

# FORUM

NEWSLETTER OF THE COMMITTEE ON CONTINGENT, ADJUNCT, AND PART-TIME FACULTY (CAP)

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CONFERENCE ON COLLEGE COMPOSITION AND COMMUNICATION

## INSIDE

<b>From the Editor</b>	<b>A1</b>
<b>From the Chair</b>	<b>A2</b>
<b>A Solution to the Adjunct Problem</b>	<b>A4</b>
Scott Oury	
<b>Book Reviews</b>	<b>A6</b>
Nancy Sours • Tom Brown	

### From the Editor

Janice Albert

Now that the NCTE Web site has been expanded and improved, we have easy access to some of the details about committees such as CAP: The Committee on Contingent, Adjunct, and Part-time Faculty. The CAP Mission Statement is this: *We are an appointed group of full-time faculty, part-time faculty, and graduate students who are college composition teachers and members of CCCC. We work together to address and improve the working conditions of part-time and full-time non-tenure-track writing faculty.*

This newsletter exists as one of the charges of the Committee: *To maintain established platforms for the discussion of issues of concern to part-time and adjunct and non-tenure-track teachers of writing and literature (panels, SIG sessions and discussion lists); and to continue publishing a national newsletter on issues of concern to part-time and adjunct and non-tenure-track teachers of writing and literature.*

"Issues of concern" is a tall order. During my editorship, I have taken this to mean issues on the macro level as well as issues visible only under the microscope of one individual's experience. We've reviewed books that take the broad view (see Tom Brown's review of Derek Bok's book on p. A10). We've seen first-person accounts of career choices from people who have transitioned from graduate school into jobs they might not otherwise have sought but for the particular conditions that present themselves in the 21st-century academy. We've gotten advice from writers who have solved some of the niggling problems of working efficiently as TAs, such as managing e-mail. In the current issue, we can learn what kind of money a perpetual applicant must shell out just to apply for work.

## About *Forum*

*Forum* is published twice a year by the Committee on Contingent, Adjunct, and Part-Time Faculty (CAP) 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.

Submit your work electronically via e-mail or an e-mail attachment. Address your work to [jmalbert2002@earthlink.net](mailto:jmalbert2002@earthlink.net) and put the words "Forum article" somewhere in your subject line. Submissions should include the following information:

- your name
- your title(s)
- your institution(s)
- home address and phone number; institutional address(es) and phone number(s)
- if applicable, venue(s) where submission was published or presented previously

For additional guidelines or information about *Forum*, contact Janice Albert, *Forum* editor, 565 Bellevue Ave., Suite 1704, Oakland, CA 94610 or phone (510) 839-1140.

It is the policy of NCTE in its journals and other publications to provide a forum for the open discussion of ideas concerning the content and the teaching of English and the language arts. Publicity accorded to any particular point of view does not imply endorsement by the Executive Committee, the Board of Directors, or the membership at large, except in announcements of policy, where such endorsement is clearly specified. Similarly, opinions expressed do not necessarily reflect the views of the editor, the Non-Tenure-Track Faculty Special Interest Group, or the Conference on College Composition and Communication.

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There are issues we've not covered, too. I'd like to read an article on how adjunct status impedes research—how does uncertain access to library resources interfere with the work of necessarily independent scholars? I'd like to hear from someone who has quit a graduate program principally because of today's working conditions—how does that decision feel now? Of course, *Forum* will always welcome accounts of progress in convincing boards and administrations to improve instruction by improving working conditions.

How about you? Do you have a perception, an insight, an experience to share? There may be readers who have wished someone would talk about that very idea. Let me hear from you at [jmalbert2002@earthlink.net](mailto:jmalbert2002@earthlink.net).

