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ABJECT PROFESSORS

*Part-time instructors
get flattened by
the academy*
by GIGI GENERAUX
PAGE 16

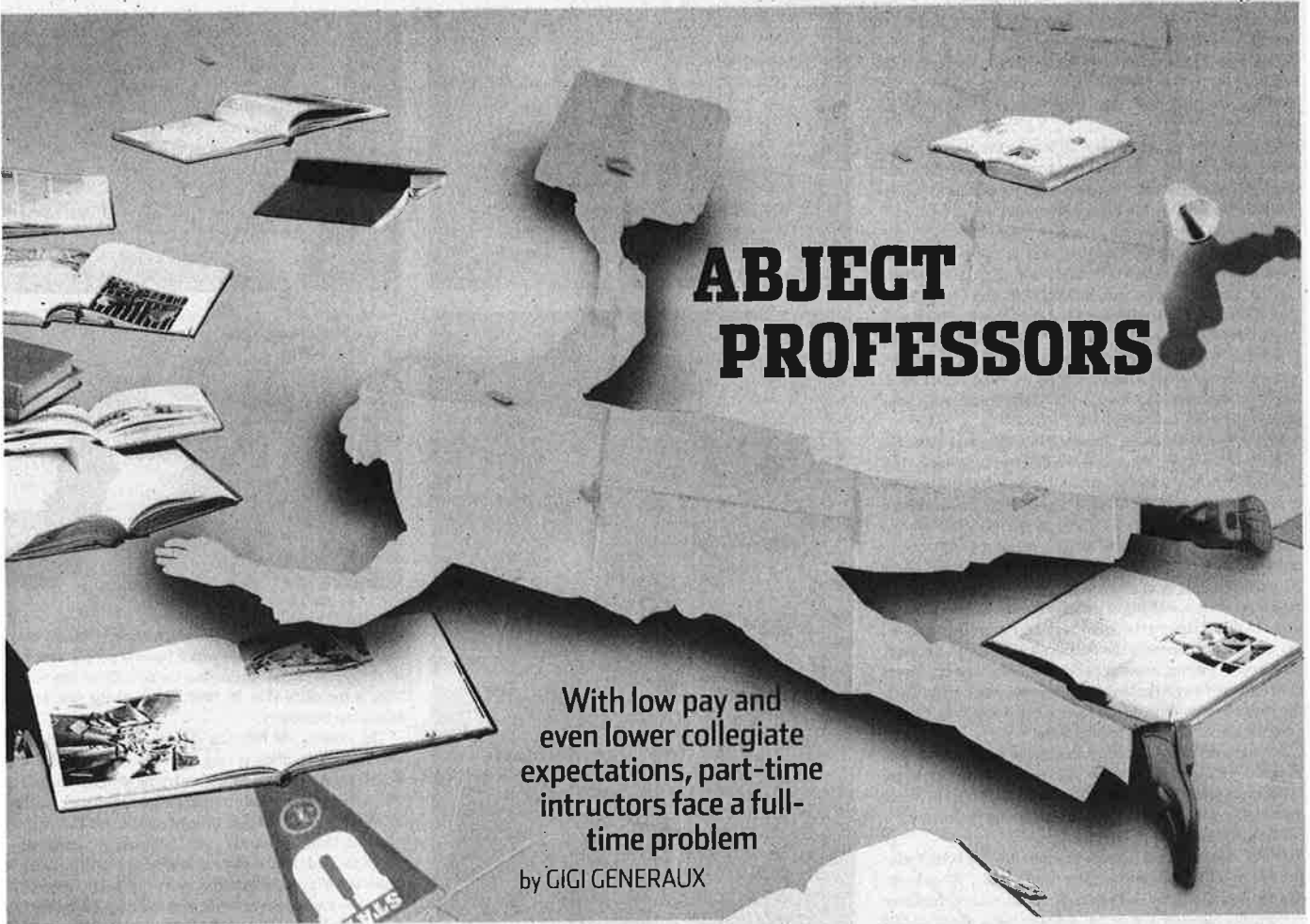
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JUAN MARTINEZ STROLLS THE CITY, PART 3

