



The Sentinel

UUP — Oneonta Local 2190

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2012 UUP Survey: *Quality of Professional Life & Administrative Assessment*

By Bill Simons, Chapter President

In a short time, all those represented by UUP Oneonta will receive the survey: **Quality of Professional Life & Administrative Assessment**. Dissemination and tabulation of the survey will be electronic. Survey participants are guaranteed confidentiality and anonymity. Dr. Jen-Ting Wang, Associate Professor of Statistics, Department of Mathematics, Computer Science, & Statistics, will tabulate the results. Those to be evaluated include the president, vice presidents, and associate provost. UUP will disseminate the statistical and free response results.

At its December 19th, 2011, meeting, the UUP Executive Board voted to conduct, during the fall 2012 semester, the College at Oneonta's fifth evaluation of **Quality of Professional Life & Administrative Assessment**. The Executive Board created a committee, consisting of Jen-Ting Wang (Chair and Director), Rob Compton, Norm Payne, Andy Perry, and Bill Simons, to design the survey instrument. The committee held well attended meetings with the UUP bargaining unit to receive their input concerning the design of the membership; members of the UUP bargaining unit were also encouraged to contact members of the committee with their suggestions. UUP also discussed the contents of the survey with Management. In addition, two pre-tests preceded the finalization of the survey instrument.

The rationale for the vote of the UUP Oneonta Executive Board to conduct this evaluation rests on several factors, amongst them:

1. All employees, including administration should be accountable
2. Subordinate personnel are continuously evaluated,
3. UUP Oneonta has an on-going practice of periodic evaluation of senior administration, and
4. Such evaluations of senior administrators provide important feedback.

The senior Administrators to be evaluated are noted below:

- **President** Nancy Kleniewski
- **Provost & Vice President for Academic Affairs**
Maria Thompson
- **Vice President for Student Development** Steven R. Perry
- **Vice President for Finance and Administration** Todd Foreman
- **Vice President for College Advancement** Paul J. Adamo
- **Associate Provost for Institutional Assessment and Effectiveness** Patricia Francis

A copy of the survey appears below.

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2012 UUP Survey: *Quality of Professional Life & Administrative Assessment (continued)*

Introduction

Your participation in this evaluation is important as it will allow us to better understand ourselves and our priorities as an academic community, and it will enable UUP to better represent you. In addition to the statistically-based questions, UUP encourages you to submit free response comments. Do not include any remarks that might identify you in your free response comments. **Remarks should relate only to the performance of professional responsibilities of those evaluated and should not include any references to race, ethnicity, gender, appearance, orientation, or any other ad hominem attribute.** Keep in mind that UUP will tabulate and disseminate the statistical and free response results of this evaluation of the senior administration.

PLEASE NOTE:

- All members of the UUP bargaining unit were sent this evaluative instrument to complete.
- Completion of the survey will only take a few minutes.
- **All responses will remain completely anonymous and confidential. No attempt will be made to identify individuals based on their answers to these questions.**

Thank you for your participation.

(1) Quality of Professional Life

Instructions: Choose one choice per item from the scale: 1=Strongly Disagree (SD) to 7=Strongly Agree (SA). If you cannot fairly answer an item, select the "N/A" choice.

I believe that ...

1. our academics/professionals possess positive morale.
2. the College provides a satisfactory physical environment for my work.
3. the College provides adequate technology support.
4. the College provides adequate funding for my professional work.
5. I am recognized and appreciated for my professional work.
6. the Discretionary Salary Increase (DSI) process/results are fair.
7. my salary is equitable.
8. the College provides reasonable job security.
9. the process of assessment and accreditation activities is manageable.
10. the content and results of assessment and accreditation activities are meaningful.
11. my department or area receives adequate support from the administration.
12. my supervisor is an effective advocate for my department or area.
13. the College effectively uses my ability and potential.
14. the College uses external consultants effectively.
15. the academics/professionals play a significant role in the governance of the College.
16. the administration makes decisions in a transparent and effective manner.
17. the administration promotes diversity in recruiting and retaining academics/professionals.
18. the administration appropriately and effectively resolves personnel disputes.
19. overall, working at the College is satisfying.
20. Please write your comments concerning other issues on the professional life.

2012 UUP Survey: Quality of Professional Life & Administrative Assessment (continued)

(2) Performance of Given Administrators

Instructions: Choose one choice per item for each administrator from the scale: 1=Strongly Disagree (SD) to 7=Strongly Agree (SA). If you cannot fairly answer an item, select the "N/A" choice.

Which administrator(s) would you like to evaluate? Check all that apply.

- President (Dr. Nancy Kleniewski)
- Provost and VP for Academic Affairs (Dr. Maria Thompson)
- VP for Student Development (Dr. Steven Perry)
- VP for Finance and Administration (Mr. Todd Foreman)
- VP for College Advancement (Mr. Paul Adamo)
- Associate Provost for Institutional Assessment and Effectiveness (Dr. Patricia Francis)
- I don't know any of the above administrators enough to evaluate them.

1. This administrator is accessible if and when there is a need to discuss problems, make inquiries, or suggest changes.
2. This administrator is fair-minded and flexible.
3. This administrator is considerate and concerned about my work needs.
4. This administrator effectively promotes professional growth.
5. This administrator recognizes the strengths and weaknesses within his/her areas of responsibility.
6. This administrator selects and manages personnel effectively.
7. This administrator properly allocates spaces, supplies, equipment, and budgetary resources.
8. This administrator, overall, effectively fulfills her/his responsibilities.
9. Please write your comments concerning any of the above administrators.

(3) Demographics

1. Type of Position: Academic Professional Librarian
2. Rank:
 - Academic: Professor Associate Professor Assistant Professor Lecturer Adjunct Other
 - Professional: SL-1 SL-2 SL-3 SL-4 SL-5 SL-6 Don't Know
 - Librarians: Librarian Associate Librarian Sr. Assistant Librarian Assistant Librarian Other
3. Type of Appointment: Permanent/Tenured(Continuing) Non Permanent/Non Tenured
4. Employment Status: Full-time Part-time
5. Gender: Female Male Transgender
6. Years of Service at this College: 0-5 6-10 11-15 16-20 Over 20

Restructuring in the Eye of the Storm

By Rob Compton, Vice President for Academics



Rob Compton, next to the functioning "high speed" Gautrain in Jo-berg, South Africa, Aug. 2012

If you are like me, you probably have your opinions about "restructuring and reorganization" on this campus. As your Vice President for Academics, please contact me about your thoughts as it affects the conditions of work for you. The restructuring exercise is not a "tabletop endeavor." It's real and happening. I wish it were a tabletop so that we could pilot the whole process. It is happening in real time and it will impact the conditions of your labor on campus for possibly decades to come. In this essay, please permit me to share some thoughts and ideas about the ongoing transformation of global higher education and restructuring.

I believe that the train has "left the station" without wheels and our luggage.

"The Train Has Left the Station"

A common refrain that cajoles us to accept the consultant's report and the proposed structure is "well the train has left the station" so we need to hop on board. Let's be clear about the safety of the train and its destination before we "all aboard." Something has gone awry in the entire process over the past decade at this College. It's commendable and necessary, if not for improving work conditions, but also even for sheer survival that we get things right at this College. As an academic, I often feel that everything is in flux and nothing is certain at this College. Some of this is global, other are national or state driven. Other parts are unique to this campus. I often tell my wife, that at this pace, higher education will no longer need professors in a decade. (If you think I'm exaggerating, check out Western Governors University). I find it appalling that the powerful regional educational accrediting bodies can virtually mandate restructuring, the need for an Academic Master Plan, encroaching assessment, and paperwork but not understand that higher education is being eroded from within.

Higher education in general, SUNY, and then Oneonta is in a state of crisis, experience gut wrenching transformative realities. Most of this is not pleasant and the changes do not bode well for higher education. The framework of change, driven by the marketization and the commodification of inputs and outputs leads to disempowered education for faculty and students. After the initial top down approach to restructuring and strategic planning, the educational managers' focus on retracing steps and move toward an enhanced consultative model is meaningful but nonetheless confusing to academics. As an example, I imagined how life "without departments" would be on campus after I sensed a movement in that direction after several pronouncements. Then, now I see that the discussions have shifted away from interdisciplinary approaches toward greater segmentation of silos through the possible establishment of four, five, or even possibly six Deans.

A preferred approach or sequencing would have consisted of the following:

- 1) consultant is hired to assess campus efficiency and preparedness to address the campus in light of higher education's transformation. The Office of Institutional Effectiveness and the Senate creates separate reports;
- 2) all three report are disseminated and discussed widely;
- 3) a reorganization task force is set up and the President and/or Provost outlines a vision with the Deans on board;
- 4) after the implementation of the reorganization, the College adopts an Academic Master Plan; and
- 5) after the Academic Master Plan is created, issues of Facilities Master Plan and Assessment comes in to creation

Currently, I believe that the train has "left the station" without wheels and our luggage. I'd like to see careful, clear, and reasonable articulation of our vision as an institution. So far, I don't see it on this campus. Thus, it becomes a "free for all" with each silo seeking to maximize its utility (e.g., resources and strategic positioning). The institution as a whole continues to suffer. We need to get off that kind of train that is falling off the cliff.

