



Using SPI or SRFI to Compare Faculty Teaching Effectiveness: Is it Statistically Appropriate?

By Jen-Ting Wang, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Statistics, Department of Mathematics, Computer Science, and Statistics



Backgrounds and Problems of Faculty Evaluation through SRFI

For the past few months, the new instrument for measuring teaching effectiveness known as SRFI (Student Response to Faculty Instruction), has been widely discussed among faculty members on campus and implemented in the Senate. After reviewing some of the available documents, I am compelled to address some concerns about the proposed instrument. As a statistician with a Ph.D. in Statistics and over 10 years of experience teaching and consulting in Statistics, I'd like to express my concerns regarding SRFI from the statistical point of view.

When the SPI was first implemented on campus over 20 years ago, the main purpose was to provide faculty with feedback on their teaching. It was not to be incorporated into the evaluation of faculty teaching for re-appointment, tenure, promotion, or DSI. For some reason, it has now become one of the most important assessment tools, if not the primary one, for evaluating teaching effectiveness. Furthermore, teaching effectiveness is often reduced to only one number -- the mean score, which has been mistakenly used for comparative analyses of faculty members' teaching effectiveness. It is also often being misinterpreted that, for example, one faculty member with an overall mean score of 3.8 has better teaching effectiveness than another faculty member with 3.7. Is the SPI or SRFI a valid, effective, or fair measurement for teaching effectiveness?

First of all, it is simply not possible to scientifically compare two faculty members' teaching effectiveness. There are too many extraneous and uncontrollable confounding variables whose effects on SPIs cannot be disaggregated from teaching effectiveness. These include: student's academic background, motivation, a faculty's accent or physical appearance, grading scale, class size and dynamic, course subject, etc.

Let us suppose that, hypothetically, under a well-controlled experiment, we are using an assumed perfect instrument to compare two course sections taught by two identical robots, who deliver the same teaching pedagogy in the same manner at the same time with the same course assessment methods. Will the two robots receive exactly the same scores? Of course not! The differences on the instruments are obviously not due to the difference of teaching but the variability of other variables – including for example, the students themselves and their preferences. So, is it appropriate to conclude that one robot teaches better in one class than in the other simply because of a higher mean? Faculty members are not robots; human variation (nonteaching related) unintentionally contributes to the variations of teaching evaluative scores. Hence, when comparing the scores of faculty members, the differences in the statistics include not only the difference of their actual teaching but also much other variables that cannot be measured but should not be excluded. It is not even appropriate to compare SPIs of one faculty member's teaching in different courses, not to mention to compare SPIs of different faculty members across varying courses. The controlled variables in the evaluative instrument cannot be statistically controlled adequately. The confounding variables prevent one from accurately comparing one faculty member to another. Therefore, even with a perfect teaching evaluation instrument, the SPI results can only be served as a reference at best.

Secondly, the instrument that measures teaching effectiveness, SPI or SRFI, may not be accurate. Let's just focus on SRFI here. The items on SRFI were created based solely upon a large-scaled study shown in Feldman (2007) and have not been sufficiently validated. Notice that in the study, the results were reported according to data collected many decades ago (23 studies: 1920s-1, 1950s-1, 1960s-8, and 1970s-13). Since then, the student population has changed, and the students' needs may have also changed. Is it still appropriate to follow these old recommendations? Furthermore, pilot studies were conducted in Fall 2009 and in Spring 2010. The instructors who participated in the pilot study were not randomly chosen but voluntarily selected; therefore the sample is likely to be biased from the beginning. The participating instructors may share some common characteristics which may yield biased results, (e.g., lack of sufficient international faculty or assistant professor participation). Any statistical conclusions drawn from a biased sample may be incorrect or meaningless. Therefore, any generalizations made based on a potentially biased sample should be regarded unwisely hasty. Now, let's assume that the sample was not too biased. SRFI is reported with no significant differences between teaching effectiveness and the course level, class size, and/or gender, which contradicts many other studies (Abrami *et al*, 1982; Dunkin and Barnes, 1986; Marsh and Ware, 1982; Naftulin *et al*, 1973; Perry *et al*, 1979; Rubin and Smith, 1990). Even Kenneth Feldman (1986) himself showed that professors' personalities affect students' ratings of overall teaching effectiveness. Moreover, the SRFI sample sizes are considerably small. (Of the 42 classes in Fall '09, 26 were taught by females and 16 by males; of the 33 classes in Spring '10, 19 were taught by females and 14 by males.) Since instructors in a semester teach multiple courses, they might have included all of them in the study or might even participated in both semesters for the pilot study. When the sample size is small, it is usually not easy to conclude statistical significance, but it does not mean that there is no true difference. With such a small and biased sample we cannot generalize that there is no significance in terms of the course level, class size, gender, or other variables.

Another concern is the use of bar graphs of means to compare the scores of the teaching effectiveness within the department, college, and/or course level being included in a set format in the faculty's dossier for continuing ap-

pointment and tenure considerations. Further, reporting of means and standard deviations is not appropriate because the responses in SRFI items are ordinal rather than interval level data (Strongly Disagree-Strongly Agree) and therefore, the differences cannot be quantified properly. This is disturbing because a Personnel Committee or the Deans Advisory Committees that are not trained to interpret data will misinterpret the information and use the means to rank faculty. From the earlier discussions in this article, I stated that we cannot compare the mean scores and cannot use them to compare faculty members.

So What Can be Done?

At best, we can only report frequencies and/or percentages for each item, if not using open-ended answers. Although the teaching evaluations are not solely based on SRFI/SPI data, on this campus, they seem to be weighted much higher than peer-evaluations or self-evaluations. The bottom line is that a faculty member cannot be summarized into one number that represents his/her entire teaching effectiveness; unfortunately this is how it is being used at SUNY Oneonta.

These are some issues with which I have significant concerns. As a statistician, I clearly see that statistics are being misused and abused in the name of evaluating faculty teaching. The evidence used to validate SRFI as a scientifically-sound instrument is not appropriately obtained (small-sized, biased sample) and the statistical conclusions (no difference reported in gender and course level) are likely to be flawed. We want SUNY Oneonta to be a competitive college that provides our students with the highest possible quality of education. In order to do so, instructors and administrators need to first have a much better understanding and interpretation of statistical results.

Peter Sacks (1997) described his view: "Once employed as an innocuous tool for feedback about teaching, student surveys have evolved into surveillance and control devices for decisions about tenure and promotion. Add the consumeristic and entertainment values of the culture beyond academe and the result can be ugly: pandering teachers doing what's necessary to keep their student consumers satisfied and their jobs secure."

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Center for Academic Development & Enrichment: CADE

By Bill Simons, Chapter President

[Editor's Note: This article is part of a continuing *Sentinel* series featuring the many excellent programs and departments that comprise SUNY College at Oneonta.]



The Center for Academic Development & Enrichment (CADE) constitutes an important College resource for students and faculty. Domiciled on the second floor of Alumni Hall, CADE includes the Learning Center and the Writing Center.

Fourteen dedicated and highly-trained members of the UUP bargaining unit comprise the Center's professional tutoring staff, including the Center's Interim Coordinator, Amy Crouse-Powers. CADE professional staff participates actively in state and national associations within their field. Many of them are longtime employees of the College. CADE specialists provide services integral to the academic success of many of our students.

CADE serves a wide and diverse student population. CADE, for example, administers the College-mandated writing exam, which all students take before graduation. Students with pending grades due to difficulties with course writing requirements come to the Center. Many faculty refer students to CADE for course-specific reasons. The Center offers tutoring in content and skills, fostering effective learning strategies. Numbers of international students have found CADE essential to acquiring reading and writing facility in English. CADE also provides support for those with learning disabilities. Some of the College's best and brightest students were, at some point, CADE participants. CADE turns struggling students into successful students. CADE listens to students and confronts their individual problems. Many of the Center's students have augmented their task-specific learning skills and fashioned viable study environments. Through CADE, a plethora of students have attained notable developmental gains.

