



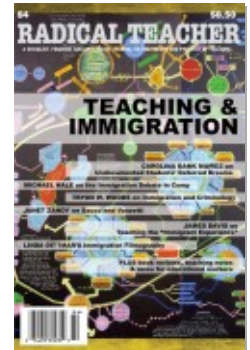
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News for Educational Workers

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Please send a hard copy of your Note to Bob Rosen, Department of English, William Paterson University, 300 Pompton Road, Wayne, New Jersey 07470 — and also an e-mail, with the header "Teaching Note," to: bobrosen@radicalteacher.org

News for Educational Workers

Books by *Radical Teacher* Collective Members

» **Joseph Entin, Robert C. Rosen, and Leonard Vogt**, Editors. *Controversies in the Classroom: A Radical Teacher Reader*. Foreword by Deborah Meier. The Teaching for Social Justice Series. Teachers College Press, 2008.

» **Sarah Chinn**. *Inventing Modern Adolescence: The Children of Immigrants in Turn-of-the-Century America*. Rutgers University Press, 2008.

Teachers Against Occupation

Teachers Against Occupation (TAO) (www.teachersagainstoctupation.org) is a collective organized to coordinate

various efforts by scholars and teachers to critique and resist military occupations worldwide. This site is intended to be a virtual 'meeting point' for different academic groups engaged in building opposition to imperial policies at home and abroad and a resource for groups challenging government support for such policies. Collectively, TAO hopes to present a stronger and more coordinated voice of resistance to occupations that destroy communities and livelihoods.

Teaching controversial topics is difficult but necessary. In an effort to provide practical pedagogical support and effective educational resources to teachers, TAO is collecting course materials for teaching against occupation, which will in turn be made available on our website. To that end, educators at all levels are asked to submit to TAO any of the following: syllabi, course modules, lesson plans, web sources/links, videos, primary source materials (articles, essays, maps, images), and pedagogical approaches to controversial subjects. TAO is collecting material suitable for use in grade 7-12 curriculum and in college and university classes. Over the coming weeks and months TAO will review submitted material and begin to post syllabi, modules, and other teaching resources freely available for educators.

Education and the Military

The U. S. military continues to solicit the help of psychiatrists and anthropologists in its ongoing wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. In May of 2006, the American Psychiatric Association (APA) made a position statement forbidding psychiatrists from having any direct participation in the interrogation of anyone in military or civilian detention. A few weeks later, the Council

on Ethical and Judicial Affairs of the American Medical Association (AMA) stated a similar position because “a role as physician-interrogator undermines the physician’s role as healer.” The U. S. Army and the Department of Defense, however, continue to resist the positions taken by APA and AMA (*The New England Journal of Medicine*, September 11, 2008). In Afghanistan, the U.S. military is attempting to put anthropology to work to help “win” the war. Steve Featherstone’s “Human Quicksand: For the U. S. Army, a crash course in cultural studies” (*Harper’s Magazine*, September 2008) is a depressingly and frighteningly close-up look at what the United States is doing in Afghanistan, as well as a close look at the ways anthropologists’ organizations have fought against being exploited by the U.S. military.

High school military academies like Virginia’s Franklin Military are springing up across the country and offer exclusively Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (JROTC) programs partially funded by the Department of Defense. With an increase from 1,500 JROTC programs in 1992 to 3,500 programs in 2008, it is difficult to believe the academies’ administrators when they say they are running college prep schools and not military recruitment centers for high school students (“No JROTC Left Behind: Are military schools recruitment pools?” *In These Times*, September 2008).

The New York Civil Liberties Union (NYCLU) is rallying opposition to the September 16, 2008 directive by Schools Chancellor Joel Klein to streamline the process of providing military recruiters personal information on 11th and 12th graders in the NYC public schools. NYCLU is asking for an extension on the deadline for

submitting opt-out forms and the opportunity for the issue to go to a public hearing (*NYCLU News*, Winter 2009).

From September 16-19, 2008, in Columbia, South Carolina, State Board of Education members from across the United States met with Army officials at a conference to explore possibilities for greater union between public schools and the military. This conference was called Building Stronger Futures Together (www.nasba.org).