## From the Chair

Laurie Delaney, Co-chair, CAP Committee

At CCCC in March, the Committee on Contingent, Adjunct, and Part-time Faculty (CAP) held its annual meeting. I'd like to take this opportunity to report to you what we accomplished at that session and to inform you of our goals for the coming year. Jim McDonald, co-chair of the CAP committee, began by calling our attention to the downsizing of part-time faculty at University of Arizona, University of Texas–Austin, UT–San Antonio, and elsewhere. Much of this downsizing occurs through the elimination of courses in the first-year

writing sequence, as was the case in Florida. As a result, the committee decided to draft a sense of the house motion. It reads:

*“Be it resolved that the CCCC opposes the trend of eliminating first-year writing courses without the input of the faculty who teach those courses.”* This sense of the house motion was subsequently passed at the Annual Business Meeting. We also decided to continue discussion on this important issue by proposing sessions on it at next year’s CCCC. Jim has drafted a panel presentation, and I’ve proposed “Downsizing Writing Programs/Downsizing Writing Faculty” as the topic for next year’s SIG.

As the trend in downsizing suggests, we still have much work to do to end the exploitation of part-time and full-time non-tenure-track faculty. Our committee will continue to explore ways to support contingent faculty and improve job security and working conditions. One way we plan to do this is through our continued support of Campus Equity Week, a national week of action to call attention to the overuse and exploitation of contingent faculty. We are also in the process of revising CCCC’s “Statement of Principles & Standards for Postsecondary Writing Instruction.” To that end, we hope to strengthen the “Wyoming Resolution” (1986) emphasis on creating a set of professional standards and establishing grievance and censure procedures. We hope to return the emphasis to working conditions of contingent faculty rather than tenure.

We also wanted to address what CCCC could do to help part-time faculty take advantage of what CCCC and NCTE have to offer. The issue of the Professional Equity Project was raised by Sandie Barnhouse, our Executive Committee liaison and TYCA Secretary. Our challenge is to get more contingent faculty to attend the conference and make use of the program. Eileen Schell suggested that for next year’s conference, we should contact the California Part-time Faculty Association about participating in the PEP program. Another suggestion was to work toward eliminating the formal nomination process (which requires having a chair or WPA nominate faculty for the PEP grant) and allowing people to self-nominate. In the meantime, please encourage your administration to nominate part-time faculty who would like to attend CCCC. Jim and I also plan to explore lowering the membership and registration fees for part-time faculty. [*Editor’s note:* Since this meeting, we have invited PEP alumnae to contribute to *Forum* through a letter sent from NCTE headquarters.]

Jim has also suggested that we take advantage of regional affiliates of CCCC/ NCTE to help inform people about labor issues. Regional affiliates offer several advantages in that regard. It is less expensive to travel to regional meetings, and

regional meetings allow more opportunity to address local issues that affect labor conditions such as varying legislation on collective bargaining.

*Forum* editor Janice Albert asked the membership to consider ways the newsletter can be strengthened through solicitation of articles via adjunct Web sites and related publications, simultaneous biannual publication in *CCC* and *TETYC*, the archiving of each issue on the NCTE Web site, and the development of a process for rotating the editorship.

Jim moved that *FORUM* be published on the NCTE Web site, and the motion carried. The Committee created a list of names of readers who might help with development of pieces for *FORUM*. Janice agreed to contact NCTE headquarters to draft a process for rotating the editorship.

This is an overview of our meeting and our goals. As always, we are interested in your input. We hope that our committee can serve you and help CCCC and NCTE serve you as well. If you have comments, questions, or suggestions, please feel free to contact one of us: Jim McDonald at [jcm5337@louisiana.edu](mailto:jcm5337@louisiana.edu) or Laurie Delaney at [ldelaney@stark.kent.edu](mailto:ldelaney@stark.kent.edu).

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### **A Solution to the Adjunct Problem**

Scott Oury

Say it isn't so:

- That *if* adjuncts could teach 10 classes (full-time, community college), the yearly wage would be \$22,000 (with no benefits)
- That a high school grad makes \$22,000 (often with benefits)
- That an associate's degree gets you \$30,000
- That a bachelor's gets you over \$40,000

But it *is* so.

Say it isn't so:

- That 700,000 adjuncts nationwide contribute about 10 billion per year to their employers in higher education
- That just in Massachusetts, 4,000 adjuncts contribute 48 million per year to its community colleges
- That adjuncts contribute more than double their wages to the college at which they teach

But it *is* so: these numbers are the difference between adjunct wages and a living wage.

