

30 Years Strong!



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# Union Press

## Ponderings of the President by Ira Lansing

A best-selling book entitled *The Bible Code* by Michael Drosnin appeared in 1997. The author claimed that by using certain semi-mathematical procedures, secret messages could be revealed in the text of Genesis. The messages gave information about future events (that have since come to pass) and also alleged to alien origins. Despite numerous successful debunkings, one of which showed a similar method could be applied to *War and Peace* to reveal hidden messages, the book was a financial success and even spawned a sequel, *The Bible Code II*.

In his column in the December 2008 issue of *Scientific American*, Michael Shermer calls this tendency for the brain and senses to find meaningful patterns where there are none “patternicity”. He argues that sometimes there are connections and sometimes not, but regardless, patternicity is almost a human survival skill, and for this reason exists. It is better to believe the “rustle in the grass is a dangerous predator when it is just the wind”. In contemporary

times, Shermer writes, “science with its self-correcting mechanisms of application and peer review” assist us in deciding if that is a face on Mars or just craters. When an organization is responsible for observing behaviors, patternicity can set in and begin to raise doubts.

Over the years UPM has served the general union function of negotiating matters related to wages, benefits and working conditions. The responsibility of monitoring and enforcing the contract (through discussions, grievances or litigation) also falls on the organization. In the last five years or so it seems that there is a definite pattern in the behavior of the Trustees and the administration when it comes to the contract and faculty in general. It has been stated many times before, in this publication and elsewhere, that under the current administration and Board of Trustees, not only have there been more than the usual number of grievances, but more grievances

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have gone or will go to arbitration in these five years than in all 25 years preceding them. Is this truly a pattern of confrontation, rejection and litigation, or is it just the “wind in the grass”? Outside observers might argue that there is a pattern, but it is directed towards the Union and not faculty as a whole. This would *not* seem to be the case in that the recent instance when the Academic Senate proposed to the Trustees a program revitalization/reduction policy, the Board rejected it and implemented one of their own choosing. There is additional evidence that faculty input on modernization is also by-and-large ignored. Make no mistake, there are instances with the District where both the Senate and UPM have made accomplishments, but for the most part a pattern of anti-faculty behavior has existed. The behavior has extended to areas that involve scheduling, assignments, salary, conference leaves, sabbatical leaves, calendar, part-time employment,

coordinators and absences, to name just a few. This is predatory, not environmental.

As UPM and the District move through the process of impasse (it was recently pointed out that progressing through impasse is a great oxymoron!) and into fact-finding, it will fall upon all faculty to decide what is important to us. Certainly our jobs are of utmost importance, but in what form and with what type of contractual liberties or restrictions will be of paramount significance. Crucial to the process will be everyone’s awareness of what is and has transpired, the involvement of many and not just a few, and generally staying in touch so that informed decisions can be made. There will always be patternicity, but as Shermers said, people will believe weird things because of “our evolved need to believe non-weird things.” UPM would argue there are many non-weird things happening. Stay informed, stay involved, stay in touch.

	<p><b>Tick-tock, tick, tock, time on the clock.</b>  <b>Amount paid to the attorney for the District during the month of October:</b></p> <p><b>\$28,200</b></p> <p><b>... and still no contract</b></p>	
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## **CONNECTING THE DOTS**

News and Opinion  
by Arthur Lutz

### **The Huddle**

**A**mos Alonzo Stagg was an influential and distinguished college football coach. He coached at the University of Chicago from 1892 until 1932 – and later until 1946 at the College of the Pacific. He was responsible for many innovations in the game, including the Statue of Liberty play, the use of helmets, the lateral pass, and putting players' names on the backs of uniforms. In 1951 he was inducted into the College Football Hall of Fame as both a player and a coach. He died in 1965 at the age of 103.

Stagg also popularized the use of the football huddle.

Prior to 1894, college quarterbacks did their play-calling at the line of scrimmage. There was no huddle and no attempt to hide their calls from defensive opponents. One college, however, Gallaudet University, a college for the deaf – out of necessity used American Sign Language to “call out” their plays at the scrimmage line. And they discovered that this gave them an advantage because nondeaf opposing teams were unable to decipher their play calls.

But when Gallaudet played other “deaf” schools, this advantage disappeared because these schools could “read” their hand signals. So beginning in 1894 Gallaudet decided that when they played “deaf” schools they would gather their offensive players in a huddle prior to the snap of the ball so they could

transmit their signals unobserved. The results were so successful that they extended this practice in games with all their opponents. And thus the football huddle was born.

