand of the 1997 Teamsters strike, the creation of 10,000 new full-time jobs out of some of the new part-time positions.

Overlooked during the press coverage of the Teamsters’ apparent victory was the fact that these new “full-time” positions were paid well below the scale of existing full-timers and would earn just 75 percent of the rate of regular full-timers by the end of the contract. This introduced a new, lower-wage tier in the ranks of the full-timers. The lower wages of this group would continue to support the wage increases and benefits of the union’s powerful minority constituency, the shrinking core of long-term full-timers. (Readers employed in academic circumstances will recognize this strategy as having been pioneered in their own workplaces, with the institution of nontenurable full-time lectureships as one of the “solutions” that the long-term tenured faculty have
accepted to management’s expansion of part-time faculty.) It would take
three years of foot-dragging through arbitration and federal court be-
fore UPS delivered even these watered-down full-time jobs.

Despite credulous ballyhoo about the strike as the decade’s exemplar
of labor militance and solidarity between full-timers and part-timers,
the part-time majority of UPS workers benefited little from the Teamster
“victory.” The starting wage for part-timers, which had remained at $8
for fifteen years (since 1982) was raised in the 1997 contract a grand to-
total of 50 cents. Ten years later, the Teamster-negotiated starting wage
for UPS part-time package handlers working between 11:00 PM and
4:00 AM remains just $8.50, or exactly one raise in a quarter-century.
This is a loss against inflation of more than half. In 1982, the $8 per
hour starting wage for part-timers was more than twice the minimum
wage (of $3.35), and slightly above the national hourly average wage
(of $7.72). In 2006, the UPS starting wage was about half of the na-
tional average hourly wage of $16.46 for nonsupervisory workers. With
the “minimum” wage so low that only half a million Americans earn it,
the $8.50 per hour UPS starting wage in 2006 was equal to or lower
than what most traditionally “minimum wage” occupations actually
earn and lower than the statutory metropolitan living wage established
in many major cities. This isn’t eight or nine bucks an hour for eight
hours a day, 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM. This is eight or nine bucks an hour for
showing up five nights a week at midnight and working three and one-
half to five hours, depending on the flow of packages for physically de-
manding, dangerous, night-shift work at the company’s convenience.

Moreover, there is at least half an hour, often more, of unpaid com-
muting around airport security on either side of the paid three hours.
The commute each way can total as much as an hour, even for students
who live just a mile or two from the facility: “When I was there, you’d
have to be in the parking lot by 11:30 at the latest if you wanted the
shuttle bus to get you to the gate by 11:40, where you’d then wait to
have your ID checked, and then walk through the maze of hub build-
ings for 500 yards before finding your workspace and clocking in,” one
recalled. “The point being if I got parked at 11:45, I’d be late and get
bawled out. The traffic outside UPS leading into the shift is nightmarish,
so you’d really need to leave the house an hour before work to have a
shot at getting to the sort station on time.” With the unpaid commute,
that’s five hours of third-shift time, being paid close to the minimum
wage for just three hours.
In the past twenty-five years, working conditions at UPS have eroded even faster than the wage. With the union’s lack of interest in part-time workers, UPS has increasingly introduced ultrashort shifts, technology-driven speedup, and managerial surveillance of every aspect of the work process, including real-time tracking of errors. Employing constant surveillance by a battalion of “part-time supes,” themselves generally students, UPS deploys cameras and manned watchtowers throughout the multilayer sort. “They’re always watching you work from tall perches that exist nearly everywhere in the plant,” one former student worker recalls; “the perches are ostensibly ladders to other layers of the sort, but the consistent presence of management at the stair landings creates the feeling of almost total surveillance. Even when you can’t see them, you know they’re in hidden rooms watching you on camera.” Nearly all student workers are repeatedly tested by “salting” packages with bad address labels; employees decry the practice as a “particularly nasty” form of continuous stressing of their work environment.

Several current or former UPS employees have begun weblogs to chronicle the high-speed, high-stress nature of their employment. One, writing as “Brown Blood,” explained that he’d begun the weblog for “the employees of UPS to express their true feelings about their job in all aspects,” noting, “I must apologize now for any foul language that may . . . will occur in this community because most of these jobs not only test the limitations of your physical capacity it also shatters all anger management.” On the JobVent weblog, UPS workers’ rating of the workplace were commonly below zero:

Little did I know that I would spend 4 hours a day in a dark, oven hot dungeon being screamed at by idiotic powertrippers who having given up believing life has some kind of meaning and now want to make themselves feel better by humiliating the only people in their lives that they have any sort of advantage over. All this while you are sweating liters and giving your back life-long injuries. I couldn’t help but laugh in disbelief when I received my first paycheck for $120. IF YOU EVEN THINK OF WORKING AT UPS, realize that if you don’t want to spend the next ten years of your life being treated like toiletpaper just to become a lousy driver then go work for FedEx, the benefits are as good, the pay is better and you get just a little respect, a friend of mine worked there for 5 days and became a driver. UPS is no less than 7–10 years. Bottom line: UPS SUCKS A BIG ONE!!!!!!!! I dread work every day.
According to at least one long-term Teamster full-timer, the part-time students working the night sort are driven particularly hard: “They cram eight hours work into five.” Agreeing with this characterization of the workload for undergraduate employees, one student worker said, “Around finals time, I’d go for days without sleep. The scary thing is, I’d see the sleepless period coming, know there was nothing I could do about it other than quit school or quit work, and then learn to psych myself up for it.”