Please tell me that this is not (really) a burden. At least tell me that the burden is shared—by the state, administrators, full-time colleagues, staff, grounds keepers, janitors. But the burden is not shared; it is ours alone. Across our big, beautiful, rich country, adjuncts do half the essential work of higher education: teaching. Everyone *e/se* gets a living wage. (Absurd? Yes.)

Is this not a problem, both for those who are responsible for their entire support and for the rest, who are (also) participating in the ravage of a profession? Is the dismal prospect for a full-time position of little concern? And what of the dismal prospect for health or retirement benefits as the years pass?

For the 10 years that I've been involved with the issue, I've listened to complaints, hurt, anger, and despair; I've watched some of my most committed, talented colleagues leave for other work because they couldn't afford or stand to teach any longer. Most of us have nursed our discontent—then plowed on for the love of the work.

Can we hope for change? In Massachusetts, where I teach, where all community college adjuncts are unionized, where full-time faculty struck for adjuncts during negotiations for one contract and threatened work stoppage for the next—and gained a 100% plus increase over 10 years—in Massachusetts, we have *lost* a little ground in 15 years to cost of living. California has made substantial, hard-won progress. Oregon and Washington have made gains. But throughout the entire midsection of the country, community college adjuncts are making around \$1,500 per course. In New Mexico a couple of years ago, adjuncts got an extra \$15 per course with a doctorate. Adjuncts at 4-year colleges are not doing much better (except for those under union contracts). Over the past 20 or so years, given cost of living increases, we've lost ground, substantially.

What can we hope for? What are we hoping for? Trying to figure out why this country's poor have not revolted against intolerable inequities, some have suggested that the poor expect, before long, to win the lottery (with wonderful and widespread encouragement from media). I imagine a similar scenario is true for most adjunct hangers-on: they dare not speak out about the loaded odds or poor conditions for fear of being ejected, so they wait in silence for their number to come up.

Real change has not come, and is unlikely to come given the prevailing outsourcing mentality (and our inertia). Respecting ongoing actualities, let me suggest, as a solution, a Swiftian change in attitude (or perhaps only a recognition of attitudes we hold short of consciousness). I suggest adopting (or owning) the "OK" attitude. In brief: "academic apartheid" is OK.

- It's OK for those hoping to enter our field and for those working part-time in the field to undergo 3 to 15 years of probation at half a living wage without benefits.
- It's OK, following this probationary period, for just one-third to be inducted; the rest must continue under these conditions—or leave.
- Since *mass exits*, however, will destabilize the profession, it's OK for adjuncts to stay; we hope they will be paid for office hours and advising, and receive cost of living increases on their present wages. Perhaps more, if monies are available.
- Though most adjuncts are well-trained professionals, it's OK not to consider them professionals, or treat them as such, since this could undermine hard-won professional standards.
- It's OK not to show gratitude for financial benefits brought to the profession by adjuncts, because that (again) might undermine the profession.
- It's also OK not to show gratitude for the security that has resulted from this giant buffer between us and “reduction in force.”
- And finally, it's OK to welcome new candidates to the academic lottery.

*Scott Oury has taught English full-time for 23 years: one year at County College of Morris, NJ, 22 years at Triton College, IL; and part-time 12 years: 3 years at Triton College as “professor emeritus,” 7 years part-time at Holyoke Community College, MA, 4 years as ESL Counselor at Amherst College, and 1 year at Mt. Holyoke College teaching composition to “at risk” students. He served on the negotiating team for the last Massachusetts Community College Counsel contract, and as adjunct advocate for several years.*

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### **Book Reviews**

*Steal This University: The Rise of the Corporate University and the Academic Labor Movement*  
edited by Benjamin Johnson, Patrick Kavanaugh, and Kevin Mattson; Routledge, 2003

Reviewed by Nancy Sours

More than 20 years ago, when I was first hired as a lecturer at my current university, many of my colleagues were the wives of doctors, lawyers, and other well-paid professionals. They were dedicated to their students, but money was of secondary concern; one was even overheard to say that she regarded her job much as her mother had viewed volunteer work at the local hospital. Though I also loved teaching, I desperately needed my meager paycheck. I had no idea that I was part

of a national trend, a massive domestic outsourcing movement that was in the process of shifting vast segments of post-secondary teaching onto the shoulders of adjunct faculty and graduate students.

