



Worker Organizing: Between grassroots mobilization and industrial citizenship

Call for Papers to be Published in *Research in the Sociology of Work*

Rick Delbridge, Markus Helfen, Andi Pekarek, and Gretchen Purser, editors

Worker organizing has long been fundamental to securing good jobs and working conditions. By joining together, workers gain the collective strength to redress inherent power imbalances vis-à-vis employers and secure protection from the vulnerabilities imposed on them by market failures. Yet the settlements between labour and capital – whether codified in collective agreements and legislation or manifesting as social norms about work and employment – have always been partial and contested. Today, an array of rapidly unfolding shifts – from technological advances and attendant new business models, to growing political populism, demographic change, the Covid-19 pandemic and its aftermath, and climate collapse – is transforming work and challenging extant modes of worker organizing in new ways. These developments have laid bare that work in late capitalism is too often exploitative and alienating, and that existing institutions and practices of labour relations fail to provide workers with adequate protection and material rewards. Accordingly, this volume seeks to (re)centre worker organizing and its potential to steer the world of work in a more sustainable direction, towards fairness and social justice.

The landscape of worker organizing has become increasingly diverse and dynamic. Established unions across the developed economies, having suffered significant declines in their membership and influence, are experimenting with new organizational forms, practices, and frames (e.g. new membership models, digital tools, intersectional solidarity) to revive their flagging fortunes. As the reach of ‘traditional’ unionism and collective bargaining has declined, alternative forms of collective action ranging from worker centres and living wage movements to freelancer and gig workers’ organizations, as well as virtual social movements such as #DemocratizingWork, have emerged. Labour activists are also exploring new ways of leveraging consumer power to complement worker organizing for better working condition in a range of industries.

This volume of *Research in the Sociology of Work* invites papers that explore all aspects of worker organizing. We welcome both empirical and conceptual papers. Articles may address any of a wide range of topics and themes, including but not limited to the following:

- Types and models of worker organizing
- Worker organizing and technology
- Discourses of worker organizing
- Repertoires of worker organizing

- Worker organizing and consumers
- Media portrayals of worker organization
- Unions and worker organizing
- Employers and worker organizing: dialogue and repression
- Worker organizing, environmental crisis, and just transition
- Worker organizing in the gig economy
- Social (in)justice and worker organizing
- Worker organizing, law, and institutions
- Occupational cultures and worker organizing
- Emotions and worker organizing
- Success and failure of worker organizing
- Experiences of worker organizing

Submissions may be made at any time up until 1st February 2024. Please submit your manuscript to RSWEditors@gmail.com and include “Worker Organizing” in the subject line.

Calls for papers appear here: <https://books.emeraldinsight.com/page/series-detail/Research-in-the-Sociology-of-Work/>

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