constructive suggestions. But this aggregation of research also serves to highlight the "profound reluctance of universities to see an ethical culture as constitutive of its fundamental identity" (195), and to show this across the university's many facets and layers.

Despite the incisive critique Keenan levies throughout *University Ethics*, I believe he both sees and celebrates the tremendous potential and good that institutions of higher education offer to our world on many levels. It is this potential good that makes Keenan's project important, even essential: universities are institutions we believe in, that we are a part of, that we need and that others need too. To consider the ways in which they can become greater forces for good, to open up pathways for self-evaluation and, ideally, transformation, is not only necessary—it is a *good* in its own right.

DONNA FREITAS
Author, *Sex and the Soul*

II

In *University Ethics*, James Keenan makes two welcome and bold assertions: first, that the mistreatment of adjunct faculty in higher education is (in the words of one chapter title) "A First Case for University Ethics," and second, that "the discourse about *gender* at university campuses is the entry point for further discourse on university ethics" (127; my emphasis). By elevating and respecting the work that has been done about, by, and for two historically overlooked and disrespected groups in higher education, Keenan calls for a transformation of university culture from one that only preaches ethics to one that practices it. In so doing, he has invited his readers to recognize that the challenges and questions that these two marginalized communities raise, and the solutions they offer, are at the heart of *all* of the issues that he has identified as crucial to "promoting the constitutive role of ethics in the contemporary university" (30). In this short reflection, I would like to elaborate on this insight.

First, I would add evidence to the argument that adjunct faculty are a "first case" giving us "access to ethical issues often overlooked and not considered 'material' for academics" (38). Keenan has identified the most important of these issues in observing that the case of adjunct faculty illuminates critical realities that impede the establishment of a culture of ethics. One such reality is the "cultural myopia" that keeps faculty in their disciplinary and status-based silos, oblivious to the material effects of the exploitative contingent employment system on their adjunct colleagues. Another is the privileging of research over teaching. These attitudes, Keenan recognizes, are

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profoundly structural problems. On this point, Neil Hamilton and Jerry Gaff's 2009 paper for the Association of American Colleges and Universities, *The Future of the Professoriate*, should be required reading as a companion piece to *University Ethics*. Hamilton and Gaff argue that the work and the status of the professoriate are predicated on a social contract that has the concepts of academic freedom, peer review, and shared governance—all integral to a culture of ethics—at its core. They further contend that faculty are no longer socialized to understand this social contract or their obligation to "proactively justify" it as "integral to the mission" of higher education. Their argument complements Keenan's in contending that faculty in particular have failed to understand and practice their ethical responsibilities, thereby undermining their own ability and obligation to support higher education's mission. Like Keenan, Hamilton and Gaff see the neglect of contingent faculty by their tenure-line colleagues as distressingly connected to the rise of other alarming trends, including commodification.

Keenan connects commodification quite directly to the challenge of building an ethical culture in higher education. The adjunct, after all, is the embodiment of commodification; the ideology animating the shift to contingent academic employment demands the transformation of teaching from a vocation, a viable profession, and a human relationship into an impersonal transaction to be exercised as cheaply and efficiently as possible. The resulting human, and therefore ethical, damage is done not only to the adjunct professor but also to the students, faculty, administrators, and communities who are affected by it, as the university mission, and therefore the ethos of the common good, are undermined.

Take the problem of undergraduate misbehavior in social and academic life. Keenan suggests that the "general ethical wasteland of college campuses" (112) can be remedied in part by encouraging faculty to become more involved with and concerned about the ethical dimensions of student life, presumably through mentorship and guidance. Yet contingent faculty who must work at other jobs to make ends meet, or who are supposed to be part-time so that they can meet other obligations including family caregiving, often do not have the time or the material resources or sometimes even the emotional wherewithal to be available to students in this way—and if they do, the time they spend is not compensated.