Most bloggers complained of the pay (“pathetic”), schedule (“random, terrible hours”), injuries (“I was killing myself physically”; “constant muscle pulls/strains, a lot of safety hazards”; “horrible; you’ll sweat like a dog in the summer and freeze in the winter—unsafe—watch out for sharp objects and falling boxes”), and supervisory harassment. As a whole, the evaluations were resoundingly negative: “This was the worst job I ever had”; “You can imagine it’s bad when the highest UPS scores with me in any category is a minus 2”; “If you’re thinking of working here, DON’T DO IT!” Many of the bloggers give a vivid portrait of the nature of the stressful nature of the work. Every error is tracked, and a minimum standard for error-free sorting is one error in 2,500. How often do you make an error while typing? If you’re like me, you make several typing errors per page, for an error rate per word of 1 in 60 or so. At UPS, an error of 1 in 500 is considered extremely poor. The student workers are particularly likely to be placed in these high-stress positions. If younger, they are commonly inexperienced at work generally. If older, they have typically suffered substantial economic or personal distress. Either way, those who don’t express rage and disappointment, or vote with their feet by quitting, appear likely to internalize management’s construction of them as slow-moving failures. Students sometimes contribute to weblogs like “Brown Blood” less to complain than to get coping advice (“Is there a better way of doing this without going miserably slowly? . . . I want to show that I can be competent in some form of employment.”)

The work of the loaders intensifies during the holiday rush:

I hate how UPS is always fucking you over. On a normal day I load 3 trucks and lately it’s been a total of about 800–900 packages. . . . They told me I would only have the 4th car one day per week. Well guess what . . . they gave me 4 cars 3 days this week. Today I had a total of over 1600 packages with no help, the bastards. My loads
were shit and my drivers were bitching, but what the hell can I do about it?

I suppose the fact that I've slept less than 5 of the past 55 hours had something to do with my despising work today. But Red Bull helps with that.

I'm so f—in glad it's a long weekend. (“hitchhiker42”)

These notes of stress, fatigue, and powerlessness on the job are nearly uniform throughout the UPS permanent part-timers.

Employee of the Month

Some 70 percent of the workers in the main UPS hub in Louisville are women. The average age is thirty-four, and many are parents. Some of the women work in data entry, but most of the work involves package handling. For every teenage worker, there's another part-timer well into her forties.

The reality of the undergraduate workforce is very different from the representation of teen partiers on a perpetual spring break, as popularized by television (Girls Gone Wild), UPS propaganda (“they're staying up until dawn anyway”), and Time: “Meet the ‘twixters,’ [twenty-somethings] who live off their parents, bounce from job to job and hop from mate to mate. They’re not lazy—they just won’t grow up” (Grossman; for more, see Bartlett).

There are more than 15 million students currently enrolled in higher ed (with an average age of around twenty-six). Tens of millions of persons have recently left higher education, nearly as many without degrees as with them. Like graduate employees, undergraduates now work longer hours in school, spend more years in school, and can take several years to find stable employment after obtaining their degrees. Undergraduates and recent school leavers, whether degree holders or not, now commonly live with their parents well beyond the age of legal adulthood, often into their late twenties. Like graduate employees, undergraduates increasingly find that their period of “study” is, in fact, a period of employment as cheap labor. The production of cheap workers is facilitated by an ever-expanding notion of “youth.” A University of Chicago survey conducted in 2003 found that the majority of Americans now think that adulthood begins around twenty-six, an age not co-
incidentally identical with the average age of the undergraduate student population (Tom Smith).

The popular conception of student life as “delayed adulthood” is reflected in such notions as “thirty is the new twenty” and “forty is the new thirty” (Irvine). The fatuousness of these representations is confounded by looking at the other end of one’s employment life. Few people are finding, in terms of employability after downsizing, that “fifty is the new forty”; people in their fifties who lose their jobs often find themselves unemployable. What are the economic consequences for a person whose productive career can begin in their middle thirties or later, then end at fifty or sooner? This pattern presents real obstacles for both women and men wishing to raise a family. Yet mass media representations of extended schooling and the associated period of insecure employment are often cheery, suggesting that it’s a stroke of good fortune, an extended youth free of such unwelcome responsibilities as home ownership, child-rearing, and visits to health-care providers. In this idealistic media fantasy, more time in higher education means more time to party—construing an extended youth as a prolonged stretch of otherwise empty time unmarked by the accountabilities of adulthood.

Concretely, the apparently empty time of involuntarily extended youth associated with higher education is really quite full. It’s full of feelings—the feelings of desperation, betrayal, and anxiety, the sense that Cary Nelson has captured for graduate employees under the heading of Will Teach for Food. Writers like Anya Kamenetz and Tamara Draut have captured the similar feelings of upper-middle-class college graduates in books like Generation Debt and Strapped. Many of the persons Draut and Kamenetz describe will have added graduate school to successful bachelor’s degrees at first-tier or second-tier institutions. But little attention has been paid to the role of higher education in organizing the vast majority of the lives it touches—those who don’t graduate or those who graduate with community college, vocational, or technical degrees.

“Employee of the Month” (“The Dance That Is My Life”) is typical of the more successful students employed by UPS. As she tells it on her weblog, this “mom/stylist,” aged thirty, the mother of children aged three and five, is a fan of Christian apocalyptic fiction and a part-time student who hopes to become a teacher. She has an “A” average. She depicts her husband as a substance abuser who provides no contribution to the household finances; during the months covered in her
weblog, he moves in and out of the house. Like most students who find a job with UPS, she was already working hard before signing on with Big Brown. While parenting and starting school, she was working three jobs, including office work and hair styling. In the first few weeks, she enjoys the work: “I am digging this job! I get to work out for 4–5 hours a night,” plus collect education benefits. Anticipating the 50-cent raise, she writes, “The pay sucks at first but within 90 days I should be ok.” She plans to continue working as a stylist, but feels that she can quit her other two job part-time jobs, “with doing hair 3 days a week I will be making just as much as I have been making [with three jobs] and only working about 35–37 hours a week total. Woo Hoo!”

