

FORUM

NEWSLETTER OF THE NON-TENURE-TRACK FACULTY SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP

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CONFERENCE ON COLLEGE COMPOSITION AND COMMUNICATION

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From the Editor

Janice Albert

As a tenured English department faculty member in California, I saw the hiring practices in English shift from the conscientious search for life-time colleagues to the practice of pulling in temps, often at the last minute, with no commitment toward their preparation, development, or rehire. In the '90s, I wrote a paper about this transformation that led Miles Myers, Executive Director of NCTE, to include me among the NCTE representatives at the 1997 meeting of the Councils of Learned Societies on the abuse of contingent labor, along with Patti Stock, John Lovas, and Bobbi Kirby-Werner, then editor of *Forum*.

I mention this to let you know that my interest in the conditions of employment for adjuncts, part-timers, and lecturers has a history. It's clear to me that higher education in the United States is at a crossroads. On my most fatalistic days, I predict that education is being turned into a market, and that what happened to medicine under managed care is the future of higher education. On other days, I think that Americans won't let that happen. Right now, I see that more people need to be informed about what's going on, and I'm encouraged that this issue of *Forum* is scheduled to come out in time to publicize Campus Equity Week, October 28–November 3, 2001.

Please read and share this copy with your colleagues. I'd like to hear your comments. Please send them to me at: Janice Albert, Editor, *Forum*, 565 Bellevue Ave., Suite 1704, Oakland, CA 94610. Thanks.

**To secure complimentary offprints of *Forum*,
contact Don Robbins at NCTE at
(217) 278-3670 or (800) 369-6283, extension 251.**

About Forum

Forum is published twice a year by the Non-Tenure-Track Faculty Special Interest Group of the Conference on College Composition and Communication. As editor, I welcome you to submit news items, book reviews, editorials, and/or articles related to non-tenure-track faculty in college English or composition courses. Submissions for the fall issue should be received no later than May 1; for the winter issue, the deadline is September 1. Note: Submissions will not be returned.

You may submit your work electronically, via e-mail or an e-mail attachment, or through U.S. mail. For e-mail submissions, address your work to JMAAlbert@aol.com and put the words "Forum article" somewhere in your subject line. If you choose U.S. mail, please send one hard copy of your submission(s) to:

Janice Albert
Forum editor
565 Bellevue Ave.
Suite 1704
Oakland, CA 94610

For both e-mail and U.S. mail submissions, include the following information in a cover note:

- your name
- your title(s)
- your institution(s)
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For additional guidelines or information about *Forum*, contact Janice Albert at the address provided or at (510) 839-1140.

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From the Chair
Deborah Normand

Let me introduce you to the Steering Committee for the Non-Tenure-Track Faculty Special Interest Group:

Deborah B. Normand, Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, Chair,
dnormand@lsu.edu

Kim Flachmann, California State University, Bakersfield, kflachmann@csu.edu

Scott Oury, Leverett, MA, Member of the Part-Time Committee of the Two-Year College English Association (TYCA),
ScottOury@the-Spa.com

Janice Albert, Chabot College, CA, Editor of *Forum: Newsletter of the Non-Tenure-Track Faculty Special Interest Group*,
JMAAlbert@aol.com

Diane McElfresh, Northern Kentucky University, Highland Heights,
Mcelfreshd@nku.edu

Your Steering Committee's charge is as follows: to provide a platform for the discussion of issues concerning non-tenure-track teachers of writing and literature; to publish a newsletter for national distribution on issues of concern to non-tenure-track faculty; to encourage the integration of non-tenure-track faculty within our profession.

CCCC 2002—Chicago ACTION!

Join us in Chicago for CCCC 2002. Speakers at the Non-Tenure-Track Faculty Special Interest Group will emphasize ACTION! by highlighting fair labor prac-

tices at their institutions that each of us can use as models to promote real change at our colleges and universities. Examples may include institutions that no longer hire instructors on a per-course basis or who offer merit increases to NTT faculty or have converted non-tenure-track positions into full-time, tenure-track ones. These are all recommendations made by the CCCC Committee to Improve the Working Conditions of Part-time and Adjunct Faculty. We hope to meet you in Chicago.

