

On the Line

SSSP Labor Studies

Editor's Introduction

Welcome to our second issue. The meetings are upon us and the section leadership thought we should get out one more communiqué to give people some updates on the sessions and changes within the section.

Perhaps the most important information is that Reuben Roth has replaced Chuck Koeber as section chair. It seems that Chuck has crossed the fence to join management and his new responsibilities as Associate Dean of Liberal Arts and Sciences at Wichita State University preclude him from continuing as Chair. Of course I am kidding and we all wish Chuck well in his new position. More importantly, we thank him for all of his hard work over the past years and look forward to his future participation in the section.

We should also welcome our new Chair, Reuben Roth (pictured above). Reuben wrote an excellent piece for our last newsletter on his search for a smoked meat sandwich at last year's



New Chair, Reuben Roth, looking a bit glum after an unsuccessful search for smoked meat in Montreal. He should have no problem finding a good corned beef sandwich in Manhattan.

ASA. Below he offers us an introduction to himself below. Reuben has worked hard to put this year's sessions together and we appreciate his efforts. Again please contact me with future items or suggestions for the newsletter cdolgon@worchester.edu

A Message From the Chair

Welcome to another issue of the Labor Studies Division newsletter. Our Annual Meeting in New York City is fast approaching and I thought I'd take a moment to plug our division. I realize that I'm preaching to the converted, but I'd like each of you to think of one gifted student who might be interested in spending \$20.00 (equivalent to about

25 boxes of *Macaroni and Cheese*) to join the SSSP and become a member of the Labor Studies Division.

Why should your students join our division? Well, the Labor Studies Division offers them an opportunity to meet others who have similar interests in workplace issues, unions and the labor movement. (continued on p. 2)

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Important Information Inside

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Message from the Chair (continued)

Why not gather 2 or 3 of your most promising students and encourage them to present a collective paper at next year's Annual Meeting? Cajole a student today. It's good for our division membership numbers, but it's also a great way to ignite a student's interest in academic activism.

FROM AUTOWORKER TO ACADEMIC

This issue of our newsletter presents me with a great opportunity to briefly tell you something about myself. First, you should know that I'm a Canadian, which makes spelling the word "labour" without the "u" a heck of a balancing act. It also means being aware of cultural quirks, like the fact that we call *Macaroni and Cheese* "Kraft Dinner" over here.

Currently I'm a full-time faculty member at a small northern Ontario (Canada, not California) university. I've been an assistant professor at Laurentian University since 2005 and I've taught Sociology and Labor Studies since 2001. My interests are firmly situated in class structure and analysis, the sociology of work, the North American labor movement, and education and work.

I've also been a Senior Researcher at two large Canadian universities since 1995. Most of the time this involved administering large government grants related to informal and non-formal learning in the workplace, and shifting labor markets in the so-called 'New Economy'. But before taking on an academic career I held a wide variety of industrial and service-industry jobs. I've been an orderly in a geriatric hospital, an audiologist's assistant, a shipper-receiver, a construction laborer, a telecommunications cable repairman's assistant, an aircraft assembler and an automobile assembly line worker. And that's only a partial list of the jobs that I've held. My most formative workplace experiences took place between 1984 and 1992 as an automobile assembler at one of General Motors of Canada's car assembly plants. At GM, I sanded and welded roof pillars and fastened automobile fenders into place.

In short, I've had a varied, diverse and busy resume that reflects some of the changing labor market conditions faced by those Baby Boomers who

came of age during the 1970s recession. I recognize that it's a fairly unusual resume for an academic, but my working experience has furnished me with a useful background, given my research and interests in organized labor and workplace issues.

But while I was a blue-collar worker I wasn't simply earning a paycheck; I was also a union activist. I've been a member of the Brotherhood of Railway Carmen (BRAC), the United Auto Workers (UAW) and the Canadian Auto Workers (CAW) union, among others. I'm sure that many Labor Division members would be surprised to hear that Canada had a nationwide general strike in 1976, protesting federally-imposed wage-and-price controls. I'm happy to say that participating in the general strike was one of my first experiences as a labor activist.

I know that my employment history and class background contributes to my sense of social justice and my hopes for a strong international labor movement, and I'm happy to sit in a room of like-minded folks each year at the SSSP.

