

# In Critical Solidarity

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on Labor and Labor Movements**

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**SPECIAL ISSUE:  
*Occupy Wall Street and Unions***



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### **From the Chair: Global Reach**

It is commonplace to point out that labor, capital, and their relations are increasingly globalized. But the dimensions and consequences of this process can still surprise. I'm reflecting on two recent experiences that brought this home to me.

In September in Johannesburg, I participated in the annual conference of the Global Labour University, an ILO-supported program based in campuses in Brazil, Germany, India, and South Africa. The conference brings together academics, advocates, and union activists from every corner of the globe (and in the Joburg case, included a special pre-conference with "RC44", our counterpart section in the International Sociological Association—our section's Jennifer Chun was the lead organizer). The connections that get made are nothing short of amazing. For example researchers and activists compared notes on domestic work and domestic worker organizing in Argentina, India, the Philippines, South Africa, Turkey, the US, and several other countries. Perhaps the most interesting innovation comes from Uruguay (in research by an American studying in Brazil), where a left government recently shifted the labor relations system to tripartite labor-employer-government collective bargaining. It's not obvious how to bring domestic work into this framework, but the Uruguayans have solved the problem—by creating an Uruguayan Housewives' League as the employer representative!

The other experience was closer to home. I supervised the Master's thesis of a student who is the son of Salvadoran immigrants. Hugo wrote about how the organizing practices and perspectives of meso-American immigrants now working for unions in the US are shaped by their earlier activism in their home countries. But as I got to know Hugo better, I realized that it's not just his thesis topic that is transnational. Though born in Los Angeles, Hugo grew up immersed in his parents' hometown association. He travels with some frequency to "his" home region of El Salvador, and to Oaxaca where he is connected

with grassroots activists. Hugo is exceptional, but the transnationalism of his experience is not, in today's US.

It would be easy to add examples. To take one topical instance, Occupy Wall Street has roots in the anti-globalization movement, was inspired by Spain's *indignados* (who were inspired by Egypt's Tahrir Square activists), and has helped spark other Occupy movements around the world. The Labor and Labor Movements Section continues to take steps to recognize and build on these globalization processes. Our ASA 2012 program includes a session on "Transnational Capital and Labor" as well as a domestically focused session on "U.S. Labor and Politics" timed for the run-up to the 2012 elections. (We hope that the global topic will help us connect with other sections, such as the World System, Global, and International Migration Sections.) The Section's Council is working on an exchange with the Work and Labor Section of the Chinese Sociological Association. In my experience, the sinews of global scholarly connections are one-to-one collegial relationships, so we count on many of you to continue developing these relationships and finding ways to bring these connections into the life of the Section. And of course, the sine qua non for all this is your continued participation in the Labor Section—don't forget to renew your section membership as you renew ASA for 2012.

A happy new year to all,  
Chris Tilly

### **2011 Section Awards**

**The 2011 Distinguished Scholarly Monograph Award** (Committee: Ian Robinson (Chair), Jeff Haydu, Tom Juravich, Ben Lind, Jeff Salaz, and Marcos Lopez) has been awarded to **Jane Collins and Victoria Mayer** for *Both Hands Tied: Welfare Reform and the Race to the Bottom of the Low-Wage Labor Market* (University of Chicago Press, 2010). *Both Hands Tied* is

theoretically ambitious, showing how major trends in labor markets—the decline of manufacturing and its union jobs, the rise of low-wage service work, and capital’s abandonment of the principle of the family wage—interact with changes in social policy driven by neoliberal ideas of individual motivation and the appropriate role of the state. *Both Hands Tied* masterfully integrates its account of the sources and likely consequences of these macro-level changes with a lively ethnography of 33 women, living in Racine and Milwaukee, Wisconsin who enter, remain on, or return to the Wisconsin Works program in 2003. *Both Hands Tied* is (sadly) persuasive in its claim that the experiences of these women can probably be generalized to the rest of the state, and perhaps, more broadly still.

*Both Hands Tied* shows that far from liberating women from a dependent, poverty-ridden existence, the structural and policy changes it analyzes have combined to lock women into poverty-wage work and dependent status from which it is very difficult to escape. It also shows how workfare rules and practices reinforce and feed back into labor market structural trends, negatively impacting workers who have never been part of the workfare system. It does this partly by creating an expanded pool of low cost labor for social reproduction work, thus driving down wages, and partly by training welfare recipients to accept such jobs and denying them basic labor rights that might have helped them contest this system. The authors show that the few women who achieve some modest upward mobility are able to do so only when they break the rules and successfully deceive their case workers. The exceptions thus prove the ugly rule that this study documents: neoliberal economic restructuring, combined with neoliberal social policy reforms, powerfully reinforce one another in deepening and institutionalizing female, minority and child poverty in this country.

It is hard to see how we can break out of the vicious circles of neoliberalism that Collins and Mayer document so well without substantially increasing the share of the working class that is

organized into the labor movement. And it is hard to imagine organizing on a large enough scale to win policy victories in these areas without devising ways to organize effectively in the private service sector. That is, after all, where two thirds of all jobs—and an even greater share of the worst paid and least secure ones—are found.

Many doubt that such workers can be organized on the requisite scale, but our runners-up this year both offer real analytic and empirical purchase on this vital question. **Jennifer Jihye Chun’s *Organizing at the Margins: The Symbolic Politics of Labor in South Korea and the United States*** (Cornell, 2009), focuses on organizing struggles by janitors subcontracted to clean university buildings, household workers, and golf caddies. Perhaps Chun’s most important theoretical and practical point is that, while these workers have relatively little structural power, they can organize and deploy significant “symbolic capital.” That is, the injustice of their situation is so clear—by accepted community standards—that they have a good chance of winning widespread public support if they can bring their normally invisible work situation to the attention of that public. They do this through what Chun calls “public dramas,” such as the on-campus worker rallies and administration building occupations by student supporters at Inha University in South Korea and Harvard in the United States. Chun’s cases show that worker and public pressure can bring about significant positive changes in employer behavior and improvements in employee compensation and job security. While Chun’s focus is entirely on unions as the catalysts to such coalitions, workers’ centers such as the Restaurant Opportunities Centers and Domestic Workers United have also won significant victories for restaurant and domestic workers by employing the same basic approach. They thus reinforce Chun’s message that organizing strategies based on developing and deploying symbolic capital are a promising way forward in this sector.