Public Rhetoric for Academic Workers: Tips from the Front Lines

Mike Evces

As Equity Week draws near, many part-time and adjunct faculty across North America will want to use the opportunity to raise awareness of their situation in their local community. Fortunately, a strong tradition of campus activism and public rhetoric is already in place and growing every year. Public action, for example, has always been an important factor in the success of the graduate employee union at the University of Iowa, known as UE local 896-COGS.

As all good rhetoric and composition instructors know, the form of a message depends on the particulars of audience, occasion, and purpose. With that in mind, here are some examples of public rhetoric that have been successful in helping win and preserve comprehensive affordable health insurance, salary increases, a grievance procedure, and other benefits. You don't have to have a union, or even plan to have one, in order to adopt some effective rhetorical strategies from the academic labor movement.

During contract negotiations, COGS members always show their support for the bargaining committee and educate the community about their issues by holding rallies and informational pickets near the site of negotiations. A well-organized and planned rally is very helpful. Faculty who are adjunct or part-time may note that graduate employees face similar rhetorical situations. That is, as academic professionals, they are perceived even within the university community as "having it easy." Thus, part of the COGS message is always that "The UI Works Because We Do," a chant that is easily adaptable for faculty as well. Here are some other tips for planning an effective public action:

- Turnout is essential. Have a list of people who will come and participate, and call to remind them the day before. Send out a local press release, so the media will know ahead of time to send reporters and photographers. A rally or picket gives editors a reason to cover your issues, as the "event" is generally considered news. Include facts about workload, pay, trends, and other

facts that will catch an editor's eye. Include quotes from the organizers. Many quotes found in newspapers and repeated on local television news programs are in fact provided before an event by the group holding it. It's standard procedure. Be sure to mention that Equity Week is endorsed by the Conference on College Composition and Communication. Faxing your press release is a good idea.

- Have a point-person for reporters to talk to. Generally, it is effective for participants to respond to questions from the press by referring them to the appointed spokesperson, although if your message is well-defined, anyone should be able to repeat it to the press.
- Find out about the local or campus rules for public demonstrations. Generally, you'll want to avoid blocking entrances and exits, and keep sidewalks clear.
- Have a few catchy chants to shout, emphasizing a clear and simple set of messages. Public demonstrations, of course, benefit from simplicity and an emphatic tone. For example, "What do we want? Equity! When do we want it? Now!" is a good call-and-response chant format. It sends your message to the public and helps build a sense of community among the group.
- Have a few adjuncts and/or part-timers make short speeches, testimonials to the real experiences of academic workers. One such "speak-out" could address national trends and the purpose of Equity Week.
- Have a lead person to start the action, keep it going with chants and speaker introductions, and conclude the event. Don't forget to begin with a brief explanation of who you are and why you are there.
- Make signs to carry. Often groups try to squeeze too much information on signs. Keep yours short and simple, and use very large letters so the photographers can get a good picture and passers-by can easily understand what's going on. Standard poster board is good for this, especially if you use wooden sticks and staple two sheets of poster board together so the sign doesn't curl in the breeze.
- Prepare leaflets for someone to distribute to passers-by, explaining the event and the issues.
- If you have access to amplification, such as a megaphone or a portable public address system, make sure you have it all set up and tested well before the designated start time. Some megaphones require batteries.
- Tap local progressive resources by contacting local labor unions, progressive student groups like Students against Sweatshops, and any other groups who

share a similar concern for social justice. Invite them to your event well ahead of time, and thank them for their support in your introduction. In the months leading up to Equity Week, try to have a representative of your group contact other groups personally. Often you can get a few minutes of their meeting time to extend your invitation and explain your issues.

- Turn-out cannot be overemphasized. Obtain a list of phone numbers and e-mail addresses. Ideally, a small group should telephone potential participants the night before with a polite reminder to attend.