Rather than a partying teen, this typical working undergraduate is a devout thirty year old who is thrilled simply to be able to work a mere full-time equivalent at two different jobs, in addition to schoolwork and solo parenting of two small children.

After the Christmas rush, and still in her first two months of employment, the upbeat blogger notes: “I am getting muscles in my arms and shoulders, my legs are getting a little toned. I do need to lose about 25 lbs so the more muscle thing is a good start. . . . I am getting better at my job now that I am a little stronger and can lift the boxes up to the top shelf.” Within six months, by March 2006, she had made “employee of the month” at her facility. In the same month, she had her first work-related injury: a strained ligament from working with heavy packages. On a physician’s orders, she was placed on “light duty,” dealing with packages weighing one to seven pounds (seven pounds is approximately the weight of a gallon of milk). She had also grown discouraged about her prospects of continuing her education and was considering dropping out of school.

Her family life is increasingly stressed by the UPS job. In order to collect less than thirty bucks a night, she has to leave her children to sleep at her mother’s house five nights a week. Now that the holiday rush is past, she finds that, on her UPS salary and even with a second job, she is unable to afford such everyday staples as Easter baskets for her children, which her sister provided. “A guy at work told me about a job at a private school, I applied and had an interview. I hope I get the job. I need to pay bills and the UPS job isn’t enough,” she concludes:

My kids did have a good Easter, thank you to my sister. We went down to her house and she bought my kids candy, toys, and each kid a
movie!! I thought that was above the call of duty. I can’t tell you how much I appreciate my family for coming to my aid in my time of need this past year. I know I could get another job and put my kids in daycare all day again and be able to support them better, but I wouldn’t be able to go to school. It’s hard right now, but I am already a year into school and I will be a teacher in a few years. I can’t stop now. Even with this drama going on in my life I have still kept a 3.6 grade point average. I want to finish it. My son still wants me to be a teacher, so I have to show him that with work and perseverance you can accomplish anything despite your circumstances. Facts don’t count when it comes to reaching a goal. (“The Dance That Is My Life”)

In other words: for UPS to receive one super-cheap worker, that worker’s parents have to donate free child care and other family members have to donate cash, time, and goods. Like the vast majority of her coworkers in a UPS earn and learn arrangement, this A student and employee of the month is so sapped by the experience, physically injured, under-compensated, and domestically disarranged that she’s on the verge of quitting school.

Despite her qualifications, energy, and commitment, the only thing keeping this UPS worker going is the desire to shore up achievement ideology for her children (“I have to show him that with work and perseverance you can accomplish anything despite your circumstances”), to create a Disney narrative out of their lives when she drops them off to sleep at their grandparents five nights a week, a Disney narrative that will prove that “facts don’t count when it comes to reaching a goal.”

**Supergirl: “My Back Hurts So Fricken Bad”**

This five-foot two-inch, 110-pound, twenty-three-year-old undergraduate woman writing under the moniker of “supergirl” has a charming sardonic flair: “America needs no more cheese, ham, huge-ass boxes of summer sausage, holiday popcorn tins, or kringles... I think I’ve moved enough of these that every man, woman and child should already have one by default. No wonder obesity is an epidemic.”

As with most, her daily UPS shift is a second job. After a year, she’s ready to quit. She’s had one work-related arm surgery: “I really don’t want to have another, or worse, risk permanently damaging the nerves
in both arms,” she writes; “and I sincerely don’t think I’m being paid enough to stay there 2 years and blow out both arms unfixably. . . . I know pain and can tolerate it, but I can’t even fucking sleep because every position somehow puts pressure on a nerve in my arm that’s already got problems and is being pushed to the limits.” When I asked another Louisville student employee to comment on “supergirl’s” representation of the injury rate, he called the physical toll exacted by the workplace a “key point,” adding, “The physical harm this work does will long outlast the span of the job.”

She complains of the culture of UPS—of speedup, the pressure to deny injuries and work through them, and the pressure to continue employment through the milestones that dictate education benefits such as loan and tuition remission. Under the rubric “don’t make UPS yours,” she warns other prospective student employees away:

My back hurts . . . so fricken bad. It doesn’t benefit me to say I hurt because I’ve noticed that if you hurt of any kind the sort super just asks you to quit (in not so many eloquently and legal to say to an employee words). . . . I lift tons of shit that’s got 20–30 pounds on me . . . but as I stand; a girl of 5’2” and a buck ten . . . I can’t do that kinda shit everyday. . . . I guess I can be supergirl fast or supergirl strong or a normal mix of either . . . but I can’t be both every fucking day. Who can, anyway?

What disturbs her most is the pressure (from family, coworkers, supervisors) to work through her injuries to benefit-earning milestones. She understands the pressures driving everyone else to push her to continue, “but shit why can’t I just say I’d like to not be at a job like that?” In any event, she writes, “everyone should know I’ll probably just stay there anyhow . . . cause I’m too damn busy to find anything else anyway.”

10,000 Students and 300 Degrees

There’s little mystery regarding UPS’s motivation for the earn and learn programs—not benevolence, but the cheapness and docility of the student workforce. In addition to the ultralow wage, students’ dependency on UPS includes loan guarantees and tuition remissions, which are lost or reduced if the student resigns “prematurely” from the program. As a
result of its campaign to hire undergraduates, UPS’s retention of part-time package handlers has improved markedly, despite speedup and continued stagnation of the wage between 1997 and 2007. Average time of employment for part-timers grew by almost 50 percent, and retention increased by 20 percent, with some of the most dramatic improvements in the Louisville main hub. This tuition benefit is tax-deductible and taxpayer-subsidized. It’s a good deal for UPS, which shares the cost of the tuition benefit with partner schools and communities and saves millions in payroll tax (by providing “tuition benefits” instead of higher wages), while holding down the part-time wage overall. All earn and learn students must apply for federal and state financial aid. Many of its workers attend community colleges, where tuition is often just a few hundred dollars. Many students are subjected to a bait and switch: attracted to the program by the promise of tuition benefits at the University of Louisville (currently over $6,000 a year), program participants are instead steered toward enrollment in the community colleges—a decision that doesn’t reflect their academic needs, but as Metropolitan College director Poling admits, exclusively the desire of the state and UPS to contain costs. Studying on a part-time basis, as most in the program do, a student seeking a B.A. can therefore remain in a community college for three or four years before earning the credits enabling transfer to a four-year school. One student pointed out that trying to schedule around the UPS jobs was a “lot harder than it sounds,” and for many it was “downright impossible to do this and get the degree in any reasonable period of years.” Students who attend inexpensive schools or qualify for high levels of tuition relief (as is often the case in the economically disadvantaged groups targeted by UPS recruiters) substantially reduce UPS’s costs. Undergraduate students also represent lower group health insurance costs.

