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Adrienne E. Eaton and Paula B. Voos

Abstract

Surveys demonstrate that U.S. managers, like other workers, want greater voice at work. Many have joined organizations that represent employee interests: caucuses based on social identity, pressure groups, and professional associations. In varying degrees, these organizations use old union tactics such as mutual aid, skill-certification, and political activity. All these organizations have serious limitations. For the benefit of both managers and unions themselves, unions should increase their outreach to these organizations and employees. Public-sector unions often include some managers so they provide one model. However, methods of representation beyond collective bargaining are important here. Adequate representation of managers requires return to Sidney and Beatrice Webb's conception of unions as any continuous association of employees seeking to improve their working lives.

Unions must contend with changing employer structures and labor-market practices, so both labor-studies scholars and trade unionists are struggling to identify revitalization strategies for the U.S. labor movement. Together they focus on the need for unions to reconsider structures and functions. They seek to improve the chances that additional groups of workers—contingent workers, immigrants, and so forth—will affiliate with unions. These strategic discussions, sometimes explicitly or implicitly, hark back to very old debates on the nature and function of unions. In particular, the discussions parallel the classic "Methods of Trade Unionism" by Sidney and Beatrice Webb (1902). These methods include, but are not limited to, collective bargaining.

This paper seeks to take a place in those debates. Our study is rooted in the observation that the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA) excludes large categories of workers from the right to participate in collective

bargaining, and that unions must not let that law define who might be members. Cobble (1994, 290), for instance, used 1990 data to estimate that NLRA coverage excludes as much as 43 percent of the workforce and 33 percent of the private sector workforce. Approximately *half* of the workers that the law excludes are supervisory and managerial workers.[1] In this paper, we focus on this group of excluded employees.

Obviously, supervisors and managers are not homogeneous. Some supervisory and managerial workers may be privileged executives, whereas others are far down corporate hierarchies. Private-sector labor law, however, treats all supervisory and managerial workers exclusively as agents of the employer. In fact, first-line supervisors and middle managers also experience work life as employees. When such workers seek to influence their work situations, they face a limited number of options. Supervisors and managers probably most commonly address employment issues by negotiating individually with superiors, talking with human resource departments, enduring their work problems, or changing jobs, although a growing number have sued under employment law when they believe legal violations exist. All of these methods isolate the person and individualize the issues. Moreover, they must rely on the employer's fairness or benevolence, and/or their ability to find another job, or their chances to achieve legal redress.

Most fundamentally, these limited methods raise the question of how satisfied are American managers and supervisors with the opportunities they have for voice at work. Are they currently satisfied with their opportunities for influence with regard to both the work itself and the terms and conditions of their employment? What type of work-related organizations, if any, have managers themselves created or joined? Do these organizational forms offer any suggestions for an expanded definition of, or membership in, the labor movement?

Theoretical Background

The NLRA has not only shaped union membership in the United States; it has also worked to narrow the very definition of a union. The NLRA defines a "labor organization" as an organization "in which employees participate and which exists for the purpose, in whole or in part, of dealing with employers concerning grievances, labor disputes, wages, rates of pay, hours of employment, or conditions of work." In practice, unionization in the United States has become synonymous with collective bargaining ("dealing with the employer"). But while collective bar-

gaining is, for good reason, a central "method," as the Webbs would say, of free unions around the world, it is not the only method.

The Webbs, in fact, identified three methods of unionism: collective bargaining, mutual insurance, and legal enactment. In many contexts collective bargaining, particularly centralized bargaining over all or most of a particular market, was (and is) the most effective way to get what workers needed. However, both scholars and unions are reconsidering the value of other approaches to worker representation—as a way to supplement collective bargaining, or as a stepping stone toward majority status and collective bargaining, or as a substitute for collective bargaining where that method is less effective than other methods of unionism.

Mutual insurance

Mutual insurance (or to use broader language, mutual aid) is perhaps the oldest method of unionism. Mutual insurance consists of the collective creation of funds "to insure against casualties," including benevolent or "friendly" insurance funds for work time lost to sickness and accidents, death benefits for survivors, and "out-of-work" pay for members who cannot find work. It also consists of the many ways that union members can informally assist one another (e.g., by networking to help find work for a union brother or sister). Mutual-aid unionism has received renewed attention recently by Bacharach, Bamberger and Sonnenstuhl (2001; see also Jarley 2003). They argue that if unions revert from the now-dominant servicing "logic" to a mutual-aid logic that will help them recapture member commitment and legitimacy.

The U.S. labor movement has been experimenting with non-majoritarian, non-collective bargaining membership forms that relate, in part, to the concept of mutual-aid unionism. Typically, the goal is to attract members who are also interested in supporting labor in its political activity and perhaps ultimately becoming represented by collective bargaining. The AFL-CIO's experiments with "associate membership" are at least twenty years old—associate members receive some discounts on insurance and other services while, it is hoped, they align themselves politically with labor. More recently, the Communications Workers of America (CWA) has extended the notion of associate membership to a strategy of forming non-majoritarian organizations in firms where they have a long-term commitment to organize. Organizations to date have been formed at IBM, GE, and Microsoft. CWA's penultimate goal with these initiatives remains to establish a majority union with collective bargaining rights.