Restructuring in the Eye of the Storm (continued)

Segmentation, Restructuring, and Number of Deans

Any time a plan is devised and implemented, there will be “unintended consequences.” Sagacious leaders anticipate, as much as possible prospective deleterious consequences of their plans and put in place ameliorative or preventive mechanisms and measures. There is a problem of systems efficiency and task designation for the organizational structure here. Over the past several years, the “vacancy review process” and the “cost savings for changes in the administrative positions” realized positive savings for the College. I won’t discuss where the money went or the implications of these downgraded salaries or positions in this article. However, I will point out that significant costs savings will be eroded by the addition of new Deans. The benchmark used for the past positions/salaries prior to the savings realized is not the appropriate benchmark point. In other words, the misaligned tasks and salaries of those positions were created by years of internal College processes and politics. Are we moving back in the direction of what UUP used to draw attention to, “the proliferation of administration”?

Depending on the flow of bureaucratic requirements (more paperwork and compliance mandates), the extent to which the new Deans will have authority to enact changes specific to their divisions, the quality of the individuals hired, and the place of academics in the university the number of Deans is a moot point. Whether we have an OctoDean structure with one hundred deans or two Deans, misses the mark completely.

More Deans could lead increased segmentation and the greater demise of interdisciplinary programs. Each Dean must protect the departments under his/her domain. Interdisciplinary programs would be forced to exist within disciplinary departments. Interdisciplinary programs would slowly become “departmentalized” and interdisciplinary departments would become cannibalized and lose their very appeal and *raison d’être*. Gone would be the prospects of a viable Environmental Studies, Africana Latino Studies, or Women and Gender Studies Departments.

As a College, the justification that other campuses have five or ten deans then requires Oneonta to copy that framework is reactionary. For example, SUNY Cortland has three Deans. Interestingly, their organizational structure has Associate Deans supporting the Deans. There has been no discussion on campus or from the administration about how the support staff in each of the Deans’ domain would be structured. At the same time, no one has discussed the interrelationship of the divisions. One possibility, used in many Business, Law, and other professional schools is the hiring of several Administrative Assistants (AA) and Assistant Deans (AD). These Assistant Deans often do not have Ph.Ds. and earn about 60-70K. These AA and AD would “keep the paperwork running through the system.” It is entirely possible, I would argue, even probable that more deans and greater structure without clear rationale and well thought out strategies would lead to greater institutional paralysis and functional confusion and regimentation and even rigor mortis.

Conclusion

In the brave new world of global, American, and New York higher education the only promise is one of change and most likely mutation. The university centers are rationalizing (i.e., watering down) Gen Ed requirements and voraciously expanding enrollment. The proprietary institutions are creating new programs, many of them interdisciplinary. Other institutions are moving ahead with internships abroad, social justice programs, and the like. Meanwhile, entities like Khan Academy, Coursera, Udacity and other “cooperative” arrangements will make our institution anachronistic unless we figure things out.

Skilled academic leaders must be able to analyze the changes, position the College for “success” and protect its most valuable asset: its employees. Will we get there? What will it take? I doubt that the way we are proceeding will lead us in that direction.

Skilled academic leaders must be able to analyze the changes, position the College for “success” and protect its most valuable asset: its employees.

Bittersweet Departure

By Caridad Souza, former UUP Oneonta Contingent/Part-Time Concerns Officer



Caridad, first row, center, advocating for justice

Against the backdrop of last Friday's ruling by Dane County circuit court judge Juan B. Colas against the attack on collective bargaining for Wisconsin teachers and public workers I contemplate the conditions under which I labored at SUCO for the last nine years. Several people asked why I left. My short response has been that "I don't see a future here for someone like me." As I retrospectively review that response, I realize it is not entirely accurate. Indeed my future was set. It included low waged academic work, the structural dislocation of the departments in which I taught, teaching up to ten classes a year and through the summer, and getting paid as much as a dissertation fellow who teaches only four classes. Thus as long as I consent to my exploitation, I have a future at SUCO. I labored under conditions where both departments---ALS and WGS---were underfunded and undervalued. Each

department brings a unique intellectual dimension to the institution that is not duplicated anywhere. Lack of infrastructure meant that during all the nine years I worked I used computers and printers inherited from others, furniture that was physically hazardous, and with very few resources made the best of things in order to work hard and long without much recognition. The kind of future I envision for myself, however, is a quite different one.

While the conditions of my labor were not the easiest, the relations of my labor were particularly difficult. I worked under hostile conditions, where everything I did became suspect and was questioned by those with the power to decide whether I worked. And while the work I did is vitally necessary to the functioning of the institution, the value of that labor remained at best invisible and at worst unclear. Lack of support for my work, best exemplified in the initial hysteria around the Kente Graduation Recognition Ceremony, the claims that such an event was "segregationist," and pulling the plug on funding for the Ghana program, has been demoralizing. This lack of support for anything substantial and lasting, the things out of which legacies are born, was certainly on my mind as I contemplated leaving. It is unfortunate that bureaucrats with little understanding about how things work outside of the institution and more interested in cookie cutter regulatory regimes than in taking time to know something about programs get to decide which programs get funded. The value of the work I did was undermined by the normative operations of the institution. It became clear to me last year after the Ghana program was defunded that the work I did would never be truly valued here. The decision to go where I might be better valued was not something I could easily pass up.

If you couple the difficult conditions and relations of labor with a reactionary approach to diversity, it is easy to understand leaving. If diversity is a pillar of the institution, why are those most engaged with it supported the least. Despite the Kiplinger ratings, why are there almost no spaces for the intellectual work of diversity. Intellectual life is almost nonexistent except for a few snatches of conversation in the halls. Adjuncts are still treated as expendable labor. Contingent employees of all kinds are still underpaid and structurally exploited. The College Senate quibbles about whether employees should make a little more money. These are the reasons for my departure. Some of my reasons are personal. Some are professional. And my departure is bittersweet. I will miss my friends and colleagues in struggle. Bittersweet as it has been, I am glad another opportunity came along.

This year for the first time in nine years I enjoyed Labor Day because Colorado State University gives its employees the day off. I celebrated by going to see Independence Rock at the Colorado National Monument near Grand Junction. And I thought about my colleagues back home participating in the UUP luncheon, gathering as they do every year, circulating a petition to collect signatures so that SUCO employees can also enjoy the day off to celebrate workers. Colorado celebrates the invisible work of people whose hands, minds and hearts keep the country moving. In retrospect I wonder about SUCO's claims to progress.

UUP Labor Day: Oneonta, Monday, September 3, 2012

UUP Oneonta held a Labor Day luncheon meeting at Noon on September 3, 2012, in the Otsego Grille, Morris Complex. Special Events Coordinator Loraine Tyler and Acting Vice President for Academics Tom Horvath welcomed waves of UUPers as they entered the room. As UUPers savored hot dogs and hamburgers, Chapter President Bill Simons introduced the program. When Bill asserted that the College at Oneonta, like most SUNY units, should not hold classes on Labor Day, applause reverberated throughout the room.



Philippe and Eileen express Labor Day solidarity with Oneonta

In addition to the UUP Oneonta stalwarts who packed the room, three State UUP Officers shared Labor Day with us — Secretary Eileen Landy; Vice President for Professionals J. Philippe Abraham; and State UUP Vice President for Academics and Chief Negotiator for Contract Negotiations Jamie Dangler. Eileen, Philippe, and Jamie are longtime friends and supporters of the Chapter, frequently coming to Oneonta to participate in our events.

A charismatic and candid speaker, Jamie provided a rousing keynote speech, addressing the continuing budget crisis, the relevance of employment loss at SUNY Downstate to other SUNY/ UUP campuses, the need for vigilance against consolidation and shared services, and ongoing contract negotiations. Following her formal remarks, Jamie welcomed questions and open discussion from a highly engaged UUP audience. A lively session ensued, illustrating the democracy of discourse at UUP's core.



Jamie at the mike

Some familiar faces were absent. Rob Compton remained in South Africa, tending to democracy's unfinished business. Janie Forrest missed her first UUP Oneonta Labor Day in a decade, now united with her fiancé Arty Shertzer at Stony Brook. In his own right, Arty, President of UUP Stony Brook, is a dear friend of the Oneonta Chapter. Thinking of their UUP Oneonta comrades on Labor Day, Arty and Janie sent the following message:

Bill and all of our Friends at Oneonta:

Janie and I send our regrets at not being able to be with you today to mark once again SUNY Oneonta's unfortunate and inexplicable reluctance to honor Labor Day. Please do share our note at today's picnic!

In searching for words to express our feelings, I think I have found some very eloquent words to share with you:

UUP Labor Day: Oneonta, Monday, September 3, 2012 (continued)

Today, as we gather with friends and family to enjoy the last days of summer, we pay tribute to the American workforce.

The Labor Day holiday celebrates the social and economic achievements of our working men and women and has its roots right here in New York.