Another way in which students reduce UPS’s cost is by quitting before they become eligible for benefits, by taking an incomplete, or failing a class. No benefits are paid for failed or incomplete classes. Students who drop out of school but continue to work for UPS also significantly lower UPS’s cost.

To put UPS’s costs in perspective, look at these figures. In a decade, it has spent no more than $80 million on tuition and student loan redemption in over fifty hubs. By contrast, its 2006 deal with the state of Kentucky—for a 5,000-job expansion of just one hub—involved $50 million in state support over ten years. Company officials are fairly
frank about UPS’s dependency on cheap student labor, supported by massive taxpayer giveaways. “It would have been nearly impossible to find an additional 5,000 workers [for the expansion] without the resources of Metropolitan College,” a public relations vice president told the Louisville business press (Karman and Adams). It has expanded earn and learn programs to fifty other metropolitan centers, to Canada, and to for-profit education vendors such as DeVry.

It’s a lot less clear whether this is a good deal for students. “We’ve solved employee retention,” Poling admits, “but we’ve got to work more on academic retention.” Of the 10,000 students Poling’s program claims to have “assisted” with their higher education since 1997, in a fall 2006 interview, he was able to produce evidence of just under 300 degrees earned: 111 associate’s and 181 bachelor’s degrees. Since both UPS and Metropolitan College refuse to provide public accountability for the academic persistence of undergraduate workers, it’s hard to estimate what these numbers mean in comparison with more responsible and conventional education and financial aid circumstances. The most favorable construction of the evidence available for Metropolitan College shows an average entry of slightly more than 1,000 student workers annually. Based on two and one-half years of data after six years of program operation, according to Poling, the program between 2003 and 2006 showed approximate annual degree production of about 40 associates’ and 75 bachelor’s degrees. This approximates to a 12 percent rate of persistence to any kind of degree.

UPS’s student employees in the Metropolitan College program are more likely to be retained as UPS employees than they are to be retained as college students. In May 2006, of the 3,000 or so Metropolitan College “students” working at UPS, only 1,263 were actually taking classes that semester. This means that during the spring term, almost 60 percent of the student workers in UPS’s employ were not in school; “another 1,700 or so,” in Poling’s words, “took the semester off” (Howington).

Of the minority actually taking classes, at least a quarter failed to complete the semester. UPS pays a bonus for completing semesters “unsuccessfully” (with withdrawals or failing grades) as well as “successfully.” Counting the bonuses paid in recent years for “unsuccessful” semesters together with the successful ones, Poling suggested that during terms in which between 1,200 and 1,700 student workers were enrolled, between 900 and 1,100 students would complete at least one
class. These numbers appear to hang roughly together. If in any given year, the majority of UPS night-shift workers are “taking the semester off,” and 25 percent or more of those actually enrolled fail to complete even one class in the semester, this seems consistent with an eventual overall persistence to degree of 12 percent.

In plain fact, it would seem that UPS counts on its student workers failing or dropping out. Because of the high rate of failed classes, withdrawals, and dropping out, UPS ends up paying only a modest fraction of the education benefits it offers. If each of the 48,000 students who had passed through its earn and learn program as of 2005 collected the full UPS share of tuition benefits over a five-year period, it would have cost the company over $720 million. In fact, it spent just 10 percent of that total—$72 million—on tuition remission, or an average of only $1,500 per student (the equivalent of just one semester’s maximum tuition benefit per participant). Similarly, the loan remission benefit (theoretically as much as $8,000 after four years of employment) would total almost $384 million. But as of 2005, UPS has had so far to pay off just $21 million, an average of just $438 per student worker, well under 10 percent of its liability if all of its student workers actually persisted to completion of a four-year degree (UPS, “Fact Sheet”).

In the absence of meaningful accountability by UPS and its partners, we can only raise questions about this arrangement, not answer them. Since the program has been in operation for ten years, there are plenty of data. These are questions that can be answered. And these are questions that parents, students, partner institutions, and host communities should demand be answered. Many of these are similar in form to questions I posed to UPS through its press representative and which it refused to answer:

1. On average, how long do student workers remain employed with UPS?
2. What percentage of student workers exiting UPS’s “earn and learn” programs remain enrolled in school?
3. What percentage of UPS student workers have additional employment?
4. What percentage of current or former UPS student workers earn associates’ degree within three years and bachelor’s degrees within six years?
5. Do these percentages vary by shift worked?
6. What is the total and average amount of loans taken by earn and learn students? How much of those loans have been paid off by UPS?
7. What is the grade-point average of students enrolled in UPS programs?
8. UPS advertises that students can earn up to $25,000 in tuition and loan benefits. What is the average tuition and loan benefit actually paid per student?

One of the major unanswered questions is this one: Why haven’t the partner institutions asked UPS for these answers already? Don’t they have a responsibility to ask whether their students are being well served by these arrangements? If a promise to fund a citizen’s higher education actually results in reduced likelihood of educational success, shouldn’t the institution, the state, and the city revise or discontinue the arrangement?