Legal Enactment

Today "legal enactment" is typically equated with public policy and government regulation of the employment relationship—minimum wages, overtime requirements, pension regulation, paid family leave, and so forth. It also encompasses older types of government (or quasi-government) regulation that accompanied union or professional society efforts to standardize training and licensure—both to ensure labor quality and to control labor supply. Examples are the licensure of beauticians and barbers, the certification of teachers, or bar examination for attorneys.

The purpose of collective bargaining and legal enactment was to set a "common rule" for all workers in a labor or product market so that they would not lower wages by competing against one another. The Webbs argue that even "out-of-work pay," a type of mutual insurance, was similarly intended to prevent workers from being forced to accept below-standard work out of desperation. All these union strategies are rooted in the recognition that most individual workers suffer disadvantage in the labor market.

Although government regulation of employment conditions is more extensive in other advanced market economies, government regulation has clearly also been a central strategy of the U.S. labor movement since the 1930s. Some observers have argued that the American labor movement's claims to represent U.S. workers broadly have been most consistently realized by its support for greater protection of individual workers in areas related to employment discrimination, disability, family leave, and safety and health. The labor movement also has been consistently concerned that federal economic policy primarily insures adequate aggregate demand to maintain employment and narrows income differentials between economic classes. The recent re-emphasis by the labor movement on political representation of workers is entirely consistent with "legal enactment" as a method of unionism.

Current discussions in labor studies

Many of those writing about union revitalization have emphasized the need for unions to focus on what might be called a "career assistance" or labor market mobility strategy. Heckscher (2001; see also Osterman et al. 2001, 123-124), for instance, argues that substantial changes in the forms of employment representation are needed given the transformations in the economic and political systems in which industrial relations systems are embedded. He suggests that "representation in a mobile economy" must include support for careers that span several companies

and skill sets (portability of benefits; information about job opportunities, company reputations, and salary norms; access to continuing education and developmental opportunities for specific skill training; help with financial planning for retirement, unemployment, and education; social and psychological support in dealing with change and instability; and mentoring about career paths and possibilities). He also advocates new forms of pressure on employers—specifically publicity, lawsuits, and financial leverage.

In short, this strategy includes skill development, portable benefits, and provision of labor market information. When portable benefits are included, this strategy overlaps with the method of mutual insurance. The strategy is most often advocated as a way to better attract and serve service workers (Cobble 1991), professional workers (Hurd and Bunge 2003), and workers in very mobile labor markets. Some scholars have argued that the focus on skill development will also make unionized workers more attractive to employers, as has long been the case in the construction industry (Cobble 1991, Masters and Atkins 1999). All these ideas involve retaining the use of collective bargaining as a method of unionism where it is effective but bolstering it with other methods.

The Webbs broadly defined union as a "continuous association of wage-earners for the purpose of maintaining or improving the conditions of their working lives" (1920, 1). Many contemporary scholars echo the Webbs when they recognize that the means to improving those conditions are widely varied (e.g., Masters and Atkins 1999, 308-309). Larry Cohen, executive vice president of CWA, signaled labor's commitment to this broad conception of unionism recently when he defined a union as "a membership organization of workers."

Expanding the definition of unionism frees us from the NLRA's blinders in thinking about who is eligible for union membership. That is not to say that everyone should necessarily be eligible for such membership. Questions remain about the level of interest any of these nontraditional types of workers have in collective organization. Those questions may be sharpest, in fact, for managerial workers who have been legally placed on the other side of the labor-management divide.

In the research described below, we explore, using the limited data currently available, the level of interest supervisory and managerial workers have in broadly defined unionism. We examine survey evidence on satisfaction with various job characteristics and with opportunities for "voice" on the job. We then turn to the types of work-related organizations that managers have created on their own or participate in and evaluate

these organizations against an expanded definition of unionism. Our goal is to stimulate thinking in the labor studies community about the needs and collective potential of this group of workers.

Survey Data: Worker Representation and Participation Survey

The Worker Representation and Participation Survey (Freeman and Rogers 1998, 1999) is the most extensive survey of worker interest in various types of workplace voice currently available. It contains evidence that American workers do not have as much influence as they would like over a range of workplace decisions. Respondents were probed on a variety of possible types of each voice mechanism and discovered that employees are interested in exerting additional voice on workplace decisions through a variety of mechanisms, including more employee involvement, grievance procedures, and some type of employee organization. We reanalyzed the survey data to see if it contained clues regarding the attitudes of low-level and middle-level managers toward available and desired means of voice in their workplaces.

The data divide into three occupational groups: non-managers, lower-level managers, and mid-managers.[2] The separate breakouts possible for lower- and mid-managers are particularly informative insofar as representation rights have been most contested for the lowest managerial levels.[3] Evidence from the survey is presented in Tables 1 and 2.[4] We do not discuss the results in detail, leaving it to the interested reader to peruse the tables. Instead we focus on our "bottom-line" interpretation of these survey responses, along with a few details we found to be most informative.