The days when adjunct salaries were regarded as second incomes have long passed. Most of my colleagues today, including those with partners, rely on their paychecks to survive in the over-heated Bay Area housing market, where even studio apartments rent for over \$1000 per month. As a group, we teach close to 100% of the writing classes offered by our English Department. We vote in departmental elections and are represented in the academic senate. Though untenured and invisible to many “real” professors, we view ourselves as career faculty and professional educators, as opposed to the legendary trumpet player from the local symphony who drops by campus one afternoon a week to teach aspiring musicians. Thanks to the work of our union, the California Faculty Association, many of us will stick around long enough to retire with pensions and health benefits.

But, except for our vast numbers, we are hardly typical of non-tenure-track faculty around the country, most of whom labor under far more difficult conditions. *Steal This University*—the title obviously a play on Abbie Hoffman’s 1971 classic *Steal This Book*—is a useful and informative, if somewhat uneven, anthology of articles exploring this tidal wave sweeping over higher education in the U.S. Subtitled “The Rise of the Corporate University and the Academic Labor Market,” the book is divided into three sections. The first addresses subject matter familiar to most readers of *The Chronicle of Higher Education*: the rise of the University of Phoenix and its for-profit kin (Ana Marie Cox); the boosterism around distance learning (David Noble’s well-known “Digital Diploma Mills”); Denise Marie Tanguay’s critique of merit pay; and Benjamin Johnson’s masterful overview of what he calls “the casualization of labor.”

The second section addresses the daily life of the adjunct/graduate student instructor and the retribution in store for those who step out of line. Kevin Mattson (“How I Became a Worker”) refers to his Gen X counterparts as “the contingent labor generation,” noting that “nothing makes you more ironic than being highly overeducated and working some sucky job.” Alexis Moore (“The Art of Work in the Age of the Adjunct”) traces her path from working artist to freeway flyer to union activist. Corey Robin (“Blacklisted and Blue”) charts the oh-so-progressive Yale faculty’s response to a grade strike by graduate assistants, which they characterized as a “terrorist act.” Finally, Joel Westheimer relates his denial of tenure, despite unanimous support from his department and a stellar publications record, after he testified on behalf of NYU graduate students attempting to unionize.

The final section deals with issues of organizing. In “The Campaign for Union Rights at NYU,” Lisa Jessup lays out “how-to” directions for mobilizing community and student support in a successful unionization campaign. Michael Brown, Ronda Copher, and Katy Gray Brown (“Democracy Is an Endless Organizing Drive”) dissect the failure of a similar campaign at the University of Minnesota, stressing that such efforts must build community, not merely win elections, if they are to counter well-run opposition groups bent on destroying coalitions. In “Moving River Barges,” long-time activist Cary Nelson writes of his attempts to pressure the MLA and AAUP to act on contingent faculty issues, while Barbara Gottfried and Gary Zabel (“Social Movement Unionism and Adjunct Faculty Organizing in Boston”) describe efforts to build citywide coalitions of NTT faculty. Finally, Susan Meisenhelder (“Renewing Academic Unions and Democracy at the Same Time”) describes how the California Faculty Association revitalized itself by improving conditions for part-time faculty while enriching the debate about the purpose and future of higher education in this country.

The most impressive of these contributions address the dirty little secret of American life: class. (Or in this case, given the lack of upward mobility, perhaps “caste” would be a better term.) In “The Drain-O of Higher Education,” Benjamin Johnson reveals that we have no accurate statistics for the number of adjuncts in this country: figures range from 200,000–400,000, while most agree that there are more than 200,000 graduate student employees laboring in academia. This has implications for the job market, especially in the humanities and social sciences: of tenure-track faculty slots lost to retirements in the mid-1990s, only one in three has been replaced by a tenure-track hire. He addresses the social costs of this “casualization”: the threat to academic freedom for those who have no job security, the corruption of grading among instructors who rely on student evaluations for their continuing employment, and the social gulf created by this bifurcation, which has divided faculty members into first- and second-class citizens and destroyed collegiality. Tenured professors have little sense of how their less privileged colleagues make do on poverty-level wages.