Date: 5/18/11 Item: CP
By: Todd Farlow



ABJECT PROFESSORS

With low pay and even lower collegiate expectations, part-time instructors face a full-time problem

by GIGI GENERAUX

Next Monday, Sam Hollister will commute between all three CSN campuses to teach three undergraduate courses in one day. He will drive an average of 60 miles and spend \$120 on gasoline for the week. He has a master's degree in sociology. And his take-home pay for the entire semester will be about \$7,200, or about \$1,440 a month. It's worth noting at this point that the vice president of CSN earns \$157,680 a year and that deans earn on average \$116,936 a year. For Hollister, consequently, it's anyone's guess if next semester he'll even have the three courses he has now.

Hollister is an adjunct faculty instructor and, because of his egregious commute, he is jokingly referred to among professors as a "freeway flier." Adjuncts are part-time faculty hired on a contractual, semester-to-semester basis with no promise of job security and no health insurance benefits — and the students they teach often don't know that their education is being subsidized by this part-time labor force. Adjuncts are paid per course and often spend many hours commuting between multiple institutions to scrape together paychecks that hover around national poverty levels. They are professionals with upwards of six years of postsecondary educational training, on par with doctors and lawyers, but their salaries comprise less than a barista at Star-

bucks makes. They are a casualty of greedy university systems unwilling or unable to pay them a living wage as full-time, tenured employees. And unlike K-12 teachers, they seldom enjoy any collective bargaining rights with their employers. Because of their lack of job security, virtually all of the adjuncts interviewed for this story asked to have their names withheld — a disturbing trend among professors who are ostensibly protected in voicing their opinions by the United States' conventions of academic freedom.

This fall, an estimated 4.5 million students will begin their studies at universities and two-year colleges across the nation. More than 68 percent will be taught by adjuncts like Hollister. In its report on what it calls "con-

tingent faculty," the American Association of University Professors found that almost 70 percent of today's college faculty hold part-time appointments. A new hire to the professoriate has a two-in-three chance of being hired only for a part-time position. The *Adjunct Advocate*, a national news magazine for adjuncts, has found that the percentage of part-time faculty has doubled in the past 15 years. According to the National Center for Education Statistics, the percentage of part-time faculty at colleges and universities in the U.S. in 1970 was 22.8. Today, that number is 49.3 and is expected to rise.

What started as a way to connect working professionals to students who could benefit from these instructors' real-world experience

as turned into an exploitative and overused system driven by the bottom line. The adjunct system is the easiest way for colleges and universities to save money in unsure economic times, but the AAUP notes that the rate of adjuncts increased exponentially during the economic boom of the '90s, when universities were putting more resources into technology and state-of-the-art facilities at the expense of paying living wages to faculty.

Gregory Brown, professor of history at UNLV and president of the UNLV chapter of the Nevada Faculty Alliance, says that UNLV relies so heavily on adjunct faculty because the state, including both public treasury and private donors, does not invest sufficiently in instruction to meet the cost of providing students with what they have a right to, which is a full-time faculty member teaching every course section. He notes, however, that in the 2009-2010 school year, 15 percent more course sections were actually taught by full-time faculty, but that those sections were on average 15 percent larger than in the previous academic year, and that UNLV's full-time faculty teaching loads are "already heavier than national averages for public research universities."

Hiring part-timers with no guarantee of job security and no health benefits helps save money, but statistics from the journal *Educational Policy* indicate that for every 10 percent increase in adjunct labor at four-year doctoral institutions, retention of freshmen after their first year drops by 4 percent. Additional studies by the *Journal of Human Resources, Research in Higher Education* and *Community College Review* have found that graduation rates and overall academic success decline when students are taught primarily by part-time faculty.