**Marshall Ganz’s *Why David Sometimes Wins: Leadership, Organization, and Strategy in the***

*California Farm Worker Movement* (Oxford, 2009) makes an equally vital point: as important as having the right strategy for a particular purpose and moment, is having the strategic capacity to understand when and how strategy must be changed. Few organizations, in the labor movement or elsewhere, are good at that. Ganz uses the case of the United Farm Workers, and its success where the much better resourced AFL-CIO and the Teamsters failed, both to demonstrate the importance of strategic capacity and to explore its sources. Ganz had already developed the concept “strategic capacity” in his 2000 *AJS* article. But with the space permitted by a book, he is able to use this framework to document and evaluate the evolution of the UFW—not only its major victories, but also its losses—with the detail and nuance that 16 years as a UFW insider make possible. In the process, he provides us with analytic tools for understanding, evaluating and improving unions’ strategic capacity at a time when strategic innovation is vital.

**The 2011 Distinguished Scholarly Article Award** (Committee: Anna Guevarra (Chair), Larry W. Isaac, Joshua Page, and Gretchen Purser) has been awarded to **Chris Romberg** for “**A Signal Juncture: The Detroit Newspaper Strike and Post-Accord Labor Relations in the United States,**” *American Journal of Sociology*, **115(6):1853-94**. This article analyzes the 1995-2000 Detroit newspaper strike, which Romberg refers to as a “deviant” case through which to revise theories of strike activity and thereby contribute to our understanding of post-accord labor relations. The study is based on 100 interviews with a variety of informants including strikers and union leaders; company executives and representatives; non-striking employees; and local and national civic leaders and public officials. It is also based on news stories collected over a period of four years, on archival sources such as trial transcripts, and on various organizational documents. Not only is the empirical case fascinating and important, but all the more so due to Chris’ theoretical development of the methodological concept of the “signal juncture” of which the Detroit strike is an

instance. The concept of signal juncture is described as “moments of conflict that reveal a ‘collision’ of underlying developmental paths,” developed as an analytic tool for studying institutional continuity and change. Romberg creatively tethers the logic of deviant case analysis to that of path dependency theory. Conceptually related to but analytically distinct from its cousin concept—“critical juncture” a transformative case in which rules and relations change ushering in a new historical period—the signal juncture highlights a deviant case that departs from the dominant pattern without producing transformation but exposes the forces and countertendencies that are endogenous to continuous trends. As such, the model calls attention to signals—internal structural tensions/contradictions that persist and within periods so it is useful conceptual vehicle for those of us interested in dialectical processes. This is a sophisticated theoretical and empirical analysis offering a major contribution to labor and labor movement scholarship and to historical sociology more generally.

**The 2011 Distinguished Graduate Student Article Award** (Committee: Steve McKay (Chair), Manjusha Nair, Jennifer Seminatore, David Tope, and Anna Wetterberg) has been awarded to **Lu Zhang** for “**From Detroit to Shanghai? Globalization, Market Reform, and Dynamics of Labor Unrest in the Chinese Automobile Industry.**” Lu Zhang’s timely and fascinating paper brings us deep into China’s industrial heart to challenge the notion of the “helpless” Chinese workers. Extending the work of Beverly Silver, Ching Kwan Lee and others, Zhang draws on extensive and insightful interviews with both management and workers in the Chinese auto sector to reveal the dynamics of recent labor protests, the politics and structuring of labor force dualism, and the centrality of new labor laws to both the state’s labor control strategies and workers’ bargaining strategies. Her work will be a major contribution to the study of labor in China as well as the global trend towards institutionalizing labor force informalization.



## **Labor and the Occupy Movement**

By Dan Clawson  
December 15, 2011

A range of labor scholars (and activists) have long argued that the labor movement needs to be shaken up, that traditional approaches clearly aren't working, that it makes no sense to stick with the old ways when they lead to a continuing slide in labor's membership and power.

A reasonable response has been: Yeah, good luck with that. The labor movement *has* changed in major ways – a dramatically altered stance on immigrants and immigration, support for living wage campaigns, resolutions opposing U.S. involvement in Iraq, a shift from National Labor Relations Board elections to card check campaigns, an emphasis on community alliances, more attention to gender – and none of those changes have been able to reverse labor's decline. John Sweeney's 1995 "New Voice" leadership arrived with great hope; Change to Win's 2005 breakaway made bold claims; neither has led to the change its partisans hoped for.

The Occupy movement has given the Left a shot in the arm, infusing new spirit, in a few short months doing more to energize people than any labor action in a very long time. Among the many strengths of the Occupy movement has been the widespread introduction of anarchist principles, an emphasis on a bottom-up approach, a challenge to hierarchy, spreading to a much larger public alternative forms of meeting and decision making, adding a new element to the social movement repertoire, and above all, changing the debate.

The change in the terms of debate has been striking. For years my students – very much including my progressive and Left students – have railed against "the government" and largely ignored corporate power. If I assign an article

about one or another nefarious corporate action, class discussion and student response papers will talk in terms of the evils of "the government" even if the only government culpability is its failure to stop corporate actions. The Occupy movement seems to have changed that, I hope for good. Suddenly everyone – even politicians and the mainstream media – is talking about "the 1 percent" and in effect discussing the power of the capitalist class, although that term still can't be used in polite company (or most sociology talks-articles). (Noteworthy here is that unions have talked about Occupy-issues for a long time; Steve Lerner, then of SEIU, gave a talk at a recent ASA convention that focused on the need to take on Wall Street; but when labor talked this way the issue did not catch fire.) For the first time a Left movement is holding the Obama administration to account and generating pressure, moving it to at least timid steps toward confronting inequality. New debates have opened up. Most important, the dominant frame has shifted, and people take a different starting point and perspective in thinking about issues, both new issues and those that have been around for a long time. Every mildly progressive group has taken to adding "Occupy" to the title of the action they would in any case have taken, and to thinking in bolder terms about what they might do, and to showing the connections between their agenda and that of the 99 percent.

The labor movement's response to the Occupy movement has been very good in some ways, and same old same old in others. Unions have endorsed the Occupy movement, offered resources, and coordinated actions and marches; at the same time, the Occupy movement has supported not just working people, but unions and official union activities. My own statewide union, the 107,000 member Massachusetts Teachers Association, can serve as one example. The union takes incredibly timid stances on electoral politics, teacher evaluation, responses to (Democratic) politicians who cut our pensions and healthcare, and the need to raise revenue. (We support a revenue bill, but "now is not the right time to push for it.") But although the union won't take strong

action in support of our own members, we enthusiastically endorsed Occupy Boston and Occupy Wall Street, and urged our members to join them and participate.