Robin Corey’s insightful discussion of the 1995 grade strike at Yale (“Blacklisted and Blue”) lays out the lines of demarcation, as allegedly progressive faculty members, products of the 1960s, individuals who have built careers on post-colonialist and gender theory, turned on their graduate students and sabotaged their career prospects with hardly a glance backward. Class enters into this discourse as well. One Yale professor commented on links between the TA union and those representing dining workers and other support staff; Corey notes her assumption that this “subtle appeal” to the faculty’s “delicate, presumably shared sensibilities



would be enough to convince other professors that the TA union ought to be denied a role in the university." He tellingly concludes that, for her, "The professor–student relationship was the critical link in a chain designed to keep dirty people out."

In the end, *Steal This University* suggests some guidelines for campus activists:

We need to stop believing that we belong to a privileged class of people who do "brain work" as opposed to physical labor. *Everyone* deserves to be treated with dignity and respect; *everyone* deserves equal pay for equal work. (Kevin Mattson wryly quotes an employee of Rutgers who asked, before signing a union card, "We're not going to become a part of that labor union that represents the janitors, are we?") In contrast, California Faculty Association members recently hit the picket lines in support of striking grocery workers. In return, if the CFA ever reaches an impasse and initiates a work stoppage, organized labor will be there to stop deliveries and bring the campuses to a halt. We need each other.

We should choose our battles carefully. The University of Phoenix and its ilk are probably here to stay, offering a form of outsourced training for corporations that pick up the tab. Many working toward degrees at such institutions are non-traditional students who would not otherwise attend school at all, while the graduate students are often pursuing quick-fix MBAs. Ana Marie Cox calls for "changes in our political culture that articulate wider civic needs over short-term benefits," a shift that, while desirable, is unlikely to occur under present circumstances. But we can urge legislators to block the loosening of accreditation standards and prevent for-profits from piggybacking off public resources, like university libraries. And we can do our best to prevent this creeping corporatism from invading public sector institutions.

We also need to seek the support of our students. In public institutions like my own, they are shocked to discover that their instructors are not affluent professors with free parking slots and frequent sabbaticals. When classes are deleted from the schedule, students' lives are put on hold. Several years ago on my campus, a number of lecturers with annual contracts were told there would be no work available for them during the spring semester. We mobilized students to sign petitions and stage demonstrations; almost magically, the department found the resources and classes were restored. Clearly, this would prove more difficult in some institutions than others. At elite universities, as Benjamin Johnson notes, the whole point of a degree is to "land you a better job than the poor schmucks who taught your classes."

We should also work in solidarity with those above and below ourselves in the institutional hierarchy. Here in California, a large majority of state university

graduate student employees recently signed union authorization cards to be represented by the United Auto Workers. They deserve our enthusiastic support. In a more controversial move, we should make common cause with tenure-track faculty, who are vulnerable to the same market forces that affect adjuncts. This commonality of purpose may be easier to achieve on my campus, where a 4–4 teaching load isn't conducive to a great sense of privilege. As John Hess has noted in a recent issue of *Academe*, "The corporatized university would like to treat all employees like contingent faculty, and will do so sooner or later if it can."

Like full-time faculty in my department, I currently teach four classes each semester, but I am paid 80% of a full-time salary. Everywhere in the country, contingent faculty continue to be exploited, though the picture is not all bleak. Recently, Western Michigan University agreed to grant tenure to full-time lecturers. While this ignores the problem of part-timers, it is a step in the right direction. In California, despite an excruciating budget crunch, we continue to move forward. Recently, the state university system extended fully funded health benefits to lecturers teaching a .40 course load (two semester classes). In January, an agreement between the union and the university system gave incumbent lecturers "Preference for Available Temporary Work," thus moving existing adjuncts closer to full-time employment. Long-time lecturers (six years or more) now enjoy three-year contracts. And as Susan Meisenhelder has noted in her article, the current CFA contract has eliminated merit pay within the California State University system. Meisenhelder herself was named to the system's Board of Trustees by outgoing Governor Gray Davis, though he rescinded the nomination after strenuous opposition from the Chancellor's office.

The struggle continues.