One particularly fun and successful event that has become a tradition for UE local 896-COGS is the Grade-In. Graduate employees bring their work to a public place, and actually grade papers and tests. In this way, the university and town community can see the work that graduate employees do. During a break in the grading, officers of the local unveil a large report card set up on an easel. On this report card, the union lists issues as though they were course titles. This is a good way to identify your group's issues and to have fun with academic discourse. During a short presentation, an officer runs down the list of issues and offers an assessment of the university's performance, concluding each assessment with a grade which she or he then marks on the report card with an oversized magic marker. For example, the university may get an A on "grievance procedure," but a C- on health care. COGS has had to give an "Incomplete" in the area of child care, since the Board of Regents will not discuss it at the bargaining table, and has had to remind them that the "I" could turn into an "F" if the work is not taken more seriously. The Grade-In can be fun, and it can effectively convey to a diverse audience the kinds of issues that academic workers face. Whether you choose to hold a Grade-In, a rally, a march with signs, or some other public event to mark Equity Week, two main rhetorical purposes should be kept in mind. You will want to communicate your issues and your situation to a broad audience, so that "part-time and adjunct faculty" become more familiar terms. At the same time, and perhaps more important, the very process of composing and executing public rhetoric builds a sense of community among academic workers. This is especially important for part-time and adjunct faculty who may seldom, if ever, see each other on a regular basis. As an action-oriented event, Equity Week thus promises to be a major milestone in the struggle for justice in the academic workplace, as it brings academic workers together and makes their plight more widely known.

Mike Evces is a doctoral student in Language, Literacy, and Culture at the University of Iowa.

What's Past Is Prologue: The 2001 COCAL Conference

Scott Oury

In January 2001, COCAL-West IV (Coalition on Contingent Academic Labor) brought together organizations, groups, and individuals across the United States and Canada who are concerned with what Carey Nelson termed the “sweat shop” nature of adjunct teaching. The conference itself exemplified its major theme: that we must form coalitions nationwide to go beyond the numerous resolutions made over the past 30 or more years concerning part-time teaching—and act, to preserve higher education itself.

COCAL IV was held in San Jose, California, for good reason: community college part-timers in California have been acting for adjuncts in most every way imaginable: organizing the entire state, initiating legislation, accompanied by public relations and media campaigns, protests, petition drives, and hearings; and last year, an “A2K” (Action 2000 Coalition) State Equity Week, all of which shamed the governor to make a “down payment” of \$62,000,000 on a three-year promise of \$75,000,000 each year to bring adjuncts to equity. This has been a 20-year effort, intensive these last two years, by part-time faculty. Many of the sessions and panels, inspiring and poignant, detailed the extensive efforts of California part-timers.

Throughout the two-day conference, other contingents also presented their own substantial efforts toward equity. Gary Zabel, co-director of COCAL-Boston, described the effort that brought parity and benefits to the University of Massachusetts at Boston, and unionizing drives in several Boston-area colleges, among them, Northeastern, Suffolk, Brandeis, and Emerson (now unionized). Eric Marshall, an activist and Ph.D. candidate at CUNY, detailed successful efforts to reform New York City unions through the “New Caucus,” and the struggle toward parity and benefits. Wendy Rader Konofalski, organizer for the Washington Federation of Teachers, joined the union after years of feeling branded in her adjunct role, and with others has been working toward equity for adjuncts. Among their efforts: creating a document on the working conditions of adjuncts, findings which the state agreed to; working to raise benefits to 50%; and getting salary pro-rated: one-half at 100% and one-half at 76% of full-time salary.

Affairs in the heartland are not so promising. Joe Berry, Roosevelt College (Chicago), reported that only four of Illinois community colleges were organized. Efforts are underway at Roosevelt. Columbia College, with help from UPS, has organized and negotiated a contract. Pay at Columbia is only equivalent to Massachusetts’s community colleges (about \$2,200/course), but for the heartland, where salaries average below \$1,300 per course, this is a major gain.

Beyond California, by far the most encouraging news came from Canada. Quebec universities and colleges, through a major study followed by strikes (some prolonged) have made major steps toward equity for adjuncts. But British Columbia has set the standard for the Continent. The College Institute Educators' Association (CIEA) of British Columbia has negotiated a "historic" agreement for adjuncts: a pro-rated salary scale, health and welfare benefits for the entire year, professional development, and severance pay. Add to these the rights of continuance and accrual: Half-time faculty moving into a third year (with a good evaluation) are considered "regular" faculty with full benefits and the right to accrue courses toward full-time status.

