



Society for the Study
of Social Problems
In Pursuit of Social Justice

Labor Studies Division Summer 2020 Newsletter

Jacqueline Zalewski, Chair
Todd Vachon, Vice Chair
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A WORD FROM THE CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR

Greetings Labor Studies Division friends and colleagues. We hope this message finds you as well as can be in these tumultuous times.

It is both a time of great challenges and also of great opportunities. The Coronavirus Pandemic has wreaked havoc on the lives of working people, including exposing frontline workers to direct harm in the workplace and displacing over 30 million workers from their jobs. It is disproportionately impacting the most vulnerable in society, including the elderly, the poor, immigrant communities and communities of color. The federal government, driven by the intersecting ideologies of neoliberalism and white supremacy in the executive branch and much of the Senate, has done the bare minimum to help workers and struggling communities.

At the same time, we have seen working people stand up and self-organize to solve problems directly in their workplaces and communities. From unionized workers fighting for personal protective equipment in hospitals, to unorganized workers in Amazon warehouses walking out to demand stronger health and safety protections, to people of all races joining the Black Lives Matter protestors in the streets to demand justice for George Floyd, Breanna Taylor and so many other black and brown people killed at the hand of law enforcement. The sustained protest in this space goes beyond just one case of injustice but aims to upend the system of institutional racism and police brutality that define the daily lives of black people in America.

As labor studies scholars and practitioners, we have a duty and a responsibility through our research, writing, and public engagement to uplift the voices of those whose voice is not always represented in the mainstream discourse. The voices of workers, of black and brown communities, indigenous peoples, immigrants, and undocumented workers. To that end, we have invited LS division members to share the titles of books, articles, films and websites they have been reading to educate themselves, promote the cause of equality, and/or provide inspiration during this moment of unrest and hopefully change. The result is the “Labor and Social Justice

Reading and Watching List” that is included below in this newsletter.

To help carry this work forward, we also want to invite you all to join the Labor Studies Business Meeting on July 28 at 3 pm (EDT). Zoom meeting link is below. With your participation, we can come up with a great set of sessions for next year and continue to build a vibrant community of labor scholars who can see SSSP as an intellectual home for our important work.

Sincerely,

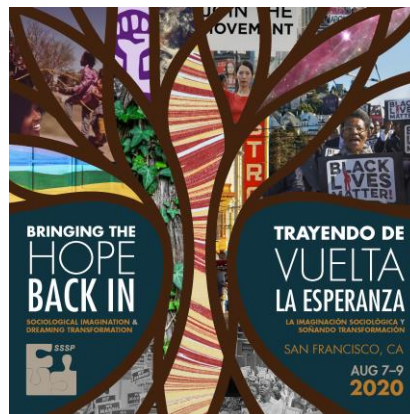
Jacqueline M. Zalewski and Todd E. Vachon

Labor Studies Division Business Meeting, July 28th @3pm EST

The zoom link is:

<https://wcupa.zoom.us/j/95950889233?pwd=UWlJTFIHOWgzd1FPOFl4TU9EZlcvZz09>

Password is: SSSP-LS



We also want to invite you to attend the SSSP half-day Virtual Annual Meeting on August 7 from 12:00 pm to 5 pm (EDT) – details available through the SSSP Website and via email.

THE STATE OF THE DIVISION

As of June 2020, the Labor Studies Division has 127 members. For the 2020 Annual Meeting, which was cancelled because of COVID-19, the Division had prepared a **full slate of ten sessions**. This slate rested on the diligent work of people who proposed

sessions and people who volunteered to administer sessions, sometimes going the extra mile to find papers to complete panels. Their names are listed in the summary of Labor Studies sessions at the end of the newsletter—please check it out!