The *Pakistan Daily* newspaper published a list of Iraqi academics assassinated by the United States and allied occupation forces. The objective of these assassinations is “to kill a nation, to destroy Iraq’s ability to educate its people, to undermine its research and scientific capabilities, to transform a nation into a territory, and ultimately to destroy civilization.”

Academic Freedom

Much time is spent by both right and left academics discussing how much influence professors can or should have on the politics of their students. The right propose that the “tenured radicals” are taking over the universities; the left fear denial of promotion and/or tenure. However, researchers in three sets of new studies recently “concluded that professors have virtually no impact on the political views and ideology of their students.” *PS: Political Science and Politics*, the journal of the American Political Science Association, has published two of these studies, one involving nearly 7,000 students at 38 institutions (*The New York Times*, November 3, 2008).

Gregory S. Prince Jr., former president of Hampshire College and author of *Teach Them to Challenge Authority: Educating for Healthy Societies*, argues that professors

should take all kinds of positions as a way of challenging their students. "A neutral stance in the classroom," Prince writes, "deprives students of the chance to learn how to challenge those who have power over them—a skill that is essential in any career, that is essential for the health of any institution and that is critical in a democratic society" (<http://insidehighered.com/news/2008/09/04/prince>).

According to the *Bricup Newsletter* (www.bricu.org.uk), Israel does not support academic freedom. In July of 2008, four Israeli academics sent out a petition to mostly senior academics at Israeli institutions of higher learning in favor of academic freedom for Palestinian faculty and students. Of the 9000 emails sent to Israeli academics, only 407 faculty sent back email endorsements for the petition.

On November 13, 2008, at a University of California, Berkeley, concert called "Israeli Liberation Week," three Palestinian-American students unfurled two Palestinian flags and were subsequently assaulted by student members of the right-wing groups Tikvah and the Zionist Freedom Alliance. Anti-Arab racial epithets were repeatedly used during the attacks (Statement from the Arab-American and Muslim Community of the San Francisco Bay Area on Hate Crimes at UC Berkeley).

Margo Ramlal-Nankoe, a sociology professor at Ithaca College, says that her political views influenced her tenure denial. She teaches courses on women in the third world and on global race and ethnic relations, and she has been a faculty adviser for a group called Students for a Just Peace, which opposes the Israeli occupation of the Palestinian territories. Professor Ramlal-Nankoe has hired the same law firm which defended

Norman Finkelstein in his tenure battle with DePaul University last year (<http://chronicle.com/daily/2008/09/4728n.htm>).

Education and Activism

On October 1, 2008, at a Chicago Cubs game in Chicago, a group of over 1,500 students, parents, teachers, and activists were protesting outside the stadium for state educational reforms. The rally was the latest in a six-year effort lead by State Senator James L. Meeks to force Illinois lawmakers to address "the disparity between dollars spent per child in wealthy suburban Chicago and the dollars spent in the inner city and downstate" (*In These Times*, December 2008).

The New York Civil Liberties Union (NYCLU), along with the Student Safety Coalition, recently introduced the Student Safety Act, legislation that would require quarterly reporting by the New York Police Department and the Department of Education on issues like school safety, incidents involving arrests, and suspension or expulsion of students. This legislation would also expand the jurisdiction of the Civilian Complaint Review Board to investigate allegations of misconduct filed against school safety staff (*NYCLU News*, Winter 2009).

Engineers Without Borders (EWB), a student group at the University of Minnesota, recently won a \$25,000 award from Keen Footwear to explore ways to recycle used plastic water sachets, heavy plastic pouches which cannot be resealed after use and therefore are discarded, littering the streets and beaches of Haiti (*In These Times*, November 2008).

"Cuba's Generation Gap" (*NACLA Report on the Americas*, November/

December 2008) reports on a video showing a confrontation between university students and the president of the Cuban parliament. The student questions and complaints (“Why do Cubans need state permission to travel? What justifies the system of dual currencies? Why can’t government processes be more transparent?”) are common enough complaints in Cuba. The video, however, shows a student audaciousness not seen before and represents a new generation of Cuban students who, while faithful to the revolution and socialism, want a greater say in and explanation of their country’s policies.

The Miller-McCune (Turning Research into Solutions) October 2008 issue publishes the results of surveys showing that college students may not protest in the streets, but the generation of the internet is as political and anti-war as students in the 1960s (www.miller-mccune.com/article/684).