The nation's first Labor Day was celebrated in New York State in 1882, and throughout the generations since our state has led the nation in supporting the labor community and workers' rights. The progress achieved by organized labor, as well as its leadership in creating jobs and rebuilding the state's infrastructure, has benefited all New Yorkers.

Today, we celebrate that history and we offer gratitude to our brothers and sisters in the labor community for their hard work in building the Empire State.

This message was written by none other than our Governor, Andrew Cuomo in his Labor Day message sent out to all New Yorkers....TODAY!

I truly hope that the Oneonta administration will...reverse this sad policy [of Labor Day classes].

Best wishes to all of you and please do eat an extra hot dog for us!

Regards,
Arty and Janie



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

Norm Payne 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 Labor-Management Meeting Notes for September 11, 2012, [Tues.] 3pm

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

For Labor: President Bill Simons, and Rob Compton (VP for Academics)

I. UUP and Management shared reflections on the Part-Time Faculty Orientation conducted annually and noted that UUP-Mgt cooperation makes this possible. UUP thanked Lisa Wenck for all of her efforts, year after year to organize the orientation. The PT Faculty Orientation has become a model, both in UUP and within the SUNY system for other campuses.

II. Management provided the list of the membership of the following committees

2012-2013 Membership of :

A. Deans Advisory Committees (DAC)

Behavioral and Applied Sciences

Science and Social Sciences

B. Tenure and Promotion Committee (P&T)

C. Local Chancellor's Awards Committee(s): Academic, Professional Service, and Student Awards

III. UUP inquired and discussed with Management the status of University Police Chief Position.

IV. UUP Updated Management UUP *Quality of Professional Life & Administrative Assessment* Survey and indicated that we incorporated four of their five suggestions. We also informed them that "pilot testing" has already taken place after several input sessions from the membership and the Executive Board. Lastly, it was noted that the survey would be done electronically.

V. UUP and Management discussed the College Calendar as it pertains to Labor Day observance.

VI. Management provided and both sides discussed the data on Departmental breakdowns for Fall 2011 and Spring 2012 of full-time faculty course for reductions under "appropriate justifications" as listed in "the Faculty Handbook." Both Management and UUP want to find strategies in increase the applicant pool.

VII. Labor updated Management on continuing UUP member concerns in Athletics Department

VIII. Performance Programs discussions and numbers were deferred to the next meeting

IX. UUP requested and Management provided the numbers of PT faculty at Oneonta for the following semesters: Fall 2011, Spring 2012, and Fall 2012

X. Discussion Regarding 2012-2013 Professional Workshop Series to be continued in the next meeting.

Meeting adjourned 3:50pm

UUP Requested & Management Provided Data (Sept. 11, 2012 Labor-Management Meeting)

Deans Advisory Committees (DAC)

<i>Behavioral and Applied Sciences</i>	<i>Science and Social Sciences</i>
Craig Bielert, Chair	Tracy Allen
Howard Buchan	Susan Bernardin
Fida Mohammad	Constant Goutziers
Thomas Sakoulas	Matthew Hendley
Kjersti VanSlyke-Briggs	John Schaumloffel

UUP Requested & Management Provided Data (continued)

Tenure and Promotion Committee (P&T)

Gwen Crane, Chair
Gretchen Sorin
Orlando Legname
Larry Armstrong
Hanfu Mi
Bill O'Dea

2011-2012 Local Chancellors' Award Committees

Academic

Patrick Meanor, Chair

Colleen Brannen-ex officio
Mary Lynn Benson
Julie Freeman
Renee Walker
Donna Vogler
Maria Thompson
Cathy LaFontaine
2 students

Professional Service

Colleen Brannan-Chair-ex officio

Roger Sullivan
Patrick Meanor
Denise Straut
Ellen Blaisdell
Steve Maniscalco
2 students

Student Awards

Renee Walker-Chair (Tom Horvath served as designee)
Patrick Meanor
Angie Eichler
Joanne Murphy
Eileen McClafferty
student

Courseload Reduction Approvals

Science and Social Science

Fall 2011

English -2
Chemistry and Biochemistry-1
History-1
Physics and Astronomy-1
Africana and Latino Studies-1

Spring 2012

Mathematics, Computer Science & Statistics-1
English-1
Chemistry and Biochemistry-2
Biology-1
Africana and Latino Studies-2

Behavioral and Applied Science (excluding Business and Economics)

Fall 2011

Music-1
Education-1

Spring 2012

Music-1
Communication Arts-1

Membership – Have a say, become a member today!



UUP Membership Director Hanfu Mi, far right

Welcome new and returning faculty and professionals! We are off to a great start for the new academic year. We hope that many of the UUP members will continue to participate this year in the “Food for Thought,” Diversity Panel Discussions, College and Community Forums, Labor Film Series, Saturday’s Bread, and the UUP picnics that your Oneonta chapter sponsors and organizes. It is a great chance to meet other faculty and professionals in and outside of your department! Since this is the start of a new academic year, here is information about becoming a member for both new and returning faculty and professionals:

UUP negotiates with New York State on behalf of all SUNY academics and professionals. Currently, UUP’s Negotiations Team has geared up for its September meetings and will be ready for the next table session with the state, expected to take place later in September. Please visit <http://www.uupinfo.org/negotiations/index.php> to stay informed. UUP also provides benefits to all members of the bargaining unit (such as the Dental and Vision Programs, the Free Group Life Insurance, etc.). Our Chapter here at Oneonta is working on several labor management issues, including the recurring issue of part-time faculty concerns. As you know, there is strength in solidarity.

Whether you are part-time or full-time, even if you think you are a member – please check out your pay stub. If you have dues taken out under “membership,” then you are a member. If you have dues take out under “agency fee,” then you are not a member yet. If you are interested in becoming a UUP member, please contact the Oneonta Chapter Membership Director, Hanfu Mi, at x3000 or email hanfu.mi@oneonta.edu. Remember, you cannot vote on our contract unless you are a member – so have a say, become a member today!

Leah Bridgers: New UUP Officer for Contingents/Part-Time Concerns Officer

Dr. Leah Bridgers was elected UUP Oneonta Contingents/Part-Time Concerns Officer at the Monday, September 10, 2012, Chapter Executive Board Meeting. Leah replaces Dr. Caridad Souza who has accepted a position at Colorado State University in Fort Collins. Assistant Professor in the Math, Computer Science, and Statistics Department, Leah has a primary interest in mathematics education. She has a strong commitment to providing representation for UUP's adjunct, part-time, and contingent employees. Leah performs with the Catskill Chamber Singers.

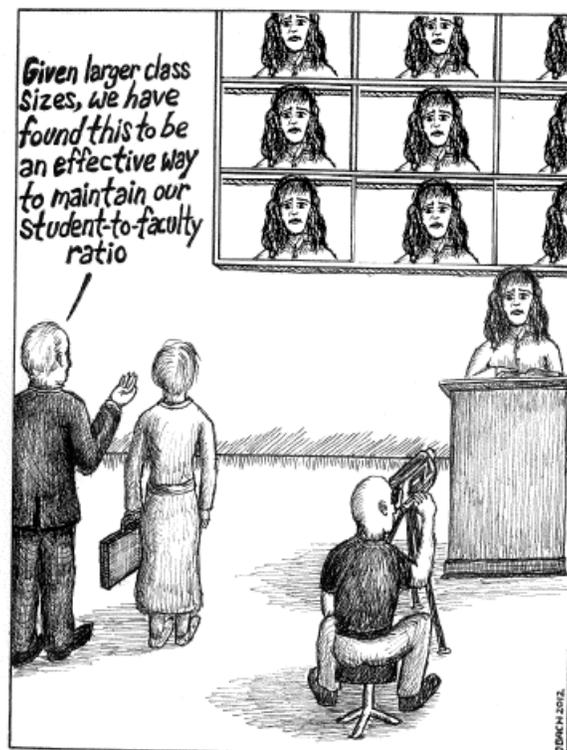
You may contact Leah by telephone (436-3655) or email (Leah.Bridgers@Oneonta.Edu).

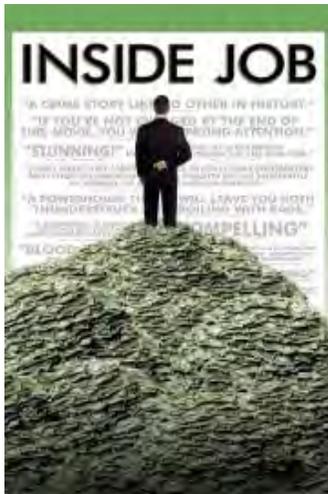


Toon Commentary: Brave New World of Higher Ed

By Brian Obach, Chair Sociology, SUNY New Paltz

[**Editor's Note:** Reprinted from the September issue of *The Bullhorn*, the newsletter of UUP New Paltz with the permission of the authors and editor/Chapter President Peter Brown.]





UUP Labor Film Series

At Hunt Union Red Dragon
Theater

Monday, October 15, 6 p.m.