*Nancy Sours is a lecturer in the English Department at San Francisco State University. She has no problem identifying herself as a member of the working class.*

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*Universities in the Marketplace: The Commercialization of Higher Education*

by Derek Bok, Princeton University Press, 2003

Reviewed by Tom Brown

As a dean responsible for international student programs for nearly 20 years, I recall a long ago meeting with an Academic Vice President who had requested a "cost benefit analysis" of our Intensive English Program. An accountant colleague who had prepared the analysis observed in his report that there were "only" 15–20 students enrolled in each class section, and there were three levels—beginning,

intermediate, and advanced. “Why,” I recall being asked, “can’t we just collapse these three sections into two?” The question revealed an ignorance of the challenges of teaching writing to non-native speakers, and absolutely no evident concern about whether merging the classes was educationally sound, much less in the best interest of students.

Derek Bok’s 2003 book, *Universities in the Marketplace: The Commercialization of Higher Education*, is a powerful, thoughtful, and frank analysis of a higher education environment wherein the “bottom line” increasingly seems to be the only thing that matters. The former Harvard President wonders whether maximizing profits can, or should, be the proper guide for making decisions in the university, as he notes that money adds another reason for “putting selfish interests and private pursuits” above a primary commitment to students and learning. “Profit-seeking can threaten the university’s obligation to give the best possible teaching,” writes Bok, and “the profit motive will lead universities to offer inferior instruction by trading on their reputation and on the gullibility of students.” He acknowledges that his commentary might be criticized as “high-minded arguments” coming as it does from the former president of a top-tier institution that has some \$20 billion in the bank.

As an administrator, I always felt that a simple question should guide most, if not all, institutional actions: “How will students and their learning benefit from the proposed decision?” Bok begins his book with his own questions: Is everything in the university for sale if the price is right? Will institutions compromise their basic values in quest of profits that “may be changing the nature of academic institutions in ways we will come to regret”? Sadly, his answer on both counts is yes—everything is for sale, from school logos to potential advertising space above campus urinals. And, yes, institutions will sacrifice their values, if the price is right, or at least close. Furthermore, Bok believes that there may be little that can be done about increasing commercialization, and he describes a higher education community that shares one characteristic with compulsive gamblers: “There is never enough money.” As the distinguished UCLA educator Alexander Astin observed nearly 20 years ago, higher education institutions and their leaders have come to care more about what they have and what others think about them than they care about what they do for their students and faculty.

While educational institutions may be seen, and may see themselves, as agents of change in American society, it is clear that this is not the case. “Commercialization has plainly taken root in many areas of American life and culture,” Bok intones, and he leaves no doubt but that the weeds of commercialization and commodification have spread to the groves of Academe. Universities now run

“research parks, major sports programs, shopping malls, hotels, restaurants of all sorts” according to the *Chronicle of Higher Education* (January, 2004). Rather than resisting commercialization, many universities, like the world around them, are now trapped on the treadmill of rising expectation, where one can never be too rich or too thin (e.g., incessant “reorganization,” more part-time and non-tenure-track faculty).

Bok is candid and direct in making the case that the best interests of students are often far from the center of institutional decision making. Indeed, it is in his reflections on the excesses of “big time” intercollegiate athletics where Bok’s passion comes through most clearly, as does his stark view of higher education’s misplaced priorities: “American universities, despite their lofty ideals, are not above sacrificing academic values in order to make money.” And Bok does not seem optimistic about the possibility of change, noting that even university presidents have limited power “to reclaim academic values once lucrative commercial practices have won a firm footing.” The best we can hope for in Bok’s view is “to tighten the rules and limit the damage.”

Bok provides a vivid chronicle of the profit seeking that has always been part of American higher education—beginning with land developers and a railroad owner who offered Yale and Harvard students “lavish prizes and unlimited alcohol” in order to use their rowing competition on Lake Winnepesaukee to attract potential investors to southern New Hampshire. He describes college athletics as “the oldest form of commercialization in American higher education.” He paints a dark picture of “a conspiracy to exploit student-athletes by preventing them from being compensated at the full value of their services,” in an environment where the rewards have become so lucrative that colleges and universities “simply will not deny themselves even part of current or future spoils.”