One reason the University of Louisville hasn’t asked these questions is because, in connection with its willingness to contract its students out to UPS, it collects tuition revenue and other subsidies, and the Metropolitan College partnership contributes heavily to new building plans across the campus, most notably erecting a series of new dormitories to house the UPS student workforce recruited from all over the state. Nor has it wanted to draw attention to the success rate of its own students. When the Metropolitan College program began in 1997–1998, the University of Louisville’s six-year graduation rate was under 30 percent. This compares unfavorably with the institutions in its own benchmarking. The six-year graduation rate for Mississippi State is 58 percent; Florida State is 65 percent, and North Carolina State–Raleigh is 66 percent. A six-year graduation rate of around 30 percent means that if 2,000 undergraduates enter as first-year students, close to 1,400 will not have graduated six years later.

That figure is almost twice the number at many comparable institutions. Over ten years, a gap this size in academic persistence means that many thousands of individuals are not receiving degrees, in contrast to students in benchmark institutions. Over the past ten years, that graduation rate has crawled up to 33 percent, but even the improved number places the University of Louisville dead last among its own benchmark institutions, and dead last among thirty-eight comparator institutions.
generated by the IPEDS (Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System) database. Louisville and the state of Kentucky consistently rank near the bottom of educational attainments by a variety of indicators. Since the educational success rate of students at the institution and surrounding community was already so low, the success rates of UPS students flies under the radar.

One dean of students with whom I spoke claimed not to have studied the UPS students’ success rate but shrugged off concerns with the impression that their attainments were “probably roughly comparable” to the low rate of other Louisville students. Using the measure of “year-to-year persistence,” Poling was willing to compare his Metropolitan College student workers to other Louisville students, but not when it came to comparing persistence to degree.

**Good for UPS and Who Else?**

One of the reasons few hard questions have been asked of arrangements like Metropolitan College is that the superexploitation of undergraduate workers is not just a matter of UPS’s individual dependency but a system of profound codependency, extending through the web of local, national, and even global economic relations.

As John McPhee’s *New Yorker* profile of the Louisville hub makes clear, working for UPS at the Louisville main hub is really working for a lot of companies. A short distance from the sorting facility, UPS maintains millions of square feet of warehouse facilities, where its employees fill orders from online vendors for books, computers, underwear, and jet engine parts. When a Toshiba laptop breaks, Toshiba sends the repair order to UPS, who directs a driver to pick up the machine; from the local hub, it is flown in a UPS jet to an industrial park abutting the Louisville airport, where eighty UPS computer technicians repair Toshiba computers with Toshiba parts, returning the machines to their owners in about seventy-two hours. UPS is a major outsourcing contractor for fulfillment of products sold across the globe: the entire inventory of companies like Jockey is kept in UPS facilities in Louisville and handled exclusively by UPS employees from the point of manufacture to the consumer or retail outlet.

So the “good deal” that UPS is getting from the state and working students of Kentucky is also a good deal for all of the companies with
which it has outsourcing contracts and, ultimately, for all of its customers. Shipping from the Louisville Worldport is faster and cheaper than ever before. It’s a good deal for the full-time Teamsters, who no longer have to feel pressure to negotiate better for a significant fraction of UPS’s new employees.

Chris Sternberg, senior vice president of corporate communications at Papa John’s International, is frank about the multilayered economic advantages of the Metropolitan College arrangement for local businesses:

Anytime new jobs are added to the Louisville economy, we are happy both from a community standpoint as well as for our business. When you have more people employed and the economy is thriving, we’ll sell more pizzas. We are obviously pleased with the announcement. From an employment standpoint, many of our part-time workers also work part time at UPS, where they may work a four-hour shift at UPS and another four-hour shift at Papa John’s. It’s worked very well, and we like that shared employment arrangement. (quoted in Karman and Adams)

The local businesses associated with student consumption—such as pizza, fast food, banks, and auto dealers—benefit directly from this employment pattern: feeding workers, processing their loans and paychecks, and so on. The chairman of the largest auto group in Louisville was thrilled—student workers buy cars in order to commute between school and work. The local newspaper estimated that the 5,000-job expansion could mean as much as $750 million annually to the local economy.

But as Sternberg makes clear, for certain businesses relying on service workers, the UPS arrangement provided a double benefit by drawing a super-cheap workforce that needed to supplement its four hours after midnight at UPS with another four hours before midnight in a pizza shop.

**Internal Outsourcing and 10 Million “Students Who Work”**

As it turns out, UPS is just one of thousands of employers large and small whose business plans revolve centrally around the availability of
a workforce who primarily consider themselves something other than workers.

To the extent that one function of education is people production, the question of subjectivity is unavoidable: What sort of consciousness is being framed by this experience? In the case of Louisville educators and UPS, the most common subjectivity produced appears to be that of failure—of persons who fail to persist, and therefore end up believing that they deserve their fate. “They all blame themselves,” confirmed every instructor with whom I spoke regarding UPS student workers. “The only ones who didn’t blame themselves were some of the high school students,” said Susan Erdmann. “Some of them blamed UPS, rightly so.” In general, student workers view themselves through a classic lens of modernity, as someone who is really someone and something very different than their embodied self at work: I am not a package handler; I am a student working as a package handler for a while.