CADE's professional tutors also provide courses. Developmental courses in writing and math prepare underprepared students for introductory courses. CADE's various courses in reading and study skills equip students with the critical thinking and success skills they need to be able to become engaged learners who can set and achieve goals in college and in life.

CADE has a high success rate. Due to CADE, students have gained skills and mastered content that enabled them to complete courses and take on new disciplinary challenges. Numbers have gone on to make the Dean's List and garner other honors.

The College has attained impressive retention and graduation rates, and CADE has provided important ballast to those achievements. Working with the professional staff at the Center, numerous students acquire tools for success. CADE has allowed many students to graduate within four years, rather than needing additional time to earn a degree. These outcomes are substantial and significant, and never more so than now.

Labor-Management Meeting Summary Notes: January 24, 2011

For Management: President Nancy Kleniewski and Lisa Wenck, Senior Executive Employee Services Officer

For Labor: President Bill Simons and Vice President for Academics Rob Compton

The Meeting commenced at 3 PM.

I. UUP and Management discussed the Budget's implications for the College. Twenty-three searches are going forward at the College. Release of the Governor's proposed budget would soon take place. It was also noted that the Chancellor is seeking to implement a new funding formula.

II. UUP asked if there were, at present, any Planning Groups for Retrenchment or Deactivation of Programs. Management responded, at present, that there are no Planning Groups for Retrenchment or Deactivation of Programs.

III. UUP and Management shared perspectives on the Chancellor's "State of the State University" presentation and discussed issues of the Chancellor's main points pertaining to public-private partnerships, backroom consolidation of services, and SUNY as an economic engine.

IV. UUP noted provisions pertaining to UUP representation and consultation on the creation and revisions of the Workplace Violence Policy (NYCCR 800.6). Management stated that it would contact the appropriate agents to discuss UUP concerns and legal requirements.

V. Management will craft a memorandum, to be discussed, concerning employee observance of religious holidays.

VI. Management provided an update on the Provost Search.

VII. Management and UUP discussed SRFI resolutions coming from the Senate. Management indicated that the President has approved the first of those resolutions. UUP stated that adoption of SRFI would pertain to terms and conditions of employment, and that terms and conditions entail Labor-Management negotiations.

VIII. UUP and Management discussed the Summer 4-Day Work Week (5 Days Work in 4 Days) for UUP Professionals and Librarians for Summer 2011. Management agrees in principle that this is a good idea, but more examination is required prior to implementation. Management noted that it is not on the table for Summer 2011.

IX. UUP asked about "page 25 of the Faculty Handbook Course Reductions" Management noted that for Fall 2010, there were two reductions. One in Political Science and another in Women and Gender Studies. For the Spring of 2011, there were eight reductions: English 2, History 1, Chemistry 1, HUEC 2, Music 1, and Education 1.

X. CADE and the committee formed to examine tutoring were noted.

XI. Management stated that SUNY has asked for a new Master Plan for Facilities and that input will be solicited in the future.

The Meeting adjourned at 4:10 PM.

Advocacy Update

By Gina L. Keel, Academic Delegate and Outreach Representative

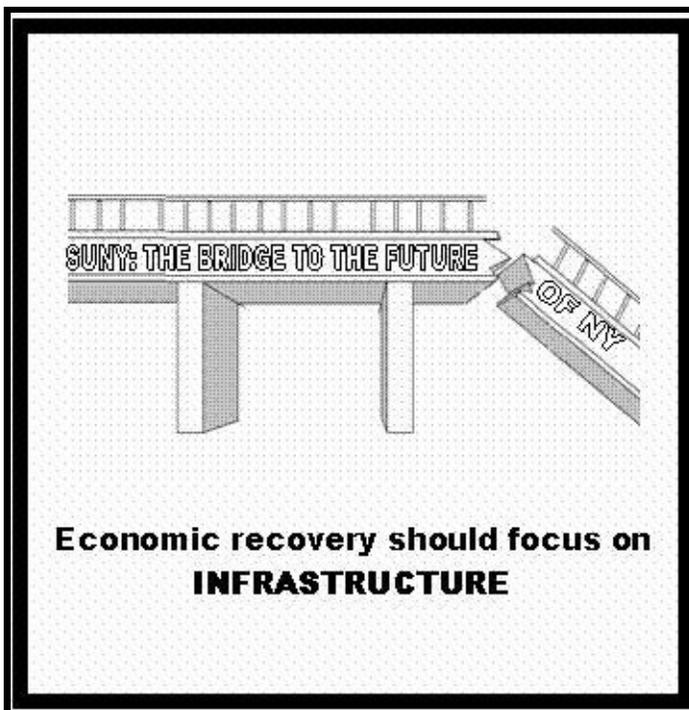


Over the past two and a half years, state funding for SUNY's state operated campuses has been cut by over \$580 million, or 25% of SUNY's total operating budget.

Your union, its leaders, and representatives to the statewide Outreach Committee will be fighting to prevent further cuts to SUNY in the next budget. UUP leaders have begun lobbying in Albany and district offices; other tactics including coalition building, media campaigns and protest marches may be required as well. On Tuesdays UUP representatives will be in Albany talking to state legislators from every district to advocate for SUNY. Please contact me, Delegate Fred Miller, or Chapter President Bill Simons if you want to participate in Albany or district advocacy visits.

These are dire times, and it is our mission and our jobs at stake. It is critical that we all contribute to SUNY advocacy efforts to oppose big funding cuts, oppose threats to UUP-negotiated pay raises, and oppose privatization efforts that threaten our SUNY mission. When you get an action alert contact legislators or when asked to donate to VOTE COPE to fund advocacy activities, remember your interests and our shared mission and please take action.

Together we must persuade our elected officials to support us now. It is critical not only for student access and our jobs. Only through strategic investment in innovative education can we meet social and economic challenges in this state, nation and world.



SUNY: The Bridge to the Future

*By Fred Miller, Outreach Representative
and Academic Delegate*

Disability Issues – Is it still a disability if no one sees it?

By Dawn Hamlin, Disabilities Officer



Dawn Hamlin

We as a society have come a long way in our understanding, acceptance, and appreciation of others with disabilities. A quick note here - I prefer the term exceptionalities – as it encompasses the dichotomous nature of the field of Special Education, addressing the issues of both those considered gifted and those considered disabled (and even those rare few who are ‘twice exceptional’).

Thanks to ADA and IDEA much has been done to improve civil rights and accessibility for individuals with disabilities across the country, if not necessarily here on campus. Think about it - while the hills here in Oneonta may indeed be beautiful, the never ending stairs on campus could make it difficult for someone with physical disabilities to get around. Portrayals in film and even comic strips (think of ‘April’ in the *For Better or Worse* strip) have raised awareness and compassion for many people with exceptionalities. Often these media representations of disability focus on the easily observable; those with obvious physical impairments such as Muscular Dystrophy or Cerebral Palsy, Downs’ Syndrome, and hearing or visual impairments.

Unfortunately this compassion and understanding seems to evaporate when the person who is exceptional has a ‘hidden’ disability. Some of my own acquaintances who are the epitome of acceptance when it comes to racial, gender, or socio-economic diversity have faltered when faced with the ‘unseen’. These well intentioned people are considerate and cordial to those with observable impairments, easily making accommodations for mobility issues and adapted physical needs. However this summer I witnessed these same folks make a quick rush to judge and find fault with a young man who struggles with Asperger’s. My friends were unaware that ‘Robert’ has a disability that makes typical social situations challenging. When a discussion became too complex ‘Robert’ turned and walked away – muttering softly and focused on the ground. “Wow – isn’t he incredibly rude” was the comment I first heard after Robert’s abrupt departure. If only that was the first time I heard comments like that maybe I wouldn’t be so concerned, but in my experience it happens all too frequently- especially for those whose disabilities remain masked at first glance.

