

# FORUM

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### From the Editor

Janice Albert

*FORUM* offers college-level faculty an opportunity to discuss adjunct issues in several ways. We welcome first-person accounts that reflect on conditions within the profession and offer pointers or insights helpful to others. From time to time, we are fortunate to receive a contribution from someone who is examining the adjunct condition in a dispassionate manner. We also comb booklists for titles that address larger issues in order to present reviews by faculty equipped to evaluate what they see. This issue offers examples of these three types of contributions in the work of Gloria McMillan, John Dern, Stephanie Roach, and Doug Larson. *FORUM* welcomes your comments and your contributions to future issues.

### From the Co-chair

James McDonald

My thoughts for this issue of *FORUM* are all about using conferences to organize faculty.

In August 2004, I attended the sixth Conference on Contingent Academic Labor (COCAL) in Chicago. This was my first experience at a conference entirely devoted to panels and workshops where we analyzed the labor of part-time faculty in higher education, discussed legislation affecting their working conditions, and reported on and planned organizational efforts of faculty. The meetings were highlighted by a march through downtown Chicago to present five colleges and

## 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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universities with report cards on their treatment of contingent faculty. It was instructive and inspiring to listen to activists in the contingent faculty movement from Canada, Mexico, and the U.S., and to sit down with them to work out ideas for addressing labor problems. You can find a report on the conference and copies of many of the presentations at [www.chicagococal.org/index-cocal6.html](http://www.chicagococal.org/index-cocal6.html), and I recommend this Web site as a resource for anyone interested in organizing faculty to improve working conditions for contingent faculty.

This year, our own 2005 CCCC Convention in San Francisco will include a number of sessions that directly address labor issues and the situations of contingent faculty, including a session on organizing contingent and tenure-track faculty in support of improving part-time faculty working conditions. Look for the table of the Committee on Contingent, Adjunct, and Part-time Faculty (CAP) in the exhibit hall where you can pick up a schedule of these sessions and other material. As always, the CAP Committee will be sponsoring a SIG Thursday evening where we will share information about contingent faculty and organizing efforts and discuss the work of the CAP Committee itself. This is an opportunity for contingent faculty and others interested in labor issues to meet each other, renew acquaintances, and join a network of experts and supporters working on getting better salaries, benefits, job security, and working conditions for non-tenure-track faculty.

Contingent faculty who attend the CCCC Convention are eligible for a CCCC Profes-

sional Equity Project (PEP) grant, which includes paid registration to the convention, \$150 to help defray expenses, and a coupon for a year's membership in CCCC. Contingent faculty living within driving distance of the convention have an excellent opportunity to get a PEP grant, which can cover a significant portion of convention expenses. I hope to meet PEP recipients and other contingent faculty attending the CCCC Convention for the first time at the annual Newcomer's Breakfast on Thursday morning. Even if it is too late to take advantage of the PEP program for the 2005 convention by the time you read this column, please keep the PEP program in mind for the 2006 convention. You can apply for a PEP grant—or nominate someone for a PEP grant—at the NCTE Web site ([www.ncte.org](http://www.ncte.org)).

Finally, the CAP Committee is beginning to collect information to learn how local, state, and regional associations, especially those affiliated with NCTE, CCCC, and TYCA, are supporting contingent faculty. The conferences of local and regional associations are usually easier and cheaper for contingent faculty to attend regularly; they also make it easier for contingent faculty to assume leadership positions and for faculty to develop effective networks for supporting improvements in working conditions. The meetings and publications of these associations often provide opportunities for faculty and graduate students to share information about working conditions and to discuss political and organizational strategies that are appropriate to local situations. The CAP Committee wants to find out about what's going on in your state or regional association regarding contingent faculty—efforts to attract contingent faculty to join the association and to take leadership roles, uses of conferences and publications to address labor issues, and attempts to use the association to organize faculty. E-mail me at [jcm5337@louisiana.edu](mailto:jcm5337@louisiana.edu) with information about your association, and I'll give a summary of the information that I collect. We'll use this information to try to do more to encourage and support regional associations to address part-time faculty working conditions.

