

Ending Adjunct Apartheid

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Abstract

As has been well-documented, adjuncts, who often live beneath the poverty line, lack adequate financial compensation and job security for the work they do. What is not normally focused on is the way the apartheid structure of academe, which severs the adjunct from institutional support and protection, violates the core mission of academe. Academics are defined not as employees, but as professionals, and offered academic freedom because the larger society understands that their unfettered pursuit of knowledge leads to the betterment of humankind. This paper argues that academe, according to its own standards, is obligated to provide adjuncts, many of whom are independent scholars, far greater professional support and protection. The paper also explores empathy towards adjuncts and ways to overcome adjunct separation.

Keywords

Adjunct faculty, exploitation, lack of professional support

Introduction

I had a daylong interview for a permanent teaching position at the university where I had adjunct taught English for five years. It ended with dinner at a local Italian restaurant with entrees like salmon and lovely views of the surrounding hills. I learned during that dinner that in the fall the full-time faculty convenes there for at least one evening of dining and bonding, at university expense. Finding out about this was like a glimpse into a secret world. Adjuncts like me, who make up the bulk of the teaching faculty at this university, are not invited. We get a pizza meeting in a university classroom. We don't bond: we sit at desks and listen.

If it sounds like apartheid, it is.

How can the university do this, I wondered? Why not invite the adjuncts? What enormous value there would be for us too to bond with each other and full-time faculty in a gracious, off-campus setting. But I knew the answer: we'd love to but we can't afford it.

Arguably, this kind of dining, about which adjuncts know nothing, can't harm them if they are unaware of it—and yet it does harm them, because it sends a message to the full-time faculty

about who matters and who doesn't, who is privileged and who is not. It reinforces who has the power and access—and who is powerless and untouchable.

In a better world, we'd all meet on level ground—even if it meant only over pizza.

I didn't get hired for the full-time job. Though I was the candidate 'left standing' at the end of the process, the hiring committee at the last minute got permission to bring in a younger male to interview. They hired him.

I have discovered that like Fanny Price in Jane Austen's *Mansfield Park*, an adjunct often finds

her feelings disregarded, and her comprehension
undervalued ... [while experiencing] the pains of tyranny, of ridicule,
and neglect. ... (Austen, 1814, p. 152)

Fanny, the poor relation adopted into the rich Bertram family, has a status position similar to that of an adjunct. Fanny was not a servant and was offered the same education as her richer female cousins, but not with the secure expectations of income, marriage and benefits—and little possibility of ever being anything but the poor relation, spending her days holding the other end of her aunt's embroidery. One thinks as well of Sonya in *War and Peace*, who is expected—and does—give way in marriage when Nicholai needs to marry wealth. It seems only natural she should be content to spend her life as a poor dependent. Academe can also be deeply debilitating in ways that have often been outlined, and which academe, I will argue, is *professionally obligated* to work to ameliorate.

This article will not focus on rehearsing, except in brief, the well-seasoned litany of adjunct woes, nor the intersectionalities that make the work a dead-end job for most adjuncts, who become trapped through age and gender. Instead, using Martha Nussbaum's work in *Upheavals of Thought: The Intelligence of Emotions*, Henry Giroux's 'The Culture of Cruelty,' and Václav Havel's 'The Power of the Powerless,' this article will move beyond the exploitation to explore why, as documented by Warnock, after more than 30 years of the same stories and the same hand-wringing, the plight of the adjunct has only worsened—and to suggest what we might do about it. I will examine why adjuncts are sometimes considered to not be worthy of compassion and how the larger system of lying and cruelty applied to the working class in this country supports adjunct exploitation and undermines academe as a whole. Finally, the article will attempt to hold tenured academics' feet to the fire to urge them to move past the 30 years of *verbal* expression of support by arguing that professional scholars have a moral and *professional responsibility* to engage in *actual action* on behalf of their adjunct colleagues. As Neil Hamilton and Jerry Gaff put it: 'Personal conscience—that is, awareness of the moral goodness or blameworthiness of one's own intentions and conduct together with a feeling of obligation to be and to do what is morally good—is the foundation on which each member of a peer-review profession builds an ethical professional identity'.¹ (Hamilton & Gaff, 2009).