I suggested to Linda Sperling of CIEA (with all irony) that this must have come from Canada's wealth as a country. "Canada cares about education," she said. Canada also cares about the state of its economy relative to education, recognizing that a healthy economy depends on the health of higher education. CIEA is also concerned about the impact of working conditions on adjuncts personally, an "enormous" impact, president Shaw said, "as they struggle to maintain a high quality of education for students." This is echoed in an article by Rosalind G. Benjet and Margaret Loweth (*TETYC*, 1989, Vol. 16, pp. 40–42), who felt the impact of her long-time adjunct status years after accepting a full-time lecturer position. Eileen Schell, Friday night, read an account by an adjunct who found herself driving the wrong way—later in the wrong lane!—on her way to teach. We need to address the psychological/ personal impact of adjunct work on, yes, our colleagues.

Adjunct working conditions affect students as well. California ran its campaign on the theme that poor working conditions for adjuncts impact the quality of education students receive.

Featured speakers underscored themes developed throughout the conference: Carey Nelson suggested, dramatically, that higher education itself has been jeopardized by standards that English/Writing/Foreign Language departments set, or allowed to be set; and that these departments must begin a national campaign of reform, which could save higher education, and perhaps the country. Jane Buck, president of AAUP, painted a picture of the old academic world that we will never see again, but maintained that freedom of speech and tenure, now under attack, continue to be essential to our enterprise. Full-time faculty, she maintained, must support part-timers in their efforts to secure such, or risk losing the enterprise altogether. Amy Dean, of the National Association for Fair Employment, prominent in WTO and other protests around the country, and featured in the *New Yorker* and *New York Times*, spoke late Saturday afternoon. Both labor and public education, she said, have the same opponents—the new industrialists. Unions must play a key

role—with higher education—in building organizations that can effect social and political action.

The implications for CCCC are clear. We must construct coalitions with unions, and with professional, political, social, and activist organizations—to preserve what’s left of our profession and restore what we’ve lost. Since 1970, we have lost two-thirds of our membership-considered-as-professionals, since part-timers’ working conditions are those of field hands, not professionals. Our first “coalition” should be made by acknowledging our adjunct colleagues—as colleagues of equal “rank.” We must actively—personally—invite them to join our ranks, and make that possible with financial assistance. It can be done.

Next fall, October 28 to November 3, activists across the United States and Canada are planning a Campus Equity Week to focus national attention on the part-time situation, especially as it erodes the integrity of our colleges and universities. This is the first time that faculty from all the major unions and associations have joined forces for a national campaign for faculty. A steering committee is now in the process of planning events, and local committees are being formed to plan campus-oriented events. We need to take an active part in Campus Equity Week—for the sake of our colleagues and for the sake of our profession. We can begin to revitalize our profession with such action. But perhaps first, we must save it.

Scott Oury teaches at Holyoke Community College, Leverett, Massachusetts.

Welcome Back, Kotters

Jean Embree

As the instructor shortage in higher education becomes more and more obvious, even to those in departments outside of technology, business, and science, most administrators are still missing a bet. The bottom line points to still-increasing percentages of adjunct rather than tenure-track instructors being hired, despite state guidelines to the contrary. Does this percentage mean a decline in quality of teaching? Not necessarily.

Both our current economy and U. S. demographics point to one increasingly possible source of well-qualified teachers who may be ready and willing to work for some years as adjuncts: recent early retirees who now feel they can “afford” to teach.

The dot.com/real estate boom has enabled millions of extremely talented employees to feel just comfortable enough financially (at least the lucky ones!) to consider a new lifestyle of giving back to the community—and for many, including

me, to consider teaching for some years after relatively early retirement from industry, the military, entrepreneurship, full-time teaching or administration, etc.

However, most school systems have no comfortable niche for these talented and experienced prospective teachers. Many of them may already have master's degrees and/or teaching experience or credentials from past temporary ventures into teaching. Others can easily get temporary credentials. But what happens when they approach administrations?