DEINDUSTRIALIZATION

Early in July, *Statistics Canada* released their national employment statistics for June. It's not a pretty picture for the Canadian manufacturing sector, which lost 31,000 manufacturing jobs in one month. In the last year, Canada lost over 100,000 manufacturing jobs (this is pretty significant in a nation of 32 million people, about half in the paid workforce). These workers are typically moving to retail and wholesale sector jobs with low-wages and few, if any, benefits. It's become a familiar, almost tired, story.

The tale is even worse in the U.S., where manufacturing jobs have been bleeding to the south and the Far East. According to the Economic Policy Institute, almost 1.8 million American manufacturing jobs disappeared between 2001 and May 2007 (Snapshot for July 11, 2007). Manufacturing jobs in California, Michigan and Ohio were the hardest hit. These once-stable jobs were one of the few places where working-class men and women could get paid a decent wage without a college degree. Today, those degrees are little more than a ticket to a retail sales job

(Continued, p. 3)

Message from the Chair (continued)

The loss of manufacturing jobs has everything to do with burgeoning college classrooms. I teach at a typical 'working-class U' and every year I break my students' collective hearts when I tell them that they can earn more as an electrician or bricklayer than at most white-collar (or pink-collar) jobs that require a college degree. Most students are incredulous at the receipt of this news. When I show them PowerPoint slides of typical wages in a variety of sectors, they're shocked that nobody ever told them this before. My feeling is that a first-year university classroom is too late to find this out and we'd do working-class kids a favor by giving them an accurate picture of the labor market.

MAKE A RESOLUTION

The Annual Meeting in August will be an opportune time for those of you who would like to see the SSSP make a public statement – political or social – about an issue that's important to you. Whether it's a minimum wage bill or our involvement in overseas wars, this is your chance to submit a resolution from our division. By the way, if you submit a resolution, be sure to suggest who it's aimed at (e.g. members of Congress, your favorite corporation, etc.).

I'd like to remind you to attend the Labor Studies Division's business meeting in NYC. This will be your chance to suggest a theme for next year's paper sessions. These meetings are usually short and lively, so don't forget to join us. Check the Annual Meeting schedule for the place and time.

Finally, a word of thanks to my predecessor, Chuck Koeber. Chuck has moved on to greener pastures and has been promoted to the position of Associate Dean of Liberal Arts and Sciences at Wichita State University in Kansas. Chuck did a sterling job of representing the Labor Studies Division during his two-year term as Chair and I hope to be his match as the incoming Division Chair.

See you in NYC.

Shameless Book Plugs

In this issue we begin a new section devoted to members publications, appearances, and other ventures. Please feel free to send along such items to Reuben Roth at rroth@oise.utoronto.ca for inclusion in future newsletters.

Rachel Sherman. Class Acts: Service and Inequality in Luxury Hotels, is out (California, 2007).

Based on 12 months of participant observation in several jobs in two urban luxury hotels, as well as interviews with managers and hotel guests, this book looks at the production and consumption of luxury service. The analysis focuses on what luxury service consists of, how managers organize its production, and, especially, how workers and guests experience and negotiate their visibly unequal entitlements both to material resources and to human emotional and physical labor. The analysis shows that workers develop multiple interpretive and practical strategies in order to constitute themselves as powerful and not-subordinate to guests; these strategies depend on symbolic resources, which differ in each organizational setting. Reciprocity from guests to workers is especially important in establishing a sense of equality. Hotel guests also use discursive justifications to avoid seeing themselves as dominating or exploitative. At the same time, however, luxury service itself bolsters their sense of entitlement to the labor of others. Ultimately, the author argues, workers' and guests' interpretive strategies serve to normalize inequality, leading both to take unequal class entitlements for granted. (continued on page 4)

Shameless Plugs (continued)

Dan Zuberi, *Differences That Matter: Social Policy and the Working Poor in the United States and Canada*. (Cornell University Press/ILR Press, 2006). The book was selected as a finalist for the Hubert Evans Non-Fiction Book Award (BC Book Prize) and the Doug Purvis Prize (Canadian Economics Association).

"This book shines a spotlight on the causes and consequences of working poverty, revealing how the lives of low-wage workers are affected by differences in health care, labor, and social welfare policy in the United States and Canada. Dan Zuberi's conclusions are based on survey data, eighteen months of participant observation fieldwork, and in-depth interviews with seventy-seven hotel employees working in parallel jobs on both sides of the border. Two hotel chains, each with one union and one non-union hotel in Seattle and Vancouver, provide a vivid crossnational comparison because they are similar in so many regards, the one major exception being government policy.