Very little work of any kind has been done on the question of undergraduate labor. Of particular interest is Laura Bartlett’s Working Lives of College Students website, featuring the original compositions of scores of student workers regarding their experience. Even in its early stages, Bartlett’s site is a rich resource for understanding the experience of undergraduates who work. The essays feature the complexity of student consciousness regarding their working lives. Some emphasize positive dimensions, such as the student who acquired her educational sense of purpose from her part-time job assisting the disabled. Others attempt to make a virtue of necessity, hoping that working while studying will teach them “time management and multi-tasking” or to “build life-long coping skills”; one added the afterthought that, “hopefully, I will survive!” (“Work, Meet Education”; “School-Work Connection”). More widespread was a sense of exploitation, sounded in the common notes of “stress” and the running analogy to “imprisonment” in several contributions. Some wrote of physical injury and mental anguish, even in light-duty service and office positions, or wrote of repeated indignities, sexual harassment, and bullying: “I am treated as if I am subhuman” (“Wonderful World of Work”). One made precise calculations of the huge gap between the costs of education and the wages earned from the university and other employers (tuition, books and fees at an Ohio State campus consuming nearly the whole of a forty-hour week’s wages, leaving just $6 a week for housing, transportation, food, clothing, entertain-
ment, medical expenses, and the like). Some described the need for simultaneous multiple part-time jobs in addition to loans and grants.

Most of the contributors viewed their work as something very different from the “real” work they hoped to land after graduation. After describing her work-related injuries in a pretzel concession at an Ohio Wal-Mart as akin to imprisonment and torture, for instance, one of the contributors concludes by observing, “Someday, this little pretzel shop will be just something I did once upon a time just to get through college” (“Rude Awakening”).

We could go any number of ways from here. For instance, we could ask what are the consequences of separating one’s consciousness from “being” the pretzel baker or package handler? One terribly important answer is that persons who were unable to recognize their own humanity in pretzel baking or package handling are perhaps less likely to acknowledge the humanity of others who handle packages, or clean toilets, or paint walls, or operate cash registers. I’ll return to this point before concluding.

Over 70 percent of U.S. high school grads enter college, 67 percent in the fall immediately after high school. Fewer than half of these complete a four-year degree. Those who do average far more than four years to do it. About 40 percent of those with a baccalaureate go on to graduate school. This professionalization of everything—the provision of degrees for so many different kinds of work—is one form in which higher education acts opportunistically. That is: it attracts more customers for credit hours with the (increasingly hollow) promise of the kinds of security nostalgically associated with the classical professions of law, medicine, education, and so forth.

There is a social bargain with youth-qua-student that goes something like this: “Accept contingency now, in exchange for an escape from it later.” The university’s role in this bargain is crucial: it provides the core promise of escaping into a future, without which their “temporary” employment would otherwise require larger enticements. The campus brokers the deal: give us, our vendors, and our employing partners what we want (tuition, fees, and a fair chunk of labor time over several years), and you can escape the life you’re living now.

Higher education is an industry, like others in the service economy, that is “structurally and substantially” reliant on youth labor (Tannock). Campuses of all kinds are critically dependent on a vast undergraduate workforce, who (as is in the fast-food industry) are desirable
Students Are Already Workers

not just because they are poorly paid but because they are disposable and “more easily controlled” (Schlosser). This is true regardless of whether campus workers are unionized or whether the school is located in a state with a relatively labor-friendly legislative environment. For an example of a school that has campus unions and a more responsible legal climate, we might take SUNY Oswego, Jerry Seinfeld’s alma mater. Oswego is a fairly modest employer of student labor, directly employing 2,000 undergraduates as part-time workers, or a bit more than a quarter of the student population. Nonetheless, students are overwhelmingly the largest sector of the workforce on campus, substantially outnumbering all other employment groups combined; taking full-time and part-time together, the campus only employs 1,500 nonstudent employees. Measured by full-time employee equivalent, it appears that student workers provide as much as half the labor time expended on campus (SUNY Oswego, “Fast Facts”).

At Oswego and nationally, student labor time is expended in work that mirrors similar low-wage benefitless positions in the service economy at large: food service, day care, janitorial work, building security, interior painting and carpentry, parking enforcement, laundry service, administrative assistance, warehouse restocking, and so on (SUNY Oswego, “Student Employment”). These activities are far more typical than the tutorial, library, community service, and internship activities that provide the public image of student work. (The nature of the work in “internship” and “community service” positions is another story, but is itself commonly similar service-economy activity such as data entry, document reproduction, and so forth.)

Student employment offices function as temp agencies or outsourcing contractors for local businesses and campus units. At a typical public campus, the student employment office has hundreds of positions advertised by off-campus employers, generally entirely without benefits or unemployment insurance, with a wage in the vicinity of $6 or $7 per hour (sometimes more and often less). The off-campus work includes farm labor, satellite installation, short-order cooking, commission sales, forklift operation, and personal care in nursing homes, as well as clerking in banks, malls, and insurance offices. Public universities will sometimes provide cheap workers for nearby elite private universities (which often place limits on the number of hours that their own undergraduates can work). The federal government employs cheap student labor in general office work and, for instance, as receptionists for the Social
Security Administration, in positions that formerly provided full-time employment for a citizen with reasonable wages and benefits. Student workers often replace full-time unionized staff.

Sometimes the temp-agency function is quite frank: at the University of Illinois–Chicago, for instance, the student employment office maintains a separate Student Temporary Service exclusively for the purpose of providing near-minimum-wage day labor on a just-in-time basis to any location on the campus. That frank admission by UIC that they’re running a temp agency may seem quite up to date and cutting edge, but it is, in fact, quite old school of them. The real cutting edge is MonsterTRAK, a subsidiary of the online job service Monster.com, which has standardized an interface with hundreds of public campuses. Initially providing on-campus interview services for graduates, the all too suggestively named Monster.com has moved into the lucrative business of managing undergraduate temp labor for hundreds of campuses, including federal work-study positions on major public campuses (Cal Tech, University of Virginia, University of Wisconsin). At all of these campuses, students cannot get work—even work-study positions funded with public money and which represent themselves as a citizenship entitlement, that is, “financial aid”—without registering with this private corporation, obtaining a password from them, and entering a nationwide temp agency, a world of work that is password protected and shielded from public view.