The adjunct labor system thus ensures that there is little to tether either students or faculty to the institution: The turnover rate for adjuncts is exceptionally high, and adjuncts who are employed seldom have office space in which to meet with students for conferencing. Many students thus struggle to build cohesive educational portfolios with professors, and have difficulty garnering letters of recommendation from those familiar with their work upon graduating.

In Nevada, with its recent cuts to education, the problem parallels national averages. CSN's faculty operates at 65 percent adjunct. UNR operates with 293 adjuncts, 24 percent of the faculty. UNLV has 432 adjuncts or 27 percent, down from 727 in 2007 and 526 in 2009. In the University of Nevada system, what would typically be called an "adjunct" is referred to as an "LOA," teachers who have "letters of appointment" to their posts instead of tenure.

Perhaps one of the biggest problems facing adjuncts who have little investment in the institutions which employ them is the increasing likelihood that students will cheat on papers and exams. Websites like BookRags.com and SparkNotes.com have made getting access to papers increasingly easy, and adjuncts who have not been teaching at the same institution for very long are often at a disadvantage in spotting resubmitted work. Many adjuncts respond by not giving papers outside of class — or by not giving any homework at all. "I don't assign papers frequently because of the issues surrounding them," says Hollister, who asked that his name be changed for this story. "I stick with [in-class] exams for the most part," because the likelihood of cheating is lower. If part-time instructors — sandwiched between an institution that won't invest in them and students who won't take their assignments seriously — are modifying curriculum to accommodate the likelihood of plagiarism, this begs the question: What happens to educational quality when a largely part-time workforce is left

"industry leaders" but by people who pursue knowledge as a kind of calling — and who are willing to sacrifice equitable pay for the "love" of their craft. William Pannapacker, a professor and writer for *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, notes that this rhetoric of love can be very manipulative when used in the context of adjunct hiring. In a 2009 article advising undergraduates against pursuing graduate work in the humanities, Pannapacker wrote, "Academic labor is a precisely tuned system: Provide no more costly tenured positions than are needed to keep the graduate students coming and the adjuncts working. And, when that balance begins to arouse skepticism about the fairness of the exchange of labor for opportunity, the rhetoric of 'love' becomes all the more powerful: 'We don't need to pay you fairly because you are doing it for love!' (Such a bargain should particularly alarm women, who are now the majority of graduate students in the humanities and the overwhelming majority of adjuncts)," he writes. Curtis adds that the humanities in general tend to attract more adjuncts overall than the sciences.

adjuncts seldom have a place where they can conference with colleagues. This ensures that academic exchange, the hallmark of the university system, is stymied and myopic such that adjuncts often end up teaching the same thing semester after semester, with no growth or change. Anna Sorenson, an adjunct in the fine art department at UNLV who asks that her name be changed for this story, says that she teaches the same lessons she was taught as a student, that she is not invited to faculty meetings, has no voting rights and has "almost no interaction with full-time faculty and very little with the administration." She also has no office space. Similarly, Hollister has no office space at CSN and uses his own thumb drive for data storage.

Without even a place to put their things down or store their data, adjuncts are, in effect, a disposable labor force. Because of this, the pressure to do everything from watering down curriculum to passing plagiarists can be intense. As John Curtis of the AAUP reminds, "student evaluations play a large role in decisions about whether contingent faculty members will be rehired," as these evaluations by 18- to 24-year-olds often influence hiring decisions.