Table 1 presents the results from different sets of questions about the degree of influence over different aspects of work and degree of satisfaction with the current level of influence. Overall, middle- and lower-level managers reported more influence than non-managers, particularly over training and how the job is done. All employees report low influence and low satisfaction with their influence over pay raises and benefits—key subjects of bargaining for traditional unions in the private sector. Indeed, both lower- and middle-level managers report that they have especially meager levels of influence over benefits, while at the same time they rate it as an area in which it is important to have a lot of influence.

Table 2 deals with workers preferences for voice mechanisms. What is ultimately striking about these data is that managers—especially lower-level managers—are not significantly different from non-managers on many of the questions. In general, managers of all levels do have somewhat less

interest in labor organizations and other voice mechanisms than do non-managers (as one would expect), partly because managers have greater satisfaction with the degree of voice they possess.

Non-managers and lower managers were very similar in seeing management-selected committees as being potentially effective ways to increase employee voice (see Table 2).[5] A majority (62.9 percent) of non-managers like the idea of having a grievance procedure ending in outside arbitration to settle issues. About half of lower-level and a third of mid-level managers liked that idea (even though such outside arbitrators might overturn their decisions).

All groups similarly preferred that any employee representation group should be run jointly and that the organization should rely on the company for its budget and staff.[6] The majority of non-managers and lower-level managers preferred that participants be elected—a plurality of middle-level managers agreed. Evidently, managers, as other employees, recognize that employees need to select the persons who represent them.

Interestingly, 46 percent of middle managers prefer an organization that includes everyone but upper management; presumably the middle managers envision an organization that would include them. This is probably the clearest evidence in the survey that even middle managers want some kind of representation. Lower-level managers (like non-managers), on the other hand, prefer that any possible organization is limited to employees doing the same work–to folks like themselves. Apparently, middle managers feel a community of interest with lower-level managers and non-managers as employees, but lower-level managers prefer to have representation of their own interests occur independently from other employee groups.

Obviously, this survey provides provocative evidence on managerial demand for additional voice, but it is far from conclusive. We turn now to a different type of evidence that shows managerial employees' interest in collective representation.

Existing Organizations Concerning Managerial Employees' Interests at Work

We scanned the environment for existing organizations that managers have formed or joined, organizations that concern managers' interests at work. We found three essential forms: intra-organizational groups labeled networks or caucuses, inter-organizational professional associations, and traditional unions engaged in collective bargaining. This evidence should be particularly salient to those who believe that if employ-

Table 1

Influence on the job, desired influence, and satisfaction with influence

Questions that were answered by only half of all respondents are marked "Form A" or "Form B"
Responses that are significantly different are in bold – please see footnotes below

Form A:
How much direct involvement and influence do you have in
:(1 = a lot, 4 = none)

	Non-managers	Lower Managers	Mid-Managers
How to do your job/organize work	**1.65** a,b	1.34	1.32
Training	**2.43** a,b	1.56	1.58
Work Schedules	**2.68** a,b	1.88	1.63
Pay Raises	**3.59** a,b	**2.94** c	2.40
Goals for group/dept.	**2.19** a,b	**1.69** c	1.31
How to work with new equipment	**2.38** a,b	2.15	1.74
Safety standards and practices	**2.41** b	2.00	1.80
Kinds of benefits offered	3.43	3.49	3.19
[Range of Ns]	[484-500]	[33-35]	[64-66]

Footnotes: a =non-managers are significantly different from lower level managers at the .05 level on a two-tailed test; b = non-managers are significantly different from mid-managers at .05; c = lower level managers are significantly different from mid-managers at .05.

Table 1 (continued)

Form A: If you could have a lot of influence, how important would it be to have influence over:
(1 = very, 4 = not at all)

	Non-managers	Lower Managers	Mid-Managers
How to do your job	**1.31** [b]	1.17	1.15
Training	**1.51** [b]	1.41	1.21
Work Schedules	1.85	1.67	1.63
Pay Raises	1.89	1.68	1.75
Goals for group/dept.	**1.62** [a,b]	**1.19** [c]	1.12
How to work with new equipment	1.70	1.50	1.48
Safety standards and practices	1.71	1.49	1.66
Kinds of benefits offered	1.53	1.64	1.60
[Range of Ns]	[479-501]	[33-36]	[56-66]

Form B: How satisfied are you with the direct involvement and influence you do have in:

Question/Scale (1 = very, 4 = not at all)	Non-Managers	Lower Managers	Mid-Managers
How to do your job/organize work	**1.63** [b]	1.63	1.35
Training	**1.99** [b]	1.65	1.60
Work schedules	**1.86** [a,b]	1.42	1.43
Pay raises	**2.59** [b]	2.46	2.11
Goals for group/dept.	**1.85** [b]	1.53	1.58
How to work with new equipment	1.77	1.44	1.72
Safety standards and practices	**1.68** [b]	1.53	1.37
Kinds of benefits offered	2.34	2.46	2.27
[Range of Ns]	[451-502]	[13-19]	[57-66]

Table 1(continued)

Influence on the job, desired influence, and satisfaction with influence

All respondents: Summary statements:

	Non-Managers	Lower Managers	Mid-Managers
Would you generally like to have more (1) influence, less influence (3), or keep things the way they are now (2)	1.35	1.48	1.32
Overall, how satisfied are with the influence you have (1 = very; 4 = not at all)	**2.07** [b]	**1.97** [c]	1.80
How much more influence would you have if There was a group of employees/managers who met regularly with upper management/upper management (1 = a lot more; 4 = no more)	**2.51** [a]	2.28	2.42
N	2049	117	242

Table 2: Preferences for Types of Employee Organizations

	Non-Managers	Lower Managers	Mid-Managers
If management selected to a committee to discuss problems would this be more or less effective: (for workplaces without unions or committees; Group A) (1 = more; 3 = less)	1.42 [b]	1.47	1.83
If employees chose their own representatives to meet with management would this be more or less effective (for workplaces without unions or committees; Group B) (1 = more; 3 = less)	1.54 [a]	2.04	1.61
Would you like an EI program? (Those who don't have; 3rd choice was "it depends.")			
Yes	66.5 %	57.1 %	57.5 %
No	28.1	35.7	29.9
Would you like a grievance procedure with outside* arbitration? (Those who don't have; 3rd choice was "it depends"):			
Yes	35.1	32.4	17.6
No	64.9	67.6	82.4

Table 2 is continued on next page

Footnotes: a = non-managers are significantly different from lower-level managers at .05; b = non-managers are significantly different from mid-managers at .05; z = significantly different from mid-managers at borderline levels of significance.

Table 2 (continued)

What type of employee organization would you prefer to settle issues (3rd choice was "do not want any outside organization")	Non-Managers	Lower Managers	Mid-Managers
Outside arbitrator	62.9	49.1	33.3
Management decides	35.1	49.1	62.8
Organization run by employees	10.3	5.3	2.2
Jointly – employees and management	88.5	93.8	95.7
Key participants are:			
Volunteers	25.5	25.7	26.5
Elected by employees	61.0	55.8	43.7
Appointed by management	10.0	15.0	23.1
Organization includes:			
Everyone but upper management	36.4	30.3	46.2
Only employees doing the same work	60.9	67.7	52.3
Organization has access to:			
Confidential information	54.3	46.2	41.8
Public information only	44.8	53.8	57.7
Organization has:			
Own budget and staff	39.5	39.0	32.7
Company budget and staff	59.6	60.0	65.9
Employees who participate need legal protection?			
Yes	50.6	44.8	37.3
No	49.4	55.2	62.7

ees truly demand organizations to voice their interests, they will create them.

Intra-Organizational Groups Formed by Managers

One increasingly common form of employee organization is the employee caucus and a variation of the employee caucus, the employee network group. Both are independent, relatively informal, self-organized nonunion groups that cover some of the employees within a single institution. According to Hyde, caucuses take two primary organized forms, employee pressure groups and networks of minority employees (Hyde 1993).[7] We discuss networks, based on social identities like race or gender, first, before surveying pressure groups.

Networks

Network groups apparently date from the early 1970s. They appeared as women and African Americans first entered management in significant numbers (Friedman, Kane, and Cornfield 1998). The first network groups, such as those at Xerox, started informally as African-Americans looked for mutual support (Friedman and Deinard 1996). Gradually the groups took on more issues, and became more formalized, with some writing mission statements, bylaws, and rules for nominating officers. As management recognized individual groups, many received small amounts of financial support. Today, typically this includes permission to use e-mail, copying machines, and hold meetings on company premises, sometimes during work hours, for group leaders. In return, where company support and company policies exist, network groups typically are open to anyone in the company, state their purpose, and have some sort of charter and leadership structure (Friedman and Craig 2001).

Friedman has developed a four-part definition of network groups based on extensive study (Friedman, Kane, and Cornfield 1998). The first defining feature of network groups is that they are organized on the basis of social identity such as gender, race, ethnicity, sexuality, disability, or veteran status. These groups typically include only a minority of potential members. Among ethnic groups, Blacks are more likely to join than Hispanics or Asians. Membership is usually open, even to white male employees, but in practice few outside of the group actually join. Groups may cross management/non-management boundaries or be limited to management employees in practice. Goals vary somewhat—a women's group may address breaking through the glass ceiling, a gay and lesbian

group may provide mutual support for coming out in the office—but groups typically address mentoring, networking, diversity support, and affirmative action.

The second element of network groups, according to Friedman, is that they are intra-organizational. Network groups do not exist as the local organizational entity of a larger body as locals do for unions. We find, however, that they are sometimes in contact with and draw from the experience of similar groups at other organizations. For instance, the website of Galaxe Pride@Work, the gay/lesbian/bisexual and transgendered employee group at Xerox Corporation, lists similar employee organizations at AT&T, Chevron/Texaco, Digital, DuPont, Ford, IBM, Intel, Lucent, Nynex, SBC, and the U.S. Federal Government. The website of the similar group at Ford links to both the group at Daimler-Chrysler and the local Michigan chapter of Pride at Work, a formal constituency group of the AFL-CIO. Of course, links between websites may or may not reflect real linkages between organizations, but activists in different corporations are clearly trying to learn from one another.

Thirdly, members themselves organize network groups and caucuses. This differentiates them from minority advisory boards selected and appointed by management to provide information on minority issues. Although as described above, many network groups receive support from and meet with management, they remain network groups so long as they are self-organized. Finally, network groups are publicly recognized or formally organized (Friedman, Kane, and Cornfield 1998). This differentiates them from the normal social networks that form in all organizations. At the same time, most tend to be relatively informal organizations.