What unions have not done is significantly change their own top-down operations, decision making structures, repertoire of actions, or capacity for action. When I spent a long day in detention in New York, following my arrest November 17 at an action billed as an attempt to “shut down Wall Street,” a couple of the union organizers in the holding cell with me said that they were urging workers to Occupy their unions as a first step, and it would be great for people to figure out creative ways to do so, ways that would be supportive of building worker power and opening up participation, rather than putting on an action by ten people that attracts 100 media outlets and gets prominently featured on Fox news (a likely outcome for any action criticizing unions from within). The non-labor people’s main complaint was the disjuncture between labor’s official support and its capacity to mobilize and involve its members. Where were the troops, people wanted to know. (My response: well, the Occupy movement itself hasn’t done that well in turning out large numbers of people; the best attended Occupy events have been those where unions were mobilizing their members.)

We need to think about the limits of the Occupy movement as well as the labor movement, and then we need to think about ways to combine the best of both as we move forward. People object to the limits of labor unions in confronting race and gender issues, but based on my haphazard attempts to assess the Occupy movement in my visits to Zuccotti Park, unions are way ahead of the Occupy movement. For some time Occupy didn’t face the level of repression that is a basic fact of labor’s history and current day-to-day existence; it remains to be seen how successful Occupy will be in regrouping in the face of what has so far been a relatively limited repression. Although Occupy is open to disruptive protests, it has not yet shown a sustained ability to shut anything down; its actions have been largely

symbolic, aimed to generate media coverage and to spark debate, *not* serious attempts to inflict financial losses on the 1 percent, something that strikes routinely do. (Remember strikes? when I was in my 20s unions used them regularly.)

Moreover, although the Occupy movement sees itself as hyper-democratic, it is potentially subject to the tyranny of structurelessness, something Jo Freeman wrote about concerning the early women’s movement. The recent events in Oakland raise the question: when those attending an Occupy general assembly make decisions about what workers based elsewhere should do, is that democratic? Occupy Oakland, at a meeting attended by few dockworkers, decided to shut down the ports, potentially costing a lot of workers a day’s pay. (They didn’t decide to shut down Berkeley or Stanford.) Cameron Williams, president of Local 19 of ILWU, said, “It’s kind of like I planned a party at your house and didn’t ask you about it” (quoted in *Labor Notes*; if you don’t read *Labor Notes*, you should).

Here are a few thoughts on how labor and Occupy can move forward together, with the hope that others will join in with criticisms and alternative suggestions:

We do need to begin by Occupying our unions, figuratively and perhaps even better literally, to make them more bottom-up, less hierarchical, more participatory, and perhaps above all, more exciting.

If unions themselves are scared to take strong actions – for some good, and some not so good, legal and financial reasons – then unions should support alternative groups attempting to do so. If faculty unions can’t take on rising tuition and student debt, maybe our unions could donate ten (or fifty) thousand dollars to an independent Occupy group (of students and faculty and parents and community members) attempting to do so, giving the money as a one-time, no strings attached, donation. (Of course, that might also be the kiss of death for such a group; both sides would need to think about this.) If unions can’t

officially Occupy, maybe they could open up channels of communication, which would permit those members who were involved in Occupy let other members know about events (with side benefits for many other kinds of member-to-member communications).

We need to think about creative ways to combine Occupy actions and labor. Above all we need to take actions, even if those actions also involve risks – there are enormous risks in our current approach of staying within the system. I'd like to see us Occupy the headquarters of the corporation(s) or school boards or universities or hospitals we are fighting, but to do so in creative – and appropriately anarchist – ways. My own take is that planned mass arrests are a bad idea. In any announced mass confrontation with the state, the state will win; that's what states are set up to do.

A goal of being arrested is silly; it wastes an entire day and is only useful for a brief mention on the news. I think we need to carry anarchist principles a step further: We should form affinity groups, then each group pick randomly out of a hat a target for their action (a building on Wall Street, let's say, or a gathering of the 1%, or a member of the Board of Trustees of a university who voted for a tuition hike) and then out of another hat randomly draw a date/time (February 1, morning rush hour). That affinity group would then aim to disrupt the normal functioning of that building or activity on that day, with the intention of NOT getting arrested, but rather just messing things up for a sustained period, then leaving before the police showed up. Sometimes people would end up getting arrested, but that would be unfortunate and unintended, not the goal of the action. Groups could engage in a wide variety of creative actions. And of course this can be done in lots of places other than Wall Street, around the country.

The Occupy movement has done a magnificent job of changing consciousness and framing the debate in new (and much more promising) terms. What it has not yet done, and what labor no longer does (very often), but what all successful social movements *must* do, is contest for power, and do

so by showing a *sustained* ability to disrupt the normal functioning of institutions important to the 1%, and keep doing so until the 1 percent offer concessions.

I hope the labor section actively facilitates debates and discussions about ways to connect labor and Occupy.

*Dan Clawson is professor of sociology at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, and author of *The Next Upsurge: Labor and the New Social Movements* (Cornell, 2003).*

### **What the Labor Movement Can Learn From an Art Auction**

By Michael A. McCarthy  
November 20, 2011

On the evening of November 9, 2011, protesters amassed outside of Sotheby's auction house to challenge the company's antilabor bravado. For those of us who go to union rallies, the action may seem a bit peculiar. Most rallies these days lack the kind of passion and disruptive intensity that you will see if you watch the Sotheby's protest. The typical union picket mostly consists of people walking in a tightly fenced-in circle, chanting about fighting back. That is certainly better than no union picket at all - which is what employers want. But Occupy Wall Street has clearly injected a new set of more innovative tactics into labor's arsenal here in New York City.

In the weeks leading up to the November 9 protest, there were a number of other disruptions in the auction house. A retired Teamster was arrested for a direct action after he managed to enter the building and cause a bit of a commotion once inside, and a few of Sotheby's board member Daniel Meyer's restaurants were similarly disrupted. On the night of November 9, however, the tactics were amplified. Nearly 300 people, by my estimate, crowded along the sidewalk outside of the Sotheby's building to thumb their noses at

the patrons of the auction house on its biggest night of the year. (The company raked in more than \$315 million in art sales by the time the last hammer came down.)

The picket line was broken into two large groups, with a space in the middle (about 20 feet across) for patrons coming into the auction. A few of us managed to find a side entrance where the more crowd-shy art collectors could sneak in. Those interactions were more intimate. After I asked one patron where her conscience was, she blew me a kiss—but I doubt it was because she liked me.