### **Academic Quality: The Adjunct Writing Faculty Survey Project**

Gloria McMillan

*Without "good" stories to rely on, no minority or marginalized majority has a chance to change its status, or, more importantly, to identify and question the "bad" tales that create it.*

—Susan Miller, *Textual Carnivals*

Rhetorical situation: How do adjuncts' working conditions impact the quality of their teaching? The Adjunct Writing Faculty Survey is a national survey of condi-

tions of, and attitudes about, college adjunct writing faculty. The survey gained the sponsorship of the Working Class Culture and Pedagogy SIG of the CCCCs in 2004. Already underway for two years, its annual goal is to solicit 1000 anonymous replies nationwide and 50 to 100 identified replies as a control group for validation. The survey will be a longitudinal, five-year data-gathering project.

The Adjunct Writing Faculty Survey enters our disciplinary conversation at a time when little can be stated with any degree of accuracy about the day-to-day work life of adjunct faculty across the country. This is not just about their numbers—we know those are huge and growing—but we seek to shine a light on attitudes and conditions. Generalizations are often made when the topic of adjunct writing faculty is approached in departmental meetings, but virtually all these remarks find their bases in second-hand reports, hearsay, or anecdotal lore. A literature review of available research on adjunct writing faculty revealed that there have been few studies of attitudes toward adjunct writing faculty and the conditions under which they labor. One case study that does provide valuable insights is Eileen Schell's *Gypsy Academics and Mother-teachers*. But such studies as Schell's do not claim to sample opinion; they only create a rich narrative based upon selected cases of what conditions are for adjunct writing faculty and how these conditions affect their teaching. She concludes, "We also need an accurate and broad survey of the working conditions of writing faculty—especially those who work off the tenure track" (120).

A review of the literature reveals that there have been surveys of numbers of each academic rank and also of salaries at various institutions, such as the U.S. Department of Education Office of Educational Research and Improvement's Profile of Part-time Faculty: 1998. The American Historical Association also set forth to document how the staffing of part-time faculty was endangering "the next generation" of scholarly professionals and students in "Who Is Teaching in U.S. College Classrooms? A Collaborative Study of Undergraduate Faculty," Fall 1999. But there have been no studies of those day-to-day conditions that affect the quality of teaching by adjuncts.

In contrast to these former surveys, the goal of the Adjunct Writing Faculty Survey Project is to design an instrument for surveying two dimensions of replies that can provide foundational data for making claims about attitudes and conditions regarding adjunct faculty. A sampling of attitudes and conditions across the country will better enable adjuncts and their representatives to "push the envelope" to improve adjunct faculty working conditions, perceptions, and ability to teach effectively.

Format: This year's survey marks the final form of this instrument after the pilot. Only slight changes will now be made that will not affect longitudinal comparisons. The current survey may be found at <<http://DakotaCom.net/~glomc/forms/Adj04.html>>.

Help on revision came from a volunteer development team of CCCC members. These changes have resulted in a survey that now can detect differences in answers regarding both full-time and adjunct conditions. This will make the survey more valid as a measure of program or departmental decision-making because the prior version only traced attitudes and working conditions of adjuncts.

Results of statistical measures: The replies of the three demographic groups (administrators, full-time faculty, adjuncts) yielded changed replies from pilot to this year in some items. Statistically significant shifts in answer patterns on items q15, q17, q19, and q29 have been noted between 2002 and 2003. These shifts prove that a longitudinal study will uncover more differences over a range of years that could point to a general shift in attitude or a trend. The use of identified answers from a small group of adjuncts and full-time faculty will prevent the skewing of replies, if it can be shown that the pattern of replies of the larger group parallels that of verified representatives of the different ranks. Thus, the 2003 survey would seem to be more reliable and valid in its current form.