Zuberi demonstrates how labor, health, social welfare, and public investment policy affect these hotel workers and their families. His book challenges the myth that globalization necessarily means hospitality jobs must be insecure and pay poverty wages and makes clear the critical role played by government policy in the reduction of poverty and creation of economic equality. Zuberi shows exactly where and how the social policies that distinguish the Canadian welfare state from the U.S. version make a difference in protecting Canadian workers from the hardships that burden low-wage workers in the United States."

Dan is an Assistant Professor at the Department of Sociology University of British Columbia.

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Robert Perrucci and Carolyn C. Perrucci (eds.), *The Transformation of Work in the New Economy*, Oxford University Press, 2007.

Editors' introductions and readings in this collection critically examine existing conditions in the workplace and discuss the political and economic forces that have shaped them. The book explores established practices governing how products are produced, how work is organized, and the class, race, and gender composition of the labor force.

Robert Perrucci and Shelley MacDermid, "Time and Control in a 24/7 Environment: Clock Time, Work Time, Family Time." Pp. 343-368 in Beth Rubin (ed.) *Research in the Sociology of Work, Volume 17, Workplace Temporalities*, Elsevier, 2007.

Qualitative data of workers' discourse and quantitative analysis of survey data from the same blue-collar workers are used to develop a construct of three workplace "times." The meaning that workers attach to the different work times is connected to their ability to exercise control over them.

Earl Wysong and Robert Perrucci, "Organizations, Resources and Class Analysis: The Distributional Model and The US Class Structure," *Critical Sociology*, 33 (2007): 211-246.

The distributional model of class analysis views large organizations, organizationally-based resources, and distributional processes as central features of the US class structure. Four forms of generative capital are identified as the basis of class position: consumption, investment, credentialed skill, and social capital.

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Cranford, Cynthia J., Judy Fudge, Eric Tucker and Leah F. Vosko. 2005. *Self-Employed Workers Organize: Law, Policy and Unions*. Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queens University Press.

Over a million self-employed Canadians go to work every day without basic labour protections and rights such as minimum wages, maternity and parental leaves and benefits, pay equity, and a safe and healthy working environment. *Self-Employed Workers Organize* is a multi-disciplinary examination of the legal, political, and social realities that both limit collective action by self-employed workers and create huge impediments for unions attempting to organize them.

Through case studies of newspaper carriers, rural route mail carriers, personal care workers, and freelance editors -- four groups who have led pioneering efforts to organize -- the authors provide a window into the ways political and economic conditions interact with class, ethnicity and gender. They argue that the experiences of these four groups demonstrate a pressing need to expand collective bargaining rights to include self-employed workers. (continued, p. 5)



Shameless Plugs (continued)

Why America Lost the War on Poverty—and How to Win It
by Frank Stricker (University of North Carolina Press,
2007)

A comprehensive history of U.S. wars on poverty, 1950-2006. Explanatory focus on job shortages rather than cultures of poor people (e.g., crime, welfare). Training programs do not create jobs, and our leaders fear robust economic growth that expands employment opportunities, raises wages, and lifts the poor. Poverty rates have never dipped below 11%. If we really want to wipe out poverty, we should directly create good jobs, enrich government income programs, and redirect resources from the top tenth to the bottom half.

The book's arguments are manifest and easy to debate. The book is designed, first, for college students in labor studies, history, sociology, economics, and so on. Second, for political activists, unionists, and community organizers. Finally, for scholars and policy-makers, who routinely underestimate real unemployment

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1) Richard Hogan and Carolyn C. Perrucci,
"Gender, Educational Credentials and Income Inequality in
Late Career,"
International Journal of the Humanities, Volume 2, Number
3, 2006:1915-25.

2) Richard Hogan and Carolyn C. Perrucci,
"Black Women: Truly Disadvantaged in the Transition from
Employment to
Retirement Income," *Social Science Research*, 2006.

3) Richard Hogan and Carolyn C. Perrucci,
"Race and Gender Income Gaps," Pp. 224-231 in Robert
Perrucci and Carolyn C. Perrucci, editors, *The Transformation
of Work in the New Economy: Sociological Readings*,
Roxbury Publishers, 2007.