INSIDE JOB (2011)

120 minutes

Academy Award® Winner, Best Documentary Feature

INSIDE JOB exposes the shocking truth behind the economic crisis of 2008. The global financial meltdown cost over \$20 trillion and millions of people lost their homes and jobs. INSIDE JOB traces the rise of a rogue financial industry and unveils the corrosive relationships that corrupted politics, regulation and academia. Based on extensive research, it features archival footage and interviews with major financial insiders, politicians and journalists. We also hear unheeded warnings from Eliot Spitzer, who fought Wall Street and financial fraud as New York's attorney general. Directed by Charles Ferguson. Narrated by Matt Damon

**WORST FINANCIAL CRISIS
SINCE THE DEPRESSION**

**Deregulation of the
financial sector**

Subprime Loans

MBS, CDO, CDS

European Debt

**MASSIVE LAYOFFS
MASSIVE BAILOUTS**

This film will be followed by an audience discussion. For more information, please contact Professor Gina L. Keel, Film Series Director, at keelgl@oneonta.edu

UUP and the Elections of 2012



UUP urges its member to vote in the Tuesday, November 6th elections. The presidential contest is one of the most important in American history. In addition, all seats in the U.S. House of Representatives and one one-third of those in the Senate are up for election. Likewise, voters will determine the membership in the next session of the New York State Assembly and Senate, which will have important consequences for the future of SUNY.

NYSUT and UUP continue to participate in all phases of the upcoming elections. For example, leaders of NYSUT locals and UUP chapters met on Monday, August 13th and Tuesday, August 14th at the NYSUT Conference on Endorsements in Albany.

At the Conference, union leaders from all over New York State examined candidate records and shared information. Oneonta was represented by Chapter President Bill Simons who had the opportunity for a reunion with 1974 SUNY Oneonta alumni Bill Bogatz, a Wantagh High School social studies/ economics teacher on Long Island as well as a Syracuse University Project Advance College Economics instructor. At the Conference, Bill represented WUT (Wantagh United Teachers), a NYSUT local. He is the Political Affairs Director of his union local.



State UUP VP Jamie Dangler and UUP Oneonta President Bill Simons consider legislative endorsements



Union Bills: Bill Bogatz and Bill Simons

Through its programming, media, phone banks, and door-to-door visits unions provide information about candidates and issues. As it has for many years, UUP Oneonta and other UUP chapters across the state help facilitate student voter registration efforts in cooperation with the national *Rock the Vote* campaign. Through *VOTE-COPE* (the *Voice of Teachers in Education*), NYSUT and UUP are highlighting the importance of educational, employment, health and other issues in the 2012 election.

VOTE on November 6th!

Reflections on Anger as a Political Tool: A Jewish Journey through the LGBTQ Struggle, Part I

by Peri L. Rainbow, Women's Studies & Humanistic/Multicultural Education, SUNY New Paltz

[Editor's Note: The article previously appeared in *Jewish Currents* and *The Bullhorn*, the newsletter of UUP New Paltz. It is republished in *The Sentinel* with the permission of the author and Peter Brown, *Bullhorn* editor and President, UUP New Paltz.]



L-R, Peri, Cecilia, and Tamela. Photo by Roy Gumpel, 2004

"Sometimes," my rabbi once whispered to me, "it's better to be quiet than to be right."

I was horrified! How could he believe that? "Justice, Justice shall you pursue" — doesn't the Bible tell us that we should not bear witness to the suffering of another without taking action?

"What should I do?" I asked.

"Just keep showing up," he said.

As a Jew, I identify with struggle organically. This sensibility was heightened in me early on by my childhood sexual victimization by an adult, which fueled my sense of outrage against the exercise of power-over, especially power over women. In the 1980s I was a college student, energized by the feminist movement, and I joined the effort to end oppression. I experienced righteous indignation on a daily basis. "The personal is the political" was my battle cry, and I brought it into every walk of life.

I helped coordinate a campus rape crisis center. I organized the first "Take Back the Night" rally in my town of New Paltz, New York. We chanted, "Women unite, take back the night!" as we marched, about sixty of us, carrying glowing candles through the campus and down Main Street. College students hung out the doors and windows of the crowded bars to holler their support, while the police videotaped us, "just in case." The radicals among us sneaked away to draw chalk figures on sidewalks where we knew sexual assaults had occurred. Vandalism! The knowledge that it was illegal made us giddy.

The last "Take Back the Night" event I helped organize was in 2001. Then 41, I was the director of Sexual Assault Services at Bard College and on the faculty of the State University at New Paltz. That April evening, five hundred of us marched by candlelight over the Mid-Hudson Bridge. We chanted and cried in memory of our own histories and the histories of those we loved. The march, rally, and survivor speak-out were charged with every form of energy imaginable. Overwhelmingly though, we were driven by anger at the sexual violence that we and our sisters (and brothers) face daily.

I was very comfortable there.

On that same night, my future wife, Tamela, held my hand for the very first time! Amazing! I had met her seven years earlier, in 1994, at the Sojourners' Women's Gathering Space, a collective of women who organized events at the Unitarian Fellowship in Kingston, New York. This was the only "women-only" space between New York City and Albany, an important safe place for lesbians and feminists, and one of the few that survived almost three decades. I was unabashedly, unapologetically out as a lesbian. That took some courage back then, and inspired courage in other women. We hosted many women artists, writers, entertainers, and political leaders. It was there that I attended my first feminist Passover seder, my first pivotal attempt to find and reclaim my people. They forgave me my dish of peas with walnuts, just left it outside as they welcomed me in.

Reflections on Anger as a Political Tool (continued)

I had accepted an invitation from the Sojourners Collective to lead a discussion on “butch-femme relationships in our community,” after a screening of the young filmmaker Tamela Sloan’s newly acclaimed short, *Dare To Be Butch*. I fell in love with Tamela that night. We began to see each other once or twice a year, whenever I had occasion to invite her to present the film in my class — and, of course, to take her out to dinner afterwards to “thank her.” Tamela was a bit of a rogue at the time, working as a stagehand in the rock ‘n’ roll industry. She always left my students swooning, handing her their phone numbers. Although it took seven years before we touched, I always knew that I loved Tamela and wanted to be with her.

In 2002, after a year of marriage, Tamela and I were denied the right to adopt our daughter as a couple. The next battle in my fight for peace and justice was laid out before me. Why should we be denied our right to make a family? How dare they?

Before this, I had been trying for years to conceive through artificial insemination. Then Tamela and I had decided to get married, and to try to create a family together. We discussed this intimately with our rabbi — I now had a rabbi! — who agreed, after careful discussion with Tamela, who is not Jewish, to officiate our wedding. I had journeyed closer to Judaism in the years since that lesbian potluck seder, and had shared many conversations with my rabbi about my disconnected Jewish past, its association with my sexual abuse, and my intentions and desires for my Jewish future. I still felt raw when I attended services, but I kept going sporadically, while reading parts of the Torah to try to understand both the text and my inclination towards it.

Our daughter Cecilia had been removed from a horribly abusive birth home at age 4 and exiled to a year in foster care. She met us at an orphanage of sorts, where Tamela worked while completing her graduate studies. Carrying the names of both my and Tamela’s grandmothers, Cecilia seemed meant to be our child. We didn’t want to fight for her, just the opposite: I had actually begun to imagine a peaceful life with my *basherte* and my baby. But I was *always* ready to battle for justice . . .

There were three county agencies and a faith-based housing agency involved, putting us through multi-layered investigations and home studies. All the evaluations were glowing and every social worker filed a positive recommendation. Two county commissioners signed off on our adoption request before I received the call: The attorney for the county in which our daughter had been born said with disdain that her county had never released a child to a same-sex couple and were not about to now.

She had three months to find a way to deny our petition. Just shy of three months later, she called and said that we had “desecrated legal documentation” by crossing out the words “adoptive father” and instead writing “adoptive mother” or “adoptive parent” on our forms (which had been approved by two other counties). There was only room for one adoptive mother, said this county attorney — and so they were prepared to release the child to one of us. I was ready to sue the county commissioner, call the press, and file a discrimination charge. Then my wife — part Buddha and part Peter Pan — suggested that we breathe deeply and then contact our attorney and our county’s family court judge. Both of them suggested that I remain quiet and that we simply adopt our daughter one parent at a time.

Sometimes it is better to be quiet than to be right.

“Aren’t you gay?” That was the response from the human resources staffer at the college in 2005, when I applied for spousal health benefits after our fourth and only legal marriage ceremony in Niagara Falls, Canada.

I expressed my familiar rage at her without filter, tired of having to defend my rights, especially after having spent a beautiful weekend as a legally married (at last!) woman. We had gone on the Maid of the Mist, just like our grandparents! Now I had to defend my right to health insurance? How dare they!

Reflections on Anger as a Political Tool (continued)

Yet during the next few years, this head of human resources and I worked together quite well. I agreed to withdraw my formal complaint; she filed our application for spousal benefits with the state. It took a year for them to respond. Under the direction of Governor George Pataki, they rejected our application.