John Marks, an adjunct in the English department at UNLV who asked that his name be changed for this story, believes he has even been denied classes because he is not liked by the director of composition who oversees adjunct appointments. Several of his colleagues this semester have been awarded three classes and health insurance while he is scraping by with one — and no health insurance. "It's such a shit job," he says. If adjunct appointments are made on the basis of petty office politics and evaluations written on the fly by disengaged teenagers, one can be compelled to question the extent to which the adjunct system threatens academic freedom overall. That is the single most important issue seen by the AAUP as undermining the quality of a university education nationwide. Curtis says, "Contingent faculty members are reluctant to challenge students in court over workload or grading, and they are afraid to tackle controversial issues in class. They are not invited to, or are not in a position to speak freely during, discussions about curriculum and teaching methods. They face potential dismissal from teaching at any point, often with no recourse to due process. This harms students as well, because it means they are not being exposed to the full range of issues and are not being held to appropriate high expectations in their courses."

» CONTINUED ON P18

"It's such a shit job."

UNLV ADJUNCT PROFESSOR

to educate undergraduates? "Way too many kids are getting through the system without basic skills," Hollister said. "For me in particular, I have a problem sometimes balancing my conception of what a college skill set should be with what the kids are actually capable of, and how to give them a chance without messing with the integrity of education overall."

Marc Johnson, provost of UNR, insists that employing contingent faculty does not impact educational quality. "Using LOAs does not erode quality; in fact, it does quite the opposite and allows us to provide a full and evolving course schedule" that keeps pace with undergraduate demand. Tony Allen, media relations manager at UNLV, agrees. "Though the need to hire part-time faculty is in part driven by budgetary restrictions and student demand in certain programs, students benefit when exposed to both world-class research faculty and industry professionals serving as part-time instructors. The School of Architecture and Hotel College are but two examples of units that hire industry leaders as instructors. Part-time instructors also benefit through their interactions with students and, perhaps, future employees."

Still, in fields like the liberal arts, the ranks of part-time instructors are often driven not by

For whatever industry knowledge they may bring to the table, adjuncts are often placed in their classrooms at the last minute, with little time to plan for the semester, which can have serious detrimental effects on the instructional quality they are able to provide. These last-minute appointments are common in a part-time system driven by semester-to-semester enrollment numbers. P.D. Lesko, executive editor of *Adjunct Advocate*, says that adjuncts who teach the majority of undergraduates are "minimally supervised, hired at the last moment sometimes and given minimal training and professional development. In short, adjuncts are tossed into the classrooms, expected to do their jobs, and turn in their grades at the end of the semester, just as are full-time faculty. The main difference is that adjunct faculty have very little of the institutional support that is offered to full-time faculty."

By "institutional support," Lesko is referring to a host of perks afforded to tenured faculty and often denied to part-time employees: fixed office space, easy access to copiers, access to library facilities, a home drive for storing electronic data and departmental voting rights. Institutional support can also mean something as simple as interaction with other faculty members. Without office space,

"I worry sometimes about how I present in class," Hollister says. "I have a tendency to talk a bit about weird things or controversial topics. It concerns me at times that it could be a problem, but I mostly just do what I feel is right for what I'm teaching." When asked, CSN and UNLV assured that their policies on academic freedom, which are established by the Board of Regents, are sanctified and revered, but if adjuncts were truly confident in these policies, perhaps they would have gone on the record for this story.

In addition to damaging academic freedom, the part-time system ensures that adjuncts are kept working night classes or at satellite campuses, so they seldom have time to talk to other adjuncts and do the one thing their administrations fear: unionize. In some states, like Ohio and — you guessed it — Nevada, part-time faculty and graduate students at state institutions like UNLV and CSN are considered public employees and are therefore prohibited by state law from joining or organizing unions. In other states, like Michigan, union efforts have been successful and have secured the largest salary increases to the lowest-paid adjuncts.

This crisis in higher education leaves one wondering why there isn't more of an outcry among parents, students and taxpayers about who is educating our nation's young adults and how little those educators are being paid. Lesko says, "People don't care who's teaching their children in

college. You think a woman who works on the assembly line cares that someone with a graduate degree is getting paid peanuts to teach college, and works without benefits? Someone with a graduate degree has many more career avenues open to her and many more career opportunities available than our hypothetical assembly-line worker. That's the wrong argument to make, but unfortunately that is the argument that full-timers who have stepped forward to be 'advocates' for part-time faculty are making. It's the argument that union leaders make. It's the argument that many adjunct activists make. ... Really, who cares that people who have been given every educational opportunity are chuckle-headed enough to let themselves be taken advantage of? It's comical, not tragic, in the eyes of those outside of academe."