Usefulness: The weakest data area in the survey up to 2004 was the number of administrators participating. Statistical analysis will be more robust and generalizable when more administrators participate. This increased number of administrators' replies will strengthen their T-test and Chi square scores and make their replies able to be generalized for the larger population in the field. In addition, content analysis of the q40 long answers was begun in 2004. Content analysis and concept mapping will enable students of adjunct conditions and attitudes to see trends and relative weights of various attitudes between ranks and across years.

Increasing the usefulness and validity of the overall survey will not require massive increases of numbers of replies so much as it will require making the survey more accessible/equally accessible both to those who use computers and those who use them rarely or not at all. The next major work will lie in increasing the methods of disseminating this survey. Our goal is 1000 replies per year, which is attainable. The issue of self-selection via computer use is an important one that the investigator does not wish to minimize, but, at the same time, there are always some areas in which a data-gathering device falls short of the ideal. The investigator hopes to make as many improvements in dissemination as in the actual construction of the survey.

Once improvements are made and the survey is able to capture a representative sampling of the larger population of adjunct faculty, this foundational research should help administrators and adjunct faculty as they work toward better working conditions via improved communication and valid data for decision making.

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## **The Cost of Applying: The Hidden Fees Associated with Submitting Dossiers**

John A. Dern

Adjunct instructors encounter many hurdles as they search for full-time academic employment. The poor job market, the possibility of having to move—perhaps across the country or even out of the country—and the different expectations of search committees are just a few of the impediments. As an adjunct who has been searching for a full-time position in English, I have contended for years with the first and the last of these hurdles, having chosen for the moment to screen out jobs that would require moving.

Still, I live in a region replete with academic institutions, so I have had numerous opportunities to submit my dossier. In fact, I probably have responded to more than sixty advertisements over the last six years, each submission costing me somewhere between \$1.00 and \$12.00. Indeed, therein lies another variable of which search committees should take note: the applicant's potential cost in dollars to compile and send out a dossier.

Admittedly, many search committees ask initially for no more than a letter of application and a curriculum vitae. Such a request usually amounts to no more than two or three ounces and costs about 83 cents to mail. For a preliminary screening, it seems to me that a letter and a vitae should suffice. In fact, I would think that search committees themselves would be able to complete an initial screening more quickly if they had fewer documents to review. After this review, they could request additional materials from the best candidates.

Some academics agree. For instance, Kathleen Mulroy, director of the Lourdes Library at Gwynedd-Mercy College in Pennsylvania, notes that she does not request supporting documentation, including letters of recommendation and transcripts, until well into a search process *precisely* because of the reasons mentioned above. James McDonald, University of Louisiana at Lafayette and CAP Committee co-chair, believes that an initial request for an abundance of supporting documentation is justified only when the search committee has a very short time to do its job, perhaps a month or two. Advertisements for positions in English, he observes, “tend to attract dozens of applications, and who can read all the material beyond the [vitae], letter of application, and perhaps a handful of recommendations?”

However, some search committees request a range of additional items, including official transcripts, teaching evaluations, a writing sample, a research plan, and possibly other documentation. For instance, two advertisements for positions in English, both posted in the last year or so, called for the following: the first asked for the letter, the vitae, the transcripts, and the letters of recommendation; the second requested all of the above in addition to a writing sample of approximately 10 pages.

Now consider the cost to respond to each of these advertisements. I can print the letter of application and the vitae from the computer for pennies, but one of my graduate institutions charges \$6.00 per transcript. The other institution, happily, sends out transcripts free of charge. The first, however, also charges me \$3.00 for each set of letters of recommendation from my dossier, which remains on file. The cost, then, of responding to the first advertisement would be more than \$10.00. The second response would cost about 46 cents more for postage because of the writing sample. In the end, the combined cost of the two responses would be about \$21.00.

Based on these examples, I can conclude that responding to a mere ten advertisements with similar requests would cost me more than \$100.00. Fifty such responses would cost me more than \$500.00. That’s \$500.00 from an adjunct whose academic salary barely reaches a gross of \$10,000 per year for teaching five courses. Thus, the cost of applying for full-time academic positions is a consideration for me because of my limited income.