In the front of the building, the crown pulsed with anger, shouting "shame" at those who crossed the line. At the most heated moment, protesters got into an extended contest of the will with the hired security and police - pushing the police barricade forward against the resistance on the other side. When one protester told him that the art patrons hated the officer's union and would love to see their pension extinct, a white-shirt cop nodded his resigned agreement. In total, the police arrested nine people, eight men and one woman, ranging from ages 19 to 55. The New York Police Department (NYPD) said the charges included criminal trespassing, reckless endangerment, resisting arrest, obstructing governmental administration and disorderly conduct. The most vivid example of civil disobedience was two young men, who laid down on the ground, bound together with a bicycle lock at their necks, blocking the entrance.

While episodes like these are tense and sometimes flirt with danger, they are an indispensable addition to labor's toolbox of tactics. For too many decades, organized labor has resigned itself to routine. While some hope glimmers due to the use of some tactical innovation such as the corporate campaign in the 1970s or, more recently, workers' centers, there is no substitute for pure and simple disruption.

Youthful passion—and a willingness to ratchet up the level of disruption—will be the basis of a renewal of labor's strength in America.



Such body- and liberty-risking tactics aren't historically unprecedented. Disruptive tactics were the basis of labor's revival in the 1930s. Most labor historians call the 1920s the nonunion era. Inequality in society during those years was roughly at today's level, and unions were even more beaten back and subdued than the ones around us.

Yet in the wake of the economic depression emanating from the 1929 stock market crash, working people—those with and without jobs—put themselves on the line.

In many cases they got arrested, and in some cases, their fates were worse. But on balance, their engagement in more heated forms of disruption shut down business as usual and became the core force behind the Wagner Act and the Social Security Act in 1935.

Three of the most famous strikes in American history occurred in 1934: the Auto-Lite strike in Toledo, the Teamster-led general strike in Minneapolis, and the San Francisco general strike started by the longshore and maritime workers.

Part of what made these strikes so incredibly important to American history and the American labor movement was just how highly charged they were. They involved clashes with the police and national guardsman, the destruction of property, and the occupation of workplaces. Strikers and



their supporters put a lot on the line, and because they did, they won.

Actually, we all won. Those kinds of disruptive strategies were central to reviving the labor movement and building real social protections that many Americans still enjoy.

It's true that unions were able to survive and thrive as organizations for some time after those turbulent early years. This success was driven in part because of their power in the collective bargaining process and in part because of their electoral alliance with Northern Democrats. But after decades of demobilizing their membership, when businesses went on the offensive in the 1970s, unions were ill-equipped to emerge victorious.

The Sotheby's lockout is a microcosm of where we are and where we could go. Its auctions are the playgrounds of the hyperwealthy—the kinds of people who have vacation homes in Martha's Vineyard and wear shoes that cost a year's salary for someone of "humbler" origins. To give you a sense of the commanding heights of the luxury occupied by these people, one painting at the November 9 auction sold for over \$60 million dollars (no, that is not a typo).

And while the hyperelite enjoy their towering fortunes in places like Sotheby's, the owners of Sotheby's are locking out 43 of their art handlers, organized by the Teamsters, because the union refuses to concede on major concessions in their contract. And this decision by Sotheby's isn't due to the competitiveness of the market. In 2010, Sotheby's made \$680 million in profits, and this year their CEO, Bill Ruprecht, received a 125 percent pay increase. Compare these figures to the situation of the art handlers outside of the building since June 29. Could the picture be any more clear? Working people—many, if not most, of whom are people of color—on the sidewalk, desperately trying to defend some of the gains they have made through their union, juxtaposed with the mostly white hyperelite adding to their art collections. This is what Occupy Wall Street is

all about. This struggle so perfectly encapsulates the moral outrage at the core of the slogan, "We are the 99 percent."

Students and workers, standing together and defiantly challenging Sotheby's, pushing the boundaries of acceptable protest and breaking the rules that should be broken, putting an end to both business and protest as usual - those are the ways that this struggle offers some insights into where we could go as a movement.

*Reprinted from Truthout (truth-out.org).*

*Michael A. McCarthy is a graduate student in the Sociology department at New York University focusing on American politics and organized labor. His dissertation is on the role that unions played in the long-term development of private pensions in the U.S. He is also a member of the In Critical Solidarity editorial collective.*

## **Goodbye to the 'Middle Class'?**

### **A Lesson for Labor from Occupy Wall Street**

By Steve Early  
November 15, 2011

Occupy Wall Street (OWS) has given our timorous, unimaginative and politically ambivalent unions a much-needed ideological dope slap. Some might describe this, more diplomatically, as a second injection of "outside-the-box" thinking and new organizational blood. Top AFL-CIO officials first sought an infusion of those scarce commodities in labor when they jetted into Wisconsin last winter. Without their planning or direction, the spontaneous community-labor uprising in Wisconsin was in the process of recasting the debate about public sector bargaining throughout the U.S. So they were

eager to join the protest even though it was launched from the bottom up, rather than in response to union headquarters directives from Washington, D.C.

This fall, OWS has become the new Lourdes for the old, lame, and blind of American labor. Union leaders have been making regular visits to Zuccotti Park and other high-profile encampments around the country. According to NYC retail store union leader Stuart Applebaum, “the Occupy movement has changed unions”—both in the area of membership mobilization and “messaging.”

It would be a miraculous transformation indeed if organized labor suddenly embraced greater direct action, democratic decision-making and rank-and-file militancy. Since that’s unlikely to occur in the absence of internal upheavals, unions might want to focus instead on casting aside the crutch of their own flawed messaging. That means adopting the Occupation movement’s brilliant popular “framing” of the class divide and ditching labor’s own muddled conception of class in America.

### **Them and us, updated**

In his 1974 memoir and union history, *United Electrical Workers* co-founder Jim Matles reminded readers that labor struggles are about “them and us”—or, as OWS puts it, “the 1 percent” vs. the “99 percent.” Unfortunately, most other unions have long relied on high-priced Democratic Party consultants, their focus groups and opinion polling, to shape labor’s public “messaging” in much less effective fashion. The results of this collaboration have been unhelpful, to say the least. Organizations that are supposed to be the voice of the working class majority have instead positioned themselves—narrowly and confusedly—as defenders of America’s “middle class,” an always fuzzy construct now being rendered even less meaningful by the recession-driven downward mobility of millions of people.

As SUNY professor Michael Zweig argued in his book, *The Working Class Majority: America’s Best-Kept Secret*, labor’s never ending mantra

about the “middle class” leaves class relations—and the actual class position of most of the population—is shrouded in rhetorical fog.

Zweig points out that the working class in America today looks quite different than the blue-collar proletariat of the last century, which leads many to believe that differences in “status, income, or life-styles” define where they stand on the economic and social ladder. But “the real basis of social class lies in the varying amounts of power people have at work and in the larger society....The sooner we realize that classes exist and understand the power relations that are driving the economic and political changes swirling around us, the sooner we will be able to build an openly working class politics.”