We joined a lawsuit with Lambda Legal Defense. After winning three cases brought against us by the fundamentalist Alliance Defense Fund, we helped change New York State case law three times and won legal recognition of health care benefits for *all* legally married New York State employees. At a press conference early in our campaign, our attorney directed me to "say less." *But there is so much to say*, I thought. Then she fed me a line: "We are here to protect our family." It was brilliant, and quiet. It defused everything. No fight necessary, just the simple truth.

[continued in next issue]

Peri L. Rainbow is an author, clinician and educator with over twenty years of experience in her field. Recognized for her treatment of post-traumatic stress, safety, and diversity, she has been teaching at SUNY New Paltz since 1991. Reprinted by permission from *Jewish Currents*:

<http://jewishcurrents.org/reflections-on-anger-as-a-political-tool-a-jewish-journey-through-the-glbtc-struggle-11132>



UUPers Invited to Participate in Campaign to Defeat Muscular Dystrophy



As their participation in flood relief and *Saturday's Bread* attests, UUPers are noted for their generosity. Peg Carney, UUP Oneonta Office Manager, invites our Chapter to participate in the Campaign to Defeat Muscular Dystrophy. UUPers can call Peg at 432-5360 for details on contributing.

Muscular dystrophy (MD) is a genetic disorder that gradually weakens the body's muscles. It's caused by incorrect or missing genetic information that prevents the body from making the proteins needed to build and maintain healthy muscles.

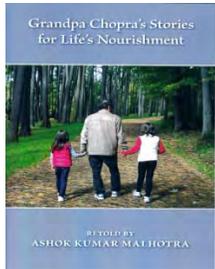
A child who is diagnosed with MD gradually loses the ability to do things like walk, sit upright, breathe easily, and move the arms and hands. This increasing weakness can lead to other health problems.

There are several major forms of muscular dystrophy, which can affect the muscles to varying degrees. In some cases, MD starts causing muscle problems in infancy; in others, symptoms don't appear until adulthood.

There is no cure for MD, but researchers are quickly learning more about how to prevent and treat it. Doctors are also working on improving muscle and joint function and slowing muscle deterioration so that those with MD can live as actively and independently as possible. [Source: Kidshealth.org]

UUPer Ashok Malhotra Publishes New Book

[Editor's Note: Amongst his many accomplishments, Dr. Ashok Malhotra is former UUP Oneonta Vice President for Academics. The article below is part of an on-going series highlighting recent books by UUPers.]



GRANDPA CHOPRA'S STORIES FOR LIFE'S NOURISHMENT BY Ashok Kumar Malhotra

eBook published by IdeaIndia.com

Copyright Ashok Kumar Malhotra 2011

Publication Date: **November 22, 2011**

The Grandpa Chopra's Stories for Life's Nourishment is Ashok's first volume of forty tales.

From the Preface:

"Grandpa Chopra was a bubbling fountain of tales and fables from all over the world. Like a bee, he had collected more than two hundred fifty stories from the cultural gardens of India, China, Afghanistan and Iran as well as from the books of the Arabian Nights, Buddhist Jataka and Hindu Panchtantra Tales, Aesop's Fables, epics of Mahabharata and Ramayana as well as the Bible. Though he had been educated only up to high school, he could speak more than six languages and was fluent in English, Hindi, Pashto, Persian, Punjabi and Urdu.

I spent my childhood days and teenage years listening to his great stories and almost memorized many of them by heart.

This is the first volume of forty stories, where each one has a moral like that of the Aesop's fables. The first twenty-two are from Grandpa Chopra and the remaining eighteen are from me under the heading of Grandpa Malhotra. I am retelling the Grandpa Chopra's stories as I recall them. Since they are coming from many different sources as collected by grandpa, a number of them might seem familiar because they have been around for centuries and told by various writers in their own ways. I am not their author but only a re-teller and a compiler. However, the stories under Grandpa Malhotra are drawn from my personal experiences and are retold with changed names to protect the privacy of those they are about."

Professor Ashok Kumar Malhotra is Distinguished Teaching Professor of Philosophy at the State University of New York College at Oneonta, New York. He is the winner of a dozen prestigious awards such as Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Teaching, East West Center Distinguished Alumni Award (USA), University of Hawaii Distinguished Alumni Award (USA), Gullands NRI Excellence Award (UK), Jewel of India Gold Award (India), Spiritual Leadership Award (USA), Bharat Excellence Award (India) and others. He has published 14 books on Indian, Chinese and Western Philosophy that include four books on Yoga and Meditation. He has also authored more than 100 articles. Malhotra is the founder of the Yoga and Meditation Society, has a "Gentle Yoga" TV program for the community and writes a monthly column on Yoga Life for the local newspaper. He is also the founder of the Ninash Foundation, a 501 c (3) charity that builds schools for the female and minority children of India.

Dr. Malhotra will donate all his royalties received from the sale of this book to the Ninash Foundation

(www.ninash.org).

There's Nothing Natural about Natural Gas

By Rosalyn Cherry (community member, New Paltz), Susan Lehrer (Professor Emerita, Sociology & Woman Studies, SUNY New Paltz), and Mary Phillips (former adjunct faculty, SUNY New Paltz)

[Editor's Note: Reprinted from the September issue of *The Bullhorn*, the newsletter of UUP New Paltz with the permission of the authors and editor/Chapter President Peter Brown.]

This past spring over four dozen interested citizens from SUNY New Paltz and the surrounding community took a bus to Dimock, PA. It is considered ground zero for drilling for natural gas—horizontal hydraulic fracturing, or fracking. The trip was sponsored by the SUNY New Paltz Environmental Task Force, consisting of faculty, staff, students and community members. In accord with ETF's goal to educate the campus and the community on sustainable practices, the trip was arranged so we could experience first-hand the impact of fracking on the environment and the community. This is especially important, as it seems possible that Governor Cuomo will allow fracking to move forward in New York.



Our tour guide was a local activist, Vera Scroggins, who also videotapes lectures, attends hearings and debates in PA and NY. She makes them available on YouTube under *veraduerga*. Vera first showed us the Hollenbeck site, which had been under construction for over a year. The house across the street, which had leased their land, had huge construction vehicles and the start of a pipeline alongside. Vera warned us to stay on the public road, but a site worker came over and told us to leave anyhow. We all said we had a right to be there, and he walked off. We could only imagine the intimidation had we not been such a large group, with Vera.

We had loaded our bus with bottles of water we had collected, to be distributed among families who can no longer use their tap water due to contamination. Along our route we passed many homes with a 'water buffalo'—large water tanks boxed in plywood—because their own wells have been contaminated by fracking. The gas corporation then supplies them with fresh water. Some residents who have contaminated water and work for the industry do not want to cause trouble, so they do not report it. Many have also signed non-disclosure agreements, so they cannot talk to the media. The industry maintains that no aquifers have been contaminated by fracking.

Our trip revealed an additional kind of poison. As Mary Phillips put it, there is a new kind of vitriol that turns friends into enemies, family members against each other, and the unraveling of the fabric of a once closely knit community. At a luncheonette across the road, Mary stopped in and asked some of the regulars, who initially regarded her with hostility, for their views. Their hostility diminished as one man told her that everyone in the area had suffered greatly from the economic downturn. For them, it might mean losing their farms. Resignedly, he said that the "mailbox checks" (from the gas company for use of their land) fed their families.

Some of the inhabitants are employed by the gas companies as truck drivers and in other labor situations. Neither they nor their families will complain about the company which provides them with jobs. Even low wages are better than no wages. Mary commented that either they were oblivious, or realized they are contributing to the ultimate ruin of their land, water and air. Both sides of the controversy are hurting. Both sides are owned by the gas company. They did realize that the promise of the gas company to provide a pipeline to bring pure water was a lie. Lawsuits continue.

There's Nothing Natural about Natural Gas (continued)

We talked briefly with one resident who was proud of having leased her land for drilling wells. She told us she feels patriotic to be helping our country get off our dependence on foreign oil. She did not seem to know there are new export terminals or facilities to convert gas to be shipped overseas, where the price gives the industry a big boost in profits that they will not be sharing with the landowners. (See photo-Thanks sign). Another resident just down the road had an upside down flag, signifying distress. Yet another family has a sign intended for a billboard draped on their roof.

The anti-fracking side of the controversy has been effectively censored by the local newspaper, which has refused to publish their paid ads. The billboard company which had initially put up one of their signs took it down two days later after 'complaints.' This whole rural county is now zoned industrial. Heavy trucks went by constantly, some carrying water or chemicals used in fracking. Roads were dug up as a pipeline was installed, while loud noise from the compressor stations needed every two or three miles goes on 24/7. Resentful truckers make noise riding the brake when they passed an anti-fracking family.

For union members, this issue is particularly relevant. One of the tactics historically used to gain support for controversial polluting industries in general is to argue that JOBS are created. We are given the choice: which would we rather have, jobs *or* a clean environment? In Binghamton, training for jobs potentially in the hydrofracking industry is being touted as a route to scarce better-paid employment. By contrast, in our own BOCES and local community college, we can see technology training offered for solar, photovoltaic and other non-extractive ways to meet our energy needs.



Next to house which leased land for fracking; pipeline under construction beside it.

