

# LABOR DIVISION NEWSLETTER



November 2014

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## **Chair's Introduction – Jackie Krasas**

Dear Division Mambers,

From the labor history museum and the Haymarket monument to the A. Philip Randolph museum and the stockyards, Chicago is a city replete with labor history! The meetings provide a great opportunity to get involved in the division and to get to know other division members. I am really looking forward to seeing you all in Chicago this August.

I would like to extend a sincere thank you to all of our division members who have agreed to serve as session organizers and to those of you who will serve as presidors and discussants. It is your work that keeps our division going strong.

Faculty members, please encourage your graduate students to become a part of SSSP and the Labor Studies Division. SSSP does a great job of supporting the efforts and work of graduate student members. Many of us who joined as graduate students stay connected and active because we remember how this organization supported and positively shaped our experience as graduate students. Encourage them to submit their best paper to the Braverman Award competition.

One final note, do not forget that we will soon be electing our next division chair. Self-nominations are welcomed!

In Solidarity,

Jackie Krasas

## **Editor's Introduction – Mark Sherry**

My name is Mark Sherry, and I am the Newsletter Editor. I'm an Associate Professor at the University of Toledo, and I wanted to explain a little bit about the format of this newsletter.

Given the focus of the SSSP on scholar-activism, I have tried to keep the focus of this newsletter on three things:

1. Newsworthy stories within the last month about the labor movement and the world of work, including information about campaigns and opportunities for activism/solidarity where applicable;
2. Suggestions for classroom activities in discussing these topics, including brief summaries to introduce a topic, questions for students, and further links.

There are always so many activities going on nationally, that it is difficult to select topics for a newsletter like this. I have tried to give a sense of the broad focus of the labor movement, as I have seen it, within the last month, but there will always be stories I miss. I'd love you to bring issues to our attention, and to write stories, whenever you like.

For me, this Newsletter is an act of solidarity – one of the hardest things to do, when you are in a struggle, is to get your message out and to let people know what you are fighting for... so when I hear of a campaign, or see them online, I will try to provide a sense of people's campaigns and links for you to research further.

# Minimum Wage Campaign

By Mark Sherry, University of Toledo

## SUMMARY OF ISSUE:

*At the time of writing (November 2, 2014), the campaign by the labor movement and its allies to raise the minimum wage is gaining national momentum – but it will also face important tests at the mid-term elections in the next couple of days.*

## CURRENT SITUATION:

According to the Richard Trumka of the AFL-CIO, <http://nhlabornews.com/category/richard-trumka/>

- As of October 2, 2014, **22 states and the District of Columbia** have minimum wages above the federal minimum wage.
- **Ten states** have passed legislation to increase wages since January 2014.
- Four more states — **Connecticut, Hawaii, Maryland and West Virginia** — will increase their minimum wage on January 1, 2015.
- **Alaska, Arkansas, South Dakota, Illinois and Nebraska** have ballot measures to raise or set wage minimums that will go to voters in November 2014.
- **Fifteen municipalities** have increased the minimum wage over the last five years.

## SUGGESTED TEACHING ACTIVITY

1. Ask students to find the minimum wage in your state. What political/industrial factors contribute to the amount that low-wage workers are paid in your community? Is your minimum wage a living wage? How do people support a family if they are on the minimum wage in your area?
2. Ask students to research the race/class/gender profiles of workers on the minimum wage. Who are the people most likely to be on the minimum wage, nationally?
3. Get students to search the following hashtags on Twitter: #RaiseAmerica and #Fightfor15. Bring copies of 5 Tweets to class. Which sections of the workforce and which unions are represented in the Tweets you found?
4. Ask the students to find one of the personal stories from a low-wage worker about this issue, either on Facebook or on Twitter. Which low-wage workers are highlighted in the labor movement's campaign?

## **FURTHER LINKS AND SUGGESTED CLASS ACTIVITY:**

Break your class into small groups (or depending on the size of your class, assign one/two students to each story below). Ask students to summarize its main points.

<http://fivethirtyeight.com/features/election-day-could-bring-raises-to-680000-low-wage-workers/>

<http://www.thehoya.com/law-school-report-finds-minimum-wage-too-low/>

<http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/economy/news/2014/03/05/84752/raising-the-minimum-wage-to-10-10-would-cut-taxpayer-costs-in-every-state/>

<http://laborradio.org/2014/10/seiu-silicon-valley-living-wage-push-most-comprehensive-in-the-nation/>

<http://www.latimes.com/business/la-fi-minimum-wage-workers-20141012-story.html#page=1>

<http://www.usatoday.com/story/opinion/2014/10/09/raise-minimum-wage-poverty-income-column/16969185/>

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/news/storyline/wp/2014/10/09/first-person-making-near-minimum-wage-pregnant-and-suddenly-without-health-insurance/>

<http://t.co/J1MjoOHIcU>

<http://capitalandmain.com/the-minimum-wage-a-new-deal-for-los-angeles-workers/>

<http://nhlabornews.com/2014/10/afl-cio-president-richard-trumka-october-10th-10-10-minimum-wage-push/>

<http://www.nytimes.com/2014/10/13/nyregion/giving-a-voice-and-fair-wages-to-an-invisible-work-force.html?smid=tw-share>

## **RELATED CAMPAIGN:**

Discuss the national campaign against Wal-Mart. What are your students' thoughts on the Black Friday boycott of Wal-Mart? <http://action.changewalmart.org/page/s/For15-nyc>

*Teaching resource for classroom discussion* Two minute video on what \$15 an hour would mean to workers: Watch: <http://ow.ly/CLXgT>

*The campaign for \$15 at Wal-Mart:*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qHNMy2oj2qk&list=UUTlbskr8TIHHwGnjYWLnXNw&index=4>

# Teaching Ferguson

By Mark Sherry, University of Toledo

## SUMMARY OF ISSUE:

Michael Brown, a young African American man, was shot and killed by Police Officer Darren Wilson in Ferguson, Missouri, on August 9, 2014. The facts of the case and his shooting are disputed, but many of the protests have involved the chant “Hands Up, Don’t Shoot” – emphasizing the ways in which young black men are disproportionately arrested throughout the country, and communities of color report distrust, abuse, racial profiling, harassment and violence at the hands of police.

## CURRENT SITUATION:

Some news outlets are reporting that Federal charges are unlikely against Officer Michael Brown. The protests in Ferguson are ongoing. *For the latest news, click on the following CNN page:* <http://www.cnn.com/SPECIALS/us/ferguson-shooting-protests>

## SUGGESTED TEACHING ACTIVITY:

**Discuss the topic “Is Ferguson a Labor Issue? Why?”**

a) Read the following speech by AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka about Ferguson <http://www.aflcio.org/Press-Room/Speeches/At-the-2014-Missouri-AFL-CIO-Convention>  
Alternatively, watch the full speech online (it takes 35 minutes)  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ny8loBhqmhc>

b) Note the differences between Trumka’s speech and the following issues raised by other unions. For instance, look at the way the issue is framed by low wage workers from Chicago:  
<http://portside.org/2014-10-16/organized-labor-takes-race-and-michael-brown>

c). Unions have sided with the African American community on this issue, with the exception of police unions, which have supported Officer Wilson. Read this article, entitled “Unions Split, Take Sides After Ferguson.” <http://www.buzzfeed.com/evanmcsan/organized-labor-ferguson>  
Discuss the unique situation of police unions, particularly when the union movement engages in civil disobedience. A sense of solidarity is the main theme of the union movement – that people in different unions are ‘on the same side.’ Are police unions on the same side as the rest of the union movement?