Statistically speaking, there are more individuals served under IDEA with these ‘hidden’ disabilities than there are for the obvious impairments that I mentioned previously. These people ‘pass’ as normal but may be struggling with a vast array of issues such as anxiety disorders, mild learning disabilities, attention deficit disorder, traumatic brain injury, hemophilia, or even cancer. Some individuals may even be unaware that they have a disability, especially if they were not ‘bad enough’ to fit certain diagnostic criteria (i.e. learning disabilities) or only matched a few but not all criteria (as is often the case for girls with ADD).

We are still quick to make assumptions or judge others based solely on physical appearance. This hasty condemnation can make someone with a hidden disability seem standoffish, stubborn, disorganized, or even lazy – when in fact that person may actually be handling their impairments comparatively well. My hope is that someday soon people will learn to stop and question – is there something else that might be going on here? It just takes a minute, and may mean a world of difference to someone struggling with the unseen.

You and the UUP Contract

[Editor's Note: The contract information below previously appeared in the UUP Potsdam newsletter and is republished with permission].

The UUP Contract has specific provisions that address benefits, grievances, notices of discipline, and processes for evaluation and review. A copy of the contract can be found at <http://www.uupinfo.org/contract/contract.html>, or you can get a paper copy in the UUP Chapter Office. The SUNY Policies of the Board of Trustees is at: http://www.suny.edu/Board_of_Trustees/PDF/Policies.pdf.

For example:

- Deadline for filing a grievance under Article 19 (Discipline) is 10 working days.
- Deadline for filing other contract grievances (Article 7) is 45 calendar days.
- As a professional, your first performance program should be in place within 45 days from initial appointment.
- Formal evaluation by your supervisor is conducted annually.
- New, reviewed, and/or revised performance programs should be done annually.
- Employee request for review of an unsatisfactory evaluation is 10 working days.
- Article 9 ensures that faculty members are protected for their academic freedom within the law.
- Basic salaries, raises and discretionary salary increases are spelled out in Article 20.
- There are several statewide joint labor-management committees that assist employees with funding in many areas: Affirmative Action, Employment and Retraining, Health and Safety, Professional Development (such as Individual Development Awards), Technology and Campus Grants. These are listed in Article 21.
- Leaves and attendance issues are covered under Article 23.
- Personnel files are maintained in Human Resources at Potsdam. The process and what can and cannot appear in your personnel file are described in Article 31.
- Reviews, evaluations and job security can be found in a few places in the contract. You should note in particular if you are an academic or professional, and if you are asking for promotion, salary increases, term renewal or continuing/permanent appointment. See Article 33, as well as Appendix A-28.
- Retrenchment procedures are covered in Article 35. There is an extensive process involved in retrenchment, and the union has worked very hard to make sure this is a last option for Management to utilize.
- Health insurance benefits are negotiated between the state and UUP. The benefits are outlined in Article 39 on Health Insurance.
- Free tuition benefits are provided for the employee on a space available basis (Article 49).
- Leaves for pregnancy, childbirth, adoption and child care are described under Appendix A-42.
- This and much more are covered by the contract! If you have any questions, please contact the chapter office and we would be glad to go over anything in the contract with you. It may not look like light reading, but the contract is what protects each of you as employees of the bargaining unit.

Myths and Realities of Grants

By Barry Gell, Director of Research and Sponsored Programs, SUNY Cobleskill

[Editor's Note: This article originally appeared in *The Unity*, the newsletter of UUP Cobleskill. It is republished with the permission of author Barry Gell and *Unity* editor Jennifer M Schorf and UUP Cobleskill President Clifford D. DaVis.]

Diminishing state support for higher education is an unfortunate reality in New York State. University faculty and staff must find ways to conduct activities on shoe-string budgets or face the prospect of eliminating programs or personnel. External funding from private foundations, or state and federal agencies can help alleviate the pain, but many faculty and staff find the grant process to be overly complex and complicated. Below are some commonly stated reasons why faculty and staff may not pursue grant funding and why their concerns may or may not be justified.

1. Grants Are Just for Research

A common misperception among university faculty and staff is that grants are solely a vehicle to obtain external funding to support research within their discipline. While some federal granting agencies, such as the National Institutes of Health (NIH), are almost exclusively focused on a research agenda, many state and federal agencies, such as the National Science Foundation (NSF), operate grant programs for both research and non-research activities. Non-research activities include education, curriculum development, planning, seed or start-up funding, technical assistance and equipment. The most common type of non-research grant is a program grant. Program grants are usually focused on activities to reach a desired goal, such as conducting workshops or developing educational materials to increase knowledge about a specific subject matter within a target population. Grants are not just for research.

2. Grants are Difficult to Obtain

While it is true that on average only 12 – 20% of submitted grants are funded, somebody has to get the grant, right? Obtaining grants can sometimes be a game of numbers; the more you submit, the greater your chances of getting funded. Most granting agencies will provide written or oral feedback to unsuccessful applicants. A wise applicant will utilize this feedback to improve subsequent applications and achieve success. “Three times is a charm” is the common phrase used to explain this phenomenon.

3. National and Highly Competitive Grants go to the “Chosen Few”

Many individuals believe that grants go to the needy. While this is true in some cases, grants usually go to those individuals and organizations who are most capable of conducting the research or program successfully. While it is often difficult to break into the “inner circle,” perseverance and attention to detail does pay off in the long run.

4. Grants are Hard to Write

Federal and state RFAs (Requests for Applications) can be 100 pages long and full of complex programmatic and statutory language. Grants.gov application packages contain multiple sections and forms, and for the novice, can

Myths and Realities of Grants (continued)

appear overwhelming. This is where your office of Grants and Sponsored Programs can help. Faculty can concentrate on doing what they do best – preparing the narrative (what you propose to do), while your Sponsored Programs office can do what they do best – ensuring that the application is complete and submitted on time.

5. Grants are Difficult to Manage

SUNY campuses are fortunate to have the personnel and expertise of the SUNY Research Foundation to manage the contractual and fiscal components of sponsored awards. Most campuses have staff dedicated to managing your award so faculty and staff can concentrate on the research or program.

Tips for Getting Started

Think of grants as a long-term investment rather than a short-term solution. Here are some ways to begin to prepare yourself for becoming more involved with grants.

1. **Know your field.** Be aware of the current science, innovative programs and the direction your field is going. A great way to do this is to get involved with your professional association and read journals and newsletters in your discipline.
2. **Know the Common Funders:** Learn who the foundation, state or federal agency is that funds projects in your field. When you read an article about a project, take note of what agency or organization funded the project and find out what else they have funded.
3. **Talk with colleagues.** Ask colleagues what agency or organization funded their program and the name of the program officer. Call the program officer to pitch your idea and be open to feedback.
4. **Partner with established investigators.** Being a collaborator or co-Principal Investigator on a project gives you a definite advantage when submitting future grants.
5. **Register with a campus grant notification system.** There are literally 1,000's of grant opportunities available every week. Your Office of Sponsored Programs cannot possibly review every opportunity you may be interested in. Most SUNY campuses subscribe to a grant notification system like InfoEd or Community of Science. Register with these systems to get automated emails of grant opportunities meeting your areas of interest delivered to your inbox.
6. **Register with a faculty expertise database.** Grant notification systems also have robust faculty expertise databases that detail your area of expertise and can list (and often link to) your professional publications. These databases allow investigators across SUNY and the country to search out potential collaborators. You may have the knowledge and expertise that a Principal Investigator from another institution needs to complete his/her project. This is an easy way to get your name out there.