¹ 'Professional education engages students and practicing professionals over a career to develop personal conscience in a professional context. Personal conscience in a professional context requires each professional to internalize (1) the ethics of duty—the minimum standards of professional skill and ethical conduct below which the profession will impose discipline; (2) the ethics of aspiration—the core values and ideals of the profession; (3) the peer-review duty

The Plight: A Profession at War with Itself

The plight of the adjunct has been well documented, as below:

... the availability of full-time tenure-track positions has declined by 50% over the past 40 years with tenured and tenure-track faculty making up a scant 29% of the academic workforce (American Association of University Professors 2016). Women and faculty of color are overrepresented in contingent positions (Bousquet 2008) and Soria (2016) ... Adjuncts and contingent faculty often teach classes at multiple institutions, earning poverty-level wages for the equivalent of a full-time teaching load. The increased reliance on adjunct labor reinforces and accentuates class hierarchy in academia, treating adjuncts as 'second class citizens' thereby weakening faculty governance and reducing graduation rates (Bettinger and Long 2004, p. 2). Apart from being underpaid, adjunct professors suffer from the stress, anxiety, and depression that accompanies the lack of respect and uncertainty of the position (Reevy & Deason 2014). Adjunct professors are less likely to engage in scholarship, largely because they lack the time and resources to do so (AAUP 2016). Wilson (2006, p. 164) argues that through the increased reliance on invisible and devalued adjunct labor, 'exploitation becomes normative' on the college campus. ... increasingly this has become the new normal for working-class academics. (Warnock 2016).

As described above, adjuncts lack job security and any reasonable path to advancement (ie, they are trapped in dead end jobs), are denied the benefits that encourage and support scholarship, and have no role in the self-governance integral to the profession, despite comprising about half of it.

Warnock asks

Indeed, when it comes to the possibilities of upward mobility in the contemporary higher education climate marked by mounting debt burdens and rampant exploitation of adjunct faculty, it bears to question if the term working-class academic truly remains a contradiction in terms. (2016)

That so many college and university faculty survive in sub-altern situations jeopardizes the ethical foundations of academe, and I will repeat Hamilton and Gaff's description of that foundation:

Personal conscience—that is, awareness of the moral goodness or blameworthiness of one's own intentions and conduct together with... a feeling of obligation to be and to do

both to hold other members of the profession accountable for meeting the minimum standards of the profession and to encourage them to realize the core values and ideals of the profession; 5 and (4) the concept of fiduciary duty where the professional's self-interest is overbalanced by devotion to the person served and the public good in the profession's area of responsibility (Hamilton & Gaff, 2009).

what is morally good—is the foundation on which each member of a peer-review profession builds an ethical professional identity. Professional education engages students and practicing professionals over a career to develop personal conscience in a professional context (2009).

Hamilton and Gaff note that the ability to perform *ethical* scholarship is the rationale behind academic freedom and faculty self-governance. What this means is that job security, time and resources for scholarship, and the protected right to pursue one's own line of scholarship is not simply a God-given right. It is given in exchange for and in protection of ethical professional behavior that is expected to benefit the wider society. It is the reason why university faculties resist market-driven metrics, and is, in fact, *why professional academe exists at all*. Hamilton and Gaff quote the 1915 Declaration of Principles of the American Association of University Professors:

It is conceivable that our profession may prove unworthy of its high calling [‘the creation and dissemination of knowledge’], and unfit to exercise the responsibilities that belong to it. . . . And the existence of this Association . . . must be construed as a pledge, not only that the profession will earnestly guard those liberties without which it cannot rightly render its distinctive and indispensable service to society, but also that it will with equal earnestness seek to maintain such standards of professional character, and of scientific integrity and competency, . . . as shall make it a fit instrument for that service (2009, 291).