Curtis is somewhat less cynical. "Parents and students who aren't familiar with details of the structure of higher education may not realize that there is any possibility other than a heavily contingent academic workforce," he says. "It's important to acknowledge that only a minority of Americans have had the experience of spending significant amounts of time on a college campus. And legislators, administrators and other policymakers seem to want to have it both ways: a dedicated, highly qualified, productive faculty, but at low cost and with plenty of so-called 'flexibility.' Flexibility," he adds, "is code for 'subject to dismissal at any time for whatever reason the administration chooses,' including no reason at all."

The recent budget cuts to education in Nevada mean that the number of adjuncts is actually lower at both CSN and UNLV this fiscal year than in years past. CSN is being funded by the Legislature to operate at a ratio of 60 to 40 percent full-time to part-time faculty, but it cannot fulfill this mandate because of budget cuts. At UNLV, the budget for part-time instruction has been cut close to 25 percent — from approximately \$12.1 million in 2007 to roughly \$9.1 million in 2010. For 2011, that number is expected to decline another 6 percent to close to \$8.6 million. Allen says that "state budget reductions of close to \$50 million at UNLV since 2007 have resulted in the elimination of eight departments, numerous faculty positions — both filled and vacant — and approximately 1,000 class sections. With an additional \$47.5 million cut proposed to UNLV's state-funded budget over the next biennium, dozens of additional programs and hundreds of faculty and staff could be impacted. With fewer programs and a reduction in class sections, it is unlikely the budget for part-time instruction will increase."

But this also likely means that adjuncts, when they are hired, will be paid less, and will often be given less than a full course load, ensuring that they don't qualify for health insurance. Adjuncts at CSN earn \$801 per credit hour, or \$2,403 for a typical three-credit class, and most teach course loads below full-time. This is the same for adjuncts at UNR, who earn on average \$815 per credit hour. Adjuncts at UNLV earn \$923 per credit hour, or \$2,769

per class — the highest salary for part instructors in Nevada higher ed. Full-timers at UNLV earn roughly \$1,130 per credit and while UNLV set this as a target salary part-time instructors as well, with increases toward meeting that goal, budget cuts in 2009 necessitated a freeze on that salary increase. Allen says, "It should be noted that during the current biennium, UNLV faculty and staff have incurred a 4.6 percent salary reduction, a reduction that was imposed on part-time instructors." Still, the president's salary may have been frozen, he makes \$246,426 a year. Only the dean of the law school earns more, at \$339,560 a year.

Trends in the professorial labor market leave one to wonder what the future of American higher education will be as more and more classes are subsidized by a time-labor force that makes little investment in the institutions where it teaches or in students themselves. As Lesko says, the future of adjuncting is rosy. The future of the tenure market is a lot less rosy. The number of adjuncts between 1980 and 2000 doubled while the number of faculty on the tenure track fell significantly. "If national part-time professorial appointments continue to rise, it won't be long before the system of higher education is almost entirely contingent and the tenure system is almost eliminated — with potentially drastic implications on academic integrity, student turnover and academic freedom. We will become more than a nation of professors for hire

PART-TIMING AT THE DEGREE MILL

THE CRISIS in part-time university instruction is even more pressing at for-profit institutions, where the schools' very business model and commuter design tends to generate a largely adjunct system. These schools often make no secret of the fact that they are delivering education driven by the bottom line, where students are viewed not so much as learners of knowledge but as consumers purchasing a product for a steep fee. As John Curtis, spokesperson for the American Association of University Professors, says, "The biggest difference in the for-profit sector is that there the faculty is almost entirely contingent. Federal data from 2005 indicates that, even among regionally accredited for-profit institutions, only 0.3 percent of full-time faculty members had tenure; 90 percent of all faculty members were employed part-time. And we would even question whether the reported full-time faculty is truly fulfilling a faculty role as opposed to an administrative one."