As Zweig would agree I’m sure, labor’s “framing” not only lacks the clear resonance of that employed by the new anti-capitalist campaigners of OWS; “one of the great weaknesses” of the standard union view of class “is that it confuses the target of political conflict.” When the working class disappears into an amorphous “middle class,” not only do the “working poor” (a mere 46 million strong) drop out of the picture, but “the capitalist class disappears into ‘the rich.’ And when the capitalist class disappears from view, it cannot be a target.”

Well, thanks to OWS—but not most unions—that target is back in view. As a result of Occupation activity, there is now a far more favorable climate of public opinion for waging key contract fights at Verizon and other Fortune 500 companies.

### **A corporate pig roast in Albany**

During the two-week strike by 45,000 Verizon workers in August, union PR people issued leaflets urging support for the CWA-IBEW “fight to defend middle-class jobs.” This characterization of strike goals enabled Verizon to run newspaper ads claiming that the \$75,000 a year or more earned by telephone technicians made them part of the “upper middle class”—and thus, apparently not worthy of sympathy from cust-

omers or members of the public whose jobs provide family incomes closer to the national or regional average.

By late October, Verizon technicians, who are part of a reform movement in CWA Local 1101, had marched through lower Manhattan in solidarity with OWS and along with NYC teachers, teamsters, and transit workers. Similar links between occupiers and Verizon contract campaigners developed in Boston.

Meanwhile, in upstate New York, members of CWA Local 1118 held a “corporate pig roast”—right around the corner from “Cuomoville,” the OWS encampment in downtown Albany that has so annoyed the state’s Democratic governor. At this OWS-inspired event, Verizon workers invited occupiers (more used to vegan and vegetarian fare) to join them. They were also brandishing new signs, with a far better, more universalist message: “We are the 99 percent!”

Interaction like this, between OWS and union rank-and-filers, has been mutually beneficial in many other places. On the labor side, Occupation activity has been a much-needed source of new energy and ideas. Let’s hope that union members can keep pushing labor’s communications strategy in a more resonant OWS-influenced direction. If they succeed with that objective, more substantive and harder to achieve organizational change could be next on the agenda.

*Reprinted from In These Times (inthesetimes.org)*

*Steve Early is a former national staff member of the Communications Workers of America (CWA) who has been active in labor causes since 1972. He is the author of The Civil Wars in U.S. Labor (Haymarket Books, 2010) and a contributor to the forthcoming, Wisconsin Uprising: Labor Fights Back, from Monthly Review Press. An earlier version of this article appeared in Logos.*

## Illinois Faculty Unions Resist University Attacks

By Nancy Traver  
November 24, 2011



[Photo: Illinois Education Association. Southern Illinois University Carbondale professors rally on Valentine’s Day. They struck for six days in November, staving off unpaid furlough days.]

At Southern Illinois University, six hours south of Chicago, dozens of professors headed back to class November 10 after ending a six-day strike over furlough days and pay cuts.

Professors balked at the university’s demand that they take unpaid furlough days, and challenged the administration to find other ways to rein in costs. Early reports indicated they had staved off furloughs for next year and forced the university to bargain over them after that. Few students attended the classes taught by temporary instructors during the strike, and thousands joined pro-union demonstrations.

At the University of Illinois Chicago, teachers and staff are struggling together to form a union. At St. Xavier University, in a Chicago suburb, adjunct faculty won a ruling by the National Labor Relations Board that the school does not

qualify for religious immunity from government oversight—opening the door to unionization.

In Chicago's Loop, at private Roosevelt University, leaders of the adjunct teachers union are trying to reverse the administration's move to cut \$1 million from the school's teaching budget, eliminate 235 classes, and raise class size from 23 to 33. At East-West University, a small private college in Chicago, adjuncts who tried to form a union have found that their classes are suddenly no longer offered.

And at Columbia College Chicago, a private liberal arts school where adjuncts teach 75 percent of the course load, the NLRB recently issued a complaint charging management with a raft of illegal anti-union actions.

At colleges and universities around Illinois, administrations are putting new pressure on their faculty, and teachers are looking to their unions for support.

The recession in Illinois, where unemployment has edged up to 10 percent, is one factor in this newly hostile approach to workers. Hiring freezes have been announced at some of the state's nine public universities, which are owed \$500 million by the state.

### RECESSION PRESSURE

White-collar professionals in many fields have lost jobs, prompting them to head to college campuses in search of work. Colleges feel emboldened by this sudden influx of burnished resumes. With a surfeit of willing workers, who needs experienced, higher-paid senior adjuncts?

Meanwhile, private school enrollment is falling as students start to fear that their thousands of dollars in student loans won't add up to good jobs after graduation.

Most of the higher ed unions are affiliated with the Illinois Education Association. Their leaders

meet regularly and support each other's protests, picket lines, and rallies.

"It's the ripple effect," said LuAnn Swartzlander-Kraus, president of the 600-member Roosevelt Adjunct Faculty Organization. "Some campuses form unions, make noise, and others hear about it."

She noted that many adjuncts teach at several campuses so they can patch together a living wage.

"The days of being in a safe job are over," she said. "You no longer have a nice perch where you can do research, study, and teach while people pay you a nice salary."

According to a study by the National Center for Education Statistics, almost 50 percent of higher-ed classes nationwide are taught by contingent faculty. These part-timers must reapply for work every semester; their salaries are as low as a quarter of what full-timers make.

### SEETHING AT COLUMBIA

At Columbia College Chicago, administrators recently announced that enrollment had dropped by 300 students, and immediately implemented a wage freeze.

The college's founding mission states that the majority of faculty members will be part-time, with one foot on campus and another foot in their respective professions.

But since fall 2010, senior adjuncts with up to 20 years' teaching experience at Columbia have complained to P-fac, the part-time teachers' union, about losing classes. Some have seen their teaching income shrivel by two-thirds.

The college is ridding itself of experienced adjuncts, who earn up to \$4,700 per semester for each course, and bringing in less-experienced adjuncts at \$1,500.



P-fac's feisty new leadership, elected by an overwhelming majority and record voter turnout in 2010, replaced a sclerotic steering committee that enjoyed a cozy relationship with the provost's office.

Previous union leaders routinely renewed toothless three-year contracts that provided no job security, and preferred to meet secretly to make deals with administrators.

## NEW BLOOD

All that has changed under P-fac President Diana Vallera and the new steering committee.

The union has organized an informational picket line, a member rally, and a petition drive. Union leaders formed a local chapter of the American Association of University Professors and hosted an AAUP Illinois meeting in October.