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Research in the Sociology of Work, Volume 17: *Workplace
Temporalities*. Edited by Beth A. Rubin. Published May 2007.

The global, 24/7 economy and the organizational changes it has generated have enormous implications for the organization, experience and use of time in (and out of) the workplace. In addition to eroding the boundary between home and work, creating time pressures both within and outside of the workplace, the need for businesses to compete in a 24/7 global economy has re-

problematized time in the workplace.

Drawing on sociology, labor economics, organizational behavior and social history, the papers in this volume examine either empirically and/or theoretically, a variety of aspects of time in the workplace. Contributors to this volume examine issues surrounding the distribution of and struggle over work hours and how these vary across a number of factors including race, class, occupation and other structural components of work. They examine temporal structures within organizations including inequities in flexible scheduling, entrainment and work teams, polychronicity, and how changing temporal structures affect professionalism and expertise. They also consider the way in which changing uses and organization of work time, in the context of economic instability and globalization, affect the difficulties of reconciling work and family. At the more micro-level, the papers consider individuals' perceptions and constructions and intersubjective constructions of time. To varying degrees, the authors speak to the policy implications or strategies for managing new times. Taken as a whole, these papers shed light on the way in which globalization and the emergence of a 24/7 economy have altered the ways, times, and meanings of time at work

HOW CLASS WORKS - 2008 CALL FOR PRESENTATIONS A Conference at SUNY Stony Brook June 5-7, 2008

The Center for Study of Working Class Life is pleased to announce the *How Class Works – 2008* Conference, to be held at the State University of New York at Stony Brook, June 5 - 7, 2008. **Proposals for papers, presentations, and sessions are welcome until December 17, 2007 according to the guidelines below.** For more information, visit our Web site at www.workingclass.sunysb.edu.



2007 SSSP Annual Meeting
Labor Studies Division Sponsored Sessions

Session 32: The Changing Nature of Work (Friday, 2:30-4:10)
Room: Riverside Suite

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

“A Virtual View of Managing Violence Among British Escorts: How Technology is Changing the Work of Escorts,” Kim Davies, Augusta State University and Lorraine Evans, Bradley University

“Reconstructing Work - A Cooperative’s Attempt to Balance Market Demands and Social Well-being,” Rick L. Shifley, Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences

“Tax Policy as Labor Policy: The Case of Contract Employment,” Debra Osnowitz, University of Massachusetts, Lowell and George Gonos, SUNY Potsdam

“Specters of Communication: Problems of Post-social Globalization,” Aneesh Aneesh, University of Wisconsin, Mill.

Session 58: Labor, Management, Class, and the Workplace (Saturday, 8:00-9:40)
Room: Park Suite

Organizer: Charles Koeber, Wichita State University

Presider & Discussant: Reuben N. Roth, Laurentian University

“The Use of the Internet by Labor and Management to Influence Public Perceptions: A Case Study of the United Food and Commercial Workers Union and Wal-Mart,” Ted M. Brimeyer, Georgia Southern University

“Workers’ Experiences of Participative Management: The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly,” Jonniann Butterfield, Florida State University

“Suck it Up, Buttercup’: Management and Union Responses to Workplace Violence in Community Care Group Homes: A Case Study,” Reuben N. Roth, Laurentian University

“Study of Factors Affecting Working-Class Tensions,” Gholam Reza Khoshfar, Mazandaran University

“Case Study of the United Food and Commercial Workers Union and Wal-Mart,” Kathryn Ray, Northwestern

Session 86: Globalization, Immigration and the Changing Nature of Work (Saturday, 4:30-6:10)
Room: Lexington Suite

Sponsors: Global Division
Labor Studies Division
Racial and Ethnic Minorities Division

Organizer & Presider: Stephen J. Sills, University of North Carolina, Greensboro

Fruit Vendors in Los Angeles,” Rocio Rosales, University of California, Los Angeles



**Inside Story Headline 2007 SSSP Annual Meeting
Labor Studies Division Sponsored Sessions (continued)**

A Look at Transnational Work Practices: The Case of Eldercare Work in Italy,” Francesca Degiuli, University of California, Santa Barbara

“Are You Being Served? Exploring Employer Demand for Migrant Labour in the UK’s Hospitality Sector,” Gareth Matthews, University of Nottingham and Martin Ruhs, Oxford University