For-profit schools like the Art Institute, the International Academy of Design and Technology and the University of Phoenix tend to pay adjuncts more per course, but the trade-offs are fierce competition from full-time colleagues for class assignments and, say some,

an even more pernicious problem: pressure to pass failing students who have simply paid for their degrees or — even worse — pressure to ignore plagiarism when it occurs.

Steve Adams, who asked that his name be changed for this story, used to teach at the Art Institute in Henderson. Asked about pressure to pass failing students, he responded, "I was never pressured, but I know of other instructors who were and threatened with being fired. ... I also know of full-timers who were sanctioned." (The Art Institute declined to comment for this story.)

Another adjunct, Aaron Todd, who has taught introductory psychology at for-profit schools in the Las Vegas Valley, like DeVry University, Regis University and the University of Phoenix, and who asked that his name be changed for this story, said, "Plagiarism is not a problem in the courses I teach because I do not give any homework. They will not do homework. So we do all work right in class. I have not tried to give homework for 10 years."

"For a long time, we were discouraged from failing any student for any reason," Todd adds. "A's were the most common grade, followed by B's. Recently, since Congress has started paying attention to us, suddenly the administration is interested in our grades forming a bell curve again. They suddenly want fewer A's, more C's and a few F's sprinkled in there. Of course, just like George Orwell predicted, they claim it's always been this way." Todd is referring to the Department of Education's recent investigation of for-profit schools, which for

years have gotten rich on federal tuition dollars while, some say, failing to prepare students for meaningful careers or provide them with transferable, accredited credits upon graduation.

Just as at state institutions, adjuncts at for-profit schools enjoy little job security, but since they are essentially corporate employees they don't even have guaranteed raises and possess virtually no due-process rights. Todd says that he is worried about his job "every term. Constantly." This had affected his willingness to be a vocal member of the faculty. "I have to hold my tongue, be very politically correct. ... Once, some years ago, I opposed a trend that the higher-ups thought would be a good sales tool. I was fired."

DeVry, Regis, the University of Phoenix, the Art Institutes and the International Academy of Design and Technology were all contacts for this story. Only the president of IADT, Jason Smith, responded saying: "The International Academy of Design & Technology greatly values the expertise and knowledge of our adjunct team. Our focus is on delivering a high quality education to our students, and we find incredible value in employing adjunct members who have real-world industry experience to share with our students. In regards to adjunct faculty pay, we believe our adjunct members are competitively compensated for their efforts." Unlike state employees, for-profit adjuncts could conceivably unionize, but it's anyone's guess whether those efforts would succeed, particularly in a national political climate that disfavors unionization. **GIGI GENERAUX**

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Letters

How Do You Solve a Problem Like Libya?

VISALIA, CALIF.

In "The Libya Intervention" [April 11] you compare the NATO activity in Libya with the Iraq War. But the Iraq War was entered on a whim of the Dubya Dimwit administration, which justified its actions with a suite of blatant lies. A more appropriate comparison would be with the 1991 Gulf War, where we used military force to halt mass atrocities by armies of criminals acting out the petulant rage of a self-obsessed dictator. I don't question our intervening in Libya, but I do question our competence. I fear we will be less successful in dealing with Qaddafi than with Saddam.

DENNIS ANTHONY

NEW YORK CITY

I objected strongly to the Iraq invasion, but I felt proud to hear my president say that America had chosen to intervene in Libya because of who we are. I call that restoring our moral standing.

ANNA THEOFILOPOULOU

TULSA, OKLA.