Hamilton and Gaff point to the sharp rise of contingent faculty as a threat to academic freedom and self-governance, both of which they understand as foundational to ethical scholarship—ie, as creating conditions that threaten the foundational reasons the profession exists.

However, academe's professional ethical commitment is broader than merely a commitment to sound scholarship. Academe works to safeguard ethical scholarship not merely to produce ethical scholarship, but because academe believes it can be an important part of creating an ethical society, a society which, in the words of Catholic Worker founder and social justice champion, Dorothy Day, makes it easier for people to be good. In other words, academics should not be doing research in a vacuum. Academics should not want the academic freedom to publish findings that, for example, cigarette smoking leads to lung cancer (even if that disturbs the bottom line of university's corporate donor), simply to publish those findings as sound scholarship or to earn tenure: we want those findings to influence the larger society for the better by changing its behavior. Likewise, we are granted academic freedom to be able to study climate change or Marxist labor theory or feminist readings of Jane Austen not just to publish beautiful papers or secure book contracts but to contribute to building a more just and healthy society, even if offends political, corporate or religious donors. The ethical concerns of scholarship cannot be reasonably divorced from the ethical concerns of the larger society. The end goal of scholarship *must* be to influence praxis. Otherwise the scholarship is pointless and even counterproductive, by siphoning talent and energy from useful activities.

Thus, the *scholarly* ethic that justifies the very existence of academe as a profession puts it under an obligation to practice *real world* ethics—and that means, at the very least, to advocate actively for the rights of adjuncts as fellow academics so that we can also function ethically and

reasonably within our profession. Right now, too many adjuncts like myself are publishing under adverse circumstances that threaten to undermine the quality of our scholarship through lack of time, resources and institutional support—and thus threaten the quality of our profession. Most of us go to great effort to ensure the quality and integrity of our work, but the conditions under which we function do nevertheless endanger that work, leading even to the possibility of it not being done at all—the work that is the *core mission* of our profession. But beyond that, even for adjuncts who simply teach, which is an enormously important component of our job, the ethical principles undergirding the *raison d'être* of our profession demand more than mere hand-wringing and capitulations to free market forces. To do their work, adjuncts need the kind of professional environment that fosters both good teaching and scholarship—and, more fundamentally, a situation that allows them, as human beings, dignity, security and a living wage. If we take seriously academe as an ethical realm, this is not a negotiable. But how do we get the point where we can begin to work seriously for adjunct rights and inclusion?

Growth of Compassion

Nussbaum's *Upheavals of Thought: The Intelligence of Emotions* argues that developing compassion is a necessary precondition to social change. She defines compassion as 'a painful emotion occasioned by the awareness of another person's undeserved misfortune.' (Nussbaum, 2001, p. 301). Compassion reflects the point of view of the witness to suffering and has two 'cognitive requirements:' that the sufferer's plight be serious and undeserved. ²[2]

Nussbaum notes that Aristotle found occasions for compassion in 'reversals of expectations' and 'absence of good prospects' (2001, p. 307). In modern times, she adds, discrimination and 'role strain,' such as single parenting, also have been documented to create compassion.

Adjuncting appears compassion worthy because it does often reflect 'reversals of expectations,' and 'absence of good prospects.' It also involves 'role strain' as adjuncts struggle to perform without such basic supports as office space, other colleagues to talk to, or even access to paperclips. Many adjuncts have PhDs and have published scholarly books (which their tenured peers from an earlier era may not have done)—and yet are working precariously from semester to semester as adjuncts, doubtless a 'reversal of expectation.' In addition, once one is caught in the maw of adjuncting, and particularly as one begins to age, one's 'good prospects' rapidly begin to fade.

Yet isn't the adjunct's suffering deserved? Aren't adjuncts culpable in 'bringing it on themselves?' Nobody lies to us about the rules of the game. Nobody promises an adjunct a better future. Graduate students are reminded repeatedly of bleak job markets. I have been informed more than once as an adjunct that nothing is owed me. Don't we enter into the situation with our eyes open? Haven't we made our choice? Doesn't compassion end at this point?