Let's say Jan Entrepreneur, age 50, who has in thirty years made a comfortable fortune in her own business, decides she would really enjoy teaching in a business department, passing along what she has learned, enjoying interaction with colleagues in her field, and encouraging the newest generation. She is given a class, enjoys the experience, and soon is teaching the allowed 60% load. However, since she has low seniority, one of her classes is at night, one on Saturday, and one on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 9 a.m. She therefore almost never sees her colleagues, she is on few e-mail or campus mail lists, she has no office or computer or office telephone extension, and she finds it very inconvenient to attend meetings or lectures on campus, which are events usually held midday and often on Fridays or Mondays—days she has tried to reserve for her family. (After all, she's teaching 60%—at approximately half the pay per hour that a “regular” employee gets.) If she sticks it out, as someone truly interested in education, even regularly attending (pro bono) a bimonthly committee meeting or two, she may gradually begin to do what she has wanted to do all along—to give back to the community, to make a difference.

And then there's José Cabrera, who has launched three successful technology companies and now decides to get a new master's degree in a different field—an MBA or a master's in creative writing or psychology. As a teaching assistant in a university, he would like to contribute significantly to the teaching staff and students. But too often such resourceful personnel on campus are nearly ignored, being asked to prove teaching ability repeatedly each semester (often officially observed and rated by those younger and much less experienced in the field than they), and in general treated as sub-instructors—inferior versions of tenure-track professors—despite the facts that early retirees have no intention of applying for tenured jobs and that long experience in the “real” world has taught most of them to be tactful, to be kind, and to work hard.

A few far-seeing administrators have begun to notice this group of eager baby-boomer retirees and have shown their interest in creative ways, including adding a new pay category to compensate adjuncts for service on committees and arranging for them to apply for grants. But important as monetary compensation is, recognition and respect are even more important. Kudos to the administrators who have managed not only to recruit this new category of gifted and experienced teachers

but to recognize what they can bring to the campus, to make them feel welcome and appreciated by the administration as well as by the students—the students who are often their biggest boosters.

We have special organizations and rewards for students who return from a “real world” hiatus. For new but expert teachers, how about a Welcome Experts Back to School group—the WEBS (!)—complete with an insignia on the name tag and a pat on the back? A little creativity here, a little publicity, and we might attract who knows how many sick-of-the-rat-race dot.commers.

We’re all planning to live longer, healthier lives and want to inspire an extra generation of students. With a bit of encouragement, we might just partially solve a higher education problem at the same time.

Jean Embree teaches at Evergreen Valley College in San Jose, California.

Book Reviews

Ghosts in the Classroom: Stories of College Adjunct Faculty—and the Price We All Pay

by Michael Dubson, Camel’s Back Books, 2001

Reviewed by Ray Jablonsky, College of Alameda, Alameda, California

If misery loves company, there’s a pity party taking place between the pages of Michael Dubson’s *Ghosts in the Classroom: Stories of College Adjunct Faculty—and the Price We All Pay*. Edited by Dubson, himself a former adjunct English instructor, *Ghosts* plays host to a virtual revelry of disgruntled discontent.

In his anthology, Dubson has collected twenty-five tales from the adjunct zone, that academic limbo-land, where qualified and committed education professionals are forced to work for proverbial peanuts, earning little money and even less respect.

The tales, all written by adjunct instructors, echo and mirror the same myopic misery crying out from all corners of our continent. Everywhere, it seems, humble and faithful adjunct instructors are being treated cruelly—*inhumanely!*—at the hands of the dastardly full-time faculty and their evil administrative cohorts.

Everywhere, it seems, administrators are solely concerned with, as M. Theodore Swift sees it, “reap[ing] tremendous profits.” Full-timers treat adjuncts, according to Kate Gale, as not “fully human.” And this combined mistreatment eventually causes some adjuncts, like Dubson himself, to consider leaving the profession, or, as in the tragic case of Jim Neal’s colleague, to leave this world altogether.

Without a doubt, their pain is real. Their stories *should* be told, their voices heard and harkened. However, with few exceptions, we’ve heard these stories

before. Many of us have lived them ourselves. So the question begs: For whom does this book toll?