When I read the *Wall Street Journal* I know I will find soundly researched, reasonably objective news stories, but if I turn to the editorial pages (which I never do) reason and objectivity will be replaced by an ideology worthy of the Middle Ages. Sadly, I find *The Nation* to be equally praiseworthy, and guilty—with the opposite ideology. An example is your stance on Libya. Not all military interventions are equal. Kosovo cannot be equated with Iraq.

BRAD BYERS

Be Sure Green Is Green

BEVERLY, MASS.

Amen to Mark Hertsgaard's final comment in "Obama ♥ Nukes" [April 11]: "Let's make sure that [alternative energy] is truly green." There are a lot of wolves in sheep's clothing out there. Something green must return more energy than went

letters@thenation.com

into building, maintaining and decommissioning it at the end of its life. This is known as energy balance. A wind farm or solar panel in the wrong place can fail this criterion if a large infrastructure is required to distribute the energy, or if geographic considerations result in the need for heroic civil engineering. Where are energy balance studies?

JOHN BELL

The Lies of Old Men

BEAVERTON, ORE.

William Mitchell, in "Beyond Austerity" [April 4], debunks neoliberal economic myths used to justify destructive government policies. It is courageous for a professional economist to do so. He writes, "The analogy between national and household budgets is false—government can spend more than its revenue because it creates currency." Mitchell concludes, however, that government budget deficits are needed to fund "increased public spending to directly target job creation." If the government can "print" all the "currency" it needs, why should there be a budget deficit?

When the government prints and directly spends legal tender, it competes with private banks, which also create money. Banks charge interest on their new money, which vanishes when the loan is repaid. Newly printed and spent government money is free of debt and permanently increases the money supply. When "targeted jobs" build interstates and bridges, or a high-speed rail system, they do not compete for resources with home builders or automobile manufacturers. Infrastructure construction and maintenance is uniquely a government responsibility, and paying for it with debt-free new "currency" will promote private investment and economic growth.

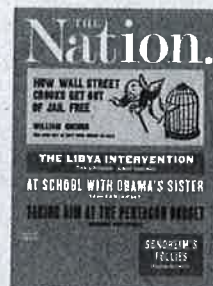
Dennis Kucinich will reintroduce the National Employment Emergency Defense Act, which authorizes debt-free money creation and spending by the government

(continued on page 26)

WHAT IS SELDOM MENTIONED IS THAT THE RICH STAY RICH BY
LOANING MONEY TO GOVERNMENTS

Date 5/18/11 Item CP

By: Jada Farlow



point out that Islam is remarkably heterogeneous and dynamic, and includes an emergent European culture that blends religion with modernity. Moreover, European integration of immigrants is actually far more successful than it is portrayed, with their images of "parallel societies" and similar stereotypes.

A number of recent studies in Germany unequivocally refute anti-Islam clichés. They show, for example, that the vast majority of Muslims don't see Islam as a political ideology and don't define themselves foremost through religion but through social standing, regional origin and profession. Only about 7 percent are deeply religious and adhere to patriarchal traditions; these tend to live in ethnic enclaves, unlike their co-religionists. In Germany 98 percent of Muslims choose their own partners. Eighty-four percent believe in separation of church and state. The new studies corroborate other research showing that most of Europe's 53 million Muslims (16 million in the EU) have lifestyles and concerns a lot like those of non-Muslim Europeans. The birthrate of successive generations of "German Turks," for example, is approaching that of other Germans. Muslim groups have welcomed initiatives, like Germany's Islam Conference, to bring Islam and European Muslims into the mainstream, as well as other positive steps to overcome the discrimination that, in part, accounts for European Muslims' marginalization and lands many of them at the bottom rung of the social ladder.