P-fac has been locked in contract talks with Columbia for almost two years with little progress. The union is seeking health insurance, transparent evaluations, and contract language ensuring adjuncts can no longer be fired at a department chair's whim.

Many grievances have been filed, as well as an NLRB charge alleging more than 30 unfair labor practices. In September, the NLRB regional office issued a complaint against Columbia, alleging bad-faith bargaining, coercion of employees, and interference in union activities.

The case is heading to a Labor Board trial in February.

Vallera said, "It's unfortunate that Columbia College has chosen to spend more of the college's revenues trying to excuse its bad behavior rather than settling the charges brought against it by the U.S. government."

*Reprinted from Labor Notes (labornotes.org). Nancy Traver teaches journalism at Columbia College and is publicity chair for P-fac.*

## A Waiting Game

By Elena Delavega

Loop 494 is a farm-to-market road that runs parallel to Highway 59 north of Houston, Texas. Four miles south of Porter, at the Northpark intersection, there is a new strip shopping center on the south side, a gas station on the north side, and not much else. To the south of this place lie the cities of Houston, 30 miles away, and of Humble, 7 miles from this point. The wealthy suburb of Kingwood is situated 4 miles to the east. On both sides of Loop 494 south of the shopping center there is wild vegetation consisting of some grass, large trees, and small bushes. A few hundred yards south of the shopping center there are patches where the grass and bushes have been worn down and pushed away by the presence of humans. Where there is no grass, the ground is bare earth, dusty in dry weather, and muddy and full of potholes when it rains. Trash litters the place. Someone has placed large garbage drums on both sides of the road, but they are not enough and they are frequently overflowing. Trash collects on the ground. Other less pleasant signs of the presence of humans are also evident on the site, and the smells are strong enough to sicken even those with strong stomachs and strong spirits. This is where a group of day laborers congregate daily to wait for jobs; it is an informal day labor site.

It is seven in the morning and the site is teeming with people. There are several cars parked on both dusty sides of the road, and quite a few trucks. Some of the cars and trucks are old and really beat up, but others look newer, almost middle class. There are almost as many cars as men, because in this part of town there are no buses, there is no public transportation of any kind. The workers could ride bikes, but there are no bikes at the site, nothing to suggest that the workers arrived at the site by any means other than by private vehicle. The men, because they are all men, sit around or stand in groups, talking. No women are visible.



The men's faces are brown, and their physiognomy suggests they are Hispanic. Some of the faces are lined and weatherworn, others are fresh and youthful. But all show determination and grit, and great seriousness. These are the faces of fighters. What are they fighting for? Who is their enemy?

The men are wearing ill-fitting worn and stained shirts and pants. Their clothes could have been at home in a downtown office in an earlier phase of their existence, but now they serve as work clothes of another kind, and their stains, tears, missing buttons, and worn-out spots are a testament of their decline in status. Some of the men are wearing baseball caps or sombrero hats, but safety goggles and gloves are not in evidence, and neither are safety steel-toed boots. The men's worn and stained shoes include tennis shoes, high tops, and even business casual shoes, and the observer can't help but wonder about the pain and dangers these feet must endure. The men's hands are rough, calloused, stained. The hands suggest hard work, a hard life. Even the young faces are paired with old hands.

Around 8 in the morning a taco truck comes, and the men flock to it, buying tacos, tortas, soft drinks, the hearty and high-calorie food of the hard worker, yet none of the men are fat. They all seem lithe, strong, wiry. But there are no brawny men among the lot, there is no one who could qualify for a "strong-man contest." The men are short, smallish, in many ways insignificant. They have been pushed back to this section of Loop 494, away from the gas station and the shopping

center where they are not welcome. They are not welcome in so many places. People from Kingwood mistrust them. The men are blamed for petty crimes, they are condemned for the filth of the site, for relieving their needs in the only place available to them. So they greet with gusto the arrival of the taco truck, evidence of their humanity. If they are consumers, then it must follow that they are people also. The taco truck treats them as people, welcomes and embraces them, perhaps uses them also, but is that not what everyone else does?

The men stand around all day. Some of them smoke, some drink something, some sit on the hoods of cars. Occasionally a truck or car stops near the men, and then the site becomes a flurry of activity. The men swarm the car and raise their hands and their voices – "me, me, pick me." "Yo, señor, yo." "Yo sí se pintar." Two or three men are chosen and instructed to get in the car or truck, which they do with a spring in their step and broad grins on their faces. The other men, the rejected ones, the ones who were not chosen, go back dejectedly to their spots and sit slowly or simply stand, and they continue waiting, waiting; the interminable wait that is the central theme of their lives.

It does not matter what time it is, there are men waiting at this site. There are more men earlier in the morning, but even at later times, after noon, or even in late afternoon there are men waiting. Waiting and watching the road. The men wait and watch the passing cars to see if any slowdown. When a car or truck slows down they start running toward it, completely disregarding their safety and that of the driver. It does not matter. In this game of survival death can come as surely from starvation as from an accident.

Throughout the day cars and trucks stop at the site, and the scene of workers surrounding the vehicles, making noise and flailing their arms, repeats itself time after time. A possible hirer shows up, the laborers surround the car, and a number of workers get chosen and leave with the hirer. Sometimes it is a contractor who hires

workers, less frequently what appears to be a homeowner, male or female, also tries to hire workers. Throughout the day those not hired go back to their waiting places, their shoulders lower every time, their faces more disappointed every time.

Sometimes police cars show up. Most of the time, they do not stop. Police just drive slowly, as if trying to ascertain whether public peace is being maintained. When police cars do stop, the laborers scramble around like scared roaches. Those who cannot get away fast enough talk to the officers, and then police leave. Seldom does anyone get arrested. For the most part, the workers are left alone as long as they stay on their little spots on the sides of Loop 494 and they do not try to move farther up the road closer to the strip mall and the gas station.

In the evening, those workers who were lucky enough to be chosen and hired for the day return to the site. Maybe they have worked for eight or ten hours, maybe they have worked for two or three hours. They are dirty and sweaty as they get out of the car of the person who hired them. They receive their money in cash and they smile. They have been paid. Others have worried looks on their faces when they get out of the car of the person who hired them. They exchange some words with the contractors who have hired them – “sí, sí, mañana, tomorrow,” but they do not receive any money. They walk back to the site. As evening falls the workers get in their cars, sometimes two and three to a car, and they leave. They, or others just like them, will be back tomorrow to begin their waiting game again.

