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September 14, 2009

Things That Go Bump in the Night

From goulies and ghosties and long-leggedy beasties
And things that go bump in the night
Good Lord, deliver us![1]

Traditional Scottish Prayer

When Richard Sims asked me to join you today, he said something like, "talk about the things that keep you awake at night."

Little did he know! I am an insomniac. The list is long, and only partly disclosable.

Instead, I will restrict my remarks to two forces that I believe will fundamentally change public education and deeply challenge the National Education Association and the American Federation of Teachers. Then, I will pull the long-legged beasties out from under the bed, and try to show that they can, indeed, be your friends.

Both these forces involve networks.

- First: computer networks that can teach or at least supply much of smartware for students to manage their own learning.
- Second: organizational networks that challenge the traditional notion of a school district. The corollary of the network idea is that the *public* in public education means what it does to Medicare: government financed rather than government delivered.

Let's deal first with computer networks. It is possible to view computerized instruction simply as technological displacement. It is much more than that. Computer networks make possible a movement from batch processing to individualized teaching and learning.

For the last century, public education has been built around an orderly grouping of students and their somewhat forced march from preschool to high school. School systems adopted this model of teaching and learning because it was the most efficient knowledge manufacturing system available. The early 20th Century Progressives looked

[1] *The Cornish and West Country Litany*, 1926. Based on traditional Scottish prayer. Source: http://www.pitt.edu/~dash/bump.html, accessed August 9, 2009.

over their shoulders at Henry Ford and the remarkable advances in manufacturing productivity, and said, in effect, "we'll take some of that."

This model has persisted simply because no one could figure out a system that was cheaper and more effective than putting a teacher in front of thirty kids (unless its was adding a few more kids; hence the continuing labor relations battles over class size).

Now, we are rapidly gaining the capacity to individualize instruction. This is a good thing. We know that the best curriculum works for about 60 percent of the students, and if you are unlucky enough to be more than a standard deviation different than other learners, you have serious problems.

Most of the increases in education funding over the last three decades have been devoted to trying to improve education outcomes from these students. In Los Angeles Unified spending controlled for inflation *decreased* by nearly 19 percent in regular classrooms between 1987-1996. Spending for special education increased by nearly 51 percent.[2]

The prophets of technology predict a flip that will cause more than half of the high school classes to be taught by Internet-linked computer software by 2019, just a decade from now.[3] If the authors are only half right, their prediction is still a big deal.[4]

The new teaching technology gains strength not by competing against regular schools and classrooms but by competing against parts of education where resistance is lower: tutoring, Advanced Placement classes in rural and hard to staff schools, home schooling, and supplemental education. Virtual academies now operate in 25 states. The largest in Florida now has more than 45,000 students.[5]

The pattern of online course taking supports the prediction of rapid change. In elementary and secondary education, more than 1-million students took classes on line in 2006-2007, a 47 percent increase from a year earlier.[6] In higher education, the number was nearly 3.5 million in 2006, up 10 percent from the previous year and reaching nearly

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[2] Richard Rothstein, *Where's the Money Going? Changes in the Level and Composition of Education Spending, 1991-1996* (Washington, D.C.: Economic Policy Institute, 1996). 14, 18.

[3] Christensen, Clayton M., Michael B. Horn, and Curtis W. Johnson. *Disrupting Class: How Disruptive Technology Will Change the Way the World Learns*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 2008.

[4] Substitution of the new technology for the old follows a familiar S-curve where adoption starts out slowly and them zooms vertically before leveling into a steady climb. Christensen argues that one can measure that curve even at the early stage of technological adoption by using a log scale and plotting the ratio of the new technology to the old. If the substitution of new for old follows a linear path, one can safely predict rapid substitution. Based on the history of on-line use—45,000 enrollments in 2000, 1-million by 2007—he concludes that teaching will soon flip.

[5] Tucker, Bill. Laboratories of Reform: Virtual High Schools and Innovation in Public Education. Education Sector Reports. Washington, DC: Education Sector, 2007. Tucker, Bill. "Florida's Online Option." *Education Next* (2009): 13-18.

[6] Davis, Michelle R. 2009. Online Course-Taking Shows Dramatic Growth. http://www.edweek.org/dd/articles/2009/01/26/04onlinestudy.h02.html (accessed Aug. 23, 2009).