To be fair, though, search committees have legitimate reasons for requesting certain materials, such as transcripts and letters of recommendation. Rosemary Feal, executive director of the Modern Language Association, points out that “from a hiring department’s and institution’s point of view, the search for a new faculty member” represents a significant financial investment in terms of the search itself and the institution’s subsequent commitment to its new employee. Institutions, she adds, have a legitimate interest “in establishing the integrity of the statements applicants make and the materials they submit.”

At what point, however, should search committees request supporting documentation? According to Feal, the MLA does not suggest that official transcripts, for instance, necessarily be part of an initial screening. The MLA’s position “is not that official transcripts should be but rather that they may be part of the initial screening.” In fact, section III, paragraph 2 of the MLA’s “Advice to Search Committees and Job Seekers on Faculty Recruitment and Hiring” states the following: “For the purpose of [an] initial screening, a letter of application and dossier should normally suffice.” (In the preceding paragraph, the document defines a dossier as inclusive of a letter of application, a curriculum vitae, transcript(s), and letters of recommendation.) Nowhere does it say that the transcripts should be official. Still, Feal also notes that a photocopy does not “accomplish all that an original does for screening purposes.”

Nevertheless, search committees should consider allowing applicants to submit photocopies of transcripts for initial screenings if they decide that they simply must have transcripts in some form at the time of application. A recent search committee at the University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown even noted the option of sending photocopied transcripts in its advertisement. In fact, McDonald believes that most search committees will accept unofficial transcripts even if an advertisement requests official transcripts. “The applicant,” he explains, “can usually send an unofficial copy with a brief explanation that this saves time and expense.” He adds, however, that the applicant obviously has to be willing to forward official transcripts at a future date. Sallyanne Fitzgerald, Vice President of Instruction at Napa Valley College in California, takes McDonald’s belief a step further: “I have never heard of original transcripts being required for the application although they may be preferred. Usually, the applicant must submit originals to be hired, but not in the application.”

What McDonald says doubtlessly holds true at many schools. Fitzgerald, too, adds an important point: many advertisements do not specifically request “official” transcripts. However, even McDonald concedes that some search committees may drop an applicant from consideration “for rather arbitrary reasons,” such as a missing transcript or a missing letter of recommendation. Because an applicant can ill-afford to make a mistake in his or her initial application, I maintain that an

applicant simply cannot assume that he or she may submit unofficial transcripts unless an advertisement, such as the one posted by the University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown, specifically mentions the option.

Just as search committees can realize that certain elements of an applicant's dossier may be an expense, applicants can help themselves lessen the costs of a job search. Such costs, for instance, may be tax deductible. According to a spokesperson for the Internal Revenue Service, a job seeker can deduct costs associated with a job search as long as he or she itemizes deductions and the total of the miscellaneous deductions goes beyond a floor of 2 percent of the adjusted gross income. In general, the filer can deduct any amount that exceeds the 2% floor. Also, applicants may request that a department refund the costs associated with submitting duplicate materials. The MLA's "Policy on Reimbursement" advises that "departments that require multiple copies of writing samples and other application materials from job applicants reimburse applicants for the cost of duplicating their writing samples and other materials."

In short, both search committees and job seekers should be mindful of each other's position and should work to find ways to reduce the cost of applying.

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## Book Reviews

*Tenured Bosses and Disposable Teachers: Writing Instruction in the Managed University*  
 edited by Marc Bousquet, Tony Scott, and Leo Parascondola, Southern Illinois UP, 2004  
 Reviewed by Stephanie Roach

This edited collection greatly expands the June 2001 *Workplace: A Journal for Academic Labor* special topics discussion on labor issues in writing programs. The collection includes a "Foreword" by Randy Martin, "Introduction" by Marc Bousquet, "Afterword" by Gary Rhoades, and twenty-two contributions—two collaboratively authored and one each from editors Bousquet, Scott, and Parascondola—that lead off three of the book's four sections. "The collection," as Marc Bousquet describes it, "explores the nature, extent, and economics of the managed-labor problem in composition" from a variety of perspectives.