The value of Gallaudet's innovation was not lost on Coach Stagg, nor on other football coaches and eventually all schools adopted the huddle as a routine part of the offensive game.

Most coaches saw the huddle merely as a way of maintaining play-calling secrecy so as to gain tactical advantage over their opponent. But Alonzo Stagg believed that the football huddle should be seen as more than just a means of deceiving an adversary. Stagg had spent years studying for the ministry and felt the huddle was a kind of spiritual gathering - a place of Christian fellowship – “a religious congregation on the field where players could minister to each other, make a plan and promise to keep faith in that plan and one another.”

Whether or not you accept Stagg's quasi-mystical belief in the huddle as a sanctified and transcendent experience, there is power and beauty in this kind of communal gathering. I've seen it in other organizations and movements – in Dr. King's Civil Rights movement; in the Solidarity movement in Poland, and in the United Farm Worker movement led by Cesar Chavez. Like Coach Stagg, Dr. King and Lech Walesa and Cesar Chavez all believed their gatherings and marches and picket lines were more than just strategies to win recognition or wage gains. They saw their gatherings as spiritual events where people could “minister, make a plan, and promise to keep faith in one another.”

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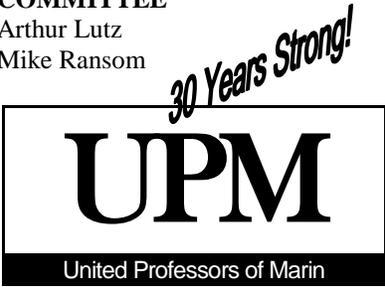
That's what the American Trade Union movement is about (or should be about). More than just a struggle for wages and better working conditions, it's also a movement to foster unity and comradeship among working people.

I think that's the way most of us who are currently picketing the District for a fair contract feel about our activities. We're picketing to preserve the rights for which

our Union has fought for over 30 years, but, like King and Walesa and Chavez we're also picketing to help sustain a spirit of unity and fellowship in our faculty, so that solidarity and camaraderie might prevail.

If you are able, please join us in this pursuit. Both the pragmatic and the spiritual rewards will be great.

## UPM Committees and Staff

<p><b>PRESIDENT</b> Ira Lansing</p> <p><b>BARGAINING TEAM</b> Paul Christensen (Chief Negotiator) Hank Fearnley, Theo Fung, Arthur Lutz Mike Ransom, John Sutherland</p> <p><b>UPM-PAC</b> Arthur Lutz</p> <p><b>GRIEVANCE OFFICER</b> John Sutherland</p> <p><b>TREASURER</b> Theo Fung</p> <p><b>BUDGET MONITOR</b> Deborah Graham</p> <p><b>BAY 10 REPRESENTATIVE</b> Rinetta Early</p> <p><b>CCC REPRESENTATIVE</b> Open Position</p>	<p><b>NORTH BAY LABOR COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVE</b> George Hritz</p> <p><b>PROFESSIONAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE</b> Mike Ransom, David Rollison</p> <p><b>WORKLOAD COMMITTEE</b> Carl Cox, TBA</p> <p><b>HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE</b> Jamie Deneris, George Adams</p> <p><b>PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS COMMITTEE</b> Arthur Lutz Mike Ransom</p> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p><b>UPM</b> United Professors of Marin</p> </div>	<p><b>SABBATICAL LEAVE COMMITTEE</b> Jamie Deneris, Don Foss, Chris Schultz, Toni Yoshioka</p> <p><b>CRA TRUST</b> Ed Essick(Chair) Sarah Brewster, Ira Lansing Ron Palmer</p> <p><b>UPM EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE</b> Ira Lansing, Paul Christensen Carl Cox, Hank Fearnley Arthur Lutz, Deborah Graham Mike Ransom, John Sutherland Tom Behr</p> <p><b>WEB MASTER</b> Mike Ransom</p> <p><b>UNION PRESS EDITOR</b> John Sutherland</p> <p><b>EXECUTIVE SECRETARY</b> Teresa Capaldo</p>
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## The Price of Loyalty

In the December 8, 2008, *Newsweek*, Jacob Weisberg's column, "The Price of Loyalty," provides some unsettling parallels with College of Marin management. Weisberg writes, "My favorite illustration of the misguided notion of loyalty that ran rife through the Bush years was the testimony of White House political director Sara Taylor to the Senate committee investigating the firings of the U.S. attorneys deemed insufficiently loyal to Bush. Declining to answer a question, Taylor said, 'I took and oath of loyalty to the president.' 'Did you mean, perhaps,' Patrick Leahy asked, 'that you took an oath to the *Constitution*?'"