20 percent of all U.S. higher education students. Online enrollments are growing at five times the overall growth rate.[7]

Technology also challenges teachers' jobs. There is the issue of technological displacement, of course. To date, most technology use in K-12 education has been bolted on to existing classes. But complete packages of on-line instruction are rapidly multiplying and becoming more sophisticated. They are also becoming more attractive to schools as their unit costs decrease.

Nationally, and in each state and district, unions will have to decide how to position themselves around the use of technology. My guess is that charter schools will adopt new teaching technologies relatively quickly. Historically, blocking technology is a loser, and the road is littered with the corpses of once proud and powerful craft unions that tried. The better path is to follow medicine and take custody of technology. (But medicine has evolved into competing technical specialties, and jurisdictional wars between the unions who represent them.)

The substantive challenge for unions is getting technology to enhance teaching rather than dumbing it down. There is little doubt that there is a powerful pedagogy in computer games. The more sophisticated ones dish out rewards at just the right pace to keep gamers working and they make tasks more difficult as the participants learn. It will take little time to wed gaming pedagogy to the on-line textbooks that are beginning to replace bound ones.

The question is, "who does this"? Are they people with the job title "teacher"? When teaching software is developed, is it an open system, like Wikipedia or Linux, rather than a proprietary one, like Britannica or Windows? Through public policy, we can choose to make technology into tools for teachers to use or hammers to pound them. Technology gives teachers the possibility of reclaiming the role of authors and developers, one lost long ago to the firms that package curriculum. It opens up the possibility of teacher collaboration on a scale not seen before. In Scotland, for example, every teacher in the country is linked to a intranet system where they can engage in cooperative lesson planning, establish interest groups among themselves, and arrange projects for groups of students from different schools.[8]

Unions will greatly affect this course, in part by deciding whether to support the needed technological infrastructure in their states and districts.

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The second thing that keeps me up at night—and which should be keeping you up too—is the movement from hierarchies to networks as the basic organizational form of public education.

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[7] Online Nation: Five Years of Growth in Online Learning. 2008. http://www.sloan-c.org/publications/survey/online_nation. (Accessed Aug. 23. 2009).

[8] Clery, Daniel. "Glow Lights Up Scottish Classrooms." *Science* 323 (2009): 60-61.

While often associated with the rise of charter schools, the shift from hierarchy to a network of experts is much more fundamental. Like the basic change from batch processing to an individualized instruction model, it strikes at the basic assumptions about an efficient and effective education system.

A professional hierarchy has been one of the hallmarks of school districts since early in the 20th Century. Unions are in a hate-love relationship to it. They challenge it, but they are utterly dependent on its persistence.

But the professional hierarchy has been deeply challenged.

Consider some *former* job titles of top tier administrators in some of the biggest school districts: antitrust litigator, district attorney, corporate lawyer, law professor and death penalty expert, police officer, city agency head, foundation executive, housing authority manager, investment manager, counsel to NASA.[9]

The decline of the professional hierarchy is linked to a more general delegitimation and collapse of the old institution. Last month in Los Angeles, I sat in the audience as the school board voted 6-1 to put up to 250 of its schools into a competitive RFP system.[10] In a public comment period that went on for four hours, one of the opposing speakers said, "this would be the end of public education as we know it." Her remark was apt, but 40 years too late.

In our book *Learning from L.A.,* we tell the story of how, over four decades, the district's power and functions were hollowed out: taxing authority, assessment, curriculum, personnel. Then we show how the basic elements of a new network-form institution were tried out, auditioned if you will.

No one has completely built a school district around these elements. But what is emerging in Los Angeles, other big cities, and more slowly in racially diverse, inner-ring suburbs is something called a *portfolio* of schools. The concept is pretty straightforward:

A school district (or other entity) assembles the best collection of schools it can. It operates some of them directly, it charters others, and engages in partnership arrangements for additional schools. The arrangement is not considered permanent but rather contingent on performance. The lowest performing schools are closed and reorganized, the best ones are copied and expanded. The search for improvement is relentless. At its core, the portfolio approach focuses on the school, rather than the district.[11]

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[9] List compiled by Paul Hill, University of Washington.

[10] Blume, Howard. "L.A. Charter Schools Get a Chance to Grow, But How Big?" *Los Angeles Times*, Sept. 2 2009, 1A.

[11] This description draws on unpublished work by David Menefee-Libey, Pomona College.

There is no single portfolio model. New York and Philadelphia get lots of attention, but let us look at my hometown of Los Angeles. About 685,000 students attend the Los Angeles Unified School District. About 20 percent of them attend schools run outside the conventional hierarchy. There are 155 charter schools enrolling 51,000 students, including Birmingham High a 2,700-student school that converted to charter status last May and Locke High School, which has been run by the Green Dot charter management organization. In addition, there are 172 magnets. There are two prototype charter districts: high schools and their feeders, which retain a loose relationship to the District. There are 10 schools whose organization is modeled on the Boston Pilot Schools, essentially in-district charters. Ten schools are under the mayor's control.

And all this was *before* the school board resolution last month.

The portfolio notion of schools, which we observed in Chicago, Los Angeles, New York, Philadelphia, Boston, and emerging in Washington, DC, is politically significant. It connects to a broader trend in public policy in the U.S. and throughout the developed world.

Beginning with business in the 1970s, finding expression in Tom Peters and Robert Waterman's influential 1982 book, *In Search of Excellence,* the idea of tough minded, output oriented government found its expression in the Clinton wing of the Democratic Party.[12]

This shift in governance is not simply privatization or "reinventing government" by making it more competitive. Instead, it shifts attention from classic public administration's fascination with command and control to regulation and persuasion and the tools that government will use to achieve its ends. Alongside direct government—schools as government agencies hire workers—we find a whole rack of tools: social regulation, economic regulation, contracting, grants, direct loans, loan guarantees, insurance, tax expenditures such as incentives, fees, liability law, government corporations, and vouchers.[13]

In education, we witness the convergence of leadership in education built around these new ideas, and in the world of institutional change, ideas count big.[14] Arne Duncan brought to the federal government the experience of creating a portfolio system in Chicago. Thelma Melendez de Santa Ana, as assistant secretary for elementary and secondary education, was mentored as a Broad fellow and was a staff member of the Los Angeles Annenberg Metropolitan Project. Mike Smith, as counselor to the secretary, directed the Hewlett Foundation's work in open-sourcing education. Brad Jupp, who

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[12] Peters, Thomas J., and Robert H. Waterman, Jr. *In Search of Excellence: Lessons From America's Best-Run Companies*. New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1982.

[13] Salamon, Lester M. *Tools of Government: A Guide to the New Governance*. Oxford University Press, 2002, p 8.

[14] For an exposition of how economic beliefs embraced New Deal liberalism and then discarded it, see: Blyth, Mark M. *Great Transformations: Economic Ideas and Institutional Change in the Twentieth Century*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002. For an extension of these ideas into education see: Boyd, Kerchner, and Blyth, *The Transformation….*

shepherded the Denver professional compensation project will advise on teacher quality issues. His old boss, former superintendent Michael Bennett is now a U.S. Senator.

The California state school board is stacked with "new governance" advocates, including Reed Hastings, Ted Mitchell and Alan Bersin.[15] The experience of Michael Barber in creating and monitoring indicators for the United Kingdom's Prime Minister Tony Blair is now being applied to education through the McKinsey consulting firm that advises the major foundations.[16] The addition of stimulus money to the federal budget gives them enormous leverage in turning ideas into public policy, ideas that will be revisited when No Child Left Behind is reauthorized, probably next year.[17]

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Both technology and organizational networks create the capacity of management to reach much more deeply into the daily lives of teachers, than the more gentle regimes of the past when a teacher could truly say, "when the classroom door is closed, I'm in charge." That's no longer true. External testing makes it clear that the standards and their evaluation are being set outside the classroom. Advanced techniques in data analysis allow performance to be tied to the work of individual teachers. Curriculum packages such as Open Court and others are complete instructional systems with embedded tests that allow administrators to know what is taught and how well on a weekly basis. The somewhat gentile, paternalistic, structure of school authority is now attached to something that looks much more like industrial discipline applied to teachers.

This new regime of close inspection is aligned with a new authoritarianism in management. It is not surprising that rampant managerialism has become the dominant theme among policy wonks and foundation executives. Managerialism is not management. I believe in good management. I teach it. But managerialism as a belief system—the unencumbered right of executives to do what they want—is a bad civil religion. It cuts against the ancient notion of craft and the modern conception of knowledge workers.

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All this is profoundly challenging to the existing establishment, particularly unions. It challenges the:

- Notion of a bargaining unit wrapped around a school district.

[15] The phrase "new governance," originates in: Salamon, Lester M. *Tools of Government: A Guide to the New Governance*. Oxford University Press, 2002.

[16] Barber, Michael. *Instruction to Deliver: Fighting to Transform Britains's Public Services*. London: Methuen, 2008. Earlier in his career, Barber was the education officer of the National Union of Teachers, and attempted, largely unsuccessfully, to turn that organization toward greater involvement in developing high quality indicators of success. See: Barber, Michael. *Education and the Teacher Unions*. Edited by Phillip Hills. *Issues in Education*. London: Cassell, 1992.

[17] I am indebted to Carl Cohn for ideas about the convergence of forces. See: Cohn, Carl. "Urban School Systems: Getting Talent to All the Right Places." *The Claremont Letter* 2, no. 4 (2009).

    - When operators of the portfolio has different employers, teachers are spread among units.
    - When district schools operate differently—as in the case of Pilot Schools—teachers have strong interest in differentiating work rules.
    - What if the employer does not have geographic boundaries? [Shouldn't a union be able to organize an inter-state employer in education the way they are in industry? The NLRA might be your new best friend.][18]
- Seniority in assignment.
    - The "new schools" notion of a distinctive culture and high performing teams cuts against seniority for assignment, and
    - Increased attention to staffing low performing schools does also.
- Rights to teaching work.
    - Can machines teach? They sure can.
    - If a machine is your instructor, does a human teacher get paid?
- A monopoly on the supply of labor to do certain jobs
    - Who represents the new class of teachers who write curriculum, develop lesson plans, keep up web sites?
- The standard single salary schedule.
- Who is management?
    - If teachers work as a team, who's the boss? [The numbers are small, but we are beginning to see some teacher-run education cooperatives.]
- How should teachers be assessed and by whom?

What do you do with these things that bump in the night? I think the long legged beasty could be your friend.

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When we wrote *United Mind Workers,* more than a decade ago, we said that teacher unions faced the choice of trench warfare or a transformational vision.[19] The politics of the last decade show that they chose the trench warfare, coupled with a defensive politics and a rhetoric of victimization.

In this trench warfare, the other side has just invented tanks, mobile political firing platforms that for the most part are running around the edges of the union battlements. For the organization that staged one of the most brilliant political coups in the last century—moving teaching to an occupation that spoke for itself instead of being spoken for—this is a startling state of affairs.

All of you—and each of you—understands the politics of the NEA and of your states far better than I.

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[18] Malin, Martin H., and Kerchner, Charles Taylor. "Charter Schools and Collective Bargaining: Compatible Marriage Or Illegitimate Relationship?" *Harvard Journal of Law & Public Policy* 30, no. 3 (2007): 886-936.

[19] Kerchner, Charles, Julia Koppich, and Joseph Weeres. *United Mind Workers*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1997.

I'm a professional bystander, an observer of the scene. From my vantage point I see the realignment of politics. Legislative backlash has limited the scope of bargaining and the powers of teacher unions in Michigan, Oregon, Pennsylvania, New York, and Illinois.[20] The California Legislature meets in special session around an agenda that is supported by both a Republican governor and ambitious Democratic lawmakers. Grassroots community organizations in Los Angeles align with the mayor—a former union organizer—and the not so hidden hand of individual wealth to take on UTLA.

Is there a solution? I believe there is. Is it hard? Without question. It is harder than organizing NEA for collective bargaining in the 1960s and 1970s. Then, there was a pattern to be borrowed. When teachers organized they organized around the industrial assumptions that one of the central traits of organizational life was what Clark Kerr called "the inevitable and eternal separation … into managers and the managed."[21]

Thus, in public schools, it was management's job to design the curriculum, set the standards, oversee performance, rate teachers. Teachers bargained the conditions of their work, not the content.[22]

While teachers gained protection from the arbitrary and capricious behavior of managers, the autonomy they got was individual, not collective

But here's the key: profession—like craft, or organized art—is not an *individual* decision. It is a *collective characteristic*, won in struggle and applied across an institution. *The response to the problems of technology and the new governance—learning networks and organizational networks—lies in a struggle to organize outside of the prevailing industrial structure.*

In *Mindworkers,* we advocated organizing around quality because if teachers didn't unionize around the quality of their occupation, other people would define it and enforce it. We advocated organizing around schools rather than districts because we thought that schools as the basic organizational unit would likely persist and that districts in their current form might not. And we advocated organizing around careers rather than individual jobs. People were likely to change jobs, we thought, and there was need for pensions, and health insurance to follow workers from job to job.

Organizing around profession, art, and craft—the non-industrial aspects of teaching work—is not soft unionism, win-win, collaboration, polite unionism. It is the bold assertion that it is teachers that ought to control the standards for entry into the

[20] Malin, Martin H., and Kerchner, at 918-921.
[21] Kerr, Clark, John T. Dunlop, Fredrick Harbison, and Charles A. Myers. *Industrialism and Industrial Man*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1960, p. 15.
[22] This is the essential argument of Kerchner, Charles T., and Douglas E. Mitchell. *The Changing Idea of a Teachers' Union*. *Stanford Series in Education and Public Policy*. New York and London: Falmer Press, 1988. It is expanded and updated in Kerchner, Charles Taylor. "The Modern Guild: The Prospects for Organizing Around Quality in Public Education." In *Transforming Unions:* edited by Jon Brock, and David Lipsky, Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2003.

occupation, that it is teachers who ought to design what is taught and work together to improve it, that is teachers who should set demonstrable quality standards for their colleagues and take disciplinary action against those who can or will not measure up.

Your detractors believe that it is impossible for you to do this.[23] They believe that even if you wanted to, the existing interests of your members would make it politically untenable.

I believe the transformation is both possible and pragmatic.

Here's why.

Just as you face great uncertainty, so, too, those who advance portfolio systems and technology. The portfolio version of school organization, opens up very interesting possibilities. But it doesn't work the way its advocates suggest.

Competition doesn't drive out bad schools. Enthusiastic amateurs from classy schools do not necessarily teach better. Charters do not systematically outperform district schools. There is no secret sauce. There is no magic bullet. Every bit of transformation from hierarchy to portfolio provides an arena for discussion and negotiation. You are currently facing a series of threats that I believe are hidden opportunities.

So, embrace the beast.

Four examples:

1. The firewall. Discussions of whether teachers will be linked to the performance of their students opens negotiations of what counts, for whom, and with what consequence.
    - It opens the door to discuss the inadequate testing systems that states now operate.
    - It opens the door of an expanded indicator system.
    - It opens the door to discussion of whether the states that are so eager to reach for federal money will use some it for a robust teaching and learning infrastructure, where teachers can collaborate and create.
    - It opens the door to discussions about how teacher specific data will be used in schools for formative evaluation.
    - It opens the door to make *other* connections between performance and achievement such as student attendance and transiency, the presence or quality of professional development, time in the school day for teachers to meet, the quality of the curriculum.
    - It opens the door for negotiations about how English Language Learners should be evaluated and the tension between value added and Annual Yearly Progress requirements.

[23] Moe, Terry M., and John E. Chubb. *Liberating Learning: Technology, Politics, and the Future of American Education*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2009.

- It opens the door for creating a method where teachers of poor and minority children, of special education students, and of the buzzards rather than the bluebirds can be recognized for their work.

I understand the critique of value added assessment. There are enormous methodological issues, some of which are being raised by scholars who have been traditionally critical of teacher unions.[24] But at the core, Bill Sanders as the father of this movement links data to the assertion that teaching matters most.[25] And value added methods say to teachers of poor and minority students, of teachers of special education students that they, too, can be successful.

To me, a strong level-playing field of assessment data is essential if unions and traditional public schools are to compete with charters. The logic of confidence—the saga that says "this is a good school"—has been removed from district run schools and attached to charters. Many observers simply refuse to believe any news that traditional district schools getting better or about charters that don't perform. Teacher unions need to build robust data system a lot more than they need to defend the firewall.

Domesticating this beast is a lot better than trying to kill it with the death ray.

2. Testing. Teaching as an occupation needs a coherent position on tests and testing. Teachers understand that the current system isn't very helpful, but wishing for a some past romantic time when the only tests were the ones that teachers made up themselves, is not going to make that time return. One of the characteristics of the new institution is low trust and high inspection.

   My own issue with testing is not that the stakes are high, but that they are hidden and that the rewards for students are either ambiguous or not present in the tests that are being used to judge teachers and schools.

   During the five years I spent in the Boyle Heights neighborhood of Los Angeles, I witnessed the most incoherent testing program imaginable. English Language Learners were subjected to a reclassification scheme that provided almost no useful feedback for the teachers involved and required the students to line up four indicators—including a test they took in the prior school year—before they could be reclassified as English fluent.

   These were very high stakes tests, but no one told the students. No one told them that if they did not reclassify as English speakers, they would never be placed in a high school class that would lead to college.

[24] Bracey, Gerald. 2007. Value Subtracted: A 'Debate' With William Sanders. http://www.huffingtonpost.com/gerald-bracey/value-subtracted-a-debate_b_47404.html (accessed Aug. 31, 2009).
[25] School Wise Press. 2003. William Sanders. http://www.schoolwisepress.com/smart/browse/account/sand_bio.html (accessed Aug. 31, 2009).

Rather than railing against testing, shouldn't the NEA and its state affiliates be designing a better one? Start with a testing audit. Line up all the tests a group of students takes is a year. Figure out how to eliminate the ones that don't help them learn or that don't give them real rewards. Organize around tests that make schools smarter organizations, not dumber ones. Join forces with those who want to focus the system on greater learning rather than more testing.

3. Teacher evaluation and discipline. It's pretty hard to get worse press than that visited on New York and Los Angeles in recent exposé's of the Rubber Roomers and the "housed" teachers, who collect full salaries and pensions years after being declared unfit to work with children. These stories featured due process hearings that took longer than the O.J. Simpson trial and pathetic sounding defenses of the system by the unions involved.[26] Jason Song's series in the *Los Angeles Times,* drew 1,200 email responses including some explicit comments about the need to organize politically to defeat teacher unions.[27]

   We know there are better ways. There are proven ways for unions to engage teacher quality without giving up due process protections for teachers who have been unfairly accused of misconduct or hounded by mean-spirited or incompetent administrators. Tough minded peer review programs work in scores of unionized school districts around the country.[28] Judgments about teacher quality is union work, or ought to be.

4. Compensation. Just because the standard single salary schedule has been an object of faith for decades doesn't make it a civil religion. Much of the current oppositional rhetoric sounds as if the only choices on the table are the current system vs. paying teachers as if they are commissioned salespersons.

   We know better. Thoughtful and thorough work has been done by Allan Odden and his colleagues in cooperation with districts and unions. Pay schemes built on salary additions for teachers obtaining specific knowledge and skills, hard to staff schools and subjects and career ladders are known and can be tied to increased in student achievement.[29] I am not a great fan of pay-for-performance because there are other incentives that I think are stronger and easier to manage. But in their defense of the single salary schedule as an article of faith prevents union locals from thinking hard about how to connect the right incentives to teaching.

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[26] Brill, Steven. "The Rubber Room." *The New Yorker*, Aug. 31 2009, 30-36.

[27] Song, Jason. 2009. Firing Tenured Teachers Can be a Costly and Tortuous Task. http://www.latimes.com/news/local/la-me-teachers3-2009may03%2C0%2C5765040%2Cfull.story (accessed August 15, 2009).

[28] For commentary on Song's articles: Charles Taylor Kerchner, Firing Bad Teachers? Just You Try. http://www.charlestkerchner.com/journart.php?pid=52 (accessed Sept. 1, 2009)

[29] Odden, Allan. "Redesigning School Finance Systems: Lessons From CPRE Research." *CPRE Policy Briefs* RB-50 (2007). Odden, Allan, and Carolyn Kelley. *Paying Teachers for What They Know and Do: New and Smarter Compensation Strategies to Improve Schools*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press Inc, 1997.

Well, there you have it. It's morning and the things that go bump in the night are less scary, and they can be a source of strength and for a vision a robust teaching profession and strong unions.

In closing let me disclose a bias.

I desperately want you to be successful.

I want you to be successful because historically organized labor has made America more fair and just, because it has given power to teacher voices, because it serves as a necessary counterpoint to managerialism, and because teachers deserve to be organized as a profession.

I fear that you will not be. And that, for me, is the thing that goes bump in the night.