Like a poor relation in a rich household, or a nineteenth-century governess in a wealthy home, the life of an adjunct can look comparatively comfortable to outsiders. To be teaching in a

² Nussbaum describes empathy as different from compassion: Empathy is imaginatively reconstructing another's experience, but a malevolent person may enjoy another's distress (2001, p. 302).

college classroom does not carry the same dramatic weight of the suffering cotton mill worker depicted in *Capital*:

Children of nine or ten are dragged from their squalid beds at four a.m. and compelled to work until ten, eleven, or twelve at night, their limbs wearing away, their frames dwindling, their faces whitening ... (Marx, 1867)

Despite the fact that adjuncts sometimes sell their blood, collect food stamps, and carry punishing work loads of six or seven courses divided between far flung campuses for starvation wages while holding down other jobs, the work is ostensibly professional—and it carries intrinsic rewards.

In what Henry Giroux calls a ‘culture of cruelty,’ the first line of defense in the hardening of the heart against the adjunct or other contingent worker is to blame him or her. As Giroux puts it:

A ruthless form of neoliberalism ... has stripped economic activity from ethical considerations and social costs. in a society in which the quality of life is measured through market-based metrics, such as cost-benefit analyses, it becomes difficult for the public to acknowledge or even understand the cost in human misery and everyday hardship that an increasing number of people have to endure. ... in a culture of cruelty, the discourse of disposability extends to an increasing number of groups that are considered superfluous.Underlying this form of neoliberal authoritarianism and its attendant culture of cruelty is a powerfully oppressive ideology that insists that the only unit of agency that matters is the isolated individual. Hence, mutual trust and shared visions of equality, freedom and justice give way to fears and self-blame reinforced by the neoliberal notion that individuals are solely responsible for their political, economic and social misfortunes (2017, para 1).

This is the unspoken assumption everywhere I have adjuncted: you, adjunct, knew what you were getting yourself into. Therefore, you have forfeited the right to expect more. Yet no long-term adjunct I know of willingly accepts their situation as is: every single one, given the choice, would chose a secure job in academe, even at the same pay. And nobody I have ever spoken to understands adjuncting as anything but arbitrary: when an adjunct with two well-received scholarly books works for a fraction of the pay beside a tenured faculty member who hasn’t published more than three articles and none in two decades, nobody argues a meritocracy. As with our poor relations Fanny and Sonya, contemporary academe is often simply the luck of draw. And in a less ruthless society, this would engender both compassion and action.

Hierarchy

Referencing Rousseau, Nussbaum notes that ‘social distinctions of class and rank’ are ‘especially keen in situations of hierarchy, where a privileged group defines its prospects as vastly superior to those of the inferior, and even gets to the point of thinking itself invulnerable.’ (2001, p. 342). Aristotle likewise thought people would lack compassion if they felt the they were ‘above suffering and ha[d] everything;’ (Nussbaum, 2001, p. 315) in other words, if they believed that the situation couldn’t happen to them. To experience compassion, we need to see

the sufferer as somehow like us. That's why those who wish to withhold compassion and teach others to do the same try to portray the sufferers 'as altogether dissimilar in kind and in possibility' (Nussbaum, 2001, p. 319). Nussbaum, not surprisingly, cites the Nazi characterization of the Jew as vermin to support her argument. It's no mystery either that the distinct and often arbitrary hierarchies in academe lead to a situation in which the lives of the tenured can feel far distanced from those of the adjunct, creating a barrier to identification. Anecdotally, I have more than once seen the flick of the wrist and heard the tone of derision in which a tenured or tenure-track faculty says 'oh, we can always get an adjunct.' Adjuncts in my experience often function as an untouchable class, the academic equivalent of jobs emptying the chamber pots: I have been hired to teach developmental classes simply because no full-time faculty wanted to touch them.

According to Nussbaum, both Rousseau and de Toqueville show that empathy is 'profoundly influenced by the ways in which institutions situate people in relation to one other: sharp separations impede these mechanisms, and similar situations promote them' (2001, p. 405).