Later, Weisberg comments, "Surrounding oneself with diehard loyalists breeds insularity.... The circle tightens, enemies are listed, paranoia blossoms."

Oaths of loyalty to individuals and to individual agendas are common within the current administration at CoM. One would hope that any manager's commitment would be to education, yet this is evidently not the case at CoM. Just think what these oaths of loyalty have cost us: When President Frances White came on board, she immediately began cleansing the existing administration. Michael Beebe was gone before anyone even recognized the new president. Soon thereafter Rainer Wachalovsky was to follow; Ling Song and Pamela Mize were doomed too. Since the then-vice president was an interim, she hardly mattered—Get rid of her as well.

And so began the process of selecting loyalty: Al Harrison, Bernie Blackman, Bob Balesteri, Arnulfo Cedillo, Susan Andrien, Diana Verdugo, and others. Many of them happened to come from Skyline, President White's former community college. Now, no one can fault an in-coming president for wanting to have like-minded people around her. But one can ask at what cost these loyalists have come.

Currently, one of these former CoM administrators is in legal proceedings with the District over her firing. Another was bought out for the price of a year's salary (in excess of \$100,000). Who knows how much the others have or will cost Marin taxpayers? Certainly we do know that the loyalty of replacement managers, consultants and investigators the District has invested in has cost us plenty.

And other costs are spiraling out of control. Several years ago, President White hired a consultant to write an Educational Master Plan, and after the \$160,000 price tag, we still have no Plan. Now President White has decided that another consulting firm is necessary, to the tune of \$96,000. And the latest in a line of replacements for our former head of Instructional Technology, Rainer W, has been paid approximately \$20,000 per month to commute to CoM from Chicago!

Our current Vice President, Anita Martinez, hired a little over two years ago in the third round of interviews, is now leaving CoM for San Francisco City College where she is simultaneously working as a full-time ESL instructor and as the CoM VP.

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It must be noted that after the first two rounds of hiring committees had failed to produce a candidate suitable to President White, she told then-Academic Senate President David Rollison that she had recruited Ms. Martinez. The rest is history. At what price did President White get the loyalist she wanted? Just think of the hours put into the hiring process, the HR work, the review of applications, the interviews and the selection process, the demoralization of working scrupulously only to have your good recommendations turned down with no reason! And tack onto that another round of hiring now that VP Martinez is leaving.

On top of these costs, UPM has filed numerous grievances because the District arrogantly continues to violate the contract. The Retirement Savings arbitration cost Marin taxpayers over half a million dollars, yet these costs could easily have been avoided by respecting the contract; another lawsuit recently concluded, in which a former dance instructor sued the District because she was not given a disability accommodation, will again cost Marin taxpayers. But the loyalists surrounding her, in particular VP Martinez and HR Director Beam, continue to misadvise President White, and she continues to cost taxpayers big dollars.

One clear beneficiary of these legal costs is the attorney for the District, Larry Frierson, who has stocked his wine cellar with fine Zins and Merlots and Cabs bought with the more than half a million dollars in recent legal fees. Though Mr. Frierson's growing failures in arbitration cost the College beaucoup (as opposed to Beaujolais) bucks, he continues to have President White's full

trust. He is, after, loyal. UPM's most recent arbitration victory in Paul Christensen's overload suit will cost the District (and by that always means Marin taxpayers) back pay for violations in two separate semesters. The arbitrator in that case ruled that the District had discriminated against Mr. Christensen because of his Union activities and ordered it (the District) to cease and desist with such discrimination. President White's penchant for loyalty (and the incompetence that comes with it) is costing Marin taxpayers millions of dollars.

But the financial costs are only the beginning. Morale across campus is down. Take, for instance, the fact that President White sat quietly by and allowed charges of racism to flourish when she could have stepped in, clarified the record and have been done with the whole mess. But no. She insisted on hiring an investigator who, incidentally, found no credibility to the charges. UPM's resulting request to review the investigator's report has been repeatedly denied (contractual violation), and so another grievance is born. How much did that investigator cost? How much will the resulting grievance cost? How many bottles of wine with the District's attorney buy with his share of litigation fees? How much does loyalty cost?

Further demoralizing came just last week when members of the English, Communications and ESL departments met in a meeting called by VP Martinez, who insisted on an immediate decision in regard to department and lab mergers.