Conchucos or 200 Square Miles of Solitude

By Miguel León, UUP Representative, State Latino Concerns Committee

A famous Peruvian historian Pablo Macera said that Peru as a nation is still a work in progress. According to him, Peru might become a nation in 50 or 70 years. In a sense, every nation is an unfinished project, especially in the sense that it is constantly defining and redefining itself. Why is the Peruvian nation still an unfinished product? One of the reasons is the competing and sometimes antagonistic cultural, ethnic and linguistic identities of Peruvians. I believe that most Peruvians do not have a clear idea of this impressive diversity within their own nation. Most Peruvians are familiar with their regional and immediate cultures. In reality, Peru is the most diverse country in South America with Quechua, Aymara, European, Mestizo (Mixed Spanish-Native Peruvian), Asian, African and Amazonian populations. Regional and ethnic cultures are still a very important factor and variable for understanding Peru. In this article, I would like to reflect on this idea of regional culture and its role in Peruvian society. The region that I am going to use as an example is the Conchucos region, a small region in the northern highlands of Peru of approximately 200 square miles which is relatively close to Lima, the capital of Peru. (See map).

Geographically the region can be divided into three high altitude valleys. In two of these high altitude valleys, the Yanamayo and Puchca, most towns are 11,000 feet above sea level. Even though the region is close to Lima, the region is locked by the massive *Cordillera Blanca*, a system of snow-covered mountains, which rise above 20,000 feet above sea level. This geographic location has kept Conchucos in isolation until the 1950s when the Peruvian state was able to build a tunnel to connect Conchucos with other neighbor valleys and Lima but the road is still very precarious. On the other hand, this isolation and its landscape makes Conchucos a mysterious place filled with spectacular sights of the cordillera, turquoise lakes and Andean puna (See picture) which resembles the landscape of Tibet. This type of landscape definitively gives Conchucos its unique character. When I travel through this landscape I cannot avoid feeling a sense of solitude and “orphanhood.”



Map of Ancash and Conchucos Region on the Eastern Part

My parents are from the Conchucos region so I have a direct knowledge of the area through them. My parents migrated to Lima in the 1940s and all but one of their children were born in Lima. They make a religious annual trip to their hometown Chacas, which is the capital of the province Asunción, one of the provinces of the Conchucos region. They speak Quechua from Conchucos which is a distinct Quechua dialect. To give an idea of how distinct this Quechua is, my parents cannot speak in Quechua with other Quechua speakers in other regions of the country, es-

Conchucos or 200 Square Miles of Solitude (continued)

pecially those from Southern Peru. Even though most Conchucans speak Quechua they also speak Spanish, an indicator of the profound *mestizaje* of the area. *Mestizaje* can be defined tentatively, at least for Peru, as a blending of the Spanish and Andean cultures and the creation of a new one as a consequence of the mutual influence of both.



The spectacular site of Chavin, dated 800-200 BC and located also in Conchucos, gives this area a unique importance that archaeologists are slowly uncovering. Until the discovery of Caral, it was thought that Chavin was the mother civilization of the Andes. Although today most archaeologists do not give Chavin that preeminence, they still point out its singularity and its unique architecture, art and pottery.

The rugged topography of Conchucos also provides beautiful peaceful lakes such as Puruhuay Lake in Huari, Conchucos

The high altitude landscape has large areas suitable for grazing livestock especially sheep, cows and goats. During Pre-Hispanic and colonial times, Conchucos was a center of livestock. In colonial times in particular, the Spaniards created a center of textile production in the area based on textile workshops or obrajes as they were called in Spanish. The textile production was sold all over Peru and the success continued after the Peruvian republic was created.

Another aspect which gives Conchucos its unique personality is the mining industry. The mineral wealth of the area has attracted the Incas, the Spaniards and many other European immigrants such as English, German, Polish and especially Italian to the area which has created another kind of *mestizaje*. My grandmother married, after my grandfather died, an Italian immigrant who came to work in the mines. The region has experienced several mining booms throughout its history, including the most recent one that started in the 1990s and continues into the present.



Typical landscape of the puna in Conchucos

Another interesting characteristic of this region is its food. People from Conchucos have a unique cuisine that includes unique ways of cooking maize and tubers. If there is something that my parents have not given up of their regional identity is their cooking and traditional dishes. Growing up in a middle class neighborhood in Lima made me realize how different my diet was from the ones of my classmates and friends. For example, cooking and eating guinea pig or *cuy* (in Quechua) is a very important tradition in my family. I recall inviting a friend to dine with us and seeing his shocking facial expression when my mother began slaughtering guinea pigs in my kitchen!! *Cuy* has been an important part of Peruvian highlander's diet for more than 5,000 years.

Conchucos or 200 Square Miles of Solitude (continued)

In closing, slowly but steadily regional identities in Peru are being assimilated into an evolving Peruvian mainstream which is inevitable because of modernization and globalization. However, it is important that this process does not bring a total eradication of regional identities as the inevitable assimilation into the capitalist globalized system continues, but that on the contrary, the process of nation building safeguards this wonderful mosaic of Peruvian identities providing a unique trajectory of development for the Peruvian nation.



Chavin de Huantar. Reconstruction of the Archaeological Site.



Publish or Perish: The Power of Book Reviews and How to Use Them Effectively

By Beth Kallman Werner, Founder and President of Author Connections, LLC



Why are book reviews important? An author should never be the only one singing the praises of their work. Positive reviews can be powerful testimonials to the value of a book. Such testimonials (when coming from honest, unbiased sources) help readers decide which titles they want to purchase, so promotion of good reviews can help to increase book sales.

With more than 700,000 new titles expected in 2011, every book faces tremendous competition. Even within the niche sectors of nonfiction, readers rely on book reviews as they seek credible experts on specific topics of interest.

Book reviews can help to:

- boost exposure for an up and coming author
- verify and enhance credibility for an author
- promote a new title from an established author
- revive a previously published title
- attract attention from agents, publishers and media execs
- support marketing efforts in advertising, press kits, online promotions, interviews, trailers
- pinpoint areas the author may want to revisit and work on

Publish or Perish: The Power of Book Reviews and How to Use Them Effectively (continued)

Reviews are a key element in any successful author/book marketing strategy. In the past, the supply chain of the publishing industry was a fairly clear and limited path. Authors were represented by agents who pitched new books to traditional publishers and acquisition editors. Once an author and their book were picked up by an agent/publisher, marketing and reviews became the responsibility of the house or imprint, and the publicity team assigned to the title. Reviews obtained (when positive) would then be promoted to traditional distribution channels - such as bookstore chains, independent (“indie”) booksellers and libraries.

Today’s world has vastly expanded beyond this traditional model. Publishers have smaller (and sometimes NO) budgets to support new titles, unless they are forecasted as blockbusters of the season. Authors are forced to take on much more marketing responsibility to increase sales for their own books. Digital communications and online distribution channels have shifted book marketing from targeting only stores and libraries to DTR (Direct-to-Reader) promotion for increased sales.

Now that consumers buy books in many different ways (in stores, online, downloads to Kindle and/or iPad), reviews from peers and fellow book-loving consumers are just as important as traditional book review brands. Word of mouth is always the most powerful marketing tool, with recommendations from friends and family largely influencing book buying habits.