Further, Nussbaum cites C. Daniel Batson's studies of compassion and helping behavior, in which one set of volunteers is told to have an empathic and imaginative connection with sufferers; the other set is told to focus on the technical details of the suffering. Not surprisingly, empathy engenders more compassion. Certainly, the extent to which the business model is used to justify treating adjuncts as 'widgets' leads to a lack of empathy—even the term 'adjunct,' rather than 'professor,' can buttress dehumanization. Adjunct ... android ... can one say 'oh, we can always get a professor,' with the same lack of identification?

Shame and Disgust

Other impediments to offering adjuncts a path up the career ladder to permanent positions with security, benefits and esteem are two emotions Nussbaum identifies as stumbling blocks to compassion: shame and disgust—and what she calls 'the adaptive response' to these (2001, p. 309).

The extent to which a collective experience of shame and disgust is projected onto the adjunct is difficult to prove beyond the intuitive—Nussbaum cites Theweleit's work on the Nazis and clearly the vast majority of academics don't share the pathologies of hardcore fascists. However, in Nussbaum's grammar, shame, an inner experience of unworthiness or failure, can lead to a disinclination to identify with adjuncts who may be seen as the physical embodiments of this failure. Likewise, the disgust reaction, a human emotion meant to safeguard people from danger, can function to cause people to distance themselves from what Nussbaum calls vulnerability and mortality. Julie Kristeva states this more forcefully in her writing on abjection, locating the abject in the corpse, 'The corpse, seen without God and outside of science, is the utmost of abjection. It is death infecting life.' (Kristeva, 1982, p. 4). Adjuncts often perceive themselves as ghosts, ie the dead (though not with entirely the same symbolic function as Kristeva's corpse); nevertheless, we float in semi-invisibility and semi-humanity on college campuses (Charbonneau & Rice, 2003) What are adjuncts but people of vulnerability and uneasy reminders of precariousness, Nussbaum's symbols of disgust? Nussbaum contends, disgust can be used to say: 'We need a group of humans to bound ourselves against ...' (2001, p. 347). The repulsion

adjunct status can engender plus the possibility of full-time academics bonding against them, works against compassion.

Further, and perhaps most importantly, adjuncts internalize shame and disgust. As Nussbaum puts it ‘suffering and deprivation ‘corrupt’ perception: ‘They often produce adaptive responses that deny the importance of the suffering; this is especially likely to be so when the deprivation is connected to oppression or hierarchy, and taught as proper through ... cultural channels’ (2001, p. 309).

Or as a *New York Times* op-ed piece put it, while discussing Hillary Clinton and all women in general, but with a sentiment as applicable to adjuncts: ‘And there’s the biting isolation of concluding it must be you who is terribly and irredeemably flawed, and the gut-punch that comes when others agree by demeaning or humiliating or threatening you — you, who individually and obviously does not belong here ...’ (Filipovic, 2017)..

Yet universities, knowing the situation in academe, continue to offer graduate slots far in excess of job market demand for tenure track positions. Do universities have a responsibility in this instance to look beyond their own bottom lines? Should they not be limiting graduate students to numbers that can reasonably expect jobs, then after that hiring full-time positions from the existing surplus pool of people with advanced degrees rather than using exploited graduate student labor? Are they not complicit in creating a situation they then disavow?

Thinking Post-Academe?

Havel’s 1978 essay ‘The Power of the Powerless’ may provide a way forward. While Havel describes a situation in many ways far different from academe in his analysis of late-phase Soviet totalitarianism – what he calls ‘post-totalitarianism’ as he experienced it in Czechoslovakia – points of convergence yet emerge.