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Though this was the first official announcement as to such mergers, VP Martinez persisted that the decision was urgent—in the last week of the semester, in her last days as VP at CoM! No explanation of the need to make an immediate decision was forwarded. Despite the English Program Review, which clearly advocated against merging departments, VP Martinez held fast to her demand.

Such blatant disregard for the law, for members of the faculty and staff who have given their lives to CoM, for the educational process, for Marin

taxpayers, and for our students has created an atmosphere of bitterness and distrust. The campus-wide recognition of incompetent yet loyal managers in HR, in Research, in Learning Resources has most of the conscious faculty gagging. The price of this loyalty, as costly in Washington as at the College of Marin, is, as Weisberg writes, a “surfeit of reliable hacks and outright incompetents.”

One further price: Their waste and ineptitude are costing us a fair contract.

John Sutherland



#### Letters to the Editor

Feel free to voice your comments and/or opinions concerning any article or issue about you, the College or your union. Letters should be signed, but names will be withheld upon request. Please direct your letters to [john.sutherland@marin.edu](mailto:john.sutherland@marin.edu)

Editor: U try not to believe the many rumors circulating at CoM until there is some substantive proof. But I wonder if the following can possibly be true—in light of the revelation about Anita Martinez’s “second” full time job, my curiosity—and my suspicions—are very high:

- Does CFO Al Harrison have his own accounting business on the side?
- Does President White “run” a travel agency with her husband?
- Is attorney Larry Frierson really the highest paid employee in the District?
- Is Donna Boatright, former CoM Vice President, the consultant earning 98 thousand dollars to revise the EMP for which we are also paying certain faculty?
- Are some animals really more equal than others?

**Name withheld by request**

**The following letter was recently sent to the Marin Independent Journal. Its author, who asked that it be included here, has received no response.**

Doug Bunnell and / or Brad Breithaupt: Isn’t it time to take a hard, critical look at the College of Marin and its public relations machine (Cathy Summa-Wolfe—a very accomplished individual) vis a vis the realities of our local college? The Board has given itself a raise.

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There are more lawsuits against the District than ever before. The highest paid employee of the District is Larry Frierson, the attorney. Fran White's public statements about the contract negotiations are demonstrable lies. The outgoing Vice President, Anita Martinez, has been double dipping as a City College of SF ESL instructor and is leaving to rejoin their faculty while making sweeping pronouncements about CoM programs. Morale has never been lower. The Bond money has now reached 50 million expended with hardly a visible result.

Come on. I know that the College is a revenue source for the IJ but the way the paper has accepted and promulgated the spin from Summa-Wolfe on faculty positions, salaries, and the bogus success stories at the college shames the profession of journalism. Isn't Fran guilty of the same crime that the Governor of Illinois just got popped for? Didn't she try to get Jennifer Golan fired for reporting "negatively" about the College?

The truth is that the public trust is being flaunted by the trustees and by the White administration—it's as corrupt as Oakland if not more so. Shall we give this a pass just because of Marin political connections?

**Name withheld by request**

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>United Professors of Marin UPM-PAC Payroll Deduction Form</b></p> <p>The UPM-PAC (Political Action Committee) provides financial support to candidates and measures that support or benefit education in Marin County and the College of Marin in particular. If you would like to support the UPM-PAC with a monthly contribution, small or large, please fill out the form below and send it to the Payroll Office.</p> <p>To: Payroll, College of Marin Date: _____</p> <p>I hereby authorize the Marin Community College to deduct from my earnings the sum of _____ beginning in the month of _____, _____ (year), and each month thereafter, and to remit this sum to the United Professors of Marin PAC #990958 until I revoke this authorization in writing.</p> <p>Signature: _____ Name _____ Address _____ City : _____ Zip: _____ SSN: _____</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>UPM Membership Application Form</b></p> <p>I hereby apply for membership in the United Professors of Marin, AFT Local 1610</p> <p>Date: _____</p> <p>Name: _____ Address: _____ City: _____ Zip: _____</p> <p>Home Phone: (    ) _____ Campus Ext: _____ Dept _____ Email: _____ SSN: _____</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Check the appropriate box:</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Permanent credit or non-credit employee or leave replacement. <input type="checkbox"/> Temporary non-credit employee on the quarter system. <input type="checkbox"/> Temporary credit or non-credit employee on the semester system.</p> <p>Return to UPM Kentfield campus mailbox or UPM Office, Science Center 136</p>
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