Authors and publishers use reviews differently for eBooks going directly to eReaders vs. printing reviews on back covers of print editions for placement on store shelves. As everything in the publishing world continues to shift and evolve, the role and impact of book reviews continues to evolve as well. If a book has already been published, even if it was published years ago, a new/current review can help to revive it and bring new attention to older titles. Some of the best ways to use a book review:

- 1) Promote strong points and best quotes from as many credible sources as possible. (Be mindful of target audiences: large and indie sellers, individual consumer readers, book clubs, librarians, special interest associations).
- 2) Print book review quotes on jacket covers or feature in opening pages of eBooks.
- 3) Quote reviews in book interviews, during podcasts, at opening and closing of book trailers.
- 4) Add book reviews to an author’s press kit, website, blogsite.
- 5) Include with query letters sent to agents and publishers.
- 6) Promote to gain attention from entertainment media and event producers for speaking engagements.
- 7) Quote reviews on the author’s LinkedIn, Twitter and Facebook pages.

Finally, collect reviews only from honest, unbiased sources – not friends and family. When an author or publisher can promote a book with positive quotes from respected sources, the power of that book’s marketing is multiplied. Be sure to consider the target audience without limiting multi-media channels that may reach those readers. Reviews are an essential piece of any book promotion program. For more information go to www.authorconnections.com.

[Beth Kallman Werner attended SUNY Oneonta from Sept 1985 - May 1987.]

Health Plans To Protect Pets and Our Wallets!

By Mona L. Hughes, Oneonta Chapter Benefits Chair

Our pets are family members. We love them and want to protect them in the same manner we would a child or spouse, but often the high costs of treatments at a Veterinarian's office is overwhelming. Wanting the best care for an aging or ill pet is not always in the budget and that often means doing less for our beloved and faithful friends than what we would like to do.

Now there is a solution for members to the high cost of pet care that will help take the worry out of affording quality pet care. Two AFT+ Member Benefits programs are now available to help defray costs and were announced in the *Voice*, October 2010, by Doreen Bango, Manager of Member Services and Benefits, Albany.

For as low as \$11.95 a month, AFT+ pet insurance can help defray the costs of large unexpected veterinary expenses. Policies include older pets, and accident-only coverage plus more. For information on these policies, phone **(866) 473-7387**.



Pet Assure, another AFT+ plan offers another type of veterinary care benefit. Members can enjoy a 25 percent savings at participating veterinarians on preventive care, shots, lab work, surgery, x-rays, medication and more. All pets including horses, exotic pets, and even older pets can be covered under this plan. For information on Pet Assure, phone **(888) 789-7387** and use **Code UP2003**.

For those of you who use the Community Veterinarian Center on State Highway 7 here in Oneonta, you will be pleased to know that when I checked with them on their participation in these programs, I was told they definitely accept these programs when caring for your pets. If you use another veterinarian service, it is important that you confirm their participation in these programs before purchasing a plan. For more information on pet plans or on any other AFT+ program, go to the AFT website: **www.aft.org/benefits**.

UUP College and Community IV Forum: Monday, February 7, Noon, Le Café, Morris

UUP Oneonta will host a College and Community IV Forum on Monday, February 7, 2011, at Noon, in Le Café, Morris Hall. The College and Community IV Forum will be open to all members of the College and Community. UUP Oneonta Membership Officer Hanfu Mi will coordinate the forum and serve as its moderator. The distinguished panel includes: Dr. Joanne Curran, Associate Dean of Education of SUNY-Oneonta; Peter Livshin, Superintendent of Milford Central School District; Nick Savin, District Superintendent of ONC BOCES; and Mike Shea, Superintendent of Oneonta City School District.

The focus of the panel will entail exploration of existing and possible future collaboration between the College and the public schools so that SUNY-Oneonta education candidates and public school K-12 students will all receive the highest possible quality of education. The role of the community will also receive consideration. Following formal remarks by the panelists, a discussion period will invite audience questions and comments. UUP will provide a complimentary union lunch.

Consider the Fulbright: Working through the Maze

By Rob Compton, Vice President for Academics

Over the past couple of years, quite a few colleagues have asked me about the process for applying, obtaining, and completing a Fulbright experience. For a relatively small and primarily teaching institution, the College at Oneonta does have its fair share of Fulbrighters amongst our midst. There are many kinds of Fulbright programs, each with a somewhat different application process, expectations and purpose. In this article, I will focus on three types of Fulbright programs that colleagues on this campus have successfully applied for and completed.

First, there are more than 8000 Fulbright recipients per year. The programs are administered by the US Department of State and provide teaching, learning, and research opportunities abroad. It also can provide a student or faculty from abroad the opportunity to teach, study, and research in the US. Recently, as far as I am aware, the following at this college have been awarded Fulbrights (I apologize if I missed anyone:

Fulbright Traditional Scholars (involves a semester or a year abroad researching and/or teaching)

<http://www.iie.org/fulbright>

- William Ashbaugh (Japan)
- Robert Compton (Zimbabwe)
- Sunil Labroo (India)

Fulbright Specialists (involves project oriented teaching and collaboration of up to 42 days)

<http://www.cies.org/specialists/>

- Thomas Horvath (Hungary)

Fulbright-Hays Group Projects Abroad (four to six weeks focused travel and research)

<http://www2.ed.gov/programs/iegpsgpa/index.html>

- Karen Joest (South Africa)

One of the functions of a Fulbright alumnus is to support others who are interested in the programs and to help publicize the benefits of the program. The three programs above focus on faculty and certain professionals. While there are programs for College administrators and students, they are not a part of my focus in this article.

Applications Process

The application process for a Fulbright is tedious, lengthy, and computerized. Each has its own website as noted above. I urge you to check out the websites and start the process as early as possible. Competition for the best

placements is quite high, but I can assure you that full or part-time status, a lack of institutional affiliation, or type of tertiary institution does not seem to negatively impact your chances greatly. The quality of the application, the references, and the fact that you thought things out carefully are very important.



First, I want to point something out that increases your chances for a Fulbright, if you have not had one in the past. Recently, the rules have changed so that no single scholar can have more than the equivalent of two Fulbrights in a life-time. There are also other time specific requirements. The Traditional Scholar experience counts as “one” Fulbright regardless of length (one or two semesters). The other two count as ½ of a Fulbright. The only way you can get more than two of these three Fulbrights is through a waiver program. Recently, the only two countries that provided this waiver for applications were Indonesia and Pakistan. In the past I recall that Mongolia was one of them too.

Let me speak about each of the three Fulbright programs briefly. Your selection odds for the Traditional Program increase if you have developed strong long-term connections with scholars and others in the host country. A letter of support from someone at the host institution is helpful. Your application is evaluated in the US and at the host country through the US Embassy and the hosting institution. Each process will take considerable time. Dr. Labroo has actually sat on the Evaluation Team. From my personal experience, they examine the viability of the project very carefully. Every year a catalog that specifies the subject areas and geographic areas of need comes out. Some Fulbrights are not specific to a country but to a region based on topic (e.g., public health in Southern Africa). Some countries are more popular than others, however, popular countries (e.g., Western Europe, Japan, and Australia) have more slots. They also generally tend to have more competition. These are things that you cannot control.

The Specialist Program is geared toward teaching seminars and intensive courses or engaging in projects over a period of a few weeks. After you apply, you may be selected onto the Specialist Roster for a five year period. Then an institution must request your “services.” Again it helps if you have connections abroad. Some people who are on the roster are never utilized. This program also has stipulations in terms of frequency of postings (please review the website carefully). These projects must be geared toward institutions of higher learning.

The Fulbright-Hays program is useful for learning a lot about a subject quickly and on site. It also is useful for organizing a group of scholars or teachers for short term study tours. The program for post-secondary instructors has a very small window for application and there are only two or three countries to choose from. Competition can be quite stiff, depending on the destination. In the past, some destinations have been the Persian Gulf states,

South Africa, China, and Senegal.