“No Talk, No Money’: English Linguistic Ability and Empowerment within the Cambodian Sex Work Industry,” Heidi Hoefinger, Hunter College CUNY

Session 111: Gender, Work and Family

Room: Americas Suite

Organizers, Presiders

& *Discussants:* Corey Dolgon, Worcester State College
Reuben N. Roth, Laurentian University

“Gender Ritualization: The Strategic Mobilization of Domestic Labor,” Jennifer A. Johnson, Virginia Commonwealth University

“Worker Discourse on Time and Control,” Robert Perrucci and Shelley MacDermid, Purdue University

“Workplace Support and Worker/Mother Identity Balance: A Content Analysis,” Syprose A. Owaja, Western Michigan U

“Negotiating the Sexual Boundaries in Workplaces: The Case Study of Photojournalists’ Work in Taiwan,” Chih-Yan Sun, Brandeis University

“Practicing Femininity, Practicing Inequality: The Importance of Gender Practices in Creating Hierarchies among Women at Work,” Laura A. Rhoton, Iowa State University

“Higher Education Faculty/Staff Dual-Career Couples and their Career Migration Decisions,” Sarah E. Patterson Muterko, Indiana University Purdue University Indianapolis

“Paying the Marriage Tax: Formal and Informal Barriers to the Promotion of Female Police Officers,” Carol A. Archbold, North Dakota State University, Kimberly D. Hassell, University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee and Jennifer Manis, North Dakota State University

Labor Studies Division Meeting Friday Evening 4:30-6:10 PM

Please join us to determine sessions for next year and discuss the future of the labor session

Labor Studies Co-sponsored Reception, Friday Evening 6:30-7:30 PM

Eat, Drink, and Get Organized!

—Joe Hill

Conference Announcement

"Is a Caring Society Possible? Mobilizing for Change", the 5th international carework conference, will be held on Friday, August 10, from 8:30-5 at the CUNY Graduate Center in New York City. The conference will bring together researchers, policymakers and advocates involved in various domains of carework to take stock of what we now know about the organization of care in the U.S., and to develop strategies that will begin to effect change at both local and national levels through unions and other types of organizing. Featured speakers include Jody Heymann, author of *Forgotten Families*; Ann Crittenden, author of *The Price of Motherhood*; and Kristin Rowe-Finkbeiner and Joan Blades, founders of *MomsRising.org*. Join us for papers and discussion by leading scholars and activists, a book exhibit, and networking opportunities. For more information and to register, see www.carework-network.org

Featured Speakers:

Jody Heymann, author of *Forgotten Families*
Ann Crittenden, author of *The Price of Motherhood*
Kristin Rowe-Finkbeiner and Joan Blades,
founders of *MomsRising.org*

August 10, 2007, 8:30-5:00 at the CUNY Graduate Center, New York

Other program highlights:

Papers and commentary by leading carework scholars, including Mary Romero, Grace Chang, Ruth Milkman, Marjorie DeVault, Robert Drago, Nancy Folbre, Demie Kurz, Margaret Nelson, Ann Orloff, Joan Tronto and many others. Book exhibit featuring current carework titles
Networking opportunities

For more information visit: www.carework-network.org

A Commonwealth of Toil: Folksongs and the U.S. Labor Movement

Corey Dolgon, a Ph.D in American Culture and Sociology Professor for over 10 years, has put together a singing lecture on the role of folksongs in the U.S. labor movement. Corey is a long-time labor activist and organizer and has used folk songs to build solidarity on the line and engage students in the classroom. This lecture covers labor history from a multicultural perspective and examines the role of folk songs in workers' lives.

Corey Dolgon's "singing lecture" is a hit. Those who attended his presentation for the U of L Labor-Management Center from union retirees to active union member to academics and management were entertained and enlightened. A good time and good learning.--

John Ralston, Director, University of Louisville Labor-Management. Center

Corey's work weaves together a coherent and accessible narrative about labor struggles with a tour de force of labor songs that move an audience with workers' own articulate Descriptions of their conditions and Inspiring visions of movements to Improve those conditions.

Chris Dale, Sociology Chair,
New England College



Union Workers Win with Aid of Students



Harvard Students recently helped security workers negotiate a fair contract with Harvard University. They conducted demonstrations and other activities including a hunger strike to help workers gain fair pay and benefits. Let's hope some things do trickle down from the elite universities.

For info contact Corey Dolgon at cdolgon@worchester.edu