In the United States, only 20 percent of undergraduates do not work at all. About 50 percent of all undergraduates work an average of twenty-five hours per week. The remaining 30 percent work full-time, more than full-time, or at multiple jobs approximating the equivalent of full-time, averaging thirty-nine hours a week. This means that about 10 or 12 million undergraduates are in the workforce at any given moment. Indeed, if you’re a U.S. citizen under age twenty-five, you are more likely to be working if you are a student than if you are not. Over 3 million persons aged twenty to twenty-four are unemployed. Being a student isn’t just a way of getting a future job—it’s a way of getting a job right now.

Here’s something to think about. The main demographic fault line employed by the National Center for Education Statistics is a fairly reasonable sounding division of the school-work continuum into two groups, Students Who Work and Workers Who Study. This sounds very clean, scientific, even empirical. In fact, however, those divisions in-
volve no empirical criteria. They’re entirely subjective, based on the self-reporting of subjects who are given just two choices for self-description: “I consider myself a student who works,” or “I consider myself a worker who studies.” There are patterns within that self-reporting, but they aren’t clear-cut at all: a huge fraction of persons describing themselves as “students who work” work full-time or more, and likewise a large proportion of those self-reporting as “workers who study” work part-time and go to school on a full-time basis (NCES, *Profile of Undergraduates*; NCES, *Work First, Study Second*).

My point is not that self-reporting of this kind is a somewhat questionable primary organization of a core national database, though it is, in my opinion. My point is that these researchers resorted to the gambit of subject self-reporting as a primary organization because in the current relationship between schooling and work, including the regulation environment, there isn’t any clear way of “distinguishing” between students and workers.

This isn’t just a problem for investigators with the NCES; it’s also a problem for the most thoughtful analysts of labor, social justice, and the social function of higher education. Although I’m going to use an essay by Barbara Ehrenreich as an example, let me emphasize that I am not criticizing her but suggesting the pervasiveness of the intellectual and emotional hurdle represented by the legal, cognitive, and affective label of “student.”

In fall 2004, Ehrenreich penned a column for the *Progressive* called “Class Struggle 101.” It’s about the exploitation of the higher education workforce, and it does an excellent job of making the necessary parallels to the wages, hypocrisy, and union-busting of Wal-Mart, while pointing out the good things that Harvard and Stanford undergraduates have done in support of what she calls “campus blue-collar workers.” Throughout this piece, she uniformly identifies students and workers as two mutually exclusive groups, generally assigning social and political agency to “the students” and helplessness to “the workers.” This is well intentioned but clearly not accurate, even on privileged campuses. At her Harvard example, for instance, labor militancy has a lot to do with the culture disseminated and maintained by one of the most noteworthy staff unions in the country, mainly comprised of, and wholly organized by, women. Similarly, at Yale, it was the militant “blue-collar” and “pink-collar” unions with a $100,000 grant that put the union of students on its feet. It is difficult, in other words, to do the usual thing in
left theory or in labor studies and write about an “alliance between students and labor,” when we haven’t made sense of the fact that students are labor. As one of Laura Bartlett’s student contributors observes, “Work, Meet Education, Your New Roommate.”

In short, I believe the left is correct in assigning a powerful agency to the undergraduate population but at least partly for the wrong reasons—that is, while they do have a degree of agency as students and credit-hour consumers, they also have a powerful and enduring agency as labor.

The Social Meaning of Student Labor

According to one observer, in 1964, all of the expenses associated with a public university education, including food, clothing, and housing could be had by working a minimum-wage job an average of twenty-two hours a week throughout the year. (This might mean working fifteen hours a week while studying and forty hours a week during summers.) Today, the same expenses from a low-wage job require fifty-five hours a week a year.

At a private university, those figures in 1964 were thirty-six minimum-wage hours per week, which was relatively manageable for a married couple or a family of modest means and would have been possible even for a single person working the lowest possible wage for twenty hours a week during the school year and some overtime on vacations. Today, it would cost 136 hours per week for fifty-two weeks a year to “work your way through” a private university (Mortenson). In 2006, each year of private education amounted to the annual after-tax earnings of nearly four lowest-wage workers working overtime.

Employing misleading accounting that separates budgets for building, fixed capital expenses, sports programs, and the like from “instructional unit” budgets, higher education administration often suggests that faculty wages are the cause of rising tuition, rather than irresponsible investment in technology, failed commercial ventures, lavish new buildings, corporate welfare, and so on. The plain fact is that many college administrations are on fixed-capital spending sprees with dollars squeezed from cheap faculty and student labor: over the past thirty years, the price of student and faculty labor has been driven downward massively at exactly the same time that costs have soared.
For the 80 percent of students who are trying to work their way through, higher education and its promise of a future is increasingly a form of indenture, involving some combination of debt, overwork, and underinsurance. It means the pervasive shortchanging of health, family obligations, and, ironically, the curtailment even of learning and self-culture. More and more students are reaching the limits of endurance with the work that they do while enrolled. One major consequence of this shift of the costs of education away from society to students, including especially the costs of education as direct training for the workforce, is a regime of indebtedness, producing docile financialized subjectivities (Martin, *Financialization of Daily Life*) in what Jeff Williams has dubbed “the pedagogy of debt.” The horizon of the work regime fully contains the possibilities of student ambition and activity, including the conception of the future.

Overstressed student workers commonly approach their position from a consumer frame of analysis. They are socialized and even legally obliged to do so, while being disabled by various means, including employment law, from thinking otherwise. To a certain extent, the issue is that student workers are underpaid and ripped off as consumers. In terms of their college “purchase,” they are paying much more, about triple, and not getting more: the wage of the average person with a four-year degree or better is about the same today as in 1970, though for a far greater percentage, it takes the additional effort of graduate school to get that wage. From the consumer perspective, the bargain has gotten worse for purchasers of credit hours, because there are many more years at low wages and fewer years at higher wages, plus there are reductions in benefits, a debt load, and historically unprecedented insecurity in those working “full-time” jobs.