Conclusion

I would like SUNY Oneonta to become the college with the highest ratio of Fulbrighters relative to overall faculty in the entire SUNY system. We have the resources. The Grants Office is helpful in looking over the application. Dr. Joest has been a pioneer in creating a campus based Fulbright Committee. Furthermore, there are now quite a few Fulbrighters on this campus that you can use as a resource and sounding board. So what are you waiting for? Adventures are awaiting, so get strategizing and applying.



The New Frontier at 50



By Bill Simons, Chapter President

Time is a bullet train, and the 1960s are history. We are now as chronologically distant from the 1960s as Americans of the Sixties were from the Progressive Era. Fifty winters have come and gone since John F. Kennedy delivered a stirring inaugural address. For veteran UUPers of a certain age, America began anew on that day. Revisionists, however, now limn Kennedy's New Frontier presidency as exhilarating — and reckless. Critical historiography finds crabgrass growing in Camelot. Yet we ignore the legacy of the New Frontier at our own peril.

By the end of the 1950s, lethargy, mediocrity, and declining purpose pervaded public and private life. In accepting the Democratic nomination for the Presidency on July 15, 1960, at Los Angeles' Memorial Coliseum, Kennedy, re-

vived the concept of frontier, summoning America to new challenges:

Today some would say that ... all the horizons have been explored-that all the battles have been won-that there is no longer an American frontier.

But ... the problems are not all solved and the battles are not all won-and we stand today on the edge of a New Frontier-the frontier of the 1960's-a frontier of unknown opportunities and perils-a frontier of unfulfilled hopes and threats.

...the new frontier of which I speak is not a set of promises-it is a set of challenges. It sums up not what I intend to offer the American people, but what I intend to ask of them.

...the New Frontier is here, whether we seek it or not. Beyond that frontier are the uncharted areas of science and space, unsolved problems of peace and war, unconquered pockets of ignorance and prejudice, unanswered questions of poverty and surplus. It would be easier to shrink back from that frontier, to look to the safe mediocrity of the past...

But I believe the times demand new invention, innovation, imagination, decision. I am asking each of you to be pioneers of that New Frontier.

Six months later, on January 20, 1961, Kennedy, affirmed the presidential oath of office to Chief Justice Earl Warren. Despite the chill, the 43-year old Kennedy, 27 years younger than the outgoing president, Dwight Eisenhower, wore no overcoat. Returning to the themes of challenge and mission, Kennedy's inaugural address, burnishing the words of speechwriter Ted Sorensen, summoned the nation to great deeds:



front row, left to right, Dwight Eisenhower, Earl Warren, John Kennedy, Lyndon Johnson, and Richard Nixon

In the long history of the world, only a few generations have been granted the role of defending freedom in its hour of maximum danger. I do not shrink from this responsibility—I welcome it. I do not believe that any of us would exchange places with any other people or any other generation. The energy, the faith, the devotion which we bring to this endeavor will light our country and all who serve it—and the glow from that fire can truly light the world.

And so, my fellow Americans: ask not what your country can do for you—ask what you can do for your country.

My fellow citizens of the world: ask not what America will do for you, but what together we can do for the freedom of man.

Finally, whether you are citizens of America or citizens of the world, ask of us the same high standards of strength and sacrifice which we ask of you. With a good conscience our only sure reward, with history the final judge of our deeds, let us go forth to lead the land we love, asking His blessing and His help, but knowing that here on earth God's work must truly be our own.

A thousand days into his presidency, Kennedy's domestic accomplishments were modest and the direction of his foreign policy still malleable. JFK finally appeared to embrace the moral imperatives of the Civil Rights movement, and the missile crisis of October 1962 evidently tempered the confrontational Cold Warrior. Yet in Vietnam and elsewhere, Kennedy stood at a crossroads, his future policies unclear, and so they would remain, for an assassin's bullet ended JFK's New Frontier in Dallas on Friday, November 22, 1963.

The death of the President, casting the nation into shock and mourning, was comparable to Pearl Harbor and 9/11. Daniel Patrick Moynihan, Kennedy's Assistant Secretary of Labor and bound to JFK by politics and ethnic fatalism, remonstrated, "I don't think there's any point in being Irish if you don't know that the world is going to break your heart eventually." JFK's tragic death fixed in memory his youth, gallantry, and charisma, thus enveloping him in myth. Despite serious and hidden illnesses, he radiated vigor. Even later revelations that Kennedy was satyr as well as martyr have not deconstructed the legend.

The New Frontier at 50 (continued)

Quite apart from the fate of Kennedy's programs, the man himself remains iconic. For himself and the nation, Kennedy aspired to excellence. JFK's intelligence, bravery, eloquence, and wit, burnished his New Frontier administration — and the years that followed. JFK's capacity for growth animated the tonality of the times.

The search for new frontiers continued to pervade the 1960s: new frontiers of politics and government; new frontiers of space and technology; and new frontiers of social and cultural innovation. As UUP now prepares to champion SUNY against threats of PHEEIA, budgets cuts, and retrenchment, let us find inspiration in the resonance of the courage, resolve, and vision that defined JFK's New Frontier.



UUP Labor Film Series



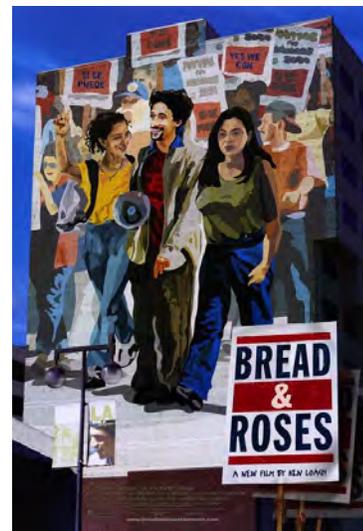
Promoting solidarity, justice, and environmental responsibility through educational film screenings and discussions. Films are shown at the Hunt Union Red Dragon Theater and will be followed by an audience discussion. For more information, please contact Professor Gina L. Keel, Film Series Director, at keelgl@oneonta.edu.

Spring Semester 2011 Program

Bread and Roses

Tuesday, March 22, 6:00 - 8:00 PM

Award-winning realist director, Ken Loach, delivers this dramatic story about an immigrant named Maya who crosses the Mexican border to join her sister, Rosa, in Los Angeles. There, she gets a job as a janitor in a large office building. Outraged by the boss's gross mistreatment of the workers, Maya teams up with union organizer Sam Shapiro (Adrien Brody) to fight for justice. Film extras included Latino immigrant cleaners, trade union and grassroots activists. The film was nominated for the Golden Palm at Cannes. (2000)



The Fire Next Time



Wednesday, April 13, 6:30 - 8:00 PM

When residents in Montana's Flathead Valley began losing their logging and mining jobs, they burned green swastikas, blamed environmentalists and took to the local airwaves. Adding fuel to the fire was a radio talk show host who declared environmentalists "an enemy... to be annihilated." But when a shocking discovery unearthed a hate group's hit list -- filled with names of local officials and their families -- the town's anger had gone too far. Filmed over a two-year period, this gritty documentary captures the complexities of the conflict from both sides. (2005)

African Rhythms: Unionism in Kenya



By Jim Dix, President, UUP Binghamton and Professor, Chemistry,
SUNY Binghamton

[Editor's Note: This article originally appeared in *The Connection*, the newsletter of UUP Binghamton. Used with permission.]

There is an undulating rhythm to Kenyan life. A Western observer listening to local conversations about current events might expect do-or-die crises ten times a day. For example, the faculty at the seven Kenyan public universities had threatened to strike October 14, 2009, unless the government came through with

payment of salary increase negotiated some time back. There were stories in the newspapers quoting union activists about the seriousness of the issue, and while it not the main topic among academics, interjecting the strike topic into conversations did produce some spirited debate.

So what happened on that October 14th? Nothing. The day came and went. No stories in the newspapers, no marching professors on campus. A few days later I asked a colleague about the resolution of the crisis. He said, casually, that the government had paid the salary increase.