At present, there is only minimal information available concerning the frequency of network groups. A survey of Fortune 500 service companies revealed that 29 percent had network groups (Friedman 1996), while a survey of National Black MBA Association members reported a similar 34 percent having network groups in their companies (Friedman, Kane, and Cornfield 1998).

Network group activities include self-help and organizational change. Self-help activities include mentoring systems, training and education, and informal trading of advice. Some groups celebrate ethnic holidays. In general these activities help members better adapt into the company as it currently exists. In contrast, activities aimed at organizational change include making contacts with decision-makers and lobbying them to change hiring policies or to institute diversity training.

Network groups have been careful to distance themselves from unions

(Friedman and Craig 2001). For instance, in a presentation to top management, network group leaders at GE included a slide that emphasized, "We are not unions" (Friedman and Carter 1993). Indeed, Hyde asserts that part of networks' appeal may be that they are not unions (Hyde 1993), presumably making them more acceptable to upper management and more attractive to managers who themselves have an antiunion outlook. In addition, networks may be careful not to engage in activities that look anything like collective bargaining, so that the company will not see them as unions or be seen as dealing with unions. Generally, HR managers and network group members believe that network groups should not focus heavily on shaping company policy (Friedman 1996).

Although network groups may be controversial when they first organize, in many companies they seem to have become largely accepted by upper management, at least as a tool to manage diversity. Networks vary in their practice and experience and that suggests that they broadly appeal to managers who fit into one of the demographic categories in which diversity issues have been salient. The networks provide some voice to members, although the voice is limited by its reliance on the approval of upper management. It is difficult to say how enduring employee networks would be if upper management started viewing them as obstacles. It does not appear that many network groups (if any) have potential for developing into unions for managers because they address a limited set of issues, they have a limited definition of membership (in terms of social identity) and they are typically limited to one employer (although they may be loosely linked to larger struggles for social equality for particular social groups).

Network groups might easily be dismissed as having nothing in common with unions. In fact, they have characteristics in common with mutual-aid and career-advancement unionism. Rather than band together to provide insurance, these workers band together for mutual support for survival and advancement within the employing organization. At times, they may use their collective and "moral" voice to pressure the employer around certain policies or practices although that is not their primary focus. These networks do not use formal bargaining strategies, but, as continuous worker associations, they seek to advance the work-related goals of their members. No matter how networks couch goals in terms of the corporate interest, those goals remain the goals of their members and not necessarily the goals of their employers.

Pressure groups

Hyde argues that "internal pressure groups . . . form in protest of *ad hoc* decisions" (1993, 602). By definition, pressure groups are concerned with effecting organizational change, usually around particular issues. Studies of this phenomenon do not appear to be numerous and much evidence is anecdotal. Hyde's research involved a single case study of this kind of caucus, and he acknowledged that it might not be a widespread phenomenon at all.

Hyde documents such a group at TekCo (1990), a large high-technology company. The company encouraged employees to use its computer bulletin board and closely monitored postings, taking action on suggestions to improve minority-hiring policies, to start a recycling program, and on many other issues. When the company announced a change in its profit-sharing plan, eliminating payments during quarters with low-sales growth, about a thousand postings overwhelmed the computer system, with most attacking the new policy. Management bowed to employee pressure and changed its profit-sharing formula. At the same time, two separate employee pressure groups were organized and then amalgamated into Employees for One TekCo. While management resisted formal employee representation, it did create a forum of randomly selected employees to discuss concerns with top management. Granted no authority, the forum was supposed to meet quarterly, but ended up meeting even less often.

Since Hyde documented the TekCo experience, there have been several examples of managerial-employee activism over unilateral changes in pension plans. IBM, AT&T and Verizon employees have all created pension-protection groups (Sanders 2000; Kahn 2000). These groups have attempted to bring pressure within companies, sometimes successfully (Kahn 2000), but have also been politically active. In fact, some pension protection groups like the Coalition for Retirement Security (http://www.pensions-r-us.org) and Career Employees Seeking Retention of Benefits cross firm boundaries.

It is difficult to evaluate the staying power of these organizations, although the Internet provides a cheap and easy way to communicate. One observer suggests "the Internet is spawning a new form of collective organization that is enabling once-compliant white collar workers to put pressure on management" (Kahn 2000). Other examples of successful employee activism involve both negative corporate publicity and lawsuits by groups of employees over particular legal matters. At the far end of the

range of this type of activity, we see class-action lawsuits against employment discrimination at a number of major U.S. corporations including, recently, Texaco and Coca Cola. Such lawsuits have, of course, a long history in the United States and include instances in which the "class" is organized by the judicial system once a small group initiates action. So while most pressure groups are not based on social identities, some obviously are.