Bok rightly points out that most athletic programs lose money and recounts dismal graduation rates for student athletes. He dismisses as myth the notion that there is any meaningful connection between winning athletics, enhanced institutional reputation, or even increased fundraising. Indeed, he cites examples where increased winning resulted in *decreased* levels of giving. He points out that there is little evidence linking athletic participation to “character building,” and he refers to the majority of research, which finds that athletes do not equal non-athletes in ethical reasoning or moral development. As for the “hoop dreams” fantasy that sports provide educational opportunities for poor and minority youth, Bok suggests that student athletes receive “a different, more impoverished educational experience than that of their classmates,” even as their toil generates million-dollar contracts for coaches and hundreds of millions in revenue for the NCAA, media conglomerates, and others.

When Bok turns his attention to the impact of commercialization on research in higher education, his book sounds a bit like a mass-market thriller. He details the experiences of faculty members left alone to defend themselves against huge pharmaceutical companies displeased with unfavorable findings about their products, while others are subjected to harassment, threats of lawsuits, and conspiracies to ruin their personal and professional reputations—even involving erstwhile colleagues. In a time when the *Chronicle of Higher Education* describes as “political science” efforts to quash findings that are inconsistent with a U.S. President’s views, it is Bok’s judgment that similar tactics by corporate interests “can confuse the public or distort the debate about important issues.” He offers the compelling example of the findings of researchers funded by the U.S. tobacco industry (94% found that passive smoke was not harmful) and those without such ties (only 13% found that passive smoke was not harmful).

Bok clearly understands that higher education depends on a “community of scholars freely sharing their ideas in a common quest for greater knowledge and understanding.” Thus, he expresses a genuine concern about corporate involvements that find faculty members keeping their colleagues and students away from their laboratories, involvements that compel a secrecy that prevents them from sharing their findings, which while normal in a competitive corporate environment is antithetical to the values of higher education. As with athletics, Bok finds a higher education community “willing to cut corners and wink at potential problems in order to gain additional resources.”

When Bok considers profit-making educational programs, he traces the origins of commercialism back to institutions that are now among the “elite.” He describes a correspondence school initiated by the University of Chicago in 1892 and a 1992 Columbia Business School dean acting to open an online educational program at the behest of Michael Milken, who had just been released from prison after serving time for securities law violations. Bok makes a useful distinction between mission-consistent programs, such as those offered in education or business by institutions with solid campus-based programs in these areas, and those developed specifically to generate revenues. He is more hopeful about corporate education programs, whose clients have a greater capacity to make judgments about quality, and he is cautious about Internet and distance education programs. Bok’s concern is that the latter provide students with little or no advising or support services, allow institutions offering them to “give as little feedback and personal attention as [they] can get away with,” and offer none of the kinds of active learning environments that are critical to student growth and achievement.

Some may even find it surprising that a former university president expresses concerns about decision-making processes for these kinds of programs that often

bypass faculty governance, possibly because administrators worry that the faculty might be more concerned about educational quality and student learning than about potential profitability.

I must admit to having to stifle a cynical outburst of laughter when I hear a president saying that s/he doesn't have any power. Nonetheless, we find Bok writing, "Sitting presidents feel that they are trapped in a system they are powerless to change." In discussing the need to reform intercollegiate athletics, Bok contends that "a serious effort in this direction could cost presidents their jobs." So, there it is! In an era when some university presidents' salaries and perks are approaching those of their coaches (including \$100,000 "signing bonuses"), perhaps it is naive to expect courage or risk taking by institutional leaders. Thus, Bok concludes that *throwing the moneychangers from the temple* will have to be the responsibility of "faculty members [who] are in the best position to appreciate academic values and insist on their observance."

According to *Universities in the Marketplace*, colleges and universities have an addiction to money, as well as to the power, prestige, and "reputational excellence" that accrues to those at the top of the higher education hierarchy—whether in the *U.S. News and World Report* rankings, the BCS football standings, or the arms race for the "best, the brightest, and the most." Sadly, it appears that too many institutional leaders have sold their souls "in a world of commerce [that] often comes with a Faustian bargain in which universities have to compromise their basic values to enjoy the rewards of the marketplace."