While the book's back jacket text suggests that the twenty-six contributors "explore a range of real-world *solutions* to managerial domination of the composition workplace" (emphasis mine), Bousquet's take on the work of the contributors as a whole is probably more accurate: they "ask tough questions." Given the kind

of data available about what “disposable teachers” get, and, more often, don’t get on the job, and given what James Thomas Zebroski calls composition’s relative quiet in the more visible and traditionally valued outlets of the discipline in regard to class and labor, there are, in fact, “tough questions” to be asked, even if—or, perhaps, especially if—there are no ready answers. The questions in this volume focus on “the relationship of workplace practices in higher education to the service economy more generally, the consequences of managerialism for the politics of rhet-comp scholarship, and the effect of corporatization on the nature of the literacy disseminated in composition classrooms.” The result is a complex, philosophical, and groundedly theoretical discussion of the topics that also name the four major parts of the book: *Disciplinary and Capitalist Ideology*, *Putting Labor First*, *Critiques of Managerialism*, and *Pedagogy and Possibility*.

The intention of this book reveals itself in Bousquet’s characterization of the kinds of questions being asked about service economy, the politics of scholarship, and the corporatization of literacy. Telling, too, is that the very headings under which such questions fall emphasize doctrine, theory, and isms wherein “pedagogy” focuses more on the function and subject position of the teacher rather than acts of teaching and learning. Thus, on the whole, this book seems to me to be more *about* “disposable teachers” than *for* them, and it is far less about writing instruction than it is about the disciplinary function and managerial nature of writing programs and higher education. In quoting James Sledd, Walter Jacobsohn’s contribution may help explain why the book focuses less on the teaching of writing and more on the managed university: “‘there can be no revolution in the *teaching* of writing until the exploitation of teachers is ended’” (199, emphasis in the original). That first need of focusing on exploitation and the exploited may explain why “Part Two: Putting Labor First” and “Part Three: Critiques of Managerialism” are the strongest and most coherent sections, and why “Part One: Disciplinary and Capitalist Ideology,” whose chapters individually imagine the end of exploitation, and “Part Four: Pedagogy and Possibility,” whose chapters individually imagine waiting revolutions, are less cohesive, more multivalent sections.

It should be noted, as Donald Lazere is quick to point out, that implementing some of the dreams and imaginings of this collection “depends on several favorable conditions for instructors” (255)—conditions which too often don’t exist. Much of what’s imagined in *Tenured Bosses*, then, depends on the eradication of the several unfavorable conditions that the collection investigates. Even as the book brings these unfavorable conditions sharply into focus, the contributors offer solutions and dreams that many are not yet in a position to realize. There may be some frustration in offering dreams of revolutionary change for the state and practice of writing instruction to readers who know and live the current conditions that make realizing such dreams impossible. Yet there is some hope in the tireless advocacy for better

labor practices that these dreams embody. As Steve Parks reminds us through the poetry of Yeats, “in dreams begin responsibilities” (129).

*Tenured Bosses* encourages us to consider not only “our responsibility to bring alive the dream of a writing program connected to economic issues,” but also “our responsibility to instantiating the dream of economic justice” more generally (Parks 130). *Tenured Bosses* takes writing instruction in the managed university as the occasion for its broader charge, what Gary Rhoades names in the “Afterword,” “Educating for Literacy,” by which he often means citizenry, and “Working for Dignity.” If “rhet-comp is the canary in the mine for the academy more generally,” then *Tenured Bosses* uses writing instruction synecdochically to discuss issues of class and the questions of what we value and how we measure it, important concerns particularly as the academy has become more and more “managed.”