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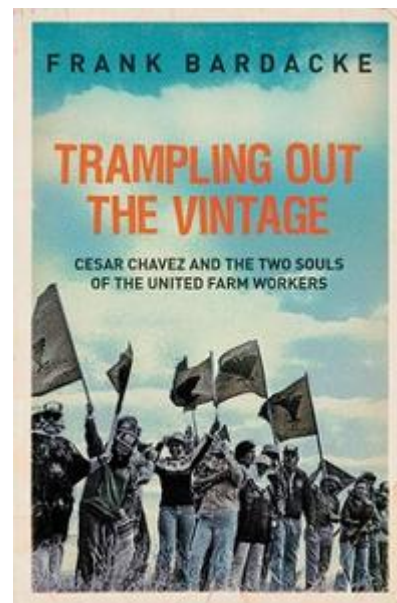
## Book Review

### Cesar Chavez and the Enduring Poverty of Farmworkers

By Michael D. Yates  
November 28, 2011

*Trampling Out the Vintage: Cesar Chavez and the Two Souls of the United Farm Workers.* By Frank Bardacke, Verso, \$54.95, 742 pages.

Frank Bardacke labored over *Trampling Out the Vintage* for 15 years. We can be grateful that he didn't give up. Bardacke explains better than anyone else how the United Farm Workers under the leadership of Cesar Chavez rose in the 1960s to become one of the most remarkable and successful unions in U.S. history but then crashed and burned so breathtakingly fast that by 1990 it had essentially disappeared from the California fields. Today, it is little more than a collection of social service entities that more than one observer has described as rackets run for the enrichment of Chavez's relatives.



Bardacke relies on primary sources: letters, interviews, personal papers, archives, newspaper accounts, court and police records, and his own considerable experience as one of a handful of Anglo farm laborers (he spent six seasons in the fields between 1971 and 1979). In the main, he lets the record speak for itself, avoiding both the apologetics and the rancor we typically find in writings about the UFW and Chavez.

### Skilled Labor

Several things set Bardacke's history apart. First, he pays attention to the farmworkers themselves, to their history of organizing, the nature of their work, and the changes that have taken place in their industry.

His descriptions of the skilled, difficult, and body-destroying work of harvesting lettuce, celery, broccoli, asparagus, and lemons are among the most moving and beautifully written parts of the book. They help show that the organization of farmworkers did not spring suddenly from Chavez's will.

As Bardacke shows with scores of examples, California agricultural workers have been doing battle with their employers for nearly 100 years. The skill required to harvest fruits and vegetables, the short time the grower has to get crops harvested, and the self-organization of the workers into tightly knit teams all combined to create a potential power that became reality when conditions were right.

Bardacke's examination of Chavez's life displays depth, too. Unlike most of the union's members, Chavez's parents owned a small farm. It was a huge blow to their way of life when they lost it in 1939 and had to move from Arizona to California to work in the fields.

The anger Chavez felt because of this was not the same as that experienced by another UFW stalwart, Gilbert Padilla, who was born into a farmworker family and learned class consciousness at his parents' knees. Padilla never had

the distrust of farmworkers that Chavez had, nor did he embrace anti-communism with the same fervor.

Chavez identified more as a Mexican-American (a Chicano) than as a Mexican. The first workers in the UFW were settled vineyard laborers, not migrants. Chavez had a lifelong antipathy for the unsettled Mexicans who soon enough composed the majority of California's farmworkers.

A devout and conservative Catholic, Chavez embraced both the "social action" philosophy of Pope Leo XIII, which recognized certain rights of working people, and the strictly hierarchical structure of the church. Under the tutelage of Saul Alinsky and Fred Ross, Chavez was able to blend his Catholicism with community organizing techniques to become a master organizer, first in community action groups and then in his union.

He came to believe with Alinsky and Ross that organizing could be taught and that the organizer was the critical actor in all efforts to build political power. His superior organizing skills helped build a core farm labor organization, but his training did not serve him when he began to identify the UFW with himself and struggled to administer a large and complex union.

### Outside Forces

Outside the union in the 1960s and 1970s swirled an enormous social, economic, and political flux. As the war in Vietnam raged on, liberalism hit a crisis. Liberals saw themselves as champions of the poor but they could not tolerate war protesters, militant and radical Black and Chicano civil rights activists, or workers who chafed at the boundaries enforced by liberal but autocratic union leaders. These liberal leaders saw Chavez and the UFW's downtrodden members as their last great hope of resurrecting the New Deal coalition of labor and liberals.

Chavez took liberal America by storm. His charisma, leadership, and Catholicism built a fanatically dedicated band of volunteers,



including hundreds of farmworkers and staffers who traveled thousands of miles to tell the nation stories of misery and exploitation. People boycotted grapes; they gave money; they came to California to volunteer for La Causa. It wasn't only the workers to whom Cesar Chavez gave hope.

All this is fairly well known. But Bardacke gives us insight into the union's darker chapters, too. The UFW waged a despicable war against "illegal aliens." Chavez claimed, with no evidence, that the union was losing strikes or was unable to call strikes because "illegals" were breaking them or would break them.

The union turned undocumented workers in to authorities and engaged in a vicious vigilante campaign along the U.S.-Mexican border. Bardacke tells us, "the union took action itself, fielding an extralegal gang of a couple of hundred people who policed about ten miles of the Arizona-Mexico border, intercepting people attempting to cross it, and, brutalized the captives."

Strategically, Chavez continued to emphasize boycotts even when strikes were succeeding and boycotts had outlived their usefulness. He insisted on fasts and pilgrimages at moments when negotiating contracts and building direct worker power cried for attention. He refused to allow members to establish local unions—and he fired and blacklisted local leaders who had the audacity to believe that the union belonged to the workers and were willing to defy him at a union convention.

### Happy to Be Poor

Chavez believed that only personal sacrifice could make people worthy to lead, and that both staff and members should be happy to be poor. He was sometimes vicious in his condemnation of member "greed," by which he meant their seeing the union as a way out of poverty.

He wanted a movement of workers and staff, living cooperatively and self-sufficiently, with a strict set of rules, like a religious order. He often neglected important union business as he investigated one utopian community after another. Chavez was also a virulent anti-communist, whose constant purges produced useful scapegoats for the union's failures. It didn't matter how important to the union a staffer might be; he or she could be dismissed at Chavez's whim. In the 1980s, the union embraced the cult-like group Synanon, the Philippines dictator Ferdinand Marcos, and other odious figures.

Chavez said Synanon's infamous "Game," in which participants verbally abused one another, was a good way for union staffers to air out interpersonal grievances. The visit to Marcos, he said, would help to ally Filipino farmworkers more firmly with the union. (They were often in conflict with the UFW's Chicano-Mexican base.)