Pressure groups most closely resemble collective-bargaining unionism. Workers are coming together, albeit on an ad hoc basis,to pressure employers to change a unilateral decision that has hurt workers—typically an employer "take-away" of an existing form of compensation like a relatively more generous pension plan. The organizations may or may not be permanent—they remind us in some respects of the temporary unions formed by workers in spontaneous strikes occasioned by wage cuts in the 1800s. Like those early unions that were created in the midst of struggle, the organizations may or may not be successful insofar as they rely in part on publicity, public opinion, and other indirect pressure tactics to change employer behavior. Increasingly, these efforts are moving into the arena of legal enactment, as groups pressure the government to provide protections after direct appeals to employers have failed. The groups that cross employer boundaries seem to offer more potential in this respect than the groups that are limited to one corporation. In either case, pressure groups combine managers, supervisors, and non-managerial employees into employee organizations with a common purpose.

Professional Associations for Managers

A much older form of organization for managers is the professional association. Hodson and Sullivan (1995) define a profession as " a high-status, knowledge-based occupation that is characterized by (1) abstract, specialized knowledge, (2) autonomy, (3) authority over clients and subordinate occupational groups, and (4) a certain degree of altruism." The process of professionalization begins with the formation of an organization or strengthening of existing ones followed by standardizing the body of knowledge members should have to practice the occupation. Licensure, degree requirements for entering the occupation, curricular standardization of courses of study, and other forms of certification are often promoted by professional associations.

Management is an occupation that has achieved only a partial degree of professionalization. Degree requirements for management are increasingly common but are by no means universal; they may include a

standardized MBA curriculum for business school certification and spe-cialty certification programs offered by a number of management organi-zations. Heckscher (1995) and others have advocated increased professionalization of middle management in the face of corporate downsizing and increased mobility of managers across organizations. Such professionalization conflicts with the reality noted by Kanter (1977) and Heckscher himself—the purportedly rational bureaucratic organization of the corporation relies in practice on informal networks of personal rela-tionships to provide for smooth day-to-day functioning. These networks are largely within a given organization; hence managers may lack suffi-cient autonomy and mobility to be true professionals. This is doubly true for first-level supervisors.

Despite the incomplete professionalization of management, a num-ber of associations of managerial employees exist. These have been in continuous existence at least since the founding of the Society for the Advancement of Management in 1912, although many organizations are of much more recent origin and new organizations seem to come into being fairly often. The largest organizations recruit members from among a broad pool of managers. The American Management Association with 700,000 individual members accepts any manager and even has members and chapters abroad. The National Management Association with 60,000 members recruits middle and lower-level managers and supervisors.[8] The Academy of Management, with 12,000 members, is largely an organiza-tion of scholars, but it is open to executives; about 1,000 executives are members. Most other organizations have a more narrow focus, generally recruiting members from a particular specialization, industry, or identity group. We identified the list of organizations in Table 3 primarily through searches of the Internet and organizational encyclopedias, and anecdotal information from actual managers. It is not meant to be comprehensive.

Functions

Managerial associations typically perform several functions. The usual over-arching goal is to gain professional status for management as an oc-cupation. The Strategic Account Management Association (2002), for instance, says it "is dedicated to the professional and personal develop-ment of executives charged with managing national, global, and strategic account relationships, and to elevating the profession as a whole." A characteristic that sets many managerial associations apart from other professional associations is the dual goal of advancing both the profession and the companies or organizations for which these professionals work.

Table 3
Management Professional Associations

	Membership	Staff	Website
General Organizations of Managers			
American Management Association^	80,000^	1000^	amanet.org
International Management Council of the YMCA	3000	1#	imc-ymca.org
National Management Association^	60,000^	29^	nma1.org
Specialized Organizations			
Alliance for Nonprofit Management	N/A	6	allianceonline.org
American Association of Airport Executives^	4500^	45^	airportnet.org
American Society of Association Executives	25,000	N/A	asaenet.org
American Society of Newspaper Editors	848	11	asne.org
Association for Services Management International	5000+	23	afsmi.org
Association of Internal Management Consultants	220	1	aimc.org
Association of Legal Administrators	9000	37**	alanet.org
Association of Proposal Management Professionals	1500	1	apmp.org
Casino Management Association	N/A	N/A	cmaweb.org
Clinical Laboratory Management Association	6300	25	clma.org
Club Managers Association of America	5000	35	cmaa.org
Computer Education Management Association	N/A	0	cedma.org
Construction Management Association of America	1200	10	cmaa.com
Institute of Management Consultants	2800	7	imcusa.org
International Association of Assembly Managers	N/A	22	iaam.org
International Association of Exhibition Management	3600	25	iaem.org
International Facility Management Association	19,000	N/A	ifma.org
Medical Group Management Association	19,000	28	mgma.com

Table 3 (continued)

Specialized Organizations (continued)	Membership	Staff	Website
National Association of Healthcare Access Management	850	2	naham.org
National Association of Institutional Linen Management	1600	6	naifm.org
National Association of Purchasing Management	48,000	86	napm.org
National Black MBA Association	5790	N/A	nbmbaa.org
National Contract Management Association	21,000	27	ncmahq.org
Product Development and Management Association	2400	3	pdma.org
Professional Convention Management Association	N/A	N/A	pcma.org
Professional Managers Association^	3000^	2^	N/A
Professional Services Management Association	245	7	psmanet.org
Project Management Institute	86,000	53	pmi.org or ism.ws
Society for Advancement of Management	11,000	1	enterprise.tamucc.edu/sam
Society for Information Management	2700	10	simnet.org
Society of Human Resource Management	165,000	218	shrm.org
Strategic Account Management Association	2000	16*	nams.org
Strategic Leadership Forum^	5000^	15^	slf-minnesota.org
Women In Management	1700	2	wimworks.org

Source for each organization is the website except for those marked ^. Number of staff was obtained by counting staff listed on the website. Source for organizations marked ^ is *Encyclopedia of Associations*, 2002.