It is perhaps a testament to Randy Martin’s *Chalk Lines: The Politics of Work in the Managed University* (Duke UP, 1998), including Gary Rhoades and Sheila Slaughter’s “Academic Capitalism, Managed Professionals, and Supply-Side Higher Education” that cogently defined the practices of the managed university, as well as Gary Rhoades’s own *Managed Professionals: Unionized Faculty and Restructuring Academic Labor* (SUNY P, 1998), that the introduction to *Tenured Bosses* does not define the “managed university.” Bousquet, Scott, and Parascondola, frequent contributors to conversations on academic labor in general, must see this volume rooted deeply enough in the conversation that “managed university” has become one of the terms of the discourse that is, like “abolitionist” or “fyc” (see Rhoades 257), fully known to insiders. However, those who are less familiar with the scholarly discourse of academic labor might feel initially disoriented entering a collection without an introduction that puts the discourse of managed academic labor in context, particularly when all the pieces of the collection, though far from jargon-laden, do share some common vocabulary. Readers should know that *Tenured Bosses* is most certainly not a primer of the issues or discourse of academic labor in the managed university.

Also, because the book focuses specifically on the politics of work in the writing programs of the managed university, some readers may want more of an introduction that frames the significance of writing itself in this context. Randy Martin suggests in the “Foreword” that “The work of literacy that acknowledges the politics of its own labors and the possibilities for managing its different ways of being is best positioned as a portal to all this world has become,” and other contributions specifically address the nature of writing—“it is writing’s very incapacity to be . . . contained that sustains people’s engagements with teaching it, studying it, doing it” (Hendricks 98); “writing is part of a collective moment” (Parks 125)—but rather than frame a more general conceptual space for the function of writing and writing instruction, or its relationship to the idea of the managed university,

Bousquet's "Introduction: Does a 'Good Job Market in Composition' Help Composition Labor?" plays out the juxtaposition of "tenured bosses" and "disposable teachers" according to his own agenda.

Bousquet's focusing question in the "Introduction" mainly serves to set up a claim that his "Composition as a Management Science," the lead-off contribution to *Tenured Bosses* (a gingerly revised reprint of his 2002 *JAC* article "Composition as a Management Science: Toward a University without a WPA"), confirms: the position of the writing program administrator somewhat monolithically contributes to the "failure of the labor struggle." Since I serve my university as both a writing teacher and writing program administrator, I admit I am disposed to be somewhat adverse to what Zebroski calls "the baggage of Bousquet," his adamant advocating that "WPA discourse is the core, stable, given, subjectivity in composition and must be removed" (437). Yet even if I agreed with Bousquet less reservedly that the "unhappiness" of both "tenured bosses" and "disposable teachers" "can be measured by their distance from the same benchmark: traditional faculty work," the problem with contextualizing the whole of *Tenured Bosses* squarely within the wheelhouse of Bousquet's own scholarship against the WPA is that the "Introduction" does not do justice to the complicated and varied conceptual space that the book as a whole inhabits. In fact, various contributions argue directly with Bousquet's vision of the WPA as the enemy vanguard, and Bill Hendricks's essay, "Making a Place for Labor: Composition and Unions" which leads off "Part Two: Putting Labor First," questions the very way Bousquet frames the struggle: "Is the struggle really between composition teachers on one side, hierarchy and hierarchs on the other?" (Hendricks 95).

*Tenured Bosses* offers a far more complex argument about labor in composition than whether or not "getting tenure will more and more nakedly mean: being a manager" (Bousquet "Introduction" 4). Much of the book questions the very concept of tenure and the traditional ways we have understood boss-compositionists (see especially Hendricks), non-tenure track lines (see contribution by Lauter), and the seeming economic inevitability of "part-time exploitation" (Jacobsohn 196). *Tenured Bosses* questions the disciplinary standards we may too often rely on to value our work. In "Global Capitalism, Scientific Management, and Disciplinary English," David B. Downing argues that, "Disciplinary criteria will, for example, more highly value an expository article *about* a highly playful and innovative performative literacy event . . . at the local writing center but not the event itself" (66). This questioning of what we value and how we measure it is threaded throughout the book (see, among others, contributions by Hendricks, Thelin and Beroncini, Godley and Trainor, Rhoades). The suggestion is that you get what you measure, and, unfortunately, what we measure doesn't always reflect what, or all that, we value.