It turns out that the demand for extractive gas is not what corporations like Chesapeake Gas had hoped. First, they called it a 'bridge fuel,' presumably until some as-yet unknown source can be developed. Now, they are trying to *create* demand for it. Natural gas cars? Why? Why not push for solar technology for cars?

Locally, SUNY New Paltz and Newburgh Free Academy High School students both participated in an international solar racing car competition. Frank Wolf, (teachers' union member, NYSUT), who teaches technical design and drawing, worked with the Newburgh after-school team of about 70 students for the winning design, which stressed fuel efficiency. It can produce more electricity than the car itself used.

We are at a crossroads: we can continue to promote extractive drilling technologies as the only option, or we can use and develop processes that do not so severely damage our natural environment and our societal ties.

Links:

Also on our trip to Dimock were reporters Lynn Woods and Richard Parisio:

Lynn Woods [CHRONOGRAM FRACK WATCH DIMOCK chronogram.com/issue/2012/6/News+%26+Politics/Frack-Watch-Portrait-of-a-Fracking-Town-Dimock-Pennsylvania](http://chronogram.com/issue/2012/6/News+%26+Politics/Frack-Watch-Portrait-of-a-Fracking-Town-Dimock-Pennsylvania)

Rich Parisio NP TIMES Column newpaltzx.com/2012/05/06/the-cruel-arithmetic-of-hydraulic-fracturing/
Catskill Citizens for Safe Energy. Their 'learn more' section has great articles catskillcitizens.org/learn.cfm

www.wfte.org – small on-line radio station in PA with news on fracking. Under 'news' – 'fracking,' see video "Consumptive Water Use of Fracking in PA."

<http://magazine.columbia.edu/features/summer-2012/gas-menagerie>

UUP Gets Golf Cart Tour with Associate Vice President for Facilities Tom Rathbone



Tom Rathbone at the Wheel

To keep the College community knowledgeable about physical facilities, SUNY Oneonta Associate Vice President for Facilities and Safety Tom Rathbone invites individuals from various components of the campus to accompany him on his ubiquitous campus inspections. For years, Tom has graciously included UUP on the list of invitees. On Tuesday, August 21, 2012, UUP Oneonta Chapter President Bill Simons accompanied Tom on his afternoon inspection. They travelled by golf cart. These tours provide information that facilitates Labor-Management discussions about physical facilities.

Numerous construction sites punctuated campus this summer. Supervising campus facilities is comparable to managing the physical infrastructure of a small city. The two largest summer projects were the completion of a total rehab of Littell, which included a compact addition, and the start of an ambitious rehab of Fitzelle Hall, inaugurated by the demolition of the building's office wing. Given its scope, entailing two additions, Fitzelle has a target completion date of summer 2014. The Fitzelle project is a massive undertaking with projected cost of \$33.8 million.

Summer infrastructure and sustainability projects also entailed a new large, energy efficient boiler for Central Heating Plant; upgrading a Biological Field Station laboratory at Otsego Lake; ratcheting up classrooms; repair/replacement of all or parts of the Fine Arts, Wilsbach, Heating Plant, MacDuff, Morris roofs; various sidewalks and retaining walls; new windows in all or parts of Schumacher, Fine Arts, and Lee; upgrade/replacement of HVAC/plumbing systems in all or parts of Chase, Hulbert, Schumacher, Lee, Science I, and Curtis; replacement of underground heating lines near Chase and Ford Hall; installing a new underground water line to serve Tobey Hall; and "milled" construction and repavement of East Dorm Drive, Grant Service Drive, and part of Ravine Parkway. Tom notes, "While we are nearly complete, we are still working on 'punch list' items around campus, so we thank your readers and members for their patience as we 'button up' the seasons' projects."

Coming Attractions down the road include several items in design: the Townhouse project; additional parking lots; HVAC upgrades for Hunt and Alumni; improved ADA disability accessible restroom facilities for Milne, IRC, Hunt, Fine Arts, Alumni, and Lee (which will also get an elevator); rehabs for the Health Center and Physical Science; and a couple of outdoor stairways.

Energy savings and feasibility remain the watchwords. In addition to the preceding projects, a still evolving Master Plan for facilities augurs significant construction in the decade ahead. Tom is excited about the campus' future.

A recipient of the Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Service, Tom supervises facilities planning, facilities operations, energy management, infrastructure, construction and Environmental Health & Safety. He continues to coordinate many notable infrastructure improvements and additions at the College. From blueprints to materials to costs to personnel, Tom expertly directs construction, operations, and safety.

Many of us who have gone on golf cart tours of the College with Tom can attest to his commitment and vision. The first impression many prospective students and visitors have of the College derives from the physical plant, and thanks to Tom and his team that is one of the College's great assets.

UUPers Dennis Hoffman, Mike Kinsella, Hilgrove Delancy, Don Libby, Scott Barton, and Janet, Frankl, Norm Payne provided oversight and leadership for most of the summer projects. In addition, UUPers Don Ackerman and Rick Roberts continue, as always, to provide great leadership in Facilities Operations, keeping the campus running and looking great.



Tom and Norm Payne, Assistant Director, Facilities, and UUP Vice President for Professionals

A *Combi* Ride through the Streets of Lima

By Carolyn Leon Palm

I recently had the opportunity to spend seven months in Peru with my husband, Miguel, a member of the College History Department, and our seven year old daughter, Eva. During this visit, I experienced much more of the capital city, Lima, than I had on previous visits. The primary reason for this was the length of time we were there. It was not simply a vacation, where I was going as a tourist, but rather it was to be our “home” for seven months.

During those seven months, one of the most significant things that happened to me on a personal level was that I moved from a place of complete reliance on others to becoming more self-sufficient, enough so that I could take a “combi,” a small public bus, with our daughter to the different neighborhoods of Lima to explore and test our limited, yet growing knowledge of Spanish. It was liberating to achieve that greater independence. It was in this place of independence that I came to know the city through my own eyes, experiencing the sounds, smells, laughter, silence and music as I journeyed each day in a combi through the city streets.

Every morning at 8 am, I walked out of the big metal gate that secured our home, pulled out my key and locked the gate behind me. This would symbolize the start of my journey, a journey that took me physically to the institute where I studied Spanish, located in a neighborhood about 45 minutes away. It was also, however, a journey that took me deeper into the life of *Limenos*, as they made their way to their respective destinations each morning in our shared combi.

As I sat, or sometimes stood if there was no seat available, I was fascinated simply to have the time to observe. On the combi, I was often surrounded by students on their way to classes at one of the many institutes on our route that offered special programs to become a chef, computer technician, masseuse or beautician. I was also surrounded by young professionals with neatly combed hair and sweet smelling cologne, talking on their cell phones or texting, I imagined planning their morning meeting or afternoon gathering place. The music was often so loud that I could hardly hear my own thoughts, yet no one seemed to mind or ever say, “Turn down the music!” I thought on many occasions, if I were in the United States, this could never happen on public transportation. There would be complaints and demands to turn down the volume. But, here, it was just all part of the journey. The music, if a song in English, was often times one that was popular in the United States in the 1970’s or 80’s. One I heard on many of my rides was a song entitled “Killing Me Softly.” I would hum it in my head and transport myself back to a time in my own childhood. What a strange feeling that was. However, I would quickly be brought back to the present by a popular song in Spanish that followed and often had a lively beat.

Along with the loud music was something else my North American sentiments found difficult to adjust to and that was the way in which passengers were cramped into such a small space. Again, no one seemed to mind. The faces of my fellow passengers rarely showed signs of disapproval or annoyance, some were sleeping, others talking or laughing with a friend next to them or talking on their iphones, but no one was angry or seemed agitated. And, what I found really fascinating was that, despite the cramped space, the driver would always stop for still one more passenger and everyone on the bus would squeeze closer to the person next to them and make room. “*There is always room for one more.*” These are words in the theme song of the most popular Peruvian program on television today.



The author of the article is about to be asked to pay her fare in the *combi* by the cobrador, the *combi*'s driver assistant.

A Combi Ride through the Streets of Lima (continued)

I spent much time looking out the window and watching the street activity and observing the buildings as we passed by. I observed how the architecture often changed from one neighborhood to the next, from the older neighborhoods to newer ones, and from the modest areas to the wealthier ones. The transformations were often significant. There were parts of the city where old majestic buildings lined large boulevards, once the homes of wealthy families in the early 20th century during the Aristocratic Republic period. I imagined the large parties that were thrown in the grand halls. Today, most of these buildings are home to local businesses and technical institutes where many of those I was traveling with were going.

Then, as we would turn up *Arequipa Avenue*, almost to my destination, the mother I had come to recognize, with her baby strapped to her waist by a piece of woven cloth, would step on begging for money or selling pieces of candy from a plastic bag. This image, juxtaposed against the back drop of the young students and professionals on their iphones and blackberry's, sticks in my mind and reminds me of the ever present reality, that despite new economic opportunities that are evident throughout the country, there are still those struggling to make it to their next meal.

At last, after 45 minutes, I would be at my destination. I would motion to the driver that I needed to get off, squeeze by the other passengers and down the steps I would go. The journey was over, at least until the combi ride home.