If meant for current graduate students, those hoping to enter the field and earn full-time positions by selling their souls as part-time instructors, the message of *Ghosts* is unequivocally clear: Forget about it! Get a real job! Go back home! Certainly, Dubson is not attempting to reach full-time faculty or administrators—not with the antagonistic tone nearly all these tales contain. More than once are full-time faculty members portrayed as heartless, arrogant, supercilious boors; administrators as pencil-pushing, penny-pinching, uptight ideocrats and yet, ironically, it's those very full-time faculty and buttoned-up administrators who must be swayed to change the desperate state of adjunct affairs. Attacking them, a freshman composition student might point out, is a glaring rhetorical no-no, a critical thinking *faux pas*.

Admittedly, I am one of the lucky ones. After six-and-a-half years of part-time teaching, after flying the freeways until my odometer broke, I recently landed a full-time, tenure-track, community-college position. Even with benefits, it's still as stressful as part-time teaching, maybe even more so.

Some in *Ghosts* posit the solution as providing more full-time jobs. That sounds great—at first. A few years ago, at one of the five community colleges where I taught, a half dozen “long-term, full-time, temporary positions” were filled with senior members of the adjunct staff. I, however, a recent adjunct instructor, was not hired. All my classes were taken away.

The bitter truth is that there are not enough jobs for everyone. Now, at least, with “adjunct exploitation,” more opportunity is available for more adjunct instructors. Odd as it seems, even as the system exploits the adjuncts, the adjuncts themselves manage to exploit the system. Adjuncts, to aid their cause, might write fewer rants and read more tales of objective adjunct experience. Buried in the back of *Ghosts* are three fine examples: J. L. Schneider's tale of race and plagiarism, Tim Waggoner's lesson in flexibility, and Kathryn Albrecht's experience as an adjunct instructor at a maximum security prison.

These three authors, by objectively detailing the plight all college instructors must endure, do much to advance the adjunct cause by creating the necessary ethos required to bridge the academic divide. They don't just complain: They chronicle.

These three adjuncts are those who will be hired full-time. Their tales will be heard and respected and rewarded. Those other tales, those bitter diatribes full of pointing fingers, they will definitely be heard, and they will definitely be remembered—by the same faculty and administrators who sit on hiring committees.

In the end, we're all human. None of us is evil or wicked, none angelic nor above reproach. Academia is nothing but *Survivor!* Sixteen strangers stranded on an island. Not everyone wins. Most get voted out. Eventually, they all become ghosts.

Teaching without Tenure: Policies and Practices for a New Era
by Roger G. Baldwin and Jay L. Chronister, 2001, Johns Hopkins University Press
Reviewed by Molly Oshatz, University of California at Berkeley

A glance at its table of contents would give you the mistaken impression that *Teaching without Tenure* is about the particular predicament of full-time non-tenure-track faculty at four-year colleges and universities. But because authors Baldwin and Chronister portray these faculty members not as a mere administrative category, but rather as the bellwether of academia's identity and culture, their book assumes a much broader purpose. They argue that the full inclusion of full-time non-tenure-track (FTNTT) faculty in academia would accomplish an administrative miracle, transforming a hierarchical, exclusionary, and increasingly ivy-towered institution into a diverse, welcoming, and socially responsive one. Their desires to reform academic culture and to make academia more responsive to society's demands are certainly laudable. Yet Baldwin and Chronister's program does not fully address the problems which FTNTT faculty have been hired to solve, and it would leave academia with no clear sense of mission apart from that granted by its critics.

Baldwin and Chronister's belief that FTNTT faculty in four-year institutions best represent the future of academia led them to omit both part-time faculty and two-year colleges from their research. They could safely exclude part-time faculty because, as they explain, Judith M. Gappa and David W. Leslie's *Invisible Faculty* (1993) had already addressed that issue. Their justification for omitting two-year institutions from their research is less clear. Admitting that FTNTT faculty in four-year colleges and universities represent a small portion of the total number of higher educational faculty in the United States, the authors simply explain that FTNTT faculty in four-year institutions are "of special importance because they hold positions that are similar in many ways to those held by tenured faculty" (78). Presumably, they see the administrative dynamics of four-year institutions as especially representative of the problems facing academia.