For instance, in post-totalitarian Czechoslovakia, the government pretended it was still enacting revolutionary ideals—Havel cites the example of the Czech greengrocer putting a ‘workers of the world unite’ poster in his shop window while both he, and his customers, fully understood they were living under a regime not at all interested in worker aspirations. Likewise, the average adjunct is treated as disposable, less than human, and temporary when the reality is that the system would collapse without adjuncts, adjuncts are human, and many adjuncts work in the same positions for decades as de facto permanent part-time employees. If the poster communicates the fear and abjection of the grocer—the grocer is afraid, Havel argues, not to hang the poster—so the pretense of the ‘temporary’ adjunct masks the brutality of a system cynically ready to exploit the unlucky academic for a lifetime.

Like the greengrocer, many adjuncts feel they ‘must live within a lie.’ (Havel, 1978). An adjunct acquaintance of mine, for instance, works for a prestigious liberal arts college. She is intensely frustrated with her status and would like a regular job after her many years of good service teaching upper level literature courses. When a new president came in and asked what could make faculty life better, this adjunct wrote ‘a permanent job,’ and then was worried she would be fired altogether—for like any adjunct, she is hired course to course with no job security. Her

campus is now trying to build ‘school spirit’ and asking for suggestions. Her suggestion is rather than new tee-shirts, make adjunct positions permanent—but she is afraid to say it.

Like post-totalitarian Czechoslovakia, academe is, ironically for a profession that stakes its claim on integrity, as Havel says ‘built on lies.’ (Havel, 1978).

Havel understood post-totalitarianism as having two possibilities, (1), becoming more of what it already was,

thus inevitably coming closer to some dreadful Orwellian vision of a world of absolute manipulation, while all the more articulate expressions of living within the truth are definitely snuffed out; or (2). the independent life of society (the parallel polis), including the ‘dissident’ movements, will slowly but surely become a social phenomenon of growing importance, taking a real part in the life of society with increasing clarity and influencing the general situation. (Havel, 1978)

Could the same be said of academe?

Changing the System

The system of adjunct apartheid arguably reinforces barriers and hence shame and disgust. A first step towards changing the system would be for colleges and universities to break down the barriers between full-time faculty and contingent faculty as far as possible. The usual rationale for the existence of adjuncts is financial, yet there are many non-economic or low-economic impact ways to break down walls. Below are low-cost but important gestures:

Actively pursue using respectful language in referring to adjuncts. Call them professors. This costs nothing.

Set up a formal system in which qualified long term adjuncts automatically slot into job openings. This would actually *save* money. The interview process I was involved in with two other candidates cost easily upwards of \$500 in meals alone—and that was before the fourth candidate was brought in. This is extraordinarily important in breaking down barriers: it moves adjuncts from a permanent untouchable class to future colleagues. Here, Jane Austen is instructive. The moment Fanny Price in *Mansfield Park* gets a marriage proposal from a wealthy man, her guardian uncle is no longer ‘not seeing’ her situation. All of a sudden, she gets a fire in her attic study. Would this no-cost change in adjunct status, subtle as it is, produce similar gains?

Make it mandatory that any conference travel money not used by full-time staff be reserved for adjuncts. Do fundraising to obtain funds to support adjunct scholarship.

In situations where there is office space, don’t segregate adjuncts from full-time staff. In one university where I work, full-time professors decided to move to a corridor of offices consciously dedicated to full-time professors. I had previously shared a corridor with them. This then it became designated the ‘adjunct’ corridor, creating a ghetto.

Invite adjuncts to faculty meetings and encourage them to attend. Offer them possibilities to serve on committees. Many won't be able to participate in either of these activities, but could be kept apprised with copies of minutes and asked to email their input, which should be taken under consideration and responded to.

If there is a faculty event, invite adjuncts and encourage them to come. Try to understand what the blocks are to adjuncts engaging more fully in the life of any given university.

'Anger,' Nussbaum writes, 'is an appropriate response to injustice.' (2001, p.394). Such anger is based on a sense of unfairness and inappropriateness. In this context, we must express anger in demanding action. We need, writes Nussbaum, to be alert to possibility of 'self-indulgent and self-congratulatory behavior, rather than real helpfulness.' An experience of compassion is not the same as taking steps to change the world. The focus needs to be 'on actions and institutions.' (2001, p. 399) We must not lose sight of nor fail to repeat that academe's *raison d'être* is moral and ethical and that this ethic extends to praxis.