* "key staff" only listed on website

** "professional staff" only listed on website

"adult program of the YMCA," presumably supported by the parent organization.

For example, the mission statement of the Society for Human Resource Management (2002) says that it will "[b]e the primary influencer of workplace policies and practices that benefit our *members and the organizations they serve*" (emphasis added).

Consistent with the sociological literature on the development of professions, the specific vehicles for this tend to be focused on education and in some cases, certification (for a detailed discussion of the educational activities of professional associations, see Hurd 2001).[9] The Project Management Institute (2004), for instance, emphasizes certification:

> Since 1984 PMI has been dedicated to developing and maintaining a rigorous examination-based, professional certification program to advance the project management profession and to recognize the achievements of individuals in project management.

Other profession-building activities include sponsoring research leading to better professional practice and annual awards to recognize outstanding professional practice.

These associations also provide services to help individual members in their careers. Virtually all of the listed organizations sponsor conferences; many also publish periodicals, reports, guides, and manuals relevant to the profession. These associations also provide various opportunities for networking, an important aspect of managerial work identified in the literature (Hodson and Sullivan 1995) (see, for instance, the website of the Strategic Account Management Association).

Perhaps a more important aspect of career assistance is employment security through mobility. Where management jobs were once thought to be highly secure, downsizing, restructuring, and the fast pace of change have decreased the belief in lifetime employment with a single employer. Heckscher (1995) argues that adopting the professional model for managers is the best way to cope with this altering of the social contract between companies and managers. Managerial associations frequently offer some sort of job-search service, job listings, a résumé-posting service, or at least the prospect that networking may lead to new employment opportunities. The Club Managers Association of America (2004), for example, has an Executive Career Services Department, that:

> provides the best and broadest range of career assistance to members and clubs. The Managerial Openings List, Mid-Management Career Opportunities List and Selective Search Bulletin offer all levels of club management position listings. . . . During the World

Conference on Club Management, the Career Services Center pro-
vides services that include job vacancy boards, résumé critiques
and mock video interviewing.

Managerial associations also engage in other mutual-aid activities by pro-
viding group insurance and discounts, special rates for university courses,
books, and/or tapes.

Like unions, many managerial associations participate in the politi-
cal process. However, their political activity is somewhat different from
that of the labor movement. The interests they push tend to be those of
the industry they are part of as well as the interests of the managers as
employees (something that also is done on occasion by unions). The
Computer Education Management Association (2004), for instance, has
a legislative action task force that "to influence US Legislative lan-
guage to allow equal opportunity for commercial training compa-
nies in educational entitlement processes." In their political activi-
ties, management professional associations begin to resemble industry as-
sociations. This may be related to the fact that they sometimes offer cor-
porate, as well as individual memberships.

In sum, managerial associations work to professionalize management
and assist members in career development. These activities have largely
been ones of mutual aid, occasionally mutual insurance, with career-assis-
tance components. Many also engage in legal-enactment strategies, but
they often blend the interests of their members as workers and the inter-
ests of the industries in which they work.

Usually they do not get involved in any representation of members'
interests within a particular employing organization. Nonetheless, they
are "continuous associations of wage earners for the purpose of improving
the conditions of their working lives." And, they have attracted tens to
hundreds of thousands of members who see at least some need for work-
related organizations independent of employers.

Collective Bargaining

Although the NLRA excludes private-sector managers and supervi-
sors from protection, some have still been able to engage in collective
bargaining. Many first-level supervisors in the construction industry are
union members and work alongside fellow employees on union projects.
Produce managers in retail food stores are typically part of union-bargain-
ing units. Officers on merchant-marine vessels have been union repre-

sented. The Railway Labor Act has somewhat different provisions than the NLRA with regard to determining who is managerial enough to be excluded from bargaining units (see Section 151.5th of the Act and the *National Mediation Board Representation Manual* (2004), available on line). Fewer individuals are classified as excluded from representation under the RLA than would occur under the NLRA because the case law that has developed looks at the preponderance of job functions of the individuals and weighs the degree to which the individual has a truly managerial or supervisory job. Hence, on the railroads, many first and second-level supervisors are represented by labor organizations, some in mixed units with non-supervisors and some in separate units.