The question of how we change entrenched systems of valuation leads the collection to questions of leadership: How do we define leadership? What should it look like? In the context of a common struggle, what does it do? What does leadership for academic labor mean? Who is charged with it? What is the work of leadership in collective action? *Tenured Bosses* investigates the nature and function of leadership, but what is never questioned is the necessity of leadership. In summing up the collection, Rhoades points to the intersection between leadership, academic labor, and composition: "Compositionists are involved in work that is central to the basic functions of a democratic, capitalist society and are in a position in their daily work as individual professionals, as well as in their collective activity as organized employees, to engage in various forms of advocacy to publicize and democratize organizations, social relations, and education" (268). Rhoades reminds us that the work of compositionists, of writing, of the academy at large is remarkable, and it is in the closing paragraphs of Rhoades's "Afterword" that threads and themes unsupported by the "Introduction," yet explored from diverse perspectives in each section, pull together with satisfaction.

Changing current labor practice is important because, as Rhoades argues, "Academics need to reassert and extend their involvement in regard to the scope and configuration of curricula and in the colleges and universities in which they work, not simply as specialists and advocates of particular fields but as educators with a central role in defining curricula" (266). Typically, only tenure track faculty and "bosses" have been held to account for this kind of university work. Moreover, the managed university has not only encouraged the abdication of this work among the tenure track, but has made it less and less possible for a more collective involvement of all academic labor in that work. At its core, the insidiousness of the managed university is that it undermines the very idea of what university work is. It is clear, then, as this volume suggests and the pages of *FORUM* have often suggested, that for the success of the academic labor struggle, the tenure-track need to take a look at their own behavior, and all teachers must understand their work beyond the walls of their individual classrooms. To maintain the power and sacredness of the university, "tenured bosses" and "disposable teachers" alike must begin to unmanage the university. The contributions to *Tenured Bosses* help imagine leadership that would make this possible.

*Tenured Bosses* is a book that univocally agitates for change while speaking in several voices about what necessitates change, what change might look like, and what questions change brings. Although the collection doesn't always offer "real-world solutions," the fact that it asks "tough questions" is important; from learning how to think, we come to know how to act. *Tenured Bosses* is a collection of critical meditations on and scholarly critiques of the politics of labor, the connection between economics and literacy, the disciplinary assumptions, and the

subjectivities of teachers and administrators in higher education that thwart, yet are baffled by, successful organizing. While giving voice to those who have or aspire to lives as organizers, *Tenured Bosses* is less the kind of collection of “organizer” and “organizing narratives” that *Chalk Lines* seemed to be (Bousquet “Academic” pars. 1.2, 1.3). Still, the tough questions being asked are not just academic. If *Chalk Lines* “gives hope for academic activism both in terms of clarity and specificity” (Henn par. 2), then *Tenured Bosses* gives hope that serious, even traditionally valued, scholarly conversation can clarify the questions of academic labor and inspire and support university-specific activism.

From adjunctnation.com to the MTV Shop (yes, that MTV) to reviews in our best journals, *Tenured Bosses and Disposable Teachers: Writing Instruction in the Managed University* is getting press. Bousquet, Scott, and Parascondola’s collection is not an easy, leisurely, or comfortable read. But that’s the point: the book is provocative. For the sake of teachers, writing, students, and higher education, get the collection and get reading, get provoked and get questioning, get allies and get active.

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*A Writer Teaches Writing*, Rev. 2nd ed.  
by Donald M. Murray; Thomson/Heinle, 2004.  
Reviewed by Douglas Larson

I began teaching writing while attending the Iowa Writers’ Workshop. Between the writing students’ lounge and Rhetoric classrooms, I would pass “DON’T BE A

WRITER—WRITE” spray-painted in huge black letters halfway down the hallway. But the tensions between being a writer and actually writing aren’t as simple as that writerly advice suggests. For one thing, I needed to teach writing. As a beginner balancing roles of writing and teaching, I would have greatly benefited from reading Donald Murray’s *A Writer Teaches Writing*, a guidebook for teachers entering or practicing the demanding profession of composition instruction.