We want to recognize and give our gratitude to the graduate students who applied for and the faculty who selected the Harry Braverman Awardee for 2020. This year's Harry Braverman Award Committee of **Eli R. Wilson** (Chair), **Melanie E.L. Bush**, and **Tracy L. Dietz** reviewed four excellent submissions for the Harry Braverman Award:

- **Devika Narayan**, University of Minnesota, “When Managers Feel Like Workers: An Analysis of Organizational Liminality”
- **Laura Hanson Schlachter** and **Kristinn Mar**, University of Wisconsin – Madison, “Spillover, Selection, or Substitution? Workplace and Civic Participation in Democratic Firms”
- **Ellen T. Meiser**, University of Hawaii – Manoa, “The Normalization of Abuse in Commercial Kitchens Through Food Media”
- **Andy Scott Chang (Winner)**, University of California – Berkeley, “Selling a Resume and Buying a Job: Stratification of Gender and Occupation By States and Brokers in International Migration From Indonesia.”

The Committee selected as winner Andy Scott Chang who will receive a \$200 cash prize.

Finally, PLEASE visit us, like the page, and share Labor Studies Division member news on the division's Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/sssplaborstudies/>

In Solidarity,

Jackie and Todd

SSSP End Racism Statement

The Society for the Study of Social Problems wishes to join millions of Americans, especially communities of color, in condemning the murder of George Floyd by four police officers, sworn to serve and protect the citizens of this country. The impunity with which these officers took Mr. Floyd's life serves as a reminder that we are all complicit if we do not do everything in our power to end the systematic oppression of people of color in the United States. What we witnessed was, for all intents and purposes, a lynching on national television. This incident, along with the recent murders of Breonna Taylor and Ahmaud Aubrey in separate incidents, adds evidence to the long and intertwined histories of state-sanctioned murder of black Americans, systemic racism against all people of color, and white supremacy. These systemic injustices are particularly tragic as they occur at a time when communities of color are disproportionately experiencing death and disease from the COVID-19 pandemic. We would be remiss as well not to express concern about the threat of using the armed forces of the United States against citizens of the United States on their own soil and by their own military. The overwhelming majority of protesters, from every ethnic and racial group, have engaged in peaceful protest and acts of civil disobedience, even in the face of excessive force by the police. Protesters are not the enemy. The enemy is racism, and we all have a responsibility to root it out wherever it is embedded.

ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM MEMBERS

Submitted by **George Gonos**, member of SSSP Labor Studies Division and founding board member of Temp Worker Justice (TWJ) ggonos@fiu.edu.

Temp Worker Justice <tempworkerjustice.org> is a nonprofit that supports temporary workers and workers' organizations seeking justice, fairness, and safety in the workplace. We are conducting a nationwide online survey of temp agency workers to build the information base needed to produce change. Anyone who has experienced work as a "temp" or so-called "contract worker" can take the online survey at <tempworkerjustice.org>. TWJ partners with worker centers, local unions and community groups affected by

the spread of temp agency work. We offer webinars or in-person gatherings and town halls, and film screenings, to provide education about worker rights, and address conditions in temped-out workplaces, whether blue-collar, white-collar, technical or professional.

TWJ is sponsoring research and campaigning for needed state and federal legislation. We support partner organizations with educational, legal, and strategic resources that have proven successful in the temp worker movement. Contact us, take the survey, and tell us why and how we might be able to work together to bring change to your workplace and community. "Flexibility must come with fairness."

JOB CHANGE

Todd E. Vachon stepped into a new role at Rutgers University as the Faculty Coordinator of the Labor Education Action Research Network (LEARN) in the School of Management and Labor Relations.

RECENT PUBLICATIONS BY DIVISION MEMBERS

Richard Hogan and **Carolyn Cummings Perrucci**. 2020. "Earnings Inequality in 2016 among Anglos, Latinxs, and Blacks," *Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences* 42 (3): 363-380.

Chris Rhomberg and **Steven Lopez**, "Understanding Strikes in the 21st Century: Perspectives from the USA," *Research in Social Movements, Conflicts and Change*, Vol. 44, forthcoming 2020.

Chris Rhomberg, "The Struggle for a New Labor Regime: The U.S.," *Tempo Social* (Sao Paulo, Brazil), Vol. 32, No. 1 (April 2020), pp. 99-118.

<https://www.revistas.usp.br/ts/article/view/164863>

Vachon, Todd E., Saket Soni, Judith LeBlanc, and Gerry Hudson. 2020. "[Bargaining for Climate Justice](#)." *The Forge: Organizing Strategy and Practice*.