More importantly, other jurisdictions both within and without the U.S. protect the rights of managerial workers to join unions and engage in collective bargaining. In some of those jurisdictions, large numbers of supervisors and managers have availed themselves of their right to be represented by a labor organization. Many European countries protect the rights of managerial employees to unionize and bargain collectively and again, many managers have exercised those rights (see EUROCADRES [Council of European Professional and Managerial Staff] website for a partial list of European unions with manager members). In countries that provide those rights, managers, including "senior managers," typically join or form their own labor organizations and negotiate separate collective-bargaining agreements. Alternatively, managers may be members of broader white-collar unions. For instance, Poole et al. (1983) report that 70 percent of the unionized managers in their British sample are in unions with non-management members. The content of managerial collective bargaining agreements includes elements that overlap with those covering non-management workers (sick pay, severance pay, work hours/time) and elements of special concern to managers (travel, liability issues, career and mobility issues) (Delamotte 1985). The Confederation Europeenne des Cadres (CEC) supports separate organization for managerial workers (*cadres*) and includes member organizations from each the European Union countries (*European Industrial Relations Review* 1994a, 31). EUROCADRES also represents managerial and professional workers at a European level but differs from CEC by focusing on "*cadres* …organized within the 'mainstream' of trade unions in each country, rather than through separate organizations" (*European Industrial Relations Review* 1994b).

If the European experience seems too distant—legally, politically, or culturally—from the United States, consider the U.S. public sector. Supervisors are afforded rights to representation in a number of states; in

some of the most populous states these rights not only cover first-level supervisors but also some higher-level supervisors and middle managers. These states include Alaska, Connecticut, Florida, Hawaii, Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, New Jersey, New York, and Washington. Although data on union membership among public-sector managers in these states is either not available or is unreliable, it is clear that many of those eligible are participating. New Jersey, the state with which we are most familiar (Eaton and Voos 2003), permits unionization for workers up to "executive" level managers. In the case of a state workforce of about 65,000, estimates are that only a few thousand employees are not eligible for bargaining. Of those eligible, only a few thousand have not sought and obtained union representation.[10] And, several hundred of those who are ineligible belong to a professional association of state managers that engages in lobbying on its members' behalf. Membership rates are also high in local government. It is interesting to note that the contracts for the low and mid-level supervisors do not differ in any notable way from those of the lower-level employees they supervise in most state agencies.

There is reason to think these rates are common in the other states as well. Overall public sector unionization rates (indeed, unionization rates in general) of these states are, with a couple of exceptions, the highest in the country.[11] That points to an important potential outcome of managerial unionism, higher union density, which in turn has other positive outcomes for unions and workers. Returning again to New Jersey, (relatively) high density in the state coupled with an active political strategy on the part of organized labor has substantially contributed to the election of Democrats in all statewide elections in the last five years. It further creates a climate of acceptance for day-to-day union activities within public sector employers that is much rarer in the private sector (Eaton and Voos 2003).

The public sector and European experiences suggest that when offered the option of traditional union representation and collective bargaining, many managers will choose that option. The 1991 General Social Survey (Davis and Smith 1994) included questions about union membership. Only 11.5 percent of the non-managers and 3.3 percent of the managers reported union membership in this sample.[12] While 38.8 percent of the non-represented non-managers expressed a desire for unionization, about half that proportion (17.5 percent) of managers indicated they would vote for a union in a representation election. Clearly, managers are less likely to demand union representation than non-managers.

Given the decades-long exclusion of managers from representation and the resulting structuring of thinking about who should and should not belong to unions, we find it more significant that a sizeable minority of managers are interested in union representation. About 24 percent of all U.S. employees (except in public administration) are either managers or supervisors according to the current population survey. If 17.5 percent of these managerial and supervisory employees were added to union ranks, there would be an additional four million union members in the United States. While this is an admittedly crude upper-bound estimate, it serves to demonstrate the point that union membership would receive a substantial boost if the managers and supervisors who would like to be represented by a union had an easy way to make that happen.

Conclusion

The legal exclusion of private-sector managerial employees from collective bargaining reflects deeply held views of what and who management is. In turn, it shapes and constrains our thinking about what is possible. In this paper, we have attempted to remove those constraints by exploring the potential for bringing managerial workers into an expanded definition of unionism. There is ample evidence for the desire of some, perhaps many, managerial workers to participate in a labor organization of some type and even evidence for interest in traditional collective bargaining.

Ignoring these opportunities carries dangers for the existing labor movement. The NLRA's dividing line between labor and management has created incentives for employers to redefine jobs to have a small managerial component and thus eliminate them from potential bargaining units. Some employers have clearly acted on those incentives (Keefe and Boroff 1994). The Supreme Court's enthusiasm for this line has also caused substantial and growing problems in organizing professional workers as the *Yeshiva*, *Healthcare Retirement Corporation*, and *Kentucky River* decisions make clear.

These problems argue for a redefinition of "employees" under the NLRA to cover both first-level supervisors and some other low to mid-level managers.[13] Given the unlikelihood of that redefinition anytime soon and given evidence of interest in alternative methods of unionism, the labor movement might consider alternatives to approaching this group of workers. Indeed, the traditional labor movement is already supporting or reaching out to the organizations that private-sector managers have created on their own. The AFL-CIO's constituency group Pride At Work

has informal links with some corporate gay and lesbian network groups. In fact, Pride At Work's membership includes individual members who may hold managerial jobs. The Professional Employees Department of the AFL-CIO has worked with professional associations that include both managerial and non-managerial engineers around immigration issues. Some AFL-CIO unions have expressed support for Working Today, an organization that seeks to provide portable benefits, other "career supports," and possibly political representