

AN EXERCISE IN POSITIVISM INFUSED WITH POSITIVE VALUES

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I am very happy to share with my colleagues a particularly heart-warming experience I had last semester. Given the reputation of my discipline as dry and technical, this is not a mean feat. As most teachers of economics know, the subject is a little bit schizophrenic. Its vehement claim to a positivist methodology runs counter to the nature of its subject matter. At the most elemental level, it is supposed to study how societies organize their economic resources with the purpose of satisfying their members' material needs, a very concrete concern that touches all of us in everyday life. Its method is rather abstract, full of supposed rigor and objectivity. For example, Nahid Aslanbeigui and Michele I. Naples, in their critical evaluation of method embraced by mainstream economists write:

Positivism defines progress in science in terms of a linear movement towards the ideal, Truth. It presumes the existence of neutral or detached scientists who look for and find observable data, equally detached from values, in order to test hypotheses that if not falsified can be called *laws*.

Here then is the problem for those of us who teach introductory principles of economics courses. It is important to make our students aware of the significance of economic forces that shape their lives, their careers and their futures. But a value-free method leaves little room to make a sense of community an integral part of their thinking. We try different strategies in the classroom to emphasize the fact that economic societies are societies first and foremost; not autonomous entities that we can investigate with the positivist method, but an intricate web of social, political and cultural institutions that play a large role in how the economy functions. The social aspects of economic cost-benefit analysis need constant reiteration, whether it is through the recognition of Catholic social teaching which focuses on the greater good of greater equity in the distribution of economic welfare or the beneficial impact of environmental regulation. As to the latter, my students have taken to rolling their eyes, at least metaphorically, when I point out all the negative externalities of S.U.V.s which they love to drive or aspire to possess.

I was very fortunate to have found an assignment for my macroeconomics students around the time I was covering the topic of unemployment. The economy was further sliding into recessionary joblessness and the newspapers were full of stories of the plight of hard-working people who were sliding into poverty. The assignment was to download a *New York Times* article about a middle-class couple who had lost their jobs due to a complex set of circumstances. The husband's work in the airline industry had suffered from both the recession and the post-9/11 decline in the airline business. The wife who thought she would enjoy staying home temporarily found that when she needed to look for work her secretarial skills had become practically obsolete. The

2003 TEACHING AWARD RECIPIENTS

The Center for Teaching and Learning is pleased to announce the recipients of its 2003 awards, which will be given at the Spring Commencement. The University is fortunate to have such gifted and dedicated faculty members, and the Center is proud to be able to honor them this year:

ST. VINCENT DE PAUL TEACHER/ SCHOLAR AWARD

Dr. Dipak Haldar
St. John's College

The **Teaching Excellence Awards** are given annually to professors who have established a record of continued excellence in teaching and scholarship:

UNDERGRADUATE TEACHING

Professor Joyce Boland-DeVito
College of Professional Studies

GRADUATE TEACHING

Dr. Ann Dranginis
St. John's College

ADJUNCT FACULTY

Professor Edith Chasen
St. John's College

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unemployment benefits were about to expire, the savings had evaporated and the couple faced the prospect of losing their apartment and of ending up in a shelter.

The students had to analyze their situation using concepts of economic theory and then make suggestions as to what a Catholic university like St. John's could do alleviate their misery.

I was impressed with the students' comments. They had understood the economic theory well and showed unusual analytical ability in applying it to this situation. My guess was that the very immediacy and reality of the predicament of the unemployed couple made the theory come alive for them. The categories of unemployment were not so much abstractions to remember, but tangible ideas that actually seemed meaningful.

But more importantly, the students became passionate as they took up the challenge of solving the problem. The Catholic values, and in fact the teachings of all religions, such as helping thy neighbor, respecting the dignity of every individual and considering the responsibility we have for the well-being of others featured prominently in their suggestions. They advocated that St. John's University could find suitable jobs for them, including janitorial work or 'temp-service' in all categories. We should also provide them interest-free loans for educating themselves, since both the husband and wife lacked college degrees. Most students thought that giving them and others in their situation free computer classes would be an excellent public service on the part of their university. A recurring theme was that advanced students should volunteer their time in making the classes feasible. One young woman wrote that professors would find it rewarding to donate their expertise and time in such a plan. I quickly realized that none of us were to shirk our responsibility. The Career Center was called on by many to assist the jobless in finding suitable work through all the means at its disposal, such as workshops and seminars with no fees charged. They did not let the couple in the story totally off the hook either and were properly critical of their low savings in spite of their above-average incomes before losing their jobs. The comments of one African-American student made me aware that perhaps we were all so sympathetic because this was a white middle-class family to whom such calamities were not supposed to happen. It was an uncomfortable reality check on my own hidden biases.

A couple of students gave due weight to the role of the government and wondered why the unemployment benefits could not be extended for these unlucky workers, when big tax cuts for the wealthy were part of the budget plan. In a subject that centers on the market economy and extols its efficiencies, my students showed mature understanding of the true nature of our economic life where interconnectedness is the significant aspect that often gets short shrift from the discipline's cold positivism. Their solutions may have been unrealizable or even simplistic, but their values were solidly humane and their decency very genuine. I felt a special bond towards them as I read their essays. Teaching economics became more exciting for what they were getting out of it, and also for what they were giving back to me. My only regret is that I cannot name all of them for their contributions, even though I had told them that I would give them credit for their ideas. They were far too many of them.

Reference:

Aslanbeigui, Nahid and Michele A. Naples. 1996. "Positivism versus Paradigms: The Epistemology of Economic Debate in Introductory Textbooks," in *Rethinking Economic Principle* (Boston: Irwin).

Faculty News

April/May 2003

Professor Joseph Adolphe (Fine Arts, adolphej@stjohns.edu) had a double-page spread of his illustrations of Biggie Smalls and Tupac Shakur in the March issue of *Savoy Magazine*; illustrated an article in *Harper's Magazine* (April 2003): "Unknown Master, The Fictions of Mavis Gallant."

Dr. Madhu Agrawal (Pharmacy and Administrative Sciences, agrawalm@stjohns.edu) published two abstracts with coauthors: "Corporate Advertising Appeals in Print Ads of Generic Prescription Drug Companies" and "An Analysis of Popular OTC Cold and Allergy Products" in conference proceedings MBAA Annual Meeting, Chicago, IL (March 2003).

Dr. Dolores Augustine (History, augustid@stjohns.edu) at a Stanford University German Studies conference on "Tropes of Unification," gave a talk on "The Impact of Two Reunification-Era Debates on the East German Sense of Identity" (February 2003).

Dr. Diana Bartelt (Biological Sciences, barteltd@stjohns.edu) attended the XXII Fungal Genetics Conference at Asilomar CA where she gave a talk entitled "A project-based laboratory using expression cloning from Aspergillus cDNA libraries" and presented a poster entitled "Oxidative stress-induced Ca²⁺-signaling in Aspergillus nidulans may be required for survival." The poster was coauthored by Vilma Greene, a graduate student, and Mitra Singh, an undergraduate student (March 2003).

Dr. Francis Brown (Hotel, Restaurant, Travel and Tourism, brownf@stjohns.edu) has contributed a chapter "Hotel and Lodging Operations" to the 11th edition of *Hospitality and Tourism* edited by Dr. Robert A. Kendall Hunt Publishing, 2003.

Professor Lee Ann Brown (English, brownl@stjohns.edu) published the book, *The Sleep that Changed Everything* (Wesleyan University Press, 2003).

Professor Franklin Camerano (Social Sciences, camerraf@stjohns.edu) has conducted the quinquennial review of the Department of Health Care Programs within the School of Arts and Sciences, Iona College (March 2003).

Dr. Frank J. Coppa (History, coppaf@stjohns.edu) presented a paper, "Pius XI's Projected Encyclical of 1938 against Racism and Anti-Semitism" in the session "Papal

Reaction to Anti-Semitic Developments in Italy" during the Spring Meeting of the American Catholic Historical Society at the University of Scranton (March 2003).

Dr. Terry H. Daniels (Early Childhood, Childhood & Adolescent Education, danielst@stjohns.edu) published an article, "Using Face-to-Face Tools for Success in Distance Education," in *Quarterly Review of Distance Education* (Winter 2002); contributed to *Trends in Educational Technology* (Ely, 2002); presented a paper, "Authentic Learning: Writing Across the Curriculum Using EasyBook Deluxe in a Special Education Setting," at SITE 2003 in Albuquerque, NM.

Dr. Robert A. Delfino (Philosophy, delfinor@stjohns.edu) published an article, "The Beauty of Wisdom: A Tribute to Armand A. Maurer," in the book, *A Thomistic Tapestry: Essays in Memory of Étienne Gilson*.

Dr. Raymond A. DiGiuseppe (Psychology, digiuser@stjohns.edu) coauthored an article "Anger treatments for adults: A meta analytic review," in *Clinical Psychology: Science and Practice* (2003); coauthored a book with Dryden, W., *A Primer on Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy*. (Champaign, IL: Research Press, 2003).

Dr. Nancy Everhart (Library and Information Science, everham@mailhub1.stjohns.edu) published "Evaluation of School Library Media Centers: Demonstrating Quality" in *Library Media Connection*; participated as part of a national panel of grant reviewers for the Institute for Museum and Library Studies in Washington, DC (March 2003)

Professor Paul Fabozzi (Fine Arts, fabozzip@stjohns.edu) had his exhibition at the Parallels Gallery, Philadelphia, PA reviewed by *The Philadelphia Inquirer* (March 2003).

Dr. Rebekah Fassler (Early Childhood, Childhood, and Adolescent Education, fasslerr@stjohns.edu) made two presentations at the Annual Conference of the National Association of Early Childhood Teacher Educators (NAECTE), November 2002, New York City: "Dealing with policies of accountability: Safeguarding personal meanings in public display of childrens art in the Age of Learning Standards" and "Can State Dinners Be Cooked in Local Pots? How does local-level engagement with

early childhood policy initiatives bubble up to the state level?"; was also re-elected Co-President of the New York State Affiliate of NAECTE.

Dr. Hannah Berliner Fischthal (English, fischthh@stjohns.edu) wrote an entry on writer Sholem Asch for *Jewish Writers of the Twentieth Century* (Fitzroy Dearborn, 2003); is also book editor for the *Journal Studies in American Jewish Literature*.

Dr. Dawn P. Flanagan (Psychology, flanagan@stjohns.edu) coauthored three books: *Diagnosis of Learning Disabilities in Adulthood*, (Boston: Allyn & Bacon, 2003), *Essentials of WJ III Cognitive Assessment* (Wiley, 2002), and *The Achievement Test Desk Reference (ATDR): Comprehensive Assessment and Learning Disabilities* (Boston: Allyn & Bacon, 2002); with coauthor, review of the *Pictorial Test of Intelligence* (2nd Edition) and *Review of the Ross Information Processing Assessment- Primary* in *The Fifteenth Mental Measurements Yearbook*, R. A. Spies, & B. S. Plake (Eds.) (Lincoln, Nebraska; Buros Institute, 2003); with a coauthor, book chapters: "Best practices in intellectual assessment: Future directions" and "Best practices in working with culturally different children and families" in *Best Practices in School Psychology* - fourth edition, A. Thomas & J. Grimes (Eds.) (Washington DC: The National Association of School Psychologists, 2002); published newsletter articles with coauthor: "Cross-battery assessment: A response to Watkins, Youngstrom, and Glutting," part I and part II, in *Communiqué* (2002).

Dr. Paul J. Gammarano (Computer Science, Math and Science, gammarap@stjohns.edu) published an article, "Substitute Success," in *The Science Teacher* (February 2003).

Dr. Donna Geffner (Speech, Communication Sciences and Theatre, geffnerd@stjohns.edu) was invited to present workshops at the annual American Dyslexia Association/New York Branch on "Current Trends in the Treatment of CAPD", New York (March 2003) and at the annual convention of the New York State Speech-Language-Hearing Association, Rye, New York (March 2003); presented a student-generated research project (with Jeanne LePorin), "Rhyming Skills of Good and Poor First Grade Readers," during a poster session at the American Academy of Audiology, San Antonio, TX (April 2003).

Dr. Marie George (Philosophy, georgem@stjohns.edu) presented two papers at a meeting devoted to Catholic social thought, social science, and social policy: "Ecology," and "Philosophical Ecology" at Nassau

Community College, NY (March 2003).

Professor Catherine McLaughlin Gifford (English, giffordc@stjohns.edu) her reading onto sound recording of *The Anvil Chorus* by Shane Stevens was entered into the permanent collection of the International Library of the Jewish Braille Institute of America, Inc.; as a member of the Speaker's Bureau of SHARE (outreach organization for victims of breast and ovarian cancer and their families) she represented the organization at a health fair sponsored by Latham and Watkins (November 2003).

Dr. Robert Hendrick (Social Sciences, hendricr@stjohns.edu) published the following entry in William L. O'Neill, ed., *The Scribner Encyclopedia of American Lives: The 1960s, Volume Two* (2003): "Arthur Meier Schlesinger, Jr."

Dr. Peggy Jacobson (Speech, Communication Sciences and Theatre, jacobsonp@stjohns.edu) presented a poster titled "Clinical Implications of Vocabulary Scores and Elicited Production of the English Past Tense in Bilingual Children" at the New York State Speech-Language and Hearing Association Convention in Rye, NY (March 2003).

Professor Thomas Kerr (Fine Arts, kerrt@stjohns.edu) illustrated a story about the anniversary of the Supreme Court's Gideon decision in the *National Law Journal* (March, 2003); illustrated an article, "Saddam's Reaction to the Ultimatum" for *The Boston Globe*, *San Francisco Chronicle* and the *Danbury Herald* (March, 2003).

Dr. Jeffrey C. Kinkley (History, kinkleyj@stjohns.edu) published an article, "Gao Xingjian in the 'Chinese' Perspective of Qu Yuan and Shen Congwen," in *Modern Chinese Literature and Culture*; published in the same issue a book review, of Denise Gimpel's *Lost Voices of Modernity* (Fall 2002); was made a member of the Editorial Board for the Chinese University of Hong Kong Press's bilingual series on Modern Chinese Literature; presented a paper, "Chinese Literary Modernism in the Mid-twentieth Century, with Shen Congwen at Its Core," at the International Conference: "Fascination and Understanding: The Spirit of the Occident and the Spirit of China in Reciprocity" in Smolinice Castle, Slovakia (February 2003).

Professor Richard Landsman (Economics and Finance, landsmar@stjohns.edu) was the subject of the front page of *Newsday* Sunday Business and Investing Section on December 15: "Someone to Help With Daily Money Matters;" was cited in the 2002 publications of *Who's*

Who in America; Who's Who in Finance and Who's Who in Education (2002).

Dr. Azzedine Layachi (Government and Politics, layachia@stjohns.edu) was invited to present a paper on "Ethnicity and Politics in Algeria: The Kabyle Movement" at a conference organized by Cornell University on "Islamic Extremism, Military Authoritarianism, and the Citizen's Movement in Algeria" (February 2003).

Professor Martha L. Mackey (Pharmacy and Administrative Sciences, mackeym@stjohns.edu) presented a lecture, "Overview of HIPAA Regulations," at the Dr. Andrew J. Bartilucci 44th Annual Pharmacy Congress on the Queens Campus (March, 2003); also co-authored a paper, "Influence of a First Year Pharmacy Course on the Attitudes of Students Toward the Pharmacy Profession by Demographics," presented at the Annual Meeting of the Business and Health Administration Association in Chicago and published in the Proceedings of the Association (March 2003).

Dr. Wilson McDermut (Psychology, mcdermuw@stjohns.edu) with coauthors published: "The Construct Validity of Depressive Personality Disorder" in the *Journal of Abnormal Psychology* (March 2003).

Dr. Stephen Paul Miller (English, millers@stjohns.edu) published an article, "Elevated Tracks: The Films of Ray Davies," in *Living on a Thin Line: Crossing Aesthetic Borders with the Kinks*, edited by Thomas Kitts and Michael Kraus (Rock and Roll Research Press, Rumford, RI; 2002).

Dr. Robert J. Mockler (Management, mocklerr@stjohns.edu) co-authored and published "Enabling B2B Marketplaces: The GE Global Exchange Services," in *Cases On Information Technology* (ACIT), (Hershey, PA: Idea Group Publishing Company, 2003); also co-authored "Integrating E-Business Into Existing Businesses: Business to Business (B2B) Applications" in the *Proceedings* of the 33rd Annual Meeting, San Diego, CA Decision Sciences Institute (November 2002).

Dr. Mary Lee Morris (Fine Arts, morrism@stjohns.edu) appeared on the Queens Brooklyn Prayer Channel on "The Catholic Novel" in an interview with Rev. Robert Lauder (Philosophy) (March 2003).

Dr. Jay Nathan (Management, nathanj@stjohns.edu) was a keynote speaker on "The total quality management

(TQM) in higher education" at a management of quality in higher education conference held in Craiova, Romania; also delivered a special lecture on the same topic at the University of Bucharest (March 2003); both were under the auspice of inter-country Fulbright cooperation.

Dr. Jeffrey Nevid (Psychology, nevidj@stjohns.edu) coauthored a book: *Abnormal Psychology in a Changing World* (5th edition; Prentice-Hall, 2003).

Dr. Marilyn Nichols (Theology and Religious Studies, nicholsm@stjohns.edu) gave a presentation, "Christian Perspectives on God," on an interfaith panel at the Hollis Mosque (February 2003); has a book review of *Praying with Teilhard* by James Skehan, S.J. in *Teilhard Perspectives* (Fall 2002).

Professor Judith A. O'Brien (Clinical Pharmacy, obrienj@stjohns.edu) conducted a Women's Health Forum at Briarwood Hall, St. John's University (March 2003).

Dr. Derek Owens (English, owensd@stjohns.edu) chaired a workshop at the 2003 Conference on College Composition and Communication, "21st Century Neighborhoods: Examining, and Maybe Even Revitalizing, our Students' Communities" (March 2003); chaired a panel (which featured St. John's undergrads and grad students) at the same conference: "Misreadings and Mistaken Identities: Tales of Culture Clash in the Writing Center" (March 2003).

Dr. Alice Ramos (Philosophy, ramosa@stjohns.edu) published an article, "From Literature to Philosophy: Faith's Impact on my Work," in *Faith and the Life of the Intellect*, eds. Curtis Hancock and Brendan Sweetman (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press); was invited to serve on the Editorial Board of *Vera Lex, Journal of the International Natural Law Society* (Pace University Press).

Dr. Joanne Robertson (The School of Education, bizzaroj@stjohns.edu) an oral history narrative of her mother's teaching experiences in the late 1930s, entitled "Preserving the legacy: In her own words," was published in the Women's History Month edition of *Education Update*; contributed a chapter entitled "Listening to the heartbeat of New York: Writings on the wall," to a text entitled *9/11 and American Culture*, released by Altamira Press (2003).

Dr. Ino Rossi (Sociology and Anthropology, rossii@stjohns.edu) has organized two sessions on "Globalization and Sociological Theorizing" for the annual meeting of the Eastern Sociological Society held in Philadelphia, PA (March 2003); also presided at two sessions and read the paper: "Dematerialization of Signs and Globalizing Spaces: Deconstruction and De-differentiation or Expansion of Experience, Consciousness, and Meaning?"

Professor Linda M. Ryan (Law Library; Library and Information Resources, ryanl@stjohns.edu) co-author of "Legal Research and Law Library Management" in *Law Journal Press*.

Rev. James Sheehan (Theology & Religious Studies, sheehaj2@stjohns.edu) has been awarded a Fellowship in the study of the bible using rabbinical methods at the Bat Kol Institute, Jerusalem.

Dr. Richard Stalter (Biology, stalterr@stjohns.edu) published three papers with coauthors: "Vascular Flora of Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge, Long Island, New York," "The Vascular Flora at the High Line Railroad, New York City, NY," and "A Preliminary Study of the Vascular Flora of Plum Island, NY" in *Torrey Botanical* (2002); his biography will be included in the 6th edition of *Who's Who in American Education*; also was nominated for the "IBC Lifetime Achievement Award."

Dr. Sherry Vellucci (Library and Information Science, velluccs@stjohns.edu) presented a paper, "Commercial Services for Authority Control," at the International Conference on Authority Control: Definition and Experience, of the University of Florence; this paper will be published in the proceedings (February 2003).

Dr. Ann C. Wintergerst (Languages & Literatures, winterga@stjohns.edu) published an article with coauthors, "Conceptualizing Learning Style Modalities for ESL/EFL Students," in *System: An International Journal of Educational Technology and Applied Linguistics* (2003); was a co-presenter of "American and Russian Communicative Behavior" at the 37th Annual Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) Convention, Baltimore, MD (March 2003).

If you would like to send an entry to "Faculty News," the deadline for the September issue is August 14th. We prefer that you e-mail the information to us at CTL@stjohns.edu . But if that is not possible, then send a typed copy of your announcement to our office located in Bent Hall, room 281. We reserve the right to edit all material received.

Maria Barnett, Assistant Editor

New Acquisitions:

- ❖ Banta, T. W. & Associates. (2002). *Building a Scholarship of Assessment*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- ❖ Boice, R. (2000). *Advice for New Faculty Members*. Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.
- ❖ Donald, J. G. (2002). *Learning to Think*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- ❖ King, P. M. & Kitchener, K. S. (1994). *Developing Reflective Judgment*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- ❖ McCombs, B. L. & Whisler, J. S. (1997). *The Learning-Centered Classroom and School*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- ❖ Parmer, P. J. (1999). *Let Your Life Speak*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- ❖ Silverman, S. L. & Casazza, M.E. (2000). *Learning and Development*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- ❖ Wankat, P. C. (2002). *The Effective, Efficient Professor: Teaching, Scholarship, and Service*. Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.
- ❖ Van Note Chism, N. & Bickford, D. J. (eds.) (2002). *The Importance of Physical Space in Creating Supportive Learning Environment*. New Directions for Teaching and Learning, No 92. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- ❖ Weimer, M. (2002). *Learning Centered Teaching*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.