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Labor studies instructor vindicated after Breitbart hit job

By Teresa Albano

University of Missouri-St Louis instructor Don Giljum was vindicated after university administrators said May 9 that videos of the labor studies instructor were “highly distorted” and classroom discussions were “taken out of context.”

UMSL’s chancellor and provost said they regretted the distress to Giljum and he is eligible to teach at UMSL.

Giljum said the university pressured him to resign after Andrew Breitbart posted the right-wing hit-job videos on his blog. Videos were spliced together in such a way as to make it look like Giljum (and his co-instructor) was advocating violence.

Giljum told colleagues he was satisfied with the university’s statement and appreciated all the support he received from friends, colleagues and concerned individuals around the country.

Giljum’s co-instructor, Judy Ancel of University of Missouri-Kansas City, had also been targeted by the video attack. However, UMKC immediately issued a statement exposing the videos as fraudulent and reaffirmed support for the labor studies program and Ancel.

Ancel said the UMSL’s statement was a victory for Giljum and academic freedom.

“Many are hoping that this victory can be converted into an opportunity to open a dialogue with



the university, faculty, and St. Louis unions about the future of labor education at UMSL aimed at strengthening it and making faculty and students more secure,” she said.

Ancel said the UMSL faculty played a key role in speaking out for Giljum and upholding the principles of academic freedom for all teachers and students. Students and state lawmakers also rallied in support.

“It was good to see the UMSL administration upholding academic freedom,” said American As-

T H I S W E E K :

- **Labor instructor vindicated after Breitbart hit job**
- **Editorial: Libya ceasefire, not another endless war**
- **What would U.S. socialism look like?**
- **People power takes Wall Street**
- **Bateo record el numero de latinos que votaron**

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sociation of University Professors senior program officer Robert Kreiser. “It would have been better if the administration didn’t respond like it did initially.”

Kreiser characterized UMSL administrators’

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initial response as an “over-reaction.”

“Giljum and Ancel did nothing inappropriate,” he said. “This is a vindication.”

Kreiser said the group welcomes UMSL’s statement upholding the principle of academic freedom and Giljum’s eligibility to teach there.

But Kreiser also said this attack, coupled with others, are a “worrisome development.”

In March, amidst the battle for worker rights in Wisconsin, the Republican Party demanded University of Wisconsin turn over all emails from U-W professor William Cronon that contained the words “Walker,” “Republicans,” “rally,” etc., after the professor had spoken out against union-busting and Gov. Scott Walker in a New York Times opinion piece.

Soon after that, an anti-union think tank in Michigan sent similar requests to the labor-studies centers at Michigan State University, the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor and Wayne State University.

Now, Kreiser said, you have Florida State University “agreeing to accept money from the Koch brothers,” and to give them the right to ap-

prove who gets faculty appointments to their economic department.

The Koch brothers are billionaire, anti-union oil tycoons, and heavily involved in funding union-busting, and other reactionary state and national legislation. They fund the Republican Party and associated groups whose sole mission is to attack President Obama and promote extreme right-wing causes like global warming denial and vote suppression. They funded groups instrumental in attacking health care reform.

Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker was caught on tape talking to a journalist pretending to be David Koch. Among the topics Walker and “Koch” discussed were using provocateurs to make trouble at the massive pro-union protests, and to bring in Andrew Breitbart for more video hit jobs.

In Missouri, the lieutenant governor and Republican lawmakers also are currently waging a legislative campaign against unions and working families.



Teresa Albano is an editor of the People’s World.

Libya ceasefire, not another endless war

By PW Editorial Board

The war in Libya is a stalemate. The only option that makes any sense in these circumstances is a ceasefire and a negotiated settlement that hopefully brings both peace and democratic openings to the Libyan people.

It appears that the Gaddafi government is ready to enter into talks, but the opposition seems to believe it can oust Gaddafi with a continued NATO air assault - despite the growing potential for terrible civilian casualties. For NATO, regime change seems to remain the objective. The danger in this situation is that steps will be taken to escalate the fighting in order to break the impasse.