A view of a Lima street with two combis approaching downtown



A close up of a crowded combi and his *cobrador*, an assistant of a combi's driver, smiling to the camera and moving slowly in a busy day in Lima

That Daring Young Man on the Flying Trapeze: An Interview with Fred Miller

By Nancy S. Cannon, Librarian and UUP Academic Delegate



Fred Miller showing interviewer Nancy Cannon circus photos

[Editor's Note: This is the initial installment of a chronicle based on interviews conducted by UUP archivist Nancy Cannon with Dr. Fred Miller. A founder of both State UUP and the Oneonta chapter, Fred began teaching Theatre at SUNY Oneonta in 1964 and retired from the College in 1998. His UUP service over the decades has encompassed tenures as State UUP Vice President and several terms as Oneonta Chapter President. At 87, Fred remains an exceptional labor advocate in outreach meetings with legislators. The account below focuses on Fred's early life in the circus, which fostered a human solidarity, providing the basis for his later union leadership. In the future, Nancy will interview other union founders, leaders, and activists. She will digitally preserve these sessions for the UUP archives. The account below limns the interview that Nancy conducted with Fred on Friday, August 10, 2012. The complete audio file of the interview covers Dr. Miller's life in the circus, Great Depression, minor league baseball, and military. The audio file of the two and one-half hour interview is available in the UUP office. Subsequent interviews will cover Fred's recollections about his experiences in the Civil Rights movement, radio, television, theater, the labor movement, SUNY Oneonta, and politics.]

Unlike the romantics of popular culture who run away with the circus, Fred Miller simply became a part of the family business, the *Flying Millers*, a trapeze act, at the tender age of 5. The circus community, comprised of people of diverse ethnic and religious backgrounds, formed Fred's extended family. This spectrum of people pulled together to set up the circus tents in early morning in order to be ready to perform for the afternoon matinee. In the circus of the 1930s, what mattered was ability and training, not race, religion, language, or national origin.

Circus people formed Fred's extended family. They came from diverse parts of the globe and shared their native foods, forms of worship, and dialects with one another as well as their joys and sorrows. The circus gave Fred authentic diversity long before the term affirmative action came into vogue. Moreover, flying high over the sawdust in an aerial act, Fred learned the bonds of mutual dependence between flyers and catchers. Diversity, solidarity, and mutual responsibility ingrained life lessons that subsequently animated Fred's union journey.

The circus traveled cross-country, performing at cities both large and small. For a time, Fred led the circus parade on a great stallion. During the 1930s, venues for the *Flying Millers* ranged from small towns in the South and Great Plains to Madison Square Garden and the 1939 World's Fair. Surprisingly, the circus business thrived during the Great Depression. Residents of the drought-stricken farmlands of the Dust Bowl managed to scrounge up enough money to see the circus, perhaps a brief reprieve from a daily life of hardship beyond their control. Fred met the real Tom Joads as Okies made their epic journey across Depression era America.

Life in a circus family brought some unusual adventures. Fred recounted helping his maternal grandfather, a magician, designer of fun houses, and exhibitor of exotic animals harvest the venom of milk rattlesnakes. Rattlesnake venom, in demand by pharmaceutical companies, brought in money. So Fred and his grandfather, who stood 6'6" and possessed powerful hands, traveled west to hunt rattlesnakes. Grandpa found the rattlesnakes, and Fred would lift the rock or whatever they hid under; then Grandpa would grab the rattlesnake with his bare hands and milk the venom into a jar. The rattlesnakes, released unharmed, then slithered away.

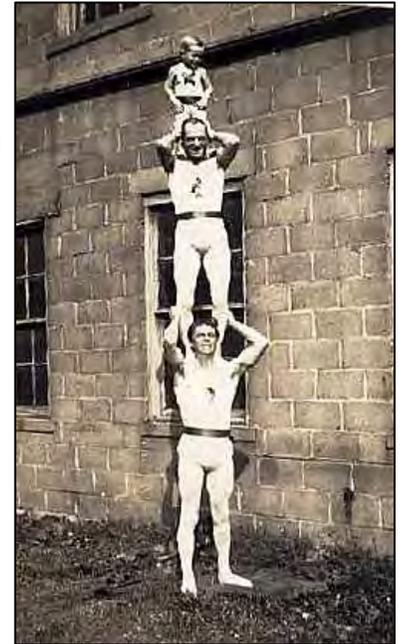
That Daring Young Man on the Flying Trapeze (continued)

Fred's broadcasting career began as child in the 1930s with a Saturday morning radio program taped during stints in Chicago called *Circus Boy*. Produced by his Uncle Marvin, Fred spontaneously answered questions submitted by the radio audience. In the isolated world of the 1930s, where many people never traveled far from their hometown, the life of *Circus Boy* must have seemed exotic indeed.

The Miller family spent much of the year on the road. Like many circus families, the Miller's spent the winter in Texas. Fred's father valued education and saw to it that Fred enrolled in a local school whenever the circus was on the road, often for only a week or so in one place.

On the move, Fred attended over 100 schools while performing. Fred's acrobatic strength and athleticism enabled him to trounce a succession of bullies foolish enough to challenge the perpetually new kid at school. Despite his peripatetic and transient youth, Fred earned a high school diploma at 15 and a college degree at 18 from Trinity University in San Antonio, Texas. He later earned a Ph.D. from Columbia University.

The circus travelled the roads and rails from coast to coast and north to south, laden with all the tents, equipment, and other paraphernalia required by the Big Show and its mobile community. They also performed in vaudeville, burlesque, and movies; in the later, they worked as stunt doubles, including swinging through vines for Johnny Weissmuller's Tarzan. Fred and his tribe grew accustomed to small temporary living quarters, making cooperation and shared meals integral to their lives. Like other fathers of the time, Fred's Dad taught the boy the family trade. So Fred learned to fly through the air with the greatest of ease; to fall 30 feet into a highly abrasive rope net if anyone made a split second error; to be an acrobat; to break a wild horse. But his association with the circus community and attending school with children from many schools throughout American taught him skills far beyond his years: to be tolerant, to treat everyone equally, to fight for those who are misused. UUP icon Fred Miller never forgot the lessons learned by *Circus Boy*.



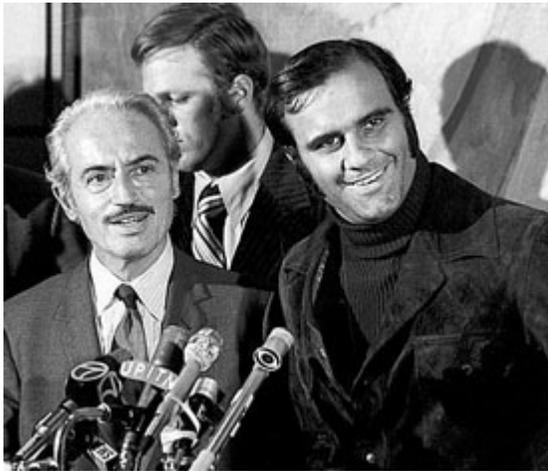
Circus Boy Fred Miller, top;
father, middle; &
uncle bottom



Miller Family Headlining Show

A Labor Primer: Marvin Miller and the Major League Baseball Players Association

By Gabriel Schechter, Editor, Researcher, and Author



Marvin Miller, left, and the young Joe Torre

[Editor's Note: Gabriel Schechter is a freelance researcher, editor, and author, and is available for professional assignments. Writers or publishers may contact Gabriel at gschechter@nycap.rr.com or (607) 821-2734]

In the early 1990s I started working on a book about the early years of Marvin Miller's tenure as the director of the Major League Baseball Players Association. My focus was on how Miller convinced a generation of ballplayers that: (A) owners weren't the benign sportsmen they were believed to be; (B) though players were a franchise's essential element and most important commodity, owners treated them poorly; and (C) a strong union was the best way to improve salaries, benefits, and working conditions. I criss-crossed the country twice, interviewing ex-players who had been the union's player representation on their respective teams, including three league representatives.

But I started the whole project by interviewing Marvin Miller, who was gracious enough to invite me to his apartment in Manhattan even though I had no journalistic credentials or track record as a baseball historian. I wanted to understand more about those early years, from his starting the job in 1966 to the tumultuous 1969 spring training boycott, a key but long-forgotten milestone in the MLBPA's early history. When the major leagues expanded in 1969 and initiated a playoff system, the television deal multiplied. Since MLB funded the players' pension program, Miller was eager to see that the players got their fair share.

The owners stonewalled him so he urged players *not* to sign their 1969 contracts, reasoning that, as he told me, "It defied logic for anybody to put their signature to a contract committing themselves for the following year with this thing unresolved." The players overwhelmingly embraced the contract boycott, with only a handful of players signing contracts that winter. Three well-attended meetings were held which solidified the union's resolve; even Mickey Mantle, who had announced his retirement, made a public statement in support of the boycott.

