

# New Series: The Masters Column

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## Editor's Note:

This is the first article in a new column in this publication named the "Masters Column." These articles will be submitted by AAEM's recognized leaders who have the honor of having being identified as Masters of the American Academy of Emergency Medicine.

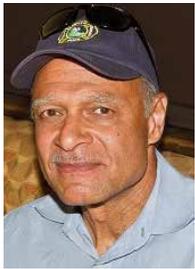
The criteria for MAAEM are:

## Master of the American Academy of Emergency Medicine (MAAEM)

Active members of AAEM may also recommend nominees to the AAEM executive committee for the Master of the American Academy of Emergency Medicine (MAAEM). This recognition of senior AAEM fellows shall be extended to those who demonstrated a long career of extraordinary

1. Service to AAEM
2. Service as an exemplary clinician and/or teacher of emergency medicine
3. Service to emergency medicine in the area of research and/or published works
4. Service as a leader in the hospital, the community or organized medicine
5. Service in the areas of health policy and advocacy
6. Volunteerism
7. Other activities or high honors that distinguished the physician as preeminent in the field of emergency medicine.

— Andy Mayer, MD FAAEM  
Editor, Common Sense



Steve Fraser wrote a book called *The Age of Acquiescence*. Sure there are always individual outliers. Not everyone is caught up thinking that capitalism and free markets as they are configured now must stay that way, but I believe

that phrase also defines where we are in emergency medicine. Many of us have acquiesced to the way our job market is currently configured. Yes, there are individual outliers who are not willing to resign themselves to acquiescence, but these individuals won't have an impact unless they act in a coordinated, that is, in an organized manner. Hence the role of AAEM. Get us outliers organized and acting in a coordinated manner to defend our profession and our patients.

So what do you think? Are you just hoping to stay happy with your individual practice? Will you just accept that the majority of emergency medicine jobs falls under the corporate practice of medicine? Do you have due process? Will you just accept whatever the hospital CEO wants? For CEOs and corporations we are labor and you know how labor has been and gets treated in the USA. Management currently holds labor hostage. And labor has mostly decided to dream of becoming management rather



than try to regain some of its lost power and dignity. Some of us will recoil at being called labor. Well, then own your practice, build your repertoire, get involved in your organization. Or you could acquiesce and try to rise into management at the hospital or within the corporation holding the emergency medicine contract. Will you do this on the backs of your peers in the pit or do you take your peers with you?



Friday, September 15th, *The Wall Street Journal* featured on the front page an article entitled "The Flip Side of the New Economy, Millions of Contractors Struggle for Career Advancement and Stability." Doesn't sound like you? Tell me this. Are you paid fees for your service? Do you get paid vacation? Do you get health insurance through your employer? Does your employer pay into a retirement fund for you?

How stable is your employment situation? Can you or your group only be fired on 30 day notice, 60 day notice, 90 day notice, with due process cause? If you have multiple no's then you must consider what defenses you have. You must consider AAEM membership. You must recruit others to join AAEM with you because with numbers come greater bargaining power. Otherwise you have no defenses against the rules of the "New Economy" which looks at physicians as contract labor. Let me reiterate. Management sees the ED doc as labor. I do not use the word "doc"

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kindly. We are the group of physicians most likely to be called doc. When management calls me “hey doc,” I cringe. You can of course collude with management and become an exploiter of your fellow docs. That may be the career advancement you have chosen. In my opinion ACEP’s support of contact management companies is collusion. Rise through the ranks of TeamHealth and who are you abetting besides yourself? This is what the “New Economy” wants from you. To be so in love with individualistic pursuits that you don’t achieve power through the clout of numbers. You have your own private relationship with management and you do what

you can not to rock that boat. Management wants you to see yourself as an individual entrepreneur happy with the niche it allows you to have. And maybe management will choose you for a role where you can earn off the backs of your colleagues. Yea! I have been coopted out of labor. Or you could become head of your department and attempt to put due process procedures into place. You could organize your fellow docs and become stewards in AAEM. You could build a group that has bargaining clout in the face of an economy stacked heavily in favor of management. Power to the pit! ■

# AAEM18 Wellness Activities

Be well with us at AAEM18

**STAY TUNED** for more information on wellness events available at the 24<sup>th</sup> Annual Scientific Assembly in San Diego — including the return of the Airway at AAEM storytelling event!



## 24<sup>th</sup> Annual Scientific Assembly April 7-11, 2018

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