Three options are available. NATO could commit ground forces, which is very unlikely. It could intensify the bombing, which is already happening. It could undertake a large-scale effort to train and arm the anti-Gaddafi movement.

This is a prescription for a long, drawn out war. It is hard to see how this is in the interest of the Libyan people or their understandable desire for democratic renewal. Nevertheless, it could well be the option pursued.

Gaddafi is considered to be an unreliable steward of oil interests and a loose cannon in a region and on a continent whose value to the powerful imperial states is inestimable. And this is likely to remain so as long as the economies of the world are dependent on oil.

But are unending wars and occupations what we want in this region? Is that the best way to make us safe and keep the oil flowing? Is it the best way for peace and democracy to take root in the Middle East? The answer, obviously, is no.

Two occupations as well as an undefined “war on terror” and a seemingly endless conflict between Israel and the Palestinian struggle for statehood - all these have brought neither stability nor peace nor democracy to this region, nor have they made the world any safer.

A ceasefire and negotiated resolution of the conflict in Libya, with a pullout of troops in Afghanistan, a just resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and an end to the “war on terror,” would help Libya and the rest of the Middle East become a new birthplace for peace, democracy, stability, and independent development.

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What would U.S. socialism look like?

By Sam Webb

Socialism isn't a stranger to the public square these days. Capitalism isn't working for most people. This feeling isn't new, but it is keenly felt today in the midst of a protracted and deep economic crisis that has no end in sight.

That is not to say that the majority of Americans are ready to embrace socialism. They aren't. But they aren't dismissing it out of hand either. In this climate, alternative ways of organizing society and the economy can expect to receive a fairer hearing by the public.

U.S. socialism will have distinctive features and characteristics, springing from our own history, that will be the result of the organized actions of a majority of the American people.

It will complete the unfinished democratic tasks left over from capitalism, especially the eradication of racial and gender inequality. At the same time, it will preserve and deepen existing democratic freedoms, civil liberties and constitutional rights, breathe new life into representative democracy, uphold the rule of law, and support a multi-party system of governance.

Socialism USA will celebrate the best traditions of our nation and give patriotism a new democratic content. Our socialism will embrace people-centered values - in place of profit-centered values - as we overcome divisions of class, gender, race, ethnicity and sexual orientation. A community of caring, kindness, equality and solidarity will become the dominant reality of daily life. It will encourage new social arrangements to care for the very young and the very old.

U.S. socialism will insist on the separation of church and state, but it will also assume that people of faith and non-faith will be active participants in society.

It will also bring an end to exploitation of wage labor, not in one fell swoop, but over time.



A mixed economy operating in a regulated socialist market and combining different forms of state, cooperative and private property will define the economic landscape, albeit with tensions, contradictions and dangers that will have to be struggled with.

The longer-term task of a socialist state and society is to shift the logic of production from wealth for the few to production for human need and economic sustainability. It is hard to imagine how such an enormous transformation can be successfully tackled without democratic planning and a society-wide investment strategy. Socialism will show that socialist forms of property and economic organization are the ground on which freedom can flower.

Finally, socialism will give priority to sustainability and sufficiency.

Moreover, the fulfillment of human needs cannot be reduced to constant expansion of consumer goods. Socialism isn't simply a "provision society." It is a society in which the wellsprings of human creativity, active engagement, individual fulfillment and solidarity find their full fruition.

Socialism will give priority to sustainability and sufficiency.

People power takes Wall Street

By Gabe Falsetta

Wall Street was taken over by people's power, and the message came through loud and clear.

An outpouring of 10,000 New Yorkers swept into lower Manhattan to demand that Wall Street and the big billionaires pay their fair share. Dozens of labor unions, community organizations, peace groups and many individuals were united in putting the blame for the economic crisis on those who created it, and in opposing New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg's punitive budget. They were outraged by Bloomberg's proposals to close two dozen firehouses, slash vital services such as community centers and homeless services, and lay off over 4,000 teachers.