Similarly, when encountering cheating, adjuncts often report that lacking job security and due process protections puts them at risk if they investigate academic dishonesty. Student objections can persuade an administration to overrule a professor's judgment, and any adjunct professor who dares to protest and who is not protected by a collective bargaining contract risks nonrenewal. Consider that faculty and administrators often feel pressure to

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achieve stellar retention and completion rates or to look the other way when college athletic departments exercise disproportionate influence on campus. Similarly, students and families feel the pressure of increasingly burdensome college costs wherein scholarships and financial aid depend on attendance and GPAs. In these kinds of situations, it is even more difficult for contingent faculty to maintain high academic standards and resist a culture of cheating. Student evaluations of adjunct faculty help determine whether these faculty will be renewed, and these evaluations are even more critical for adjuncts who are women, those who are older, and those who are people of color, since they must contend with the fact that students tend to evaluate their teaching more harshly than they do the teaching of (even other adjunct) white male professors.[1]

In his discussion of the relationship of gender to university ethics, Keenan acknowledges that the treatment of adjunct faculty is also a gender issue. Title IX, after all, applies to women's employment on campus as much as it applies to women's access to education and athletics, and half of all contingent faculty—a majority in many humanities disciplines—are women. Keenan argues that scholarship on gender has opened the door to real discussion of the need for university ethics. Yet the discourse of gender also contains a paradox within its promise. The scholars and institutions responsible for opening that door have often neglected important ethical issues such as the intersections of women's concerns with other diversity concerns. In ignoring adjunct faculty, academic discourse around gender reveals that the class structures and bias that Keenan describes in chapter 5 pervade even communities of enlightened colleagues committed to other ethical and social justice concerns. The neglect of contingent faculty by gender-conscious scholars is all the more glaring given that contingent academic employment is linked to the feminization of certain academic disciplines and to teaching relative

[1] See Max Lewontin, "For Adjuncts, a Lot Is Riding on Student Evaluations," *Chronicle of Higher Education*, October 6, 2014, https://chroniclevitae.com/news/741-for-adjuncts-a-lot-is-riding-on-student-evaluations; Stacey Patton, "Student Evaluations: Feared, Loathed, and Not Going Anywhere," *Chronicle of Higher Education*, May 19, 2015, https://chroniclevitae.com/news/1011-student-evaluations-feared-loathed-and-not-going-anywhere; Colleen Flaherty, "Flawed Evaluations," *Inside Higher Ed*, June 10, 2015, https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2015/06/10/aaup-committee-survey-data-raise-questions-effectiveness-student-teaching; Flaherty, "Bias against Female Instructors," *Inside Higher Ed*, January 11, 2016, https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2016/01/11/new-analysis-offers-more-evidence-against-student-evaluations-teaching; and Flaherty, "Zero Correlation between Evaluations and Learning," *Insider Higher Ed*, September 21, 2016, https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2016/09/21/new-study-could-be-another-nail-coffin-validity-student-evaluations-teaching.

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to research. In spite of—perhaps because of—this particular shortcoming, however, there is power in the idea that the discourse of gender is a pathway to restoring a commitment to ethical practice in higher education. My second point in response to Keenan's book is that there are important lessons in the relationship of the case of adjunct faculty to the discourse of gender.

My own path to adjunct advocacy has been marked by this relationship. Keenan mentions that I published a "manifesto," "The Adjunct's Moment of Truth," in *Inside Higher Ed* in 2009 to coincide with the launch of New Faculty Majority (NFM), the first national nonprofit organization devoted exclusively to education and action around adjunct and contingent faculty. In that piece, I deliberately invoked another famous manifesto: Jane O'Reilly's "The Housewife's Moment of Truth," published in the first edition of *Ms. Magazine* on December 20, 1971. My essay connected the abuses prevalent in contingent hiring practices to their roots in the sexist attitudes that have been seamlessly incorporated into higher education culture.

Some of the earliest work revealing this history is by Eileen Schell (in her 1998 book, *Gypsy Academics and Mother-Teachers: Gender, Contingent Labor, and Writing Instruction*) and by the University of Michigan's Center for the Education of Women. We are continuing this work at NFM through our Women and Contingency Project. Scholarship on women and contingency includes accounts of how the lower status of the humanities, and of teaching relative to research—both of which were key factors in the expansion of contingent academic employment—were reflected in and/or caused by their designation as "women's work."

In referencing O'Reilly's groundbreaking call to action, I was therefore invoking the feminist movement as a model for how to become aware of, resist, and abolish the ethical abuses of contingent academic employment. In her manifesto, O'Reilly describes the epiphanic moments that awakened her and her peers to their own worth but also connected them to a vast sisterhood. The experience taught them the necessity of, and intersections among, personal, social, political, and economic liberation.

These kinds of experiences help "make" the kind of community that changes culture. Even their failings—O'Reilly's sisterhood was not intersectional, for example—continue to be epiphanies. What is important is to keep the goal—building a culture of ethics—clearly in sight. Similarly, key to Keenan's program of building a culture of ethics is the restoration of *mission* to its central place in the university. This mission is "the education of its citizenry so as to promote the common good" (174). At NFM we are also dedicated to this goal, recognizing in Keenan's formulation the key roles of teaching and learning, the humanity of the people involved in this

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endeavor, and, particularly important in light of the 2016 presidential election, its civic purpose. We adopted the California Faculty Association's decades-old slogan, "Faculty Working Conditions Are Student Learning Conditions," as shorthand for this idea; in our mission statement, we aim to improve "the quality of higher education" by transforming the working conditions of the majority of the faculty.

It is symptomatic of the obstacles we face, however, that our argument foregrounding "quality" is often misinterpreted, leading to accusations that we think contingent faculty are inferior teachers and scholars. For us, quality is not primarily about the academic qualifications, achievements, research potential, productivity, and prestige of the faculty, important as these criteria might be. It is not about rigorous standards, important as they are. For us, *quality* is equally about the creation and cultivation of a culture of ethics, one that understands and teaches the faculty's social contract with its larger community and that recognizes the importance of education to democracy and civic engagement. The campus community, after all, is a living classroom. Quality education presupposes a community of teachers, scholars, administrators, students, families, legislators, and community members who are all working toward a common mission of defining and advancing the common good.

In his discussion of commodification, Keenan refers to a similarly narrow understanding of a fundamental concept in the establishment of a culture of ethics: accountability. Accountability has come to be understood almost exclusively in terms of efficiency and productivity, and is grounded in a conception of higher education as purely transactional (How many undergraduates are retained and graduated? How much research is produced? How much external funding is secured?) and not ethical in the sense of community making through horizontal accountability.

For us, the focus on "quality"—and the accountability demanded by our social contract as faculty—make the situation of adjunct faculty a "first case" and the discourse of gender a pathway to progress, not just for *building* a culture of ethics, but *building it through* self-advocacy, *through* witness, and *through* educational transformation. In chapter 10, Keenan makes a complementary case, suggesting reconceptualizing the university as "an organization" rather than as the corporation it has become. This reconceptualization points to the fundamental role of *organizing* as a political, and ultimately ethical, act, and is exactly what adjunct faculty and feminist communities are engaged in. We can only achieve our goals by practicing the organizational strategies and living the foundational principles necessary to build and sustain this culture: the ongoing work of relationship building and self-reflection. Thus the case of adjunct faculty and the discourse of gender may

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reveal higher education's long-standing neglect of the ethics of higher education, but the communities working to address these two critical issues are leading us toward the very solution for which Keenan advocates: "making ethics" by "making community" (217).

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III

We owe James Keenan, SJ, a debt of gratitude for this well-researched, wide-ranging, critical, and constructive call to action for those of us who care deeply about the kind and quality of the culture and structures of higher education.

One point as I begin: I am trained in international relations and sociology, and it is through those lenses that I make my comments. I join this discussion in part because Keenan insists there is "the compelling need for faculty to enter university ethics"—all faculty, from the social sciences, the humanities, and the professional schools (99).

What is his purpose in writing *University Ethic*s? Keenan states, "My question simply asks whether the university as an institution is willing to develop the context, climate, and structures to promote a culture of ethics for its members' personal and corporate conduct" (21). I will approach this question by exploring the following: Keenan's writing style, the argument itself, and a suggestion for reframing the question somewhat while, I hope, simultaneously strengthening the argument.

Three characteristics of Keenan's writing style are evident. The first two are related to why he wrote this book. He is quite frank about the impetus. When invited to give a plenary presentation on the topic "Impasse and Theological Ethics" at the 2009 annual convention of the Catholic Theological Society of America, he surmised that the audience would presume the "impasse" he would address was that between bishops and theological ethicists. But the invitation came as he was at the beginning of cancer therapy for a stage III melanoma, which entailed surgery, infections, and maximum dosage of interferon. He comments, "In the light of this experience, I decided contrary to expectations, to reflect on my experience of encountering impasse in my illness and how that impasse taught me to embrace solidarity with others. During the talk, I reflected for a moment on whether where we teach and work, the university itself, promotes solidarity" (58). He quickly credits M. Shawn Copeland for steering him in that direction. Her earlier work

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