This episode illuminates what appears to be a central tenant in East African life: verbal communication is primarily the means by which people build and maintain social networks. What is said is not all that important. For a scientifically-minded Westerner who wants to talk about things to get done, to get commitments to do things, to follow through with doing things, this aspect of African culture takes some getting used to. However, once that American cultural baggage is jettisoned and the African rhythm is embraced, life takes on a new dimension, and in many ways, a much more enjoyable dimension.

Still, there are practical advantages to Western culture. From the Western perspective, Kenya is nearly a failed state, with corruption endemic, starvation wide-spread, and inter-tribal relations strained. Making Kenya more like the West might mitigate some basic human suffering. Toward this end, a new constitution was recently proposed for Kenya. The new constitution incorporates many western ideas to devolve power from an authoritarian president.

The new constitution also contains some socialist influences. Under Chapter 6, Part 2, "Rights and Fundamental Freedoms," there is this section: "Every person has the right to fair labour practices... Every worker has the right ... to participate in the activities of a trade union ... and to go on strike."

Every worker has the right to strike! If that section is enshrined in the adopted constitution and is implemented effectively, it would be a remarkable reversal in power flow. Traditionally, there is an African Big Man, who accumulates resources and doles them out to his followers. With the proposed new constitution, workers would have the legal means to accumulate power and force the Big Men to govern in the workers' interest. Sounds almost Marxist.

Italian White Bean & Herb Soup

By Janet Frankl, Professional Delegate

[Editor's Note: Professional Delegate Janet Frankl is an excellent chef. She and her husband Jim serve as cooks at *Saturday's Bread*. Janet has graciously shared below her recipe for Italian White Bean & Herb Soup.]

Beans:

2 cups soaked dried beans, or canned cannellini or great northern white beans

2 sprigs fresh rosemary chopped (or ¼ tsp dried)

¼ tsp fresh sage (or 1/8 tsp dried)

2 sprigs fresh thyme (or ¼ tsp dried)

4 cloves garlic, smashed or chopped

½ tsp sea salt

Soup

2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil

1 ¾ cups yellow onion finely chopped

1 ½ cups carrots, peeled & diced

1 ½ cups celery, diced

Sea salt

2 tablespoons garlic, finely chopped

¼ teaspoon fresh thyme (or 1/8 tsp dried)

1/8 teaspoon fresh sage (or pinch of dried)

1/8 teaspoon fresh oregano (or pinch of dried)

8 cups low-sodium chicken or vegetable stock (if not low-sodium, eliminate other salt)

Parmesan cheese, grated



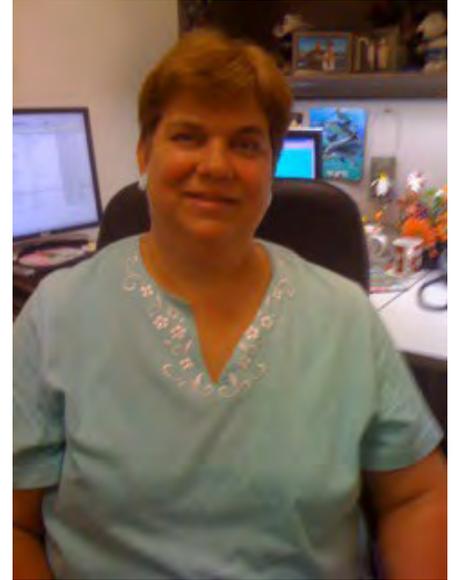
Rinse beans and place in a pot. Cover with 3 inches of water & add herbs listed in “Beans” section of recipe. Bring to boil, then cook on low simmer 45 minutes to an hour until tender but still al dente. Add the ½ tsp salt. Meanwhile heat olive oil in large pot over medium heat. Add onions and pinch of salt and sauté until golden. Add carrots & celery and sauté 3 minutes. Add garlic and remaining herbs and sauté 2 minutes. Add ¼ cup stock and cook until liquid evaporates. Add 6 cups more stock and drained beans. Simmer 20 minutes. Add more stock and a bit more salt if necessary. Serve sprinkled with Parmesan cheese. Recommend using all fresh herbs but is still very good if dried herbs are used. Serves 6.

Calories: 410; total fat: 10 g; carbohydrates: 49 g; protein: 19 g; fiber: 16 g; sodium 449 mg.

It is wonderful served with crusty Italian bread or garlic bread.

Employee Assistance Program (EAP) Committee

Our two appointed individuals, Jeri Anne Jerminario and April Harper as our union's representatives to the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) Committee. Senior Programmer/Analyst/DBA at the SICAS Center, Jeri Anne, a UUP Executive Board Officer and Professional Delegate, is a former President of UUP Cobleskill. Dr. April Harper, Assistant Professor of History, author, and coach of the College hockey club, April is a union stalwart. Jeri Anne and April will bring commitment, intelligence, and empathy to the EAP Committee. UUP thanks its previous representatives, Mark Rice and Betty Tirado, for their long and notable tenure on the EAP Committee. EAP renders valuable service to UUPers and other College employees.



Jeri Anne Jerminario

Familiarize yourself with EAP. The description of EAP that follows is adapted from a *Sentinel* article written by Mark Rice.

General information about EAP:

The Employee Assistance Program is a benefit offered to all New York State employees and their families. It is a voluntary program designed to offer a professional, confidential source of help for people who need assistance with personal problems or concerns. The program offers information, assessment, referral, and a 24-hour, 7-day a week answering service. The local chapter at Oneonta was established in 1983.

The EAP program at Oneonta consists of an EAP Committee with representation from management and labor, and an EAP Coordinator who provides the support referral to employees and their families. The Coordinator acts as a referral agent. The committee does not have direct contact with employees seeking services. The EAP Committee meets monthly and has two UUP representatives, Jeri Anne Jerminario and April Harper. The Committee's responsibilities are to select the coordinator, evaluate the effectiveness of the program, provide support and resources to the Coordinator, sponsor and assist with campus wide prevention and wellness programs, and respond to the needs of labor and management in carrying out the aforementioned responsibilities. In addition to the coordinator, the Committee also has an elected Chair, currently held by Melissa Nicolia.



April Harper

For more information about EAP feel free to contact Jeri Anne Jerminario at JERMINJA@ONEONTA.EDU or April Harper at HARPERA@ONEONTA.EDU.



China — Factory to the World of Literature and Myth: Books Reviews—Part II

By Hugh A. Holden, Former Senior Assistant Librarian, Milne Library

[Editor's Note: this is the second and concluding installment of Hugh A. Holden's China — Factory to the World of Literature and Myth commentary.]

Part 2:

In "Where Underpants Come From," Joe Bennett, a Kiwi, crisscrosses China and detours into Thailand to track down all the parties responsible for and the ingredients that went into the pair of "unders" that he bought in a department store in NZ. He takes us from the factory (with few if any worker safety features) that produces the elastic for the waistband to far western Xingjian Province, China's cotton belt. Yet, any westerner not living in a bubble already knows that China is an industrial juggernaut built on cheap labor. Indeed, those who don't sleep through every newscast also know that factories in China's most massive manufacturing center, Guangdong Province, are closing as more and more young Chinese refuse menial jobs at subsistence wages - something that, surprisingly, Bennett doesn't cover.

2.8% is a huge number if it's the current CIA estimate of the percentage of China's 1,330,141,295 (2010 est.) who live beneath China's own poverty line. In the spread between a very thin top and that big bottom are the hundreds of millions of workers who have fallen hook, line, and sinkhole for The Great American Dream - possibly the most economically powerful myth of all human time - so far. So, whether it's the capital needed to build a new mall in a week, or the army of youths who will work there to feed spending habits imported from the West, China has it. As for describing it, analyzing it, and warning the West of the dangers at hand, Bennett has only added several paragraphs to what the Pulitzer winning Nicholas Kristof - Sheryl WuDunn team of the *New York Times* did so well more than a decade ago in *China Wakes*. And if he had wanted to put interesting faces on the people he encountered, Bennett could have first taken lessons from Leslie T. Chang's much more engaging *Factory Girls*.