The United Federation of Teachers NYC pulled out all the stops, with teachers flowing down the "streets of gold," joining thousands of other New Yorkers holding signs reading "Make Banks Pay" "Education is a Right" and "No Cuts."

The May 12 demonstration began with eight feeder marches from locations around lower Manhattan to converge on Wall Street, in the culmination of a week of actions around New York City. Activists organized 80 local pickets, direct actions and rallies at banks and corporate offices, and in public venues to build visibility for the issues.

Among the marchers were City Council member Robert Jackson, who heads the Education Committee, the Rev. Al Sharpton and City Comptroller John Liu.

The outpouring showed that Mayor Michael Bloomberg caught the ire of working families in the city with his draconian budget slashing plan. Time and again New Yorkers point out that while he cries crocodile tears, he has never once opened his mouth in favor of extending the "millionaires' tax" that would continue to bring in several billion dollars a year of needed funds to the city.

Bateo record el numero de latinos que votaron

Por Elena Mora

Un reciente estudio del Centro Hispánico Pew indicó que un millón más de latinos votaron en el 2010 que los que votaron en las elecciones de término medio del 2006.

Esto se debió especialmente a que la población latina joven alcanzó la edad de votar. Cada año, más de medio millón de latinos alcanzan la edad de 18 años y en los cuatro años que separan las dos elecciones, millón y medio de inmigrantes llegaron a ser ciudadanos. En total como 3 millones y medio de latinos más estaban habilitados para votar en el 2010 que en el 2006. Estos números probablemente no revelan todo el problema: un grupo de derechos civiles de Texas ha puesto una demanda en una Corte Federal acusando que el Censo del 2010 ha fallado en contar como un décimo de los latinos que viven en ese estado.

De los 96 millones de electores que votaron en el 2010 en todo el país, los latinos representan el 6.9 por ciento, en comparación con el 5.8 por ciento que representaban en el 2006. Aunque este aumento es significativo, también revela la presencia de un continuo problema: el aumento en la población latina que vota no va paralelo con el aumento de la población en edad de votar. La cantidad de latinos que votan en cualquier elección, queda detrás del grupo blanco o del grupo afroamericano que vota; de esta forma, mientras la mitad de los votantes blancos en edad de votar lo hicieron, solo el 44 por ciento de los afroamericanos, y el 31 por ciento de los latinos lo hicieron. Igual comportamiento se observa en las elecciones presidenciales.

Otro problema que afecta el pod-

er del voto latino es que solo el 42 por ciento de la población es elegible para votar, mientras que para la población blanca el porcentaje es 77, para la afroamericana es el 67 y el 53 para los asiáticos.

Las organizaciones Latinas que se preocupan por solucionar estos problemas indicaron que para la población joven, la táctica de trabajar con ellos para explicarles la importancia del voto es la apropiada (el record de voto en este sector es bajísimo). Esto incluye proveerles materiales en Ingles. Entre las Organizaciones Latinas figuran: Voto Latino y Mi Familia Vota de SEIU.

A pesar de los rumores de que el voto latino para el Partido Demócrata corría peligro por la desilusión del incumplimiento de las promesas de arreglar el problema migratorio, las encuestas de opinión muestran que el voto latino esta sólidamente para los demócratas. En las elecciones para Congreso del pasado otoño el voto latino para los Demócratas representó 22 puntos.

David Leal, un profesor de la Universidad de Texas, expresó: "Las preferencias de los Latinos por los temas básicos como lo hace todo el mundo es importante". Un estudio de Pew publicado antes de las elecciones presidenciales del 2008 indicó que los latinos señalaron que la economía, la educación y el cuidado de la salud estaban a la cabeza de la lista de prioridades.

Antonio González, presidente de la Fundación William C. Velásquez dijo: "...el voto latino no va de un lado a otro. No va hacia los Republicanos. Si ellos se sienten mal, simplemente no salen a votar."

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