According to their research, colleges and universities hire FTNTT faculty to solve a series of problems facing higher education, four of which are of paramount importance. First, perceptions that higher education faculty are too isolated from the vagaries of the economy and that they focus too little on undergraduate teaching have diminished public confidence in higher education. Second, perhaps as a result of this loss of confidence, government financial support of higher education has declined. Third, enrollment has increased along with the diversity of student

needs. Finally, faculty salary increases, soaring administrative costs, and tenured faculty's failure to spend more time teaching despite enrollment increases have made higher education more expensive. In short, society's demands on educators and the costs of education have increased while society's confidence in higher education and the governmental funding of higher education have decreased. Full-time non-tenure-track faculty address these problems by providing higher education institutions with greater flexibility in hiring and with cheaper and more plentiful full-time teachers. Baldwin and Chronister add that FTNTT faculty bring diverse backgrounds and good teaching skills to their institutions, but they admit that few of the institutions they researched mentioned these advantages.

Their stop-gap position in academia creates problems for FTNTT faculty and their institutions by dividing the faculty into two unequal camps. Baldwin and Chronister's discovery that women and minorities are underrepresented in tenure and tenure-track jobs and overrepresented in non-tenure track positions makes this increasingly segregated faculty particularly troubling. In an effort to remedy academic inequality, the authors present thirteen areas of "good practices" in the administration of FTNTT faculty, including such items as explicit evaluation criteria, multi-year contracts following defined probationary periods, an equitable salary system and fringe benefit program, support for professional development, sabbaticals, meaningful involvement in governance and curriculum development, and procedures for protecting academic freedom. These improvements in the position of FTNTT faculty would do far more to elide academic hierarchy and weaken the tenure system than to reduce costs. Baldwin and Chronister seem more interested in squaring academic with corporate culture than with solving the financial problems of higher education.

Discomfort with academia's distance from society drives Baldwin and Chronister's program of academic reform. This distance is real—we feel it in the hostility toward tenured faculty's economic independence and seeming remove from practical concerns and in many academics' disdain for culture and work apart from intellectual pursuits. While the authors of *Teaching without Tenure* would heal this divide by forcing academia to meet society's expectations, I would prefer that the two meet in the middle. Higher educational institutions do need to make the tenure track more flexible, particularly so that more women and minorities can be included, but they also need to do a better job of articulating to a wider audience the value of academic research, liberal arts, and basic science. Any recreation of higher education should be seen as an opportunity for an inclusive conversation about the value of that education, not as another opportunity to extend corporate culture into the classroom.

Moving a Mountain: Transforming the Role of Contingent Faculty in Composition Studies and Higher Education

by Eileen E. Schell and Patricia Lambert Stock, editors, 2001, NCTE

Reviewed by Melody Kilcrease, San Diego State University

When I agreed to review *Moving a Mountain: Transforming the Role of Contingent Faculty in Composition Studies and Higher Education* by Eileen Schell and Patricia Stocks, I had just returned from Denver and the 2001 CCCC. I had attended the Friday afternoon featured session at which Schell and Stocks gave spirited presentations on “coalition building among the numerous groups engaged in efforts to bring fairness and equity in the academic workplace.” Not only did their arguments about coalition building in specific cases make sense, they offered a strategy for action that could be implemented in a variety of higher education institutions, everywhere from two-year community colleges to graduate-level research institutions.

What became obvious during the course of the session was that much work is being done to address and redress the unfair employment policies governing contingent faculty in American universities. However, most of the actions that have effected real change have seemed idiosyncratic, often dependent upon the particular set of governance policies, and/or the cooperation of ethically minded tenure-track faculty in a particular university or department. What Schell and Stocks pointed out in their presentation, however, and what they detail in *Moving a Mountain*, is that these actions may not be as idiosyncratic as they first appear. The common denominator among them is the use of coalitions to effect change.

Designed to build from a base of literature on non-tenure-track employment which the authors categorize as “documentary,” “speculative,” and “polemic,” this collection documents “enactments of reform . . . case studies that describe strategies for transforming non-tenure-track faculty’s hiring procedures, contractual arrangements, salaries and benefits, work orientation, teaching evaluation procedures, and professional development opportunities”(29).