Jonathan Tel, on the other hand, is himself a literary product of this almost inconceivably rapid transformation: a foreigner (American) who dares to write fiction in a 21st century Chinese context. In *The Beijing of Possibilities: Stories*, Tel creates Chinese characters in Chinese situations, several of which the Chinese couldn't be very proud of - presuming they are allowed legal access to Tel's book at all. Within a slim 185 pages, a team of pickpockets and the cops who pursue them are seduced by a bag of unbelievably comfortable clothing; an aging couple twice lose a daughter to infant death and then find her sitting unattended in a shopping cart outside a supermarket; a poor young woman, sold into domestic slavery to a successful Beijing couple, unwittingly destroys their happiness; and a young, presumably materialistic couple prove to be at least as fearful of easily irritated spirits as a very old woman is afraid of the communist authorities.

We learn from the extra-text material that Tel hasn't just "spent time" in China; he lives there *and* in the US. When living in one country, he writes, at physical distance, within the milieu of the other. At one time, I, like many others, fearing cultural imperialism, would have said, "He's trying to do what only *they* can do." And the Chinese have proven that they can create for a world audience what they have always been doing for internal if often covert consumption. At this point in time, however, a number of Chinese writers and other artists are still being interrogated ("invited to tea"), harassed, imprisoned and even "suicided" for their art. The lucky ones only have their work banned. Ironically, this is just the ticket for critical notice outside of China. Outside or in, however, authors don't make a living on the bootlegged copies of their work. Tel's stories, however briefly they individually engage us, may represent a new category of Chinese storytelling, a form of writing that poses a new challenge for Chinese authorities. Foreigners writing within the Chinese idiom are not so easily "harmonized."

Bennett, Joe

Where Underpants Come from: from Checkout to Cotton Field: Travels Through the New China and into the New Global Economy

New York: Overlook Press, 2009

Milne Library: DS 712 .B46 2009

CIA/Central Intelligence Agency Fact-Book online

<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ch.html>

Chang, Leslie T.

Factory Girls: From Village to City in a Changing China

Publisher: Spiegel & Grau, 2008

Milne Library: HD 9734 C55 C53 2008

Kristof, Nicholas D., and Sheryl WuDunn

China Wakes the Struggle for the Soul of a Rising Power

New York: Times, 1995 (1st edition)

Available through Inter-Library Loan.

Tel, Jonathan

The Beijing of Possibilities: Stories

New York: Other Press, 2009

Milne Library: PS 3620 .E44 B45 2009

The Sentinel Websites and Disclaimer

Editor's Note: Statements Made in *The Sentinel* do not necessarily reflect the opinion of UUP or any of its statewide representatives.

To go to the UUP Oneonta chapter website, go to the following link www.1ontauup.org. John Chiang and Alex Jean-Charles are UUP Oneonta Web Masters. The chapter website contains a number of innovative features and links.

The statewide UUP website is located at www.uupinfo.org It contains information about members benefits and many other important topics.

UUP *Vision for the Future* Forum, January 25, 2011: Summary Notes

[Editor's Note: UUP held a *Vision for the Future* Forum on January 25, 2011, from Noon until 1 PM, at Le Café, Morris. UUP Vice President Rob Compton served as Moderator. UUP Special Events Coordinator Loraine Tyler served as Scribe, and her summary notes appear below. UUP members were invited to express concerns, ask questions, and exchange information. Ground rules for the forum provided that remarks not be identified with specific individuals, and that the published notes would appear in summary form. The summary notes are not meant to serve as minutes. The remarks below do not necessarily represent the official position of either UUP Oneonta or State UUP, but they do indicate important perspectives that were expressed and which will receive careful consideration.]

Summary Notes of remarks at *Vision for the Future*:

Congressional and state elections—changes: no bail out for states, no tax increases, cut in state employment

Media has been critical of unions and discretionary salary increases

Some campuses have experienced cuts in program and staff. At this time, at SUNY Oneonta, there are no re-trenchment committees, and 23 current searches are ongoing.

Concerning no re-trenchment committee at SUNY Oneonta, does that include any committees for deactivation of programs? One program has closed, Mohawk Valley Education program. There were no re-trenchments at SUNY Oneonta as a result.

Albany and Geneseo have faced deactivation. Deactivation provides that current students are guaranteed to finish programs. Deactivation at Albany and Geneseo will result in staff reductions.

At SUNY Oneonta, there are individuals who have reported some non-renewals in the past without a lot of notice.

Transitioning of new faculty is difficult since pay is not received in the first month. However, there is a loan program to tide individuals over until the first pay day.

Adjuncts are most vulnerable to nonrenewal. The number of adjuncts is almost the same for spring 2011 as it was in spring 2010. There may be fewer adjuncts in the fall 2011.

CADE is integral to the College's program and mission concerning diversity. CADE is important in helping international students to transition to classes in English. CADE offers developmental course. As a result of CADE, students have gone academic risk to academic success. CADE has helped a large and varied group of students.

Be careful when you add new responsibilities. Don't teach an additional section without pay. You need to be paid for additional responsibilities. If one does teach an overload or add other tasks, he/she should get a letter formalizing payment or noting that the added responsibility is being done on a one-time basis. The letter could come from Human Resource



Office or Department Chair. Professionals should monitor their performance program carefully.

Assessment has added a significant amount of time to the workload. The impact of assessment on workload has not received full acknowledgment.

Concerning DSI, the UUP Oneonta Executive Board's position is to give the raises across the board. There has been no equity portion in the most recent campus DSI awards. UUP has already done an equity study. The UUP Oneonta Executive Board has asked that anyone applying for DSI receive notification of the action taken on their application; at present, requests denied do not receive notification. DSI can go to adjuncts. UUP was thanked for publishing the awards in *The Sentinel*. Concerns were raised about the capriciousness of UUP awards.

Some recent College employees have reported being asked to vacate their offices ASAP.



SENTINEL QUIZ

Bedford Falls, a fictional town in a popular holiday movie, may have been patterned after what upstate New York town? The first person to email Nancy Cannon (cannonns@oneonta.edu) with the correct answer will receive a UUP scarf.

The January *Sentinel* quiz asked, "Who is the only United States President who did not speak English as his first language?" The answer is Martin Van Buren (who spoke Dutch). The first correct answers were provided by UUP Mediator and Political Scientist Paul Conway and State UUP Vice President for Professionals John Marino.

Executive Board Contact Info

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Editor, Sentinel	Julie Carney	ONEONTA@UUPMAIL.ORG	436-2135(o)
Affirmative Action Officer (d)	Nithya Iyer	IYERNN	436-3128 (o)
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Grants Officer	Kathy Meeker	MEEKERKL	436-2479 (o)
Facilitator, Professionals (d)	Thomas DeMeo	DEMEOT	436-2188 (o)
Administrative Assistant	Peg Carney	ONEONTA@UUPMAIL.ORG	
	UUP Oneonta Office: 206 Human Ecology Building		436-2135 (o)
Other Delegates & Alternates:			
Joe Baldwin	BALDWIJC	436-3517 (h)	
Chris Bulson	BULSONCE	397-9345 (h)	
John Carney	CARNEYJJ	432-5360 (h)	
Jeri Anne Jerminario	JERMINJA	436-2377 (o)	

*e-mail addresses are
@ONEONTA.EDU
(d = delegate, o = office, h
= home)