But the systematically fascinating, and from the perspective of social justice far more significant, difference is that the U.S. worker with only a high school education or “some college” is paid astonishingly less than they were in 1970, when the “college bonus” was only 30 to 40 percent of the average high-school-educated worker’s salary. Now, the “going to college” bonus is more than 100 percent of the high-school-educated worker’s salary, except that this “bonus” represents exclusively a massive reduction in the wage of the high school educated and is in no part an actual “raise” in the wages of the college educated.3

So while it is true and important that higher education is much less of a good deal than it used to be, we also have to think about the role
higher education plays in justifying the working circumstances of those who can’t make the college bargain. Whether one is inclined to accept higher education as an unspecial and seamless path—school to work—or alternatively as something “special,” without any necessary or obvious relation to work, it can be considered straightforwardly as a distribution issue. That is: Who should enjoy the “specialness,” whether that specialness is college as self-culture or college as a relatively larger and safer paycheck? On what terms? Who pays for it? What kinds and just how much specialness should the campus distribute? Why should the public fund a second-class and third-class specialness for some working lives, and provide the majority of working lives none at all? Wouldn’t it be a straighter—not to mention far more just—path to dignity, security, health, and a meaningful degree of self-determination, even for the most highly educated, if we simply agreed to provide these things for everyone, regardless of their degree of education? Why should education be a competitive scramble to provide yourself with health care?

And here we’ve run up against the classic question of education and democracy: Can we really expect right education to create equality? Or do we need to make equality in order to have right education? With Dick Ohmann, Stanley Aronowitz, Cary Nelson, and others, I think the “crisis of higher education” asks us to do more than think about education, educators, and the educated. It challenges us to make equality a reality. It asks us to identify the agencies of inequality in our lives (including the ideologies and institutions of professionalism), to find a basis for solidarity with inequality’s antagonists, and to have hope for a better world on that basis.

For me, the basis of solidarity and hope will always be the collective experience of workplace exploitation and the widespread desire to be productive for society rather than for capital. So when we ask, “Why has higher education gotten more expensive?” we need to bypass the technocratic and “necessitarian” account of events, in which all answers at least implicitly bring the concept of necessity beyond human agency to bear (“costs ‘had to’ rise because . . .”). Instead, we need to identify the agencies of inequality and ask, “To whom is the arrangement of student debt and student labor most useful?” The “small narratives” of technocracy function to obscure the fundamental questions of distribution. Not just: Who pays for education? But: Who pays for low wages?

The employer doesn’t pay. By putting students to work, UPS accumulates more than it would otherwise accumulate if it put nonstudents to
work, because of the different material costs represented by persons who claim citizenship in the present, not citizenship in the future. These low wages aren’t cheap to society; they’re just cheap to employers. Students themselves subsidize this cheapness: by doubling the number of life hours worked, by giving up self-culture and taking on debt. The families of adult students subsidize the cheapness, both in direct labor time and in sacrificed leisure, in time lived together, and other emotional costs. Other service workers subsidize the cheapness, as the huge pool of cheap working students helps to keep down the price of nonstudent labor. And student workers, located, as I’ve said, in a kind of semiformal regulation environment, are themselves inevitably patrons of the larger informal economy of babysitters, handymen, and the cheap-work system of global manufacturing and agribusiness.

So, on the other hand, the labor time of the low-wage student worker creates an inevitable, embodied awareness that the whole system of our cheap wages is really a gift to the employer. Throwing cartons at 3:00 a.m. every night of one’s college education, it becomes impossible not to see that UPS is the beneficiary of our financial aid, and not the other way around. As Dick Ohmann has commented of another group of campus flex-timers, the contingent faculty, there’s some potential in this experience for militancy—for new kinds of self-organization for workplace security—and even a quest for new alliances with other hyperexploited and insecure workers. And in the United States, there are always more than 10 million people who are simultaneously workers and students at any given time, for many of whom the prospects of an “escape” from contingency are dim at best. Even under present conditions of extreme labor repression, the transformative agency of the millions of student employees is evident in the anti-sweatshop movement and in graduate-employee union movements, which have allied themselves with other insecure workers and not with the tenured faculty. “Professional” workers increasingly have interests and experiences in common with other workers.

On the other hand, especially for those for whom schooling does indeed provide an escape from contingency, these long terms of student work can also serve to reinforce commitments to inequality. The university creates professional workers who understand the work that everyone else does in a very particular way: they see manual work and service work through the lens of their own past, through their own sense of their past selves as students, likely comprising all of the feelings of
the non-adult, of the temporary, of the mobile, of the single person. As one contributor to Bartlett’s *Working Lives* site put it, it’s “something I did once upon a time just to get through college.” For the professional workers created by the university, these “other” workers, no matter their age or circumstances, are always doing the work of someone who isn’t really a full citizen and who doesn’t make the full claims of social welfare—just like themselves when they were not (yet) full adults and citizens. Their feeling is that these other workers, like the students who aped them for a few years, really ought to be moving on—out of the sphere of entitlement, out of “our” schools and hospitals, out of “our” public. The view of globalization from above is assisted by the voice of the beat cop to the guest worker loitering around the health-care system: move along, move along.

From here, we could go on to explore the meaning of contingency: not just part-time work but the insecurity and vulnerability of full-time workers. We could ask, for whom is this contingency a field of possibility? And for whom is contingency, in fact, a field of constraint?

It takes a village to pay for education and to pay for low wages and to pick up the cost for life injuries sustained by the absence of security and dignity. So perhaps the village should decide what education and wages should be, and the sort of dignity and security that everyone should enjoy, very much apart from the work they do.