Europe's left in particular should be in a better position to critique Islamophobic discourse. This means a rethinking of knee-jerk laicism in light of new phenomena such as the desire of many women from Muslim backgrounds to wear a headscarf for reasons of ethnic or religious pride. Or, if the left is to insist on radical secularism, then it should apply the same critique to all religions. Why, for example, is Islam to blame when

ethnic Turkish kids perform poorly in German schools, but not Catholicism when Italian migrants flunk out (which they do, in higher numbers than kids with Turkish backgrounds)? In the same vein, the rationale for exceptional behavior such as honor killings should be sought in the patriarchal traditions of certain countries rather than in Islam itself. Cultural racism, which legitimizes right-wing goals, is a complex phenomenon to decode, but it is the task of progressive forces to do it.

Policies like Switzerland's ban on minaret construction (approved by 58 percent of voters in 2009) and veil prohibitions in France, Belgium and parts of Germany violate basic rights. Increasingly derogatory popular attitudes toward Islam and Muslims translate into workplace and schoolyard discrimination, which only increases tensions. Moreover, the mainstreaming of bigotry has created a new right and revived the old one: Austria's Freedom Party, the Flemish Vlaams Blok and France's National Front have renewed their fortunes by adopting Islamophobia. In last fall's Vienna elections, the Jörg Haider-less Freedom Party nearly doubled its 2005 result, capturing 27 percent of the vote. Polls actually show the National Front's new leader, Marine Le Pen, running ahead of Sarkozy for the 2012 presidential vote.

Of all the specters haunting Europe, none are as potent—or potentially disruptive to democracy—as Islamophobia. Though the economic crisis and budget slashing across the continent have certainly fueled anti-Muslim discourse, they are not chiefly to blame for Islamophobia. The goals and jingoistic assumptions at the core of the right's agenda are essentially unchanged from the 1980s. The difference is that the left and liberals have largely capitulated, unable to address the issue of Islam and the Muslims among us in a constructive way.

Letters

(continued from page 2)

(see kucinich.house.gov/UploadedFiles/NEED_ACT.pdf).

ROBERT W. ZIMMERER

ZACATECAS, MEXICO

William Mitchell claims that progressive economists "with some well-known exceptions (Joseph Stiglitz, Paul Krugman and William Greider)" now advocate "fiscal constraint" rather than increasing overall deficit spending. Stiglitz and Krugman are impeccable neoclassical economists who apparently believe in the "special case" argument for massive Keynesian-style deficits during downturns. Otherwise, they are in basic accord with the general laissez-faire consensus of mainstream economics, which generally stands apart from the zany ideas of the Chicago School monetarists and rational expectationists, the supply-siders and libertarians driving the current wave of government-smashing austerity policies. Greider is a journalist.

There are, however, a few thousand professionally trained economists who have earned the term "progressive"—often known as "radical," institutionalists, post-Keynesian, neo-Marxist or Marxist—economists. None of these practitioners are advocating "fiscal constraint" at present. Furthermore, most of these progressive economists would question Mitchell's standard-issue Keynesian solutions, since while "Japan has been running large deficits since...the early 1990s," as Mitchell champions, it has also languished in a morass of deflation and stagnation.

JAMES MARTÍN CYPHER

Universidad Autónoma de Zacatecas

MADISON, VA.

I have no argument with William Mitchell's logic; it's his argumentative skills that need repair. After a long historical introduction, Mitchell lists five so-called neo-liberal lies. He then proceeds to clarify the lies by repeating them in more or less com-

monsensical terms, pounding them even more clearly into his readers' minds.

Those lies have curb appeal. If they are to be refuted, the language must be equally appealing. As Mitchell points out, the public has been hornswoggled by smooth-talking blue-eyed devils on Fox and other media outlets. If he had simply stated that demand is a function of money in consumers' pockets and supply is a function of demand, turning supply-side economics on its numskull head, he could have proceeded to destroy the neo-liberal lies in plain, organized words instead of deluging his readers with opaque jargon.

FRANKLIN LONZO DIXON JR.

Correction

Katha Pollitt's May 2 "Subject to Debate" column said that Planned Parenthood received \$317 million in Title X funding. Actually, Title X received \$317 million in 2010, part of which went to PP.