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The Emergence of the “Precariat”: What Does the Loss of Stable, Well-Compensated Employment Mean for Education?

Jan. 14, 2015

Noon to 2:00 p.m.

PANELISTS

BARBARA EHRENREICH

Barbara Ehrenreich is a bestselling author and activist. With the birth of her first child in 1970, she got involved with what was then called the “women’s health movement,” advocating for better healthcare for women and greater access to health information. This new concern led to a pamphlet called *Witches, Midwives, and Nurses: A History of Women Healers*, co-authored with Deirdre English. A few years later, Ehrenreich quit her teaching job at the College at Old Westbury and become a full-time writer. Her big break was a feature story for *Ms.* magazine on the myth that feminism causes heart disease. It became a cover story, and she had columns in *Ms.* and *Mother Jones*. Today, one of her major projects as a journalist is the Economic Hardship Reporting Project, which promotes cutting-edge journalism about poverty by recruiting journalists (very often poor themselves), helping them define their projects, and raising money to pay them for their work. Her latest book, *Living with a Wild God: A Nonbeliever’s Search for the Truth about Everything*, represents a sharp departure from her earlier work and is a sort of philosophical memoir.

ROSEMARY G. FEAL

Since 2002, Rosemary G. Feal has served as executive director of the Modern Language Association of America. She administers the business affairs, programs and governance of the association; is general editor of the association’s publishing and research programs and editor of two association publications; serves as an ex officio member of all committees and commissions of the association; chairs the committee that oversees the planning of the association’s annual convention; and is a member of the MLA Executive Council’s audit and advisory committees, working with the MLA’s trustees in evaluating and implementing investments of the MLA’s endowment funds and chairing the Finance Committee. She is on leave from her position as professor of Spanish at the University at Buffalo, where she was chair of the Department of Modern Languages and Literatures. From 1987 to 1998, she was a member of the faculty at the University of Rochester. A member of the board of directors of the National Humanities Alliance and a past vice president of that organization, she also served on the board of directors of the American Council of Learned Societies. Feal was a 2011-12 American Council on Education Fellow at Five Colleges Inc. Coeditor of the SUNY Series in Latin American and Iberian Thought and Culture, Feal is also an associate editor of the *Afro-Hispanic Review* and former senior consulting editor of the *Latin American Literary Review*. She has published on contemporary Latin American literature, Afro-Hispanic studies, Caribbean women writers and feminist theory. Her book publications include *Isabel Allende Today* (co-editor); *Painting on the Page: Interartistic Approaches to Modern Hispanic Texts* (co-author); and *Novel Lives: The Fictional Autobiographies of Guillermo Cabrera Infante and Mario Vargas Llosa*. Recently, she has

written on the majors in English and other languages and on liberal learning for *Liberal Education* as well as on the foreign language teaching community for *Modern Language Journal*.

Andrew Ross

Andrew Ross works for New York University, where he is a professor in the Department of Social and Cultural Analysis, and the director of the Program in American Studies. His areas of research include labor and work, urban and suburban studies, intellectual history, social and political theory, science, ecology and technology, and cultural studies. He earned a Ph.D. in 1984 from the University of Kent in Canterbury, England. Ross is a member of the American Association of University Professors and the American Studies Association. His books include *Creditocracy and the Case for Debt Refusal*; *The Exorcist and the Machines*; *Bird on Fire: Lessons from the World's Least Sustainable City*; *Nice Work If You Can Get It: Life and Labor in Precarious Times*; *Fast Boat to China: Corporate Flight and the Consequences of Free Trade*; *Low Pay, High Profile: The Global Push for Fair Labor*; *No-Collar: The Humane Workplace and its Hidden Costs*; *The Celebration Chronicles: Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Property Value in Disney's New Town*; *Real Love: In Pursuit of Cultural Justice*; *The Chicago Gangster Theory of Life: Nature's Debt to Society*; and *Strange Weather: Culture, Science and Technology in the Age of Limits*. His edited works include *Is This What Democracy Looks Like?*; *The University Against Itself: The NYU Strike and the Future of the Academic Workplace*; *Anti-Americanism*; *No Sweat: Fashion, Free Trade, and the Rights of Garment Workers*; *Microphone Fiends: Youth Music and Youth Culture*; *Technoculture*; and *Universal Abandon? The Politics of Postmodernism*.

JENNIE SHANKER

Jennie Shanker is a Philadelphia-based artist and educator. She has been teaching fine art and design in higher education for 18 years. Within that span, she was hired on a full-time basis for eight years, two of which she served as the interim chair of the Foundation Department at Temple University's Tyler School of Art, and one of which as the interim director of the Low-Residency MFA in Studio Art at the University of the Arts. For the past year, she has been active in the United Academics of Philadelphia, the region's new citywide AFT union for adjuncts. She is working as an organizer on the campaign at Temple University, and has been writing about adjunct issues for the UAP's blog, the [Higher Ed Hub](#).

LEO CASEY (MODERATOR)

Leo Casey is the executive director of the Albert Shanker Institute, which focuses on issues of public education, unionism and democracy promotion. Previously, he served as the United Federation of Teachers' vice president for academic high schools. After a stint in political organizing, Casey began his teaching career in 1984 at Clara Barton High School in Brooklyn, where he taught classes in civics, American history, African-American studies and political science. His classes—entirely students of color, largely immigrant and female—won the New York City championship of the national We the People civics competition 10 years in a row, winning the New York state championship four times and placing fourth in the nation twice. Casey has won several awards for his teaching, and he was named national Social Studies Teacher of the Year for the American Teacher Awards in 1992. He served as the New York state teacher reviewer for the National Standards for Civics and

Government Project. He has worked with teacher unions and teachers in Russia, Tanzania and China on the development of civics education. The son of two New York City public school teachers, Casey attended Antioch College, the University of Dar es Salaam and the University of Toronto, where he earned a Ph.D. in political philosophy.

Next Conversation:

ESEA at 50: The Federal Government and Equity in American Education

NOTE NEW DATE: Wednesday, Feb. 18, noon to 2:00 p.m., 555 New Jersey Ave. N.W., Washington, DC 20001

Register at www.shankerinstitute.org/febconversationregistration