For those who haven’t heard the good news, writing can be taught, and writing teachers can be developed. Inexperience does not mean inability, and this is the crux of the message to writing teachers and their students. As you might have guessed from the title, Murray accomplishes these feats by teaching from the authoritative standpoint of being a professional writer. His willingness to reveal his own writing process anchors the practice he preaches. Although it may be customary for many of us nowadays to teach writing as a process, and almost every writing teacher will have some familiarity with the methods Murray describes—generating student writing for discussion, workshops, peer editing, conferences, etc.—it’s his emphasis on his role as an active writer that distinguishes his approach. In class, he produces new writing alongside his students who are drafting, processing criticism, and revising drafts. A prolific writer, Murray opens up his process of writing for all to see, teaching by showing.

Those who favor other means of instruction might dismiss the book itself as a telling lecture, but Murray tempers his evangelical zeal with well-placed reminders that each teacher will have to discover—or uncover—what works best through experience (in the meantime, however, here are 750 things you can do right now!). Although he pitches the book mostly towards new writing teachers, anyone interested in the sources, explanations, activities, and difficulties of teaching writing as a process will certainly benefit from the abundance of ideas, suggestions, and feedback generated by his experience. Which new teacher wouldn’t scrutinize all of chapter 4, “The First Hour of the First Day”? More experienced teachers will find new activities or old ones refreshed in chapters devoted to conference techniques, peer editing tactics, and solutions to a slew of common teaching and writing problems. Two of the final chapters are set up in a FAQ format, in which Murray handles questions writing teachers, new or seasoned, might ask themselves, as well as questions others—students, colleagues, administrators—might ask of them. Questions vary from the general “Can writing be taught?” to more specific queries like “How long should conferences be?”

Despite all the wonderful material here, gathered over 20 years, this reprint doesn’t fully meet its own standards. For a writer and teacher of writing who values the ongoing process of multiple drafts, keeping things fresh (Murray boasts of immediately throwing away notes for successful classes because he doesn’t want to contaminate future classes that will have their own needs), and writing from

abundance (he emphasizes that “[one] can’t write writing” and that one needs to gather information in order to communicate), Murray has given us a verbatim reiteration of the 1984 book, adding only a two-page preface that lauds the book’s status as an historical document.

The problem isn’t simply one of editing, although this book needs it. Murray occasionally repeats himself pointlessly. On page 76 we are instructed, “You should write too, under the same conditions—on the board or in your notebook—and share your writing first. It’s a matter of ethics.” And on the very next page we get, “When there is a text . . . that text should be shared. Teacher goes first. That is an ethical question.” Arguing for the adoption of word processing over typing had value in 1984, but much of that material now seems superfluous: “A poor typist can type quickly on the machine [computer] and then clean up errors easily later.” Historical or quaint or passé—you decide.

The greater problem is he hasn’t revised this book. Though Murray extols the virtues of keeping things fresh through drafts and revision, the book lacks the last twenty years of his honing, thinking, processing. Why has he stopped the process of inquiry at 1984? With the blossoming of the Information Age, some of the questions teachers may now ask themselves aren’t covered. How can we inspire students to uncover their unique voices in an age when essays can be stored, copied, and downloaded with ease? Given the history and offerings of the book, it seems stuck between drafts, keeping us wanting more. Ultimately, he leaves being a writer and becoming a teacher to the imagination. But perhaps that’s what we’re meant to extrapolate.

Teachers can see Murray’s emphasis on opening the process in his thoughts and approaches to several institutional matters: he deplores that many who do great work in writing labs and centers do not receive the full academic status given other teachers. How might English departments react to an adjunct wishing to implement some of Murray’s ideas? Although he doesn’t ask this question specifically, the book does acknowledge generally the various climates of academic institutions and offers suggestions for any teacher seeking to create new approaches, all of which entail sharing credit with colleagues and administrators and working towards a more mutually enriched teaching, writing, and research environment.

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