Lamb, Zachary B. and **Todd E. Vachon**. 2020. "[Working for Just Adaptation: The Green New Deal, Labor, and Planning for Climate Change](#)." *POWER: Infrastructure in America*.

Vachon, Todd E. "[The Pandemic May be a Preview of Our Climate Future](#)." *The Star Ledger*.

Kyla Walters. 2020. "Planning 'Real Utopias' through Federal Spending." Class activity published in *Teaching Resources and Innovations Library for Sociology* (TRAILS) <http://trails.asanet.org/Pages/Resource.aspx?ResourceID=13800>.

Kyla Walters. 2019. "Fighting and defeating the charter school agenda." Chapter 12 in [Labor in the Time of Trump: Challenges and Responses](#), edited by Jasmine Kerrissey, Eve Weinbaum, Clare Hammonds, Tom Juravich, and Dan Clawson. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Kyla Walters. 2019. "Fighting (for) Charter School Expansion: Racial Resources and Ideological Consistency." Chapter 4 in *Race, Organizations, and Organizing Processes*, Volume 56 in the *Research in the Sociology of Organizations* series, edited by Melissa E. Wooten. Bingley, UK: Emerald Press.

Eli Wilson, an Op-Ed style piece on the fallout of Covid-19 in the restaurant industry. It was first published by the [UCLA Institute for Research on Labor and Employment](#) Then, later in [Contexts](#).

Zalewski, Jacqueline M. 2021 (forthcoming January 2). "Work and the Economy." Chapter 10 in *Investigating Social Problems*, 3rd edition, edited by A. Javier Trevino. New York: Sage Publications.

LABOR AND SOCIAL JUSTICE READING AND WATCHING LIST

Thank you to division members who shared suggestions.

- Campaign Zero. <https://www.joincampaignzero.org/research>
- Equal Justice Initiative. <https://eji.org/>
- Prison Policy Initiative. <https://www.prisonpolicy.org/>
- The Poor People's Campaign. <https://www.poorpeoplescampaign.org/learn/>
- Adia Harvey Wingfield. Collection of works on *The Atlantic*. <https://www.theatlantic.com/author/adia-harvey-wingfield/>
- Adia Harvey Wingfield. 2019. *Flatlining: Race, Work, and Health Care in the New Economy*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Jacqueline Jones. 2000. "Black Workers Remember," *The American Prospect*, November 30. <https://prospect.org/features/black-workers-remember/>
- Tressie McMillan Cottom. 2020. "Nearly 6 Decades After the Civil Rights Act, Why Do Black Workers Still Have to Hustle to Get Ahead?" *Time*, February 20. <https://time.com/5783869/gig-economy-inequality/>
- Tressie McMillan Cottom. 2015. "Race Is Always the Issue." *The Atlantic*, September 17. <https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2015/09/race-is-always-the-issue/405295/>
- Enobong Hannah Branch and Melissa E. Wooten. 2012. "Suited for Service: Racialized Rationalizations for the Ideal Domestic Servant from the Nineteenth to the Early Twentieth Century." *Social Science History* 36(2):169-189.
- Enobong Hannah Branch. 2011. *Opportunity Denied: Limiting Black Women to Devalued Work*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.

**SSSP LABOR STUDIES DIVISION
2020 CONFERENCE SESSIONS
...that are cancelled**

Thanks to the organizers for their work developing their call for proposals, reviewing, and accepting papers! Session titles and their organizers included:

Labor in the Global Supply Chain, Melanie Borstad

Gender and Work, Lisa Huebner

The Mismatched Worker, Ted Brimeyer

The Green New Deal, Todd Vachon and Alexis Econie

Aspirational Labor: Unpaid Labor Toward Future Work, Devika Narayan

Precarity, Jacqueline Zalewski

The Future of Work and Workers, Chris Wellin

Care Economy, Care Work, and Disability in the Workplace, Kathleen Abrahamson and Andrew Tatch

Pathways to Reentry, Robert Peralta

Labor and Precarity in Higher Education, Andrew Baird

PLEASE SEND US YOUR UPDATES FOR THE NEXT NEWSLETTER. WE LOVE RECOGNIZING OUR MEMBERS' ACHIEVEMENTS!!
