

A Message from the Division Chair

I would like to start by thanking the judges of the Harry Braverman Student Paper Competition and the graduate students who submitted papers. The papers were rigorous, thoughtful and will more than likely be published in top journals. All were worthy of the award, but we could choose only one. The winner will be awarded at the annual banquet on Friday August 17.

While the recall in Wisconsin did not go as planned the Democrat's control of the senate should prevent more draconian anti-union policies. However, these policies and plans seem to be continuing in other states. Earlier this year, Indiana became the 23rd right to work state. Despite this setback, there have also been a few positives. Georgia Senate Bill 469, a bill designed to criminalize certain acts of protest and picketing, was not brought to a vote and died with the ending of the legislative session.

Union activists, members of the occupy movement, and even tea partiers need to be credited with making people aware of the measure and preventing its enactment.

While these political battles continue, we need to do our best to stay involved and knowledgeable about the happenings both near and far. As many of us are scholars and educators, one thing we can do to stay involved is to educate our students on the important role of unions and what their decline means for them. Most of my students, residents of Georgia, have little direct familiarity with unions but a great deal of "knowledge" about their evils. Students do not know why there is a 40 hour work week or why there are laws in place to protect workers, but can readily explain how unions cause inflation.

Before it is too late, we need to begin to try and teach young people

the value of unions and the positive role they have played and will continue to play in the economy. How is this to be done? That is something that needs to be addressed by a group of thoughtful, active people. I hope to see you in Denver, where we can have a discussion or two about what we can do as educators and activists to try and swing the pendulum of knowledge about unions in a positive direction.

~In Solidarity,
Ted M. Brimeyer

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Wisconsin, the Recall, and Labor

Peggy Wireman, Ph.D. Wireman & Associates

The media take on what happened in Wisconsin is not accurate. I have been actively involved in this since marching around the Capitol over a year ago. It was never about paying more for benefits (the unions had already agreed to this). But the issue early on was framed by the media as being well paid public workers don't want to pay more for their health benefits. And it is true that many do not like unions and do not like public sector unions (including private union members). But I believe that the most important factor was that 60 percent of the voters exiting the polls said they didn't like recalls. The attitude about recalls had shifted from positive to negative after months of ads financed by massive amounts of money, mostly from outside the state. See: <http://www.thenation.com/blog/168335/framed-how-redefining-direct-democracy-anti-democratic-won-wisconsin?rel=emailNation> Despite that, the Democrats won three Senate seats and lost none.

The chapter on income in my book, *Connecting the Dots: Government, Community and Family* (Transaction Publishers) details the long-term attack on workers and possible solutions. See my blog: http://connectingdots.us/?page_id=10 and join my Facebook page "Let's Connect the Dots" <http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=148904598473212>

Here is an interview from my radio show *Alice in Political Land: Facts and Fantasy* with the now Majority Leader in the Wisconsin Senate on the role of outside money in politics. <http://webtalkradio.net/2012/05/29/alice-in-political-land-facts-and-fantasy-will-your-state-face-this/>

Listen to other interviews on my show *Alice in Political Land: Facts and Fantasy* on www.webtalkradio.net including ones on voter ID, the war on women, and a prisoner re-entry program that works.

SHORT YOUTUBES YOUR STUDENTS MAY ENJOY

- (1) Why Labor Unions Matter: How Labor Unions Protect the Rights of All Employees - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=obWZANR-AGY>
- (2) Unions Protect Us All - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4nTUr3YTyAY>
- (3) Living Wages or Safety Nets? Minimum Wage Earners vs. the One Percent – http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XHUxWggZ_Xo
- (4) Myths about Families Driving American Policies: All Working Women are not Sarah Palin - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=19y-h6qpy-E>
- (5) What Do Working Mothers Really Need? How Can We Help Working Moms? – <http://youtu.be/U5Wqgz-QA9I>
- (6) Code Words, Food Stamps and Getting Along: Or Why Newt Gingrich Was Wrong - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aG40C5saCAY>
- (7) The American Dream, Growth Jobs & the Myth of Meritocracy: Why your kids may not get American Dream - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QS3lTMkSTuo>

NOTEWORTHY SESSIONS AT THE DENVER SSSP MEETINGS

Thursday, August 16, 8:30am

Session 9: Social Movements and Class 'Acts' in a Digital Age

Room: Pikes Peak (AT)