Apparently, faculty will have to rescue higher education from the threats posed by commercialism and profit seeking. They will have to undertake this monumental task with few tools, even less time, and without much support from administrative leaders, who are actually paid to carry out this role. Bok is encouraging, however, about the willingness of faculty to perform conscientiously even when there are few conventional rewards or recognition. He believes that "faculty can be motivated if the issues seem significant, and they feel they can make a difference." I agree with Bok; the issues are significant and faculty can, and must, act to make *the* difference.

The changes that are needed in higher education will take not years, but generations. It will be a long march and one where success is not assured. Those who care deeply about the future of higher education will have to take comfort and strength from educational leaders and visionaries like UC Berkeley Professor K. Patricia Cross, who has written, "the biggest and longest lasting reform in education will come when individual faculty and small groups begin to see themselves as reformers in their own spheres of influence." The battle for the very soul of the

university depends on the dedication, commitment, and hard work of those who have already lost so much as colleges and universities continue to turn toward the lure of the marketplace and away from the teaching, learning, and research that are at the heart of the mission of American higher education.

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### **TYCA "Fame and Shame" Award Winners**

The Two-Year College English Association (TYCA) has announced the winners of the 2004 Public Image of the Two-Year College "Fame and Shame" Awards.

#### **SHAME WINNER**

***The Fort Worth Star-Telegram:*** In their January 25, 2004, article "Poems from the Edge" about Dr. Cleatus Rattan, Jeff Guinn quotes Dr. Jim Lee: "In our line of work, any junior college is considered Siberia," Lee says, "Most people teaching at them would probably eat wood to get out. But if you stay on a junior college faculty too long, unfairly or not, you establish yourself as a sort of junior-college type. Typically, you never get out of there."

#### **FAME WINNER**

***The Fort Worth Star-Telegram:*** In their February 2, 2004, article "Don't Dish Up That Pine Tree Yet," Dr. Tahita Fulkerson responds, "However, by the time I had read enough of Guinn's article to find my friend Jim Lee's remark that in academia 'any junior college is considered Siberia,' I knew that I had to present another view of professional life at two-year colleges."

The Fame and Shame Awards annually recognize the best and worst mentions of the two-year college appearing in any media during the previous year. Visit the Fame and Shame Awards Web site at [www.ncte.org/groups/tyca/awards/fameshame](http://www.ncte.org/groups/tyca/awards/fameshame) to submit nominations for the 2005 award.

## Reading *CCC*?

Did you know that **FORUM** is also published in the spring issue of **TETYC**?

Here's what you may have missed:

### 5.2 Spring 2002

*Part-time Adjunct Faculty Self-Orientation* by Margo Sassé, Modesto Junior College, CA

*E-Mail 101: Learning to Draw the Line with Undergraduates* by Amy Albert, University of Connecticut, CT

*Overcoming Barriers: Part-time Writing Faculty Contributions at MATC* by Nancy McMahon et al., Madison Area Technical College, WI

### 6.2 Spring 2003

*A Guide to Contingent Faculty Web Sites* by James McDonald, University of Louisiana, LA, and Dorinda Fox, University of Central Florida, FL

*Teenagers, Paperwork, and Really Long Hours, Oh My!* by Eugenia Powell Bryan, Academy of the Sacred Heart, LA

*Downwind from Eden* by Crystal O'Leary, St. Thomas More Catholic High School, LA

*Contingent in California* by Darrell Thompson, English Council of the California Two-Year Colleges, CA

### 7.2 Spring 2004

*Being Open to Opportunity* by Sallyanne Fitzgerald, Napa Valley College, CA

*Teaching: A Lifelong Seminar* by Heidi Ramirez, Hartnell College, CA

*Teaching the Captive Audience* by Kathleen Brooks, University of Findlay, OH

Plus **reviews** of *Academic Keywords: A Devil's Dictionary for Higher Education* by Cary Nelson and Stephen Watt (Routledge, 1999), *Losing the Race: Self-Sabotage in Black America* by John H. McWhorter (The Free Press, 2000), *Teacher: The One Who Made the Difference* by Mark Edmundson (Vintage, 2003)

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