After spending time with this collection, noting the similarities or vast differences between my local situation and that of the authors of the case studies in the first section, I was much more intrigued by the reports in Section II. They seemed to offer more widely applicable models for effecting change. Although the personal and institutional case studies in Section I offer insights and well-crafted arguments for how and why reform was enacted in particular writing programs, the case studies in the second section broaden the focus from contingent labor issues in writing programs, to contingent labor conditions as they relate to broader faculty concerns. In other words, the issue of contingent labor is now part of the larger

debate over academic labor in general. We non-tenure-track faculty are no longer seen, or need to see ourselves, as somehow separate from the tenure-track faculty with whom we work, but as the proverbial “canaries in the coal mine” of the academic workforce.

Opening Section II with “The Real Scandal in Higher Education,” Walter Jacobson outlines how

. . . the corporate academy and “market forces” will use the stranglehold we have given them to finish us off with a flourish—all of us—graduate students at Yale, instructors in community colleges, tenure-track faculty in comprehensive universities. (183)

And, in an equally persuasive but a bit less passionate selection, “Faculty at the Crossroads,” Karen Thompson notes that “[t]enured faculty themselves are facing massive cutbacks, loss of their traditional governance role, and aggressive attacks on academic freedom and tenure.” From this situation she concludes:

. . . the centerpiece of any solution to the part-time faculty problem must be pro rata compensation. Removing the economic incentive is the only way to prevent further erosion of the profession and protect the quality of higher education. (190)

Using these two selections to articulate the common concern among all levels of faculty for fairness and equity in academic hiring policies, as well as for the conditions under which our students are expected to learn, the editors have followed with four additional accounts of contingent faculty efforts to organize their own faculty committees, to encourage contingent faculty membership in already existing faculty unions, and to organize unions and professional organizations of their own.

Each of these detailed accounts offers a portrait of heroic commitment to an ethical foundation for our academic institutions and to maintaining the highest-quality teaching and learning environments in those institutions. And it is in these accounts that the power of collaboration and coalition figures most prominently. A key element in each of these “success” stories rests in the power gained from strategic alliances. One important lesson here is that contingent faculty working from their subordinate and often marginal positions to effect change in their working conditions and professional lives need to find individuals or groups within the campus, or groups and agencies outside of the campus, who can bring pressure on the administrators and legislators in control of labor practices and policies. Unionization and efforts leading to unionization seem to be the only successful strategies to date in the struggle to reform the exploitation of a contingent work force.

Another lesson I take away from *Moving a Mountain* is that if I want to see change in my working conditions, and those of my fellow non-tenure-track faculty members (which may very well include all university faculty if these practices remain unchallenged), my colleagues and I need to educate and organize our friends and allies. They are quite easy to find, actually; they are all those folks who have a stake in not just the “efficiency,” “affordability,” or “productivity” of academic institutions, but in the quality of higher education practiced in those institutions.

That is the final lesson in *Moving a Mountain*. Just as the authors note in their introduction and demonstrate in the final essays in the collection, “. . . as contingent faculty assumed responsibility . . . for their working conditions, they did so for their students’ as well as their own benefit” (39). The case studies presented in *Moving a Mountain* are certainly more than primers on how to get phones and desks and better schedules. They are about gaining the recognition, resources, and compensation necessary to support a first-rate faculty in first-rate teaching and learning environments that fulfill the promise of the much-touted mission statements of our universities and colleges. When we can convince our tenured faculty friends, our colleagues in professional organizations, our local business and community leaders, and our legislators that our fight is really about quality education, we may find many more allies than we imagined.

My recommendation is that we each buy a copy of this book, that we mine the case studies provided in this collection for strategies and arguments that we can apply in our own contexts, and that we make a project out of circulating *Moving a Mountain* among our friends. I would also suggest we attach a special paper clip to page 179–180, and highlight the words of Walter Jacobson:

. . . the single most important reason that faculty have not organized to resist overuse and abuse of part-time adjunct faculty is the distinction that is made between the goals and aims of tenure-track and contingent faculty. . . . We need to acknowledge our mutual interdependence . . . or we will all sink. . . . “We,” part-time, non-tenure-track, full-time, tenure track, and graduate student teaching assistants . . . must move together to ensure the integrity of higher education in the United States today.

I am beginning by circulating news of this book on our union’s listserv, reviewing it in our department’s newsletter, and taking a copy of the book to our union’s “end of the semester” (TT and NTT) faculty luncheon next week. I am also sitting down right now to start making a list of all our “friends.”