The Economics of Education

The Modern Language Association and its Association of Departments of English issued “Education in the Balance: A Report on the Academic Workforce in English” which states that a substantial number of college professors have been replaced by part-time and non-tenure track faculty. Among the reports findings: 42 percent of English faculty in senior colleges and universities and only 24 percent in junior colleges hold tenured or tenure-track positions; part-time faculty comprise 40 percent of English faculty in senior colleges and 68 percent in junior colleges; and huge salary gaps exist between tenured and non-tenure track English faculty (www.insidehighered.com, December 11, 2008).

A National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education report shows that the rising cost of college, especially during the current financial crisis, will put higher education out of the reach of most Americans. The report found that “college tuition and fees increased 439 percent from 1982 to 2007 while median family income rose only 147 percent (*The New York Times*, December 3, 2008).

Resources

California Newsreel, a non-profit educational film distribution and production company in San Francisco, distributes films that advance social and racial justice. While the films are appropriate for high schools, most films are targeted to universities and are accompanied by facilitator guides and lessons plans. For more information, contact BMC@newsreel.org.

A bibliography of working-class literature, which also notes which books have been made into films, is available from Robert Niemi of St. Michael’s College in Vermont (rniemi@smcvt.edu).

The new issue of *Cultural Logic*, now on line at <http://clogic.eserver.org/2007/2007.html>, includes essays on Rosa Luxemborg, George Orwell, and James Kelman, as well as reviews and poetry.

The Fall 2008 issue of *Rethinking Schools* focuses on the relationship between “Language, Race, and Power.” To subscribe, go to www.rethinkingschools.org.

The September 2008 issue of *Harper’s* includes an article called “Tyranny of the Test: One Year as a Kaplan Coach in the Public Schools,” in which Jeremy Miller describes his year working for Kaplan bringing in thousands of dollars for the

company by tutoring tiny numbers of students and helping them learn how to take tests.

City Kids, City Schools: More Reports from the Front Row (The New Press, August 2008) is a collection of inspiring essays from educators trying to revive urban school systems (*In These Times*, September 2008).

Is there a news item, call for papers, upcoming conference, resource, teaching tool, or other information related to progressive education that you would like to share with other Radical Teacher readers? Conference announcements and calls for papers should be at least six months ahead of date. Items, which will be used as found appropriate by Radical Teacher, cannot be returned. Send hard copy to Leonard Vogt, Department of English, LaGuardia Community College (CUNY), 31-10 Thomson Avenue, Long Island City, New York 11101—or email items to vogtle@lagcc.cuny.edu.

Contributors' Notes

Carolina Bank Muñoz teaches Sociology at Brooklyn College. Her teaching and research focus on immigration, globalization, labor and work, and race, class, and gender. Her first book, *Transnational Tortillas: Race, Gender and Shop Floor Politics in Mexico and the United States*, was published by Cornell University Press in July 2008.

Philip Cartelli is a freelance writer and teacher currently living and working in Marseilles, France.

James Davis teaches in the English department and American Studies program at Brooklyn College.

Linda Dittmar (now Emerita) taught literature, film, and gender studies at the University of Massachusetts-Boston for many years. Winner of the Chancellor's teaching award, she taught a range of courses in modern and contemporary fiction and film history and theory with a special focus on subaltern studies. In addition to many articles and book chapters she is editor of *From Hanoi to Hollywood: The Vietnam War in American Film* and *Multiple Voices in Feminist Film Criticism*. She is a long-time member of *Radical Teacher's* editorial board.

Joseph Entin teaches English and American Studies at Brooklyn College, CUNY, and is on the *Radical Teacher* editorial board. He is co-editor, with Leonard Vogt and Bob Rosen, of *Controversies in the Classroom: A Radical Teacher Reader* (2008), and author of *Sensational Modernism: Experimental Fiction and Photography in Thirties America* (2007).

Michael Hale was raised and educated in Los Angeles, California, where he participated in student, community, and labor organizing with a particular focus on anti-war, anti-racism, and immigrant rights. He has taught freshmen composition since 2004 at various community colleges. In 2006, he became the Director of Communications for the Farm Labor Organizing Committee (FLOC, AFL-