While both moves may have strengthened Chavez's control of the staff and the union, they were disastrous for the farmworkers' goals. Staffers continued to be purged, others left in disgust, and the union's liberal supporters were appalled that Chavez cozied up to a dictator.

Traveling around the western United States today, as I have for a decade, everywhere you see big profits being made on the backs of poorly paid and overworked Mexican laborers. I doubt that many of them know of Cesar Chavez and the United Farm Workers.

This didn't have to be. The UFW could have become central to the lives of poor workers, and it could have been a catalyst for the rebirth of the labor movement. Herein lies the tragedy that Bardacke chronicles magnificently.

*Reprinted from Labor Notes (labornotes.org). Michael D. Yates is the author of Why Unions Matter and editor of Wisconsin Uprising: Labor Fights Back, from Monthly Review Press. He worked as a researcher at UFW headquarters in 1977, and blogs at: [blog.cheapmotelsandahotplate.org](http://blog.cheapmotelsandahotplate.org).*

### Recent Publications

Kim Skipes' book, *AFL-CIO's Secret War against Developing Country Workers: Solidarity or Sabotage?*, has been published in paperback. For information on the book, and links to published reviews and a 20 percent discount, go to <http://faculty.pnc.edu/kscipes/book.htm>.

See also Kim Skipe's article, "Why Labor Imperialism? AFL-CIO's Foreign Policy Leaders and the Developing World," *Working USA: The Journal of Labor and Society* (December 2010), Vol. 13, No. 4, pp. 465-479.

(In other news, Kim was promoted last April to Associate Professor and granted tenure by the Purdue University Board of Trustees. He was also elected as Chair of the Chicago Chapter of the National Writers Union, UAW #1981, and took office in June 2011. Congratulations!)

### WORLD WIDE WORK

ICS is once again reprinting "World Wide Work," the free bulletin of the American Labor Education Center, an independent nonprofit founded in 1979. Please subscribe to the bulletin (for free), and encourage others to do so, which they (and you) can do at [TheWorkSite.org](http://TheWorkSite.org), a site that provides free, adaptable tools for grassroots education and organizing.

### FILMS

**The Flaw.** This exceptionally well-made, 82-minute documentary about the causes of our economic crash combines expert commentary, entertaining graphics, and human interest stories. The story begins with decades of success by the 1% and corporate CEOs in driving down incomes for everyone else. How could the majority of

Americans maintain their standard of living despite stagnating wages and income? By borrowing. How could the 1% and Wall Street make the most return on the wealth they were accumulating as they paid working people less? By lending it to those same working people.

Meanwhile, "**Inside Job**," another excellent documentary that covers other angles about Wall Street's destruction of the economy, is now available free online.

**This Is Where We Take Our Stand.** A deeply moving, must-see, hour-long documentary features young men and women who served in Iraq and Afghanistan talking about what they saw and how the experience changed their views. Available on DVD and also in segments online.

**A Better Life.** An exceptionally authentic and poignant feature film puts the audience in the shoes of a Mexican immigrant raising his son as a single father in a country that wants his labor but denies him legal status.

**A Question of Integrity.** The U.S. Supreme Court has become a subsidiary of Wall Street and other big corporations. Some call it the Corporate Court or the Supreme Corp. This 15-minute film, available free online, describes how Justices Scalia and Thomas attended and helped promote political strategy and fundraising conferences hosted by the oil billionaire Koch brothers, primary funders of the Tea Party and other political fronts for corporate interests. Justice Alito has headlined fundraisers for other corporate political causes. How impartial will these justices be when they have to choose between the constitutional rights of the 99% or the interests of oil, insurance, or drug companies?

**Crime After Crime.** This is a wrenching documentary about a woman who went to prison in connection with the murder of a boyfriend who brutally abused her. After 20 years, two attorneys helped her reopen the case, only to run into one outrageous roadblock after another.

**BOOKS**

**At-Risk** by Amina Gautier (University of Georgia). Gautier is not concerned with judging the young African American characters who are the subjects of this outstanding collection of artfully written short stories, but rather with showing how they feel.

**American Dreamers** by Michael Kazin (A.A. Knopf). A historian gives his views on selected aspects of the American Left and finds that activists have had lasting impact on culture and social justice even if they haven't fully achieved their goals.

**Aftershock** by Robert Reich (Vintage). The former U.S. Secretary of Labor has updated his book about how shifting wealth from working people to the top 1% put the economy in crisis – and what can be done now.

**No Backing Down** by Tameron Keyes (Ashtad). A former female stockbroker for Smith Barney details sexual harassment and discrimination she faced and takes readers through her successful court case against the Wall Street firm.

**Trampling Out the Vintage** by Frank Bardacke (Verso). For decades, Cesar Chavez has been remembered as a great American hero. Recently, some on the Left have dismissed him as a paranoid madman who blew the chance to build a strong union for farm workers. Bardacke argues that both stories are too simplistic and ignore important aspects of the union's experience, including what he calls its anti-democratic culture, distance from the membership, and compliant inner circle.

**Boundaries** by Elizabeth Nunez (Akashic). A Caribbean immigrant with a successful career in New York's publishing industry confronts boundary issues with her mother, a potential second husband, and her native-born bosses.

**Assumption** by Percival Everett (Graywolf). A black deputy sheriff in a small town in New

Mexico continually finds that "reality" is not what it seems in three related murder mysteries.

**Which Side Are You On?** by George Ella Lyon, illustrations by Christopher Cardinale (Cinco Puntos). A children's book tells the story of Florence Reece, the coal miner's wife who wrote the song, "Which Side Are You On?", during a bitter strike in 1931. The narrator is her oldest daughter, who is shown hiding under a bed to avoid bullets from company gun thugs.

**The Accidental Slaveowner** by Mark Auslander (University of Georgia). For more than 150 years, whites in Oxford, Georgia, have passed on a story about a black woman who was enslaved to a white minister who was the first president of Emory University. According to their account, the minister offered to set the woman free but she chose to remain with him. Meanwhile, African American families have passed down a very different account.

**Weirding the War** edited by Stephen Berry (University of Georgia). A collection of essays revisits the Civil War, finding not heroes and military strategists but deserters, torture, hunger, amputation, and prostitution.

**MUSIC**

**Clear Glass Jar** by Judith Edelman (31 Tigers). A young folk-pop songwriter pours out her feelings:

*I just worked a double on the old assembly line  
The tv's reconstructing how our hero fell out of the sky  
If I don't get some sleep today, I'll surely lose my mind  
But there's another load of laundry to be hung out on the line  
Blue dress, swing shift shirts  
Wash them down to the spot where it hurts  
Blue sky dried, gonna find good news in a load of blues*