**What does it say about race relations in the US that protestors have galvanized around the slogan “Black lives matter?” Why has this resonated so deeply?**

# FairPoint Communications Strike

By Mark Sherry, University of Toledo

## SUMMARY OF ISSUE:

Almost 2000 employees of FairPoint Communications in in Vermont, New Hampshire, and Maine went on strike on October 17, and at the time of writing (November 2, 2014), they are still on strike. FairPoint is the nation's sixth-largest telecom. The strike was a response to the plans of the company to cut health benefits and freeze workers' pensions. The company is seeking about \$700 million in contract concessions, while union negotiators want to limit the reductions to about \$200 million.

## CURRENT SITUATION:

The company has hired out-of-state scabs to do the work of striking workers and the health benefits for strikers ended on October 31.

## SUGGESTED TEACHING ACTIVITY:

1. Look at the latest news on the strike. <http://fairnessatfairpoint.com/news/> How could this strike be settled? What would that mean for both parties?
2. How does the union's offer of \$200 million in concessions play into wider neoliberal themes of our times? What are a union's alternatives in such a situation?
3. Have you ever been on strike? Most people haven't – so what would it take for you to go on strike? What would make you walk away from a paycheck?
4. Read the following article from Labor Notes: <http://www.labornotes.org/2014/10/fairpoint-workers-strike-against-wall-street-wolves> Why do these authors frame this as an issue about Wall Street? What is the rhetorical or political advantage in doing that?
5. Look at the Facebook page of the strikers. <https://www.facebook.com/fairnessatfairpoint> Examine the demographics of the protesters. In what ways do race and gender affect strikes when the overwhelming majority of protestors are white men?
6. Why do unions call replacement workers scabs? What would you do if a scab took your job?

## FURTHER LINKS AND SUGGESTED CLASS ACTIVITY:

Get students to read one of the following news stories about the dispute.

<http://fairnessatfairpoint.com/news-organizations-cover-fairpoint-strike/> (or use Google News).

*What are the main points of the story? From reading it, do you understand why these workers went on strike? Why they stay on strike? Does it explain why the company won't negotiate with the unions, as the workers' representatives?*

# Jimmy John's Non-Compete Clause

By Mark Sherry, University of Toledo

## SUMMARY OF ISSUE:

Jimmy John's, a fast food store which mainly hires mainly low wage workers, is requiring its employees to sign a "non-complete clause" where they agree not to work in "any business which derives more than 10% of its revenue from selling submarine, hero-type, deli-style, pita and/or wrapped or rolled sandwiches" within 3 miles of any Jimmy John's store in the US, for 2 years after they have finished their employment with Jimmy John's. This issue is now before the courts under the Fair Labor Standards Act. The case is *Brunner v. Jimmy John's Enterprises, Inc.*, No. 1:14-cv-05509 (N.D. Ill., filed July 18, 2014).

## SUGGESTED TEACHING ACTIVITY:

1. Non-compete clauses have, in the past, mainly applied to managers and people with 'inside information' about the company. But Jimmy John's wants this clause to apply to all employees – from those who make the bread to those who drive delivery vans. How significant is this change for low-wage workers?
2. When an individual, low-paid worker signs on with a big company like Jimmy John's, it is not a negotiation between equals. The company has much more power. So who looks after the interests of low-paid, casual workers? How can they obtain more rights at work?

## FURTHER LINKS AND SUGGESTED CLASS ACTIVITY:

**Examine the history of organizing at Jimmy John's, in the context of union campaigns to organize fast-food workers in recent years.** See this link <http://www.nlrb.gov/news-outreach/news-story/nlrb-judge-finds-jimmy-john's-franchisee-minnesota-illegally-fired-employees> In 2010, workers from ten Jimmy John's franchises tried to form a union. They affiliated with the Industrial Workers of the World – IWW. (For a fascinating look into labor history, research the early days of that union!) Six workers were fired for posting a flyer about the company's sick pay policy – which only allows someone to take a sick day if they can find someone else to cover their shift. A judge ruled in favor of the sacked workers in 2012, and Jimmy John's appealed. In April 2014, the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) upheld the decision, requiring reinstatement of the workers.

*Topics for discussion: Is Jimmy John's anti-union? Why? What are the benefits, as well as costs, of a unionized company for employers? And considering the terrible pay, and the poor conditions of fast food workers (the IWW states there is "rampant sexual harassment")... why are less than 2% of fast food workers in a union?*

# Adjunct Faculty Unionization

By Mark Sherry, University of Toledo.

Please also see the call for papers on the “Academic Precariat” at the end of this newsletter.

## SUMMARY OF ISSUE:

Adjuncts now make up over half, and up to 75%, of teaching faculty at various institutes of higher education. The average pay, per course, for adjuncts is approximately \$2700 per course, and many adjuncts don't have another job. This leaves them struggling to make ends meet. Some are on food stamps and receive Medicaid. In this context, adjuncts are increasingly turning to unionization as a remedy to their low pay and inadequate benefits.

## FURTHER LINKS AND SUGGESTED CLASS ACTIVITY:

Discussion topics:

- Why are adjuncts unionizing? What will be the effects of unionization for adjuncts and for students?
- Are adjuncts the new precariat?
- How does the unionization of adjuncts relate to the corporatization of universities?

Video with adjunct testimonies <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5jDT3KcJdLg>

Statistics on adjuncts making up the majority of teaching staff:

<http://labornotes.org/2013/05/adjunct-faculty-now-majority-organize-citywide>

Campaign websites: <http://adjunctaction.org/> and <http://www.seiu.org/coal/>

**Summarize one of the following stories about unionization efforts this month:**

<http://www.labornotes.org/blogs/2014/10/wave-contingent-faculty-organizing-sweeps-campuses>

<http://dailyfreepress.com/2014/10/31/bu-adjunct-faculty-files-for-union-election-take-steps-toward-goals/>

<http://www.sevendaysvt.com/vermont/low-pay-no-benefits-adjunct-professors-might-unionize/Content?oid=2453148>

<https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2014/10/28/tufts-adjuncts-tout-pay-and-job-security-gains-first-union-contract>

[http://www.stltoday.com/news/local/education/washington-university-adjunct-faculty-take-a-step-toward-unionization/article\\_9f7ef62e-333e-5d5f-8c2c-5c3a316a302a.html](http://www.stltoday.com/news/local/education/washington-university-adjunct-faculty-take-a-step-toward-unionization/article_9f7ef62e-333e-5d5f-8c2c-5c3a316a302a.html)

<http://www.clevescene.com/scene-and-heard/archives/2014/10/29/tri-c-adjuncts-jonesing-for-a-union>

<http://dailyfreepress.com/2014/10/08/adjuncts-slap/>



# More stories about the world of work and labor rights

By Mark Sherry, University of Toledo

*Although these stories are not discussed in as much detail as the previous ones, I do not mean to suggest that they are not as important. I just wanted to raise awareness about a lot of issues in the world of work which have arisen recently.*

*My suggestion for a teaching activity is to allocate one of the stories to different sections of your class. Then ask your students to imagine they are a union representative, and explain why this is a labor issue. Then ask them what they would say or do to represent the rights of workers in this case.*

## **Peggy Young and the rights of pregnant workers**

Peggy Young was a pregnant woman who is suing UPS because of its refusal in 2006 to make accommodations for her pregnancy, as recommended by her physician. Her case may have implications for pregnant workers throughout the US. UPS only recently changed its policy on this issue, in January of this year, in response to new guidelines by the EEOC. UPS claims its decision to deny Young an accommodation was "lawful at the time it was made," An interesting range of groups have supported Young's case, including the American Civil Liberties Union, the US Women's Chamber of Commerce and 23 pro-life groups. Although some states, such as Maryland, have passed laws about the rights of pregnant workers, proposals for federal laws on this issue are stalled in the Senate.

[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/10/31/pregnancy-discrimination-supreme-court\\_n\\_6078416.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/10/31/pregnancy-discrimination-supreme-court_n_6078416.html)

<http://www1.eeoc.gov/eeoc/newsroom/release/7-14-14.cfm>

## **Labelling Employees "Independent Contractors"**

One of the ways in which an employer can avoid paying benefits (and taking responsibility for the behavior of employees) is by labelling them "independent contractors." This has been an important issue this month in a unionization campaign by the Teamsters at Green Fleet in Los Angeles. Green Fleet has been accused of more than 50 labor violations, including firing employees for unionization efforts. The NLRB ordered two employees be reinstated on October 14, saying they *were* employees.

<http://www.latimes.com/local/lanow/la-me-ln-port-trucker-case-20141014-story.html>

<http://teamster.org/news/2014/10/lalong-beach-port-teamsters-greenfleet-issued-injunction-labor-law-violations>

## **“Not on the menu”: Sexual Harassment of Restaurant Workers**

Restaurant workers have spoken out about sexual harassment on the job this month, and the hashtag #notonthemenu was trending at one stage. Many waitresses earn as little as \$2.13 an hour plus tips – and 80% of women in the restaurant industry report sexual harassment. Those workers who rely on tips experience much higher rates of sexual harassment according [a report from the Restaurant Opportunities Centers United](#). There is a significant gender difference: 74% of women in the restaurant industry experienced sexual harassment from co-workers on at least a monthly basis and 64% on at least a weekly basis, compared to 58% and 52% of men.

<http://www.theguardian.com/money/2014/oct/07/sexual-harassment-rife-restaurant-industry-women>

## **Wayne Farms Poultry Discouraging Workers from Seeing Doctors**

Wayne Farms, one of the biggest poultry companies in the US, has been fined for failing to meet its duty to protect workers from harmful situations. Nine of the safety violations it had not met were classified as “serious.” Line workers at the Wayne Farms plant in Jack, Alabama had been exposed to painful musculoskeletal injuries, but the company discouraged them from reporting those injuries to physicians. The company could be fined \$100,000; it is appealing.

[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/10/29/wayne-farms-osa\\_n\\_6070686.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/10/29/wayne-farms-osa_n_6070686.html)

## **Sick leave**

A report for the Council of Economic Advisors to the President found that only 53% of workers say they can take paid leave when sick and only 39 percent report being able to take some type of paid family leave for the birth of a child. Also, there are large disparities in access to paid leave across groups, with access to paid leave being particularly low among Hispanics, less educated workers, and low wage workers.

[http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/docs/leave\\_report\\_final.pdf](http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/docs/leave_report_final.pdf)

## **Not taking vacation days**

Over half of American workers say they haven't taken a single vacation day this year and another almost 18 percent have taken less than five vacation days. Lower paid workers are far less likely to have taken a vacation day, and women are less likely than men to have taken a vacation day.

<http://thinkprogress.org/economy/2014/10/08/3577254/no-vacation-days/>

## **Please explore these links about other stories**

### **Nurses' working conditions and Ebola**

<http://fw.to/UqGnpAi>

[http://www.mlive.com/news/detroit/index.ssf/2014/10/michigan\\_nurses\\_were\\_unprepared.html](http://www.mlive.com/news/detroit/index.ssf/2014/10/michigan_nurses_were_unprepared.html)

### **Campaigns for Union Representation**

- Security Workers: <http://www.securityworkersunited.com/>
- Shuttle Drivers [http://sfist.com/2014/10/06/teamsters\\_to\\_zuckerberg\\_let\\_shuttle.php](http://sfist.com/2014/10/06/teamsters_to_zuckerberg_let_shuttle.php)

### **Fundraising for Indonesian film: Female Workers against Sexual Violence**

<http://www.aawl.org.au/content/women-workers-indonesia-fight-back-against-sexual-violence>

### **Nobel Prize Winner Kailash Satyarthi Fighting Child Labour with the ILO**

- Video [bit.ly/1nlyhIM](http://bit.ly/1nlyhIM)

### **Egg Freezing as a Work Benefit? Some Women See Darker Message**

<http://www.nytimes.com/2014/10/15/upshot/egg-freezing-as-a-work-benefit-some-women-see-darker-message.html>

### **Unsafe working conditions – Global South**

[http://www.nytimes.com/2014/10/14/business/international/two-groups-complete-inspections-of-1700-bangladesh-garment-factories-.html?smid=tw-share&\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2014/10/14/business/international/two-groups-complete-inspections-of-1700-bangladesh-garment-factories-.html?smid=tw-share&_r=0)

### **Deaths at work**

<http://teamsternation.blogspot.com/2014/10/every-day-workers-are-dying-horrible.html?spref=tw>

Deaths at work reduced – except for Latinos [blgwd.us/1yqqXQb](http://blgwd.us/1yqqXQb)

### **Fast Food Strikes**

“The Fast Food Strikes Have Been a Stunning Success for Organized Labor”

<http://slate.me/1CGWXjq>

### **Wage gap exists for minorities in high tech fields**

<http://politic365.com/2014/10/10/wage-gap-exists-for-minorities-in-high-tech-fields/>

## Call for Papers

### The Past, Present, and Future of Labor Education

#### Special Issue of *Labor Studies Journal*

In conjunction with the 2015 United Association for Labor Education Conference in Orlando, Florida, March 25 to 28, 2015.

The *Labor Studies Journal* invites paper proposals on the theme of labor education programs.

Labor education and worker education programs exist across the country. Some are part of certificate- or degree-granting programs, others are presented by unions, and still others are ad hoc community initiatives to address specific crises or needs. Many of these, particularly labor education programs in universities, have been under attack. Other worker-education efforts are finding new life through community groups and activist initiatives. How is the range of worker- and labor-education programs faring? What issues are they most addressing? Which populations are they best serving? How are the challenges facing specific-need programs, such as worker literacy drives, different from university-affiliated certificate programs? Should effort and energy be committed to educating rank-and-file workers or concentrate on leadership? How can worker advocacy groups, unions, and academics work together and complement each other's efforts? What are examples of labor education programs that lead to new worker action, new leadership, or new responses on the part of unions or management? How can issue-specific programs, such as worker training to avoid wage theft, build on larger-scale programs, and vice versa?

Appropriate paper topics include, but are not limited to:

- education of low wage workers
- academic job councils
- union-based education
- grievance training
- collective bargaining workshops
- context within labor education programs exist
- steward training
- apprenticeship programs

- labor studies and labor management relations in the academy
- undergraduate degrees, certificates, and associate degrees
- skills training
- historical comparisons
- international comparisons

We welcome papers from all methodological approaches, including ethnographies, quantitative analysis, case studies from a contemporary and/or historical vantage point, and more in-depth qualitative studies. Purely theoretical analyses of labor education are also welcome.

Papers submitted will be considered for presentation at the United Association for Labor Education Conference to be held in Orlando, Florida, March 25 to 28, 2015. Papers accepted and presented at the conference will then be eligible to undergo a peer review process for possible publication in a special conference issue of *Labor Studies Journal*.

Please send electronic copies of 800-word manuscript proposals by December 3, 2014 to the guest editor listed below. Full-length manuscripts are expected by the time of the conference in March, 2015. Presented manuscripts will be peer reviewed following the conference.

Elizabeth A. Hoffmann  
Associate Professor of Sociology  
Purdue University  
[hoffmanne@purdue.edu](mailto:hoffmanne@purdue.edu)

## **SSSP LABOR DIVISION FACEBOOK PAGE**

**Please join the Division's Facebook Page**

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/sssplaborstudies/>

## Call for Submissions – The Academic Precariat

\*Call for Submissions\*: \*Teaching Poor: Voices of the Academic Precariat\*

The career of college professor, giving back to the society that provided for them through education, was once a respectable path to the middle class. That class position is now slipping through the hands of the very people who helped create it, thanks to the erosion of tenured and tenure-track positions in favor of short-term contract positions without security. What should be rags to riches stories about the power of education to lift people out of poverty by providing a pathway to better jobs have become, for many academics, stories of stagnation, downward mobility, and outright impoverishment under the burden of massive debt uncompensated for by the very academy that helped contract faculty incur it.

\*Teaching Poor: Voices of the Academic Precariat\* will be a collection of voices from the world of so-called adjunct or contract college instructors who now teach 60-75% of all college courses in the United States and are paid wages equivalent to Walmart workers. In the tradition of Studs Terkel's \*Working\*, \*Teaching Poor\* will honor both the difficulties and the triumphs of this new class of impoverished white collar laborers in the academic trenches, detailing personal struggles with the resultant poverty produced by low wages, crushing student loan debt, lack of healthcare and retirement provisions, and the professional and cultural costs this system levies on individuals and the students they teach.

I welcome creative non-fiction, biographical essay, short stories, poems, comics and, in the spirit of hacking the academy through digital humanities, may eventually expand to multimedia and a permanent archive of work similar to Story Corps. Length can vary wildly, but around 7500 words for prose is the average we're looking for. Longer pieces will probably be reserved for the online archive.

This project is in its very early stages and I'm looking to see what kind of interest there is both in contributors and publishers before defining it or looking into other funding/publishing sources. I have publishers in mind (AK, Haymarket, Soft Skull, Atropos, Verso, ILR), but also welcome suggestions. I do want this to be more than a self-published ebook though, and perhaps something truly groundbreaking if we can make a collaboration work. Send your queries and submissions to Lee Kottner at [teachingpoor@gmail.com](mailto:teachingpoor@gmail.com) by Jan. 1, 2015. That, too, is a very soft deadline, but please at least query by then.

**LERA 67th Annual Meeting, May 28-31, 2015, Pittsburgh, PA  
CALL FOR PROPOSALS "Evolving Workplace Relations:  
Connecting Research to Best Practices"  
Deadline: November 15, 2014**

The LERA Program Committee has issued a call for session and paper proposals for stimulating, creative, and controversial symposia related to this theme as well as other proposals that deal with topics of current interest and the mission of the Labor and Employment Relations Association (LERA).

We encourage submissions from the perspectives of multiple disciplines – including but not limited to economics, sociology, political science, labor and employment law, industrial relations, and human resource studies – and the perspectives of multiple stakeholders, including investors, managers, workers and unions. Session proposals for only academic symposia will be considered.

*Quicklinks:*

- \* To access online submission forms - <http://leraweb.org/2015-call-for-proposals>
- \* To download call for proposals flyer – <http://leraweb.org/assets/docs/meetings/call-for-proposals-2015.pdf>
- \* To download call for papers/posters flyer - <http://leraweb.org/assets/docs/meetings/meetingscalls-am2015.pdf>

Those wishing to submit single papers rather than sessions are welcome to submit those as well, and details can be found online at the page listed above.

Proposals must be submitted or reach the LERA Office no later than November 15, 2014. Contact [LERAoffice@illinois.edu](mailto:LERAoffice@illinois.edu) if you have any questions.

**IF YOU WANT TO REVIEW A BOOK ON LABOR  
ISSUES – WHETHER THEY ARE LISTED HERE OR  
NOT – PLEASE CONTACT  
[MARKDSHERRY@YAHOO.COM](mailto:MARKDSHERRY@YAHOO.COM)**

## **Book Review**

**Mireles, Gilbert F. 2013. *Continuing La Causa: Organizing Labor in California's Strawberry Fields*. Boulder, CO: First Forum Press.**

**Reviewed by Laurie Michaels, Ohio State University**

A continuation of Mireles' doctoral thesis, *Continuing La Causa: Organizing Labor in California's Strawberry Fields* provides a fascinating look into the continuing struggle for farm worker justice and the new challenges facing labor movement organizations. The book follows the United Farm Workers of America (UFW) and the campaign to organize farm workers in the strawberry fields of California. Mireles examines the complex relationship between social movements and their allies in power – and how those relationships can make all the difference for a campaign.

Mireles is honest about the successes and failures of the campaign. The UFW is an established union wielding both a strong legal team and valuable political connections. Yet, as the UFW's campaign gained organizational capacity, it lost its connection to its base of workers in the fields. Workers became disengaged from the union's efforts, and soon a newly-formed, grassroots organization emerged from the fields, El Comité de Trabajadores de Costal Berry, and challenged the long-established UFW. The presence of the Comité in the fields and the grassroots nature of the group helped to foster trust among the workers who had become disengaged with union efforts. Initially the Comité was shockingly successful, winning three elections against the UFW.

The lessons to be learned from the early victories of the Comité have to do with the importance of networks and personal relationships with workers – especially immigrant workers who often rely on familial and social networks to find employment and other resources in the U.S. The structural dynamics and hierarchy within the UFW distanced the union from the daily concerns of the workers and eroded their trust, clearing the way for the Comité's success.

However, amidst a changing economic and political landscape, the battle for worker representation is increasingly moving from organizing in the fields to battling in the courts. The UFW's knowledge of the intricacies of labor law paved the way to the union's ultimate success in winning the representation of farm workers in California's strawberry fields. The UFW functioned within established structures as a formal organization. The UFW's campaign possessed all of the elements that the Comité lacked: a formal division of labor, organizational structure, and an ability to function as a formal and legitimate organization. This same



organizational capacity which fostered a sense of disengagement among workers proved to be critical in the courtroom.

Drawing upon social movements literature as well as political theory, this complex dynamic is explored and Mireles is able to connect the UFW's battle in the strawberry fields to the broader issues facing all social movement organizations in a shifting political and economic landscape. Traditional grassroots campaigns are being out-manuevered by campaigns with political clout and strong legal teams, leading to a disconnect between organizations and the people they represent. Mireles emphasizes the need to balance the elements of a corporate campaign with the elements of a grassroots campaign, and the importance of winning the trust of workers in the field.

Mireles employs a broad range of methods, including 53 in-depth interviews with farm workers, crew leaders, supervisors, and employers. He was able to collection ample amount of additional data from legal documents, as the nature of organizing is becoming increasingly litigious. Mireles was also able to collect data from reporters who covered the campaign, analyze industry and union publications, and study local and national news articles.

*Continuing La Causa: Organizing Labor in California's Strawberry Fields* raises important questions for labor leaders and the American labor movement. Mireles highlights the need to balance legal and political action with grassroots fieldwork – in doing so, he provides a valuable addition to the literature on social movements and labor organizing.

## NEW BOOKS/ BOOKS FOR REVIEW

**Books for review – Please contact [markdsherry@yahoo.com](mailto:markdsherry@yahoo.com) if you want to review any of the following books. Grad students especially, please use this opportunity. It will help you get network and become better known in the field. All are welcome to review.**

- \* *Wombs in Labor: Transnational Commercial Surrogacy in India* by Amrita Pande
- \* *Labor's Love Lost: The Rise and Fall of the Working-Class Family in America* by Andrew J. Cherlin
- \* *Unequal Time: Gender, Class and Family in Employment Schedules* by Dan Clawson and Naomi Gerstel
- \* *What works for Workers? Public Policies and Innovative Strategies for Low-Wage Workers* edited by Stephanie Luce, Jennifer Luff, Joseph A. McCartin and Ruth Milkman
- \* *No Country: Working Class Writing in the Age of Globalization* by Sonali Perera
- \* *The Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters: C.L. Dellums and the fight for Fair Treatment and Civil Rights* by Robert L. Allen
- \* *Silvertown: The lost story of a strike that shook London and helped launch the modern labor movement* by John Tully
- \* *Mobilizing Against Inequality: Unions, Immigrant Workers, and the Crisis of Capitalism*, Edited by Lee H. Adler, Maite Tapia, Lowell Turner
- \* *Fifteen Stories: How Workers Struck Poverty And Won \$15 For Seattle, Working Washington*
- \* *The Mediator's Handbook* by Jennifer E Beer;
- \* *Educating for Action: Strategies to ignite Social Justice* by Jason Del Gandio and Anthony J Nocella II

## NEW BOOKS/ BOOKS FOR REVIEW

I have the following books available for review right now. If you are interested in reviewing any of them, please email me at [markdsherry@yahoo.com](mailto:markdsherry@yahoo.com)

### **WOMBS IN LABOR: TRANSNATIONAL COMMERCIAL SURROGACY IN INDIA BY AMRITA PANDE**

Columbia University Press, ISBN: 978-0-231-16991-2, 272 pages, Paperback \$28.00 / £19.50

Surrogacy is India's new form of outsourcing, as couples from all over the world hire Indian women to bear their children for a fraction of the cost of surrogacy elsewhere with little to no government oversight or regulation. In the first detailed ethnography of India's surrogacy industry, Amrita Pande visits clinics and hostels and speaks with surrogates and their families, clients, doctors, brokers, and hostel matrons in order to shed light on this burgeoning business and the experiences of the laborers within it. From recruitment to training to delivery, Pande's research focuses on how reproduction meets production in surrogacy and how this reflects characteristics of India's larger labor system.

Pande's interviews prove surrogates are more than victims of disciplinary power, and she examines the strategies they deploy to retain control over their bodies and reproductive futures. While some women are coerced into the business by their families, others negotiate with clients and their clinics to gain access to technologies and networks otherwise closed to them. As surrogates, the women Pande meets get to know and make the most of advanced medical discoveries. They traverse borders and straddle relationships that test the boundaries of race, class, religion, and nationality. Those who focus on the inherent inequalities of India's surrogacy industry believe the practice should be either banned or strictly regulated. Pande instead advocates for a better understanding of this complex labor market, envisioning an international model of fair-trade surrogacy founded on openness and transparency in all business, medical, and emotional exchanges.

#### *About the Author*

Amrita Pande is a senior lecturer in sociology at the University of Cape Town. Her research focuses on the intersection of new technologies and reproductive labor, and her writings have appeared in *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, *Gender and Society*, *Critical Social Policy*, *International Migration Review*, *Qualitative Sociology*, *Feminist Studies*, the *Indian Journal of Gender Studies*, *Reproductive BioMedicine*, and in several edited volumes. She is also an educator-performer and is currently involved in a multimedia theater performance, *Made in India: Notes from a Baby Farm*, which is based on her ethnographic work on surrogacy.

## **LABOR'S LOVE LOST: THE RISE AND FALL OF THE WORKING-CLASS FAMILY IN AMERICA BY ANDREW J. CHERLIN**

Russell Sage Foundation, December 2014, ISBN-13 978-0-87154-030-0, \$35.00, paperback

Two generations ago, young men and women with only a high-school degree would have entered the plentiful industrial occupations which then sustained the middle-class ideal of a male-breadwinner family. Such jobs have all but vanished over the past forty years, and in their absence ever-growing numbers of young adults now hold precarious, low-paid jobs with few fringe benefits. Facing such insecure economic prospects, less-educated young adults are increasingly forgoing marriage and are having children within unstable cohabiting relationships. This has created a large marriage gap between them and their more affluent, college-educated peers. In *Labor's Love Lost*, noted sociologist Andrew Cherlin offers a new historical assessment of the rise and fall of working-class families in America, demonstrating how momentous social and economic transformations have contributed to the collapse of this once-stable social class and what this seismic cultural shift means for the nation's future.

Drawing from more than a hundred years of census data, Cherlin documents how today's marriage gap mirrors that of the Gilded Age of the late-nineteenth century, a time of high inequality much like our own. Cherlin demonstrates that the widespread prosperity of working-class families in the mid-twentieth century, when both income inequality and the marriage gap were low, is the true outlier in the history of the American family. In fact, changes in the economy, culture, and family formation in recent decades have been so great that Cherlin suggests that the working-class family pattern has largely disappeared.

*Labor's Love Lost* shows that the primary problem of the fall of the working-class family from its mid-twentieth century peak is not that the male-breadwinner family has declined, but that nothing stable has replaced it. The breakdown of a stable family structure has serious consequences for low-income families, particularly for children, many of whom underperform in school, thereby reducing their future employment prospects and perpetuating an intergenerational cycle of economic disadvantage. To address this disparity, Cherlin recommends policies to foster educational opportunities for children and adolescents from disadvantaged families. He also stresses the need for labor market interventions, such as subsidizing low wages through tax credits and raising the minimum wage.

*Labor's Love Lost* provides a compelling analysis of the historical dynamics and ramifications of the growing number of young adults disconnected from steady, decent-paying jobs and from marriage. Cherlin's investigation of today's "would-be working class" shines a much-needed spotlight on the struggling middle of our society in today's new Gilded Age.

ANDREW J. CHERLIN is the Benjamin H. Griswold III Professor of Public Policy in the Department of Sociology at the Johns Hopkins University.

## **UNEQUAL TIME: GENDER, CLASS AND FAMILY IN EMPLOYMENT SCHEDULES BY DAN CLAWSON AND NAOMI GERSTEL**

Russell Sage Foundation, October 2014, ISBN-13 978-0-87154-014-0, 340 PAGES

Life is routinely unpredictable. Control over one's time is a critical resource for managing that unpredictability, keeping a job, and raising a family. But the ability to control one's time, much like one's income, is determined to a significant degree by both gender and class. In *Unequal Time*, sociologists Dan Clawson and Naomi Gerstel explore the ways in which social inequalities permeate the workplace, reverberating through a web of time in which the schedules of one person shape the schedules of others in ways that exemplify and often exacerbate differences between men and women, the privileged and disadvantaged.

*Unequal Time* investigates the connected schedules of four health sector occupations: professional doctors and nurses, and working-class EMTs and nursing assistants. While the work-family literature mostly examines the hours people work, Clawson and Gerstel delve into the process through which schedules are set, negotiated, and contested. They show how workers in all four occupations experience the effects of schedule uncertainty but do so in distinct ways, largely shaped by the intersection of gender and class. Doctors, who are largely male and professional, have significant control over their schedules, though they often claim otherwise, and tend to work long hours because they earn respect from their peers for doing so. By contrast, nursing assistants, primarily female and working-class, work demanding hours because they face penalties for taking time off, no matter how valid the reasons. Without institutional support, they often turn to co-workers to help create more orderly lives.

*Unequal Time* shows that the degree of control that workers hold over their schedules can either reinforce or challenge conventional gender roles. When male doctors work overtime, they often rely on their **wives** and domestic workers to care for their families. Female nurses are more likely to handle the bulk of their family responsibilities, and use the control they have over their work schedules to dedicate more time to home life. Surprisingly, the authors find that in the working class occupations, workers frequently undermine traditional gender roles. Male EMTs often take significant time off for child care, and female nursing assistants sometimes choose to work more hours to provide extra financial support for their families. Employers often underscore these disparities by allowing their upper-tier workers the flexibility that enables their gender roles at home, while low-wage workers are pressured to put their jobs before any unpredictable events they might face outside of work.

We tend to consider personal and work scheduling an individual affair, but Clawson and Gerstel put forward the provocative hypothesis that time in the workplace is both collective and highly unequal. A valuable resource for workers' advocates and policymakers alike, *Unequal Time* illustrates how social inequalities in the workplace shape the lives of workers and their families.

DAN CLAWSON is professor of sociology at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. NAOMI GERSTEL is a distinguished university professor of sociology at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst.

## **WHAT WORKS FOR WORKERS? PUBLIC POLICIES AND INNOVATIVE STRATEGIES FOR LOW-WAGE WORKERS EDITED BY STEPHANIE LUCE, JENNIFER LUFF, JOSEPH A. MCCARTIN AND RUTH MILKMAN**

Russell Sage Foundation, January 2014, ISBN-13 978-0-87154-571-8, 364 pages

The majority of new jobs created in the United States today are low-wage jobs, and a fourth of the labor force earns no more than poverty-level wages. Policymakers and citizens alike agree that declining real wages and constrained spending among such a large segment of workers imperil economic prosperity and living standards for all Americans. Though many policies to assist low-wage workers have been proposed, there is little agreement across the political spectrum about which policies actually reduce poverty and raise income among the working poor. *What Works for Workers* provides a comprehensive analysis of policy measures designed to address the widening income gap in the United States.

Featuring contributions from an eminent group of social scientists, *What Works for Workers* evaluates the most high-profile strategies for poverty reduction, including innovative “living wage” ordinances, education programs for African American youth, and better regulation of labor laws pertaining to immigrants. The contributors delve into an extensive body of scholarship on low-wage work to reveal a number of surprising findings. Richard Freeman suggests that labor unions, long assumed to be moribund, have a fighting chance to reclaim their historic redistributive role if they move beyond traditional collective bargaining and establish new ties with other community actors. John Schmitt predicts that the Affordable Care Act will substantially increase insurance coverage for low-wage workers, 38 percent of whom currently lack any kind of health insurance.

Other contributors explore the shortcomings of popular solutions: Stephanie Luce shows that while living wage ordinances rarely lead to job losses, they have not yet covered most low-wage workers. And Jennifer Gordon corrects the notion that a path to legalization alone will fix the plight of immigrant workers. Without energetic regulatory enforcement, she argues, legalization may have limited impact on the exploitation of undocumented workers. Ruth Milkman and Eileen Appelbaum conclude with an analysis of California’s paid family leave program, a policy designed to benefit the working poor, who have few resources that allow them to take time off work to care for children or ill family members. Despite initial opposition, the paid leave program proved more acceptable than expected among employers and provided a much-needed system of wage replacement for low-income workers. In the wake of its success, the initiative has emerged as a useful blueprint for paid leave programs in other states.

Alleviating the low-wage crisis will require a comprehensive set of programs rather than piecemeal interventions. With its rigorous analysis of what works and what doesn’t, *What Works for Workers* points the way toward effective reform. For social scientists, policymakers, and activists grappling with the practical realities of low-wage work, this book provides a valuable guide for narrowing the gap separating rich and poor.

Stephanie Luce is associate professor of labor studies at the Murphy Institute, CUNY School for Professional Studies; Jennifer Luff is lecturer in the department of history, Durham University, U.K.; Joseph A. McCartin is professor of history at Georgetown University; Ruth Milkman is professor of sociology at the CUNY Graduate Center.

## **NO COUNTRY: WORKING CLASS WRITING IN THE AGE OF GLOBALIZATION BY SONALI PERERA**

Columbia University Press, February, 2014,

Cloth, 248 pages, ISBN: 978-0-231-15194-8, \$50.00 / £34.50

Can there be a novel of the international working class despite the conditions and constraints of economic globalization? What does it mean to invoke working-class writing as an ethical intervention in an age of comparative advantage and outsourcing?

No Country argues for a rethinking of the genre of working-class literature. Sonali Perera expands our understanding of working-class fiction by considering a range of international texts, identifying textual, political, and historical linkages often overlooked by Eurocentric and postcolonial scholarship. Her readings connect the literary radicalism of the 1930s to the feminist recovery projects of the 1970s, and the anticolonial and postcolonial fiction of the 1960s to today's counterglobalist struggles, building a new portrait of the twentieth century's global economy and the experiences of the working class within it.

Perera considers novels by the Indian anticolonial writer Mulk Raj Anand; the American proletarian writer Tillie Olsen; Sri Lankan Tamil/Black British writer and political journalist Ambalavaner Sivanandan; Indian writer and bonded-labor activist Mahasweta Devi; South African-born Botswanan Bessie Head; and the fiction and poetry published under the collective signature Dabindu, a group of free-trade-zone garment factory workers and feminist activists in contemporary Sri Lanka. Articulating connections across the global North-South divide, Perera creates a new genealogy of working-class writing as world literature and transforms the ideological underpinnings casting literature as cultural practice.

### **About the Author**

Sonali Perera is an assistant professor of English at Hunter College, City University of New York, where she teaches courses in postcolonial literature and theory, working-class literature, feminist theory, and globalization studies.

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**If you want to review any of these books, please contact [markdsherry@yahoo.com](mailto:markdsherry@yahoo.com)**

## **THE BROTHERHOOD OF SLEEPING CAR PORTERS: C.L. DELLUMS AND THE FIGHT FOR FAIR TREATMENT AND CIVIL RIGHTS BY ROBERT L. ALLEN**

Paradigm Publishers, ISBN: 978-1-61205-549-7, February 2015, \$19.51

C. L. Dellums and the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters helped to precipitate a sea of change in labor and race relations in California and the nation. Fundamental issues of unfair employment practices, discrimination, and segregation were confronted in new ways with consequences for all Americans. For the first time in U.S. history, a black labor union played a central role in shaping labor and civil rights policy.

Based on interviews and archival research, this new book tells the story of Dellums and the impact nationally of his groundbreaking work.

The BSCP, the first national union of black workers, was founded in 1925. C. L. Dellums, who worked as a porter in Oakland, became the West Coast organizer and was elected vice president in 1929. He held that position until 1968, when he succeeded A. Philip Randolph as president. In 1937, the BSCP made history when it compelled one of the largest U.S. corporations —the Pullman Company— to recognize and negotiate a contract with a black workers' union. This was unprecedented and almost inconceivable in the context of prior U.S. history.

In 1941, at the beginning of World War II, the leadership of the BSCP, with the support of civil rights leaders, pushed U.S. President Roosevelt to issue Executive Order 8802 requiring the ending of racial discrimination in defense industries. Tens of thousands of black men and women would be hired to work alongside whites in wartime plants across the nation.

C. L. Dellums was not only a labor leader. In 1948, he was chosen to be the first West Coast Regional Director of the NAACP. He also led the long struggle to get a fair employment practices law passed in California. The successful struggle contributed to the emergence of civil rights activism nationally and to equal treatment legislative initiatives in California and elsewhere.

**GRAD STUDENTS: PUBLISHING A BOOK REVIEW IS A GREAT WAY TO PRACTICE YOUR SCHOLARLY WRITING... PLUS YOU GET TO KEEP THE BOOK! PLEASE THINK ABOUT WRITING ONE FOR THIS NEWSLETTER!**

## **SILVERTOWN: THE LOST STORY OF A STRIKE THAT SHOOK LONDON AND HELPED LAUNCH THE MODERN LABOR MOVEMENT BY JOHN TULLY**

Monthly Review Press, Cloth ISBN: 978-1-58367-434-5, February 2014, 267 pages, \$28.95

*“This is a revolt against oppression: a protest against the brute force which keeps a huge population down in the depths of the most dire degradation, for the benefit of a knot of profit-hunters ... this is a strike of the poor against the rich.”—William Morris, 1889*

In 1889, Samuel Winkworth Silver’s rubber and electrical factory was the site of a massive worker revolt that upended the London industrial district which bore his name: Silvertown. Once referred to as the “Abyss” by Jack London, Silvertown was notorious for oppressive working conditions and the relentless grind of production suffered by its largely unorganized, unskilled workers. These workers, fed-up with their lot and long ignored by traditional craft unions, aligned themselves with the socialist-led “New Unionism” movement. Their ensuing strike paralyzed Silvertown for three months. The strike leaders –including Tom Mann, Ben Tillett, Eleanor Marx, and Will Thorne—and many workers viewed the trade union struggle as part of a bigger fight for a “co-operative commonwealth.” With this goal in mind, they shut down Silvertown and, in the process, helped to launch a more radical, modern labor movement.

Historian and novelist John Tully, author of the monumental social history of the rubber industry *The Devil’s Milk*, tells the story of the Silvertown strike in vivid prose. He rescues the uprising—overshadowed by other strikes during this period—from relative obscurity and argues for its significance to both the labor and socialist movements. And, perhaps most importantly, Tully presents the Silvertown Strike as a source of inspiration for today’s workers, in London and around the world, who continue to struggle for better workplaces and the vision of a “co-operative commonwealth.”

John Tully is Lecturer in Politics and History at Victoria University in Melbourne Australia. He is author of [\*The Devil’s Milk: A Social History of Rubber\*](#), as well as *Cambodia Under the Tricolour: King Sisowath and the ‘Mission Civilisatrice,’ 1904-1927*; *France on the Mekong: A History of the Protectorate in Cambodia, 1863-1953*; *A Short History of Cambodia: From Empire to Survival*; and two novels, *Dark Clouds on the Mountain* and *Death Is the Cool Night*.



## **MOBILIZING AGAINST INEQUALITY: UNIONS, IMMIGRANT WORKERS, AND THE CRISIS OF CAPITALISM EDITED BY LEE H. ADLER, MAITE TAPIA, LOWELL TURNER**

ILR Press, ISBN-13 978-0-8014-5279-6, April 2014, Paperback \$21.95

Among the many challenges that global liberalization has posed for trade unions, the growth of precarious immigrant workforces lacking any collective representation stands out as both a major threat to solidarity and an organizing opportunity. Believing that collective action is critical in the struggle to lift the low wages and working conditions of immigrant workers, the contributors to *Mobilizing against Inequality* set out to study union strategies toward immigrant workers in four countries: Germany, France, the United Kingdom, and United States. Their research revealed both formidable challenges and inspiring examples of immigrant mobilization that often took shape as innovative social countermovements.

Using case studies from a carwash organizing campaign in the United States, a sans papiers movement in France, Justice for Cleaners in the United Kingdom, and integration approaches by the Metalworkers Union in Germany, among others, the authors look at the strategies of unions toward immigrants from a comparative perspective. Although organizers face a different set of obstacles in each country, this book points to common strategies that offer promise for a more dynamic model of unionism in the global North. The editors have also created a companion website for the book, which features literature reviews, full case studies, updates, and links to related publications. Visit it at [www.mobilizing-against-inequality.info](http://www.mobilizing-against-inequality.info).

Contributors: Lee H. Adler, Cornell University; Gabriella Alberti, Leeds University; Daniel B. Cornfield, Vanderbilt University; Michael Fichter, Global Labour University, Berlin; Janice Fine, Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey; Jane Holgate, Leeds University; Denisse Roca-Servat, Pontifical Bolivarian University, Colombia; Maite Tapia, Michigan State University; Lowell Turner, Cornell University.

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## FIFTEEN STORIES: HOW WORKERS STRUCK POVERTY AND WON \$15 FOR SEATTLE, PUBLISHED BY WORKING WASHINGTON

Seattle workers made history when we passed the nation's first citywide \$15 minimum wage. Now we made a book too. It's fifteen stories from fifteen workers about their jobs, their lives, their struggles, and the movement they sparked. <http://action.workingwa.org/page/m/-18a1e576/1520460/-5af72482/1e637ef9/793787327/VEsE/> *"I don't know how to explain it in words. It's just like getting \$15 would mean actually having a life, being able to do regular things like drive myself to work or pay for my daughter to be in daycare."* –Julia

You've seen the news reports about Seattle's \$15 minimum wage. You've heard the experts and politicians talk about what it all means. And now you can read the stories of the workers who made it happen – in their own words. *"I had this lady come in here and she's like you ain't s-h-i-t, you ain't s-h-i-t, but you know she didn't know anything about me. She saw that I made minimum wage and she thought she could judge me because of that."* –Malcolm

Seattle's \$15 minimum wage law will boost the pay of more than 100,000 workers by \$3 billion over the next decade – one of the largest economic victories for low-wage workers in decades. These are their stories. *"I think the strike was the ultimate 'I got you.'"* –Martina  
We decided part of the answer is: you make a book — a real-life, three-dimensional printed and bound object. (It's the 21st century, so we made an e-book too.) We call it *Fifteen Stories: How workers struck poverty and won \$15 for Seattle*.

The key reason why Seattle passed a \$15 minimum wage was because a year of relentless & creative actions brought workers voices to the center of public debate in our city. We thought the long-form, long-lived nature of a book was the best way to respect the power and complexity of those worker voices, letting us capture the context, background, honesty, and depth appropriate to a moment of history.

First we interviewed fifteen workers about their lives, their jobs, their lives, their struggles, and the movement they sparked. After carefully transcribing those interviews, we assembled them into story form, adding no words of our own aside from an introduction to the book as a whole. We took extreme care to preserve the voice of each worker, paying special attention to the difficult bits — the confusion and the contradictions that normally get expunged from worker quotes.

The result is a compelling look into the lives of low-wage workers that gets deep into who these workers are, what brought them to get involved in the fight for \$15, and how participating in that struggle has changed them. Some of the stories are clean; others are messy. Some people love their jobs; others not so much. But all of them have a raw honesty and integrity that makes for good reading. *Fifteen Stories: How workers struck poverty and won \$15 for Seattle* is available at our website for just \$9.32 (the current state minimum wage), plus shipping and handling for physical copies.

Working Washington's website is <http://www.workingwa.org/>

[Order FIFTEEN STORIES today and get your e-book or print copy for \\$9.32.](#)

# **THE MEDIATOR'S HANDBOOK BY JENNIFER E BEER, REVISED & EXPANDED FOURTH EDITION, BY JENNIFER E. BEER AND CAROLINE C. PACKARD, WITH EILEEN STIEF**

New Society Publishers, ISBN: 9780865717220, Paperback – 208 pages, 2012

The popular *Mediator's Handbook* presents a time-tested, adaptable model for helping people work through conflict. Extensively revised to incorporate recent practice and thinking, the accessible manual format lays out a clear structure for new and occasional mediators, while offering a detailed, nuanced resource for professionals.

Starting with a new chapter on assessing conflict and bringing people to the table, the first section explains the process step-by-step, from opening conversations and exploring the situation, through the phases of finding resolution -- deciding on topics, reviewing options, and testing agreements.

The "Toolbox" section details the concepts and skills a mediator needs in order to:

- Understand the Conflict
- Support the people
- Facilitate the process
- Guide decision-making.

Throughout the book, the emphasis is on what the mediator can do or say NOW, and on the underlying principles and core methods that can help the mediator make wise choices.

Long a popular course textbook for high schools, universities, and training programs, *The Mediator's Handbook* is also a valued desk reference for professional mediators, and a practical guide for managers, organizers, teachers and anyone working with clients, customers, volunteers, committees or teams.

Dr. Jennifer E. Beer, PhD, combines mediation experience with her cultural anthropology background to lead courses and workshops in mediation, conflict resolution, and cross-cultural communication. She regularly teaches a negotiation course at Wharton (University of Pennsylvania). Author of the *Mediator's Handbook* and of *Peacemaking in Your Neighborhood*, she has mediated conflicts and facilitated meetings for communities and organizations for 30 years.

Caroline C. Packard, JD, is an organizational change and conflict response specialist and mediator with 30 years' experience in the field. She led Friends Conflict Resolution Programs for 15 years, and has trained hundreds of mediators. A cum laude graduate of Yale College and NYU School of Law, and a former corporate litigator with extensive formal training in individual and group psychology, Caroline has a special interest in the evolutionary psychology of group conflict and cooperation. She provides mediation and conflict-resolution services and training to organizations, families, and family businesses.

Eileen Stief developed the mediation process and principles documented in *The Mediator's Handbook*, and trained a generation of mediators to work with community, multi-party, and environmental disputes. Now retired, she led the Friends Conflict Resolution Program's experiment in community dispute settlement and later specialized in environmental mediation.

# EDUCATING FOR ACTION: STRATEGIES TO IGNITE SOCIAL JUSTICE BY JASON DEL GANDIO AND ANTHONY J NOCELLA II

New Society Publishers  
ISBN: 9780865717763  
Pub. Date: 2014-09-01

The pursuit of freedom and justice is a timeless effort, but new activists may not know where to begin, while more experienced ones often become jaded or fatigued. The task of constructing a new society free from oppression and inequality can be overwhelming. Tools for facilitating motivation, engagement and communication can mean the difference between failure and success for activists and social movements.

*Educating for Action* collects the voices of activists whose combined experience in confronting injustice has generated a wealth of key insights for creating social change. This practical, hands-on guide explores such topics as:

- Community organizing and direct democracy
- Conflict negotiation, communication and rhetoric
- Law, the educational system and lifestyle activism
- Social media skills, conference planning and online organizing.

Written in an inspirational tone, *Educating for Action* consciously straddles the line between street activism and classroom instruction. Bridging the gap between these two worlds makes for an engaging and instructive manual for social justice, helping students, teachers, and larger activist communities turn their idealism into action.

## **About the authors:**

Jason Del Gandio is an Assistant Professor of Rhetoric and Public Advocacy at Temple University. He has been involved with several movements and issues, including the Occupy Movement, the Global Justice Movement, the anti-Iraq war movement, fair-trade campaigns, and Latin American solidarity work. Jason has appeared on television and radio, and regularly speaks on college campuses and at public venues. He is the author of *Rhetoric for Radicals: A Handbook for 21st Century Activists*. [www.jasondelgandio.net](http://www.jasondelgandio.net)

Anthony J. Nocella II is a scholar-activist, Senior Fellow of the Dispute Resolution Institute at the Hamline Law School and Executive Director of the Institute for Critical Animal Studies. From blockading highways against the war in Iraq to college sit-ins for LGBTQ rights, Anthony has been instrumental in numerous movements for more than fifteen years, including working to dismantle the school-to-prison pipeline with Save the Kids. He has published more than fifty scholarly articles or book chapters and sixteen books including *Academic Repression: Reflections from the Academic Industrial Complex*.

## **SSSP: ANNOUNCING CALL FOR PAPERS AND CALL FOR STUDENT PAPER COMPETITIONS AND OUTSTANDING SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS**

Dear SSSP Member,

The [Call for Papers](#) for the SSSP 2015 Annual Meeting is now live!

View the [Student Paper Competitions and Outstanding Scholarship Awards](#) announcement and submit a paper or nominate a book, article, or scholar!

We are very excited about our 65th Annual Meeting, to be held August 21-23, 2015, at the Radisson Blu Aqua Hotel in Chicago, IL.

This year's theme, selected by President Marlese Durr, is [Removing the Mask, Lifting the Veil: Race, Class, and Gender in the 21st Century](#).

Please visit the following links for more information and forward to others who may be interested. You will also be receiving a poster in the mail shortly.

We look forward to seeing you in Chicago!

Most sincerely,  
The Administrative Office

**Call for Papers:** <http://www.sssp1.org/index.cfm/m/611/>

**Student Paper Competitions and Outstanding Scholarship Awards:**<http://www.sssp1.org/index.cfm/m/296/>

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[http://www.sssp1.org/index.cfm/m/612/Hotel\\_Reservation\\_Information/](http://www.sssp1.org/index.cfm/m/612/Hotel_Reservation_Information/)

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