'Some-cost' solutions:

Make it as easy as possible for adjuncts to qualify as part-time employees. If a person teaches one course a semester for more than two consecutive semesters, he or she should qualify as a part-time employee.

Proposals to replace adjuncts with faculty with a terminal degree³ should first include the opportunity for adjunct faculty currently in place to pursue the degree while continuing teaching. As Amy Lynch-Binieck envisions:

We have realized that we are mistreating our adjuncts, and that we were undermining the doctoral degree and our own majors by not exclusively hiring faculty with the terminal degree. So, good news! We're replacing all of our adjunct jobs with teaching-intensive tenure-track jobs! Isn't that great? Since you have an MA, though, I'm afraid, we have to let you go. Bye.

At this point, many of our contingent faculty colleagues have been teaching for decades. After years of poverty-level wages, most don't have the resources to return for or complete the terminal degree. They have loads of teaching experience that won't necessarily help them to get alt-ac jobs. And now they will be unemployed. Legions of them.

This should not be a matter to be figured out later. People's lives and livelihoods should never be an afterthought. (Lynch-Binieck, 2015)

Adjuncts should not expect to lift our status this without the help of others. As Nussbaum writes, we shouldn't 'accept the simplistic contrast between agency and passivity ... all dignity being placed on our agency, and passivity being seen as always shameful. After all, it is precisely the refusal to accept passivity ... that we have criticized as pathological narcissism, noting that such

³ A 'terminal degree' is the highest degree awarded in a particular discipline.

narcissism can be extremely in societies that excessively prize manly strength and invulnerability' (2001, pp. 408-09). Adjuncts should, in other words expect help, and not feel undermined by requesting it. Finally, as Nussbaum points out, we need protection: 'Legal guarantees, we think, do not erode agency; they create a framework within which people can develop and exercise agency' (2001, p. 407).

Change for adjuncts will come when adjuncts are fully included in the collective bargaining that represents university faculty, but pre-conditions for this will help the process. Havel discusses what he calls a 'second culture,' the dissident culture that arose alongside the official culture in Soviet client states. Adjuncts need to develop their own parallel culture—and we have not yet done this. To be most useful, this culture, to quote Havel

has an element of universality about it. In other words, it is not something partial, accessible only to a restricted community, and not transferable to any other. On the contrary, it must be potentially accessible to everyone; it must foreshadow a general solution and, thus, it is not just the expression of an introverted, self contained responsibility that individuals have to and for themselves alone, but responsibility to and for the world. Thus it would be quite wrong to understand the parallel structures and the parallel polis as a retreat into a ghetto and as an act of isolation, addressing itself only to the welfare of those who had decided on such a course, and who are indifferent to the rest. It would be wrong, in short, to consider it an essentially group solution that has nothing to do with the general situation ... (Havel, 1978).

Hoping to revitalize academe to its ethical promise, this adjunct culture would, to borrow again from Havel, be 'a sign of some kind of rudimentary moral reconstitution'.

provide hope of a moral reconstitution of society, which means a radical renewal of the relationship of human beings to what I have called the 'human order,' which no political order can replace. A new experience of being, a renewed rootedness in the universe, a newly grasped sense of higher responsibility, a newfound inner relationship to other people and to the human community—these factors clearly indicate the direction in which we must go (1978).

The work is ahead: leveling hierarchies, shouldering ethical responsibilities integral to academe and trying to rethink our way to a more humane academy.

Author Bio

Diane Reynolds, a journalist and academic, who recently added an Mdiv with an emphasis on writing to her credentials in English literature, in 2016 published a highly-praised book, *The Doubled Life of Dietrich Bonhoeffer*. She adjunct teaches literature, writing, and religion at a number of different colleges and universities. Issues of humane living and creating and studying a humane literature lie at the heart of her academic interests and studies.

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