When spring training time arrived in February 1969, hardly any players showed up, though they held workouts on their own. There had been a trickle of signees, but the owners were concerned enough to discuss the possibility of using replacement players, and by mid-March a showdown seemed inevitable. That's when Bowie Kuhn stepped in. Elected as the new commissioner in February, he didn't want his watch to begin with baseball's first work stoppage, so he prevailed upon the owners to pony up some more money for the pension fund, come to some kind of agreement on the future of the pension fund, and play ball.

For the owners, the expenditure was still small change, but it was a huge step for the players. They had taken a stand and, with Miller as their advocate and their public voice, they had gotten what they wanted. The owners had backed down. This lesson was fresh in their minds when 1972 rolled around and Miller persuaded them to engage in their first strike. Would they have had the nerve to strike in 1972 if they hadn't stared down the owners in 1969? That was just one of the questions I asked Miller in a conversation which lasted nearly two hours. Here are some of the things I learned from him:

A Labor Primer (continued)

PLAYERS IN 1966: “The understanding of the players as to what unionism was and why it was necessary and what it could do, was close to ground zero. . . .Sure they would like to make more money, but they had been told that baseball owners don’t make money, the industry doesn’t make money. They had all kinds of beliefs which were, I was going to say amazing, but not really given their backgrounds. . . .They had no work experience outside of baseball, and therefore no union experience outside of baseball. What they did know about unions was furnished by the press, a good anti-union press.”

FIRST BOYCOTT MEETING IN SEPTEMBER 1968: “When I said that it seemed to me that we had to take a very logical stand and explain to the owners . . . that it makes no sense to ask a player to sign a contract when there’s this blank spot here. . . .So we’re not dealing with something that is minor, this is quite major. The players’ reaction I thought was really good.”

SECOND BOYCOTT MEETING IN DECEMBER 1968: “It was clear that they were spoiling for a fight, the owners. The [union] board understood it because . . . the player reps, most of them if not all of them, at one time or another had been present at the negotiating meetings, observing how impossible the owners’ representatives were, so I had no doubt what they were reporting to the players. As I say, the big surprise to me was the tremendous unanimity that they found in their telephone calls.”

THIRD BOYCOTT MEETING IN JANUARY 1969: “This was not like the meeting three years later [before the 1972 strike] when the players took over and everybody talked and they kind of whipped themselves into a strike frenzy. This was a different kind of meeting. . . .The meeting was a surprise first in terms of this complete attendance, practically everybody who was invited; second, the way they listened; and then, the forceful manner in which each one got up who did talk—not everybody did talk—but I keep remembering Dick Allen. He was so magnificent . . . when he talked, God he was eloquent and forceful and strong. There was no question that nobody could sign a contract with this kind of situation.”

MY MAGIC QUESTION: “That’s a guess, obviously. I think it was a very important precedent. For those players in ’72 who had been there in ’69, which represented a clear majority, I think the memory of the success of ’69 had to have been a factor in the ’72 strike. Absolutely. All they had to do was recall what the bargaining position of the owners had been prior to the boycott being obvious and coming down to the deadline, and they taking a look at that agreement which came out of it—which was a tremendously good agreement.”

Twenty years later, I vividly remember my two hours with Marvin Miller. I could see why he had led the players out of the Dark Ages and into the Promised Land—and why the owners thought he had mesmerized the players. He was calm, reasoned, methodical, and insistent. Strengthened by the moral certitude that he was righting decades of wrongs—most notably the reserve clause, which took him a decade to overturn—he exuded the patience needed to wear down the owners’ intransigence time after time. He was the most impressive man I’ve ever met.



Winner of first presidential election, 1788: George Washington

SENTINEL QUIZ

What percentage of the popular vote cast will the winner of the 2012 presidential election receive, and which candidate will win the 2012 presidential election? Eligible predictions must reach Nancy Cannon (cannonns@oneonta.edu) by October 22nd. The first correct answer will receive a UUP cap.

What It Was, Was Football: the Jets at Cortland

By Bill Simons, Chapter President

On a perfect summer day, my well travelled '98 Toyota Camry hummed along the familiar roads — 88-206-81— leading to Cortland. Once again, the SUNY Cortland campus domiciled New York Jets pre-season camp, and as a student of sport, I wanted to see one of the National Football League's most colorful teams up close. My friend and union colleague, Jo Schaffer, an iconic State, Cortland, and Retiree UUP leader as well as an distinguished art historian, offered to attend the practice with me and to provide VIP passes, obtained through her sport agent son, Peter.



Jets at Cortland

I had a great time in Cortland. The VIP pass provided access to complimentary refreshments — and curiosity as to who I was, although no one mistook me for Joe Namath. The Jets practice was light — and ended at 11 AM before the heat became oppressive. The spectators, modest in number, radiated enthusiasm and good spirits. Quarterback Tim Tebow, blessed with the build and, unfortunately, the arm of a fullback, elicited a Greek chorus of chants from fans, some of them hopeful of challenging his resolve to remain innocent of intimate matters until marriage. The sincerity of Tebow's morality, religion, and benevolence as well as his good looks and amiable nature deterred his partisans from admitting that he had zero chance of displacing Mark Sanchez as the Jets' starting quarterback. Standing just a few yards from the playing field, we heard the booming voices of assistant coaches, occasionally punctuated by mild profanity, reveal trade knowledge of game. Proximity to the action highlighted the nuances of drills and scrimmage. The size and strength of the players, some lineman standing 6'7" and weighing in excess of 330 pounds, added to the spectacle. When the emperor, Head Coach Rex Ryan, appeared, he responded with aplomb to shouts that appetite had not yet undone his weight-loss surgery. After the practice, several players signed autographs — and fraternized. Nobody got hurt, and everyone had fun. Pre-season NFL football in small town Cortland, New York, made the game appear as innocent as that recounted in the classic Andy Griffith monologue *What It Was, Was Football*.



rites of summer: football family

Autumn has come, and revealed once again that the realities of NFL football have little to do with an idyllic summer day in Cortland. Lawsuits about concussion, bounties, and orthopedically devastated bodies cloud our enjoyment of the game. Reports of depression, deformity, and early death rampant amongst former football stars shadow the season. Along with the weight room and chow table, chemical ingestion augments gigantic size and prowess. Greed and commercialism, as well as our own infatuation with the rituals of structured violence, will culminate in a Super Bowl adorned by Roman numerals.

What It Was, Was Football: the Jets at Cortland (continued)

The Protestant elite's late 19th century concerns created American football. Distressed about a perceived erosion of masculinity in their progeny, affluent, old stock Brahmins, with names like Adams and Higginson, employed the game as a moral equivalent of war. On Ivy League campuses, football, claimed its proponents, would imbue a new generation of WASP scions with the courage, resilience, and strength necessary for their social class to maintain its proprietorship over government, military, business, and professional leadership. Walter Camp's Yale dominated the gridiron for decades. When carnage got out hand, periodic reform, such as that coming from the White House conference hosted by President Teddy Roosevelt, would take the game to new levels. Even when tough ethnics and Southerners — the Rocknes, Lombardis, Bryants, Paternos, Levys, and Tomlins — took the game away from New England patricians, football continued its climb, eventually displacing baseball as the national pastime. Clean-living WASP sports hero Frank Merriwell morphed into bureaucrat cum NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell. Aside from nomenclature, college football, currently attempting to contain the Sandusky scandal, is now no more amateur than its younger sibling, the professional game. The win-at-all-costs culture sometimes seeps down to parents and coaches guiding young children aping football at the Pop Warner level.

Football, at its best, showcases excellence, kindles intoxicating enthusiasms, unites communities and schools, fashions role models, teaches lessons, and provides opportunity. Great organizations, like the New England Patriots perform brilliantly on the field and demonstrate social responsibility off of it. Nonetheless, something needs to be done. George F. Will, the conservative pundit, certainly does not share the liberalism that provides ballast to the labor movement. Nonetheless, he is an articulate, observant, and principled conservative — as well as a baseball enthusiast. Will offers some inconvenient truths about the current state of football:

Decades ago, this column lightheartedly called football a mistake because it combines two of the worst features of American life — violence, punctuated by committee meetings, which football calls huddles. Now, however, accumulating evidence about new understandings of the human body — the brain, especially, but not exclusively — compel the conclusion that football is a mistake because the body is not built to absorb, and cannot be adequately modified by training or protected by equipment to absorb, the game's kinetic energies.

After 18 people died playing football in 1905, even President Theodore Roosevelt, who loved war and gore generally, flinched and forced some rules changes. Today, however, the problem is not the rules; it is the fiction that football can be fixed and still resemble the game fans relish.



Jo Schaffer and Bill Simons at Jets practice

Long ago, when I went to the Hadley elementary school, I and some of the other neighborhood kids would occasionally held the ball for a varsity football player, David, nicknamed Big Red, as he practiced place kicking. Big Red would kick the ball straight up Elmwood Road when cars weren't coming. At age ten, I felt a mixture of pride, excitement, and momentary fear as Big Red approached the ball. When the pigskin soared in the air, I felt it was my kick as well. A 190-pound guard, Big Red never graduated high school. At age 17, he succumbed following a 14-8 victory against Andover in September 1961. In mind's eye, I still watch from across the street as Big Red's teammates stand silently outside his house.

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