Sponsors: Global , Labor Studies , and Poverty, Class, and Inequality

Organizer, Presider & Discussant: Shawn A. Cassiman, University of Dayton

Papers:

- (1) "Framing Occupy Wall Street: The Commodification of Dissent and Constraints on Making Social Change," Brian V. Klocke, SUNY Plattsburgh
- (2) "Occupy Art: Visual Messages & Social Activism," Chelsea Starr, University of Phoenix School of Advanced Studies
- (3) "Radical Democracy & Insurgent Citizenship: An Analysis of the Formerly Incarcerated & Convicted People's Movement," Grace A. Gámez, Arizona State University
- (4) "What's the Web Got to do with it? A Digital-Spatial Public Sphere and Political Mobilization in the Arab Uprisings," Heather Marie Brown, George Mason University

Thursday, August 16, 10:30am

Session 18: Worker and Union Activism in Precarious Times

Room: Pikes Peak (AT)

Sponsor: Labor Studies

Organizer, Presider & Discussant: Chris W. Baker, Walters State Community College

Papers:

- (1) "Déjà Vu All Over Again? Strikes, Globalization, and Labor Movements," Nancy Plankey-Videla and Robert Mackin, Texas A&M University
- (2) "Opened Doors and Closed Opportunity: African American Women Operators in the Urban Transit Industry," Katrinell M. Davis, University of Vermont
- (3) "The Canadian Auto Workers' Paid Education Leave Program: Development as Freedom," AlissaAnne Mazar, McGill University
- (4) "After the Dance: The Aftermath of Union Drives on Latino Communities in the Rural U.S. South," Chris W. Baker, Walters State Community College and Ted M. Brimeyer, Georgia Southern University

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Thursday, August 16, 4:30pm

Session 43: Immigrant Workers and the State

Room: Pikes Peak (AT)

Sponsors: Global

Labor Studies

Racial and Ethnic Minorities

Organizer & Presider: Daniel Tope, Florida State University

Papers:

- (1) "Hotel Housekeeping and the Recession: A Boom and Bust Examination of Immigrant Workers in the Hotel and Resort Industry in Las Vegas," Christie D. Batson and Jennifer R. Keene, University of Nevada Las Vegas
- (2) "Immigration Policies and Gendered Migration of Indian Professional Families," Pallavi Banerjee, University of Illinois at Chicago
- (3) "New Destination Labor Markets: The Effects of Metropolitan Labor Markets on the Changing Geography of Immigrant Settlement," Chris Galvan, University at Albany, SUNY
- (4) "Untenable Lives: Ethnic Cleansing in Arizona," Meghan G. McDowell, Arizona State University and Luis Fernandez, Northern Arizona University
- (5) "Wage Theft on the Border," Maria Christina Morales and Eric Murillo, University of Texas at El Paso

Friday, August 17, 8:00am

Session 46: Jobs, Families, and Communities

Room: Mt. Harvard (GH)

Sponsors: Family, Labor Studies, Sociology and Social Welfare

Organizers: Ted M. Brimeyer, April M. Schueths, Georgia Southern University

Presider: April M. Schueths, Georgia Southern University

Papers:

- (1) "Creating a Life and Career Resumption after 'Opting Out: Preliminary Results from a Follow-Up Study," Pamela Stone, Hunter College & Graduate Center, CUNY, Meg C. Lovejoy, Brandeis University and Erin Maurer, Graduate Center, CUNY
- (2) "Dignity among Unsettled Lives: Narratives of Displaced Steelworkers," Paul Carruth, The Ohio State University
- (3) "Problematizing Military Families in Academic Literature," Kristin M. Atwood, University of Calgary
- (4) "Sexual Minorities and Income Inequality," Maura Kelly, Portland State University
- (5) "Runaway and homeless youth transitioning to adulthood: An exploration of the risk factors and outcomes for youth served in Transitional Living Programs," Annette M. Duranso, Widener University

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Saturday, August 18, 12:30pm

Session 123: Work Across the Life Course

Room: Mount Evans B (AT)

Sponsors: Labor Studies , Youth, Aging, and the Life Course

Organizer & Presider: Mary E. Byrnes, Marygrove College

Papers:

- (1) "Social stratification across educational, occupational and family trajectories: A cumulative dis/advantage approach," Francesco Giudici and Aaron M. Pallas, Teachers College, Columbia University
- (2) "The Antecedents and Health Outcomes of Sexual Harassment Among Working Teens," James E. Gruber, University of Michigan-Dearborn and Susan Fineran, University of Southern Maine
- (3) "What Pays Off? Older Workers and Low-Wage Retail Jobs," Ellen G. Frank-Miller, Susan J. Lambert and Julia R. Henly, The University of Chicago
- (4) 'They give you so much, so you give your best:' Work-family policies and worker commitment over the gendered life course," Krista M. Brumley, Wayne State University

MEMBER PUBLICATIONS

Books

Chris Rhomberg ~ *The Broken Table: The Detroit Newspaper Strike and the State of American Labor*, Russell Sage Foundation.

Dan Glenday, Ann Duffy and Norene Pupo, Nelson Canada ~ *The Shifting Landscape of Work*.

Heidi Gottfried ~ *Gender, Work and Economy: Unpacking the Global Economy*, Polity Press.

Ligaya Lindio-McGovern ~ *Globalization, Labor Export and Resistance: A Study of Filipino Migrant Domestic Workers in Global Cities*, Routledge University Press.

Ligaya Lindio-McGovern ~ *Gender and Globalization: Patterns of Women's Resistance*, de Sitter Publications.

Articles

Robert Perrucci. 2011. "Too Big to Fail: A Network Perspective." *International Journal of Contemporary Sociology*. 48: 251-278.

Gillham, Patrick F. and Bob Edwards. 2011. "Legitimacy Management, Preservation of Exchange Relationships, and the Dissolution of the Mobilization for Global Justice Coalition." *Social Problems* 58:433-460.

Nancy Plankey-Videla. "Consent as Process: Problematizing Informed Consent in Organizational Ethnographies." *Qualitative Sociology*, 35:1-21.

Book Spotlight

Nancy Plankey-Videla. 2012. *We Are in This Dance Together: Gender, Power, and Globalization in a Mexican Garment Firm*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.

We Are in This Dance Together examines Moctezuma (a pseudonym), a successful garment firm in central Mexico producing high-end suits for export from 1969 to 2002. Contrary to the image of a sweatshop operating in the global South, Moctezuma represented a high-road to development, premised on Japanese-style teamwork-based organization and a highly skilled female workforce. The case study is based on ethnographic fieldwork which included laboring as a garment worker for nine months (with permission from management, workers, and the union), as well as interviews with managers, workers, and policy-makers.

The book traces the relationship between changes in the global economy, state policies, firm organization, and women's agency at Moctezuma by contrasting work organization over three decades, in addition to labor strikes that occurred in 1972 and 2001. By examining both the objective conditions of work and the subjective experience of women workers during two strikes, I find that women's understanding of what it is to be a worker changed as the socio-political and organizational contexts shifted. The political opportunity structures available to these women differed significantly, providing distinct spaces to resist managerial dictates, mobilize against state repression, and build coalitions with other workers and social actors.

While the 1972 strike is best explained by the presence of local class-based movements demanding inclusion in the expanding welfare state, the 2001 mobilizations were informed by women workers' interpretation of globalization as a gendered and racialized race to the bottom, democratization processes in Mexico, and increased immigration to the U.S. from the region. These conditions provided women with an alternative view of what was possible and a means to end what had become exploitative work relations at Moctezuma.

The book also challenges dominant management theories that equate development with industrial upgrading (i.e., the adoption of organizational, technological, and product innovations). I demonstrate how globalization processes—namely neoliberal free-trade policies and the consolidation of power in the hands of a few large retailers (i.e. Wal-Mart) and branded manufacturers (i.e. Calvin Klein)—diffuse organizational innovations in the garment industry in contradictory ways, undermining productivity and opportunity in the global South.

At the organizational level, I demonstrate how the re-organization of production from assembly to self-managed teams required an on-going negotiated social pact where both managers and women workers enacted agency, albeit of different types. Moreover, I argue that self-managed teams placed women workers in a contradictory location: hired for their docility, women were required to be assertive. While self-managed teams cultivated leadership qualities, it did so within a deeply paternalistic corporate culture. In this context, women workers found a space where they could marshal independence in the name of traditional femininity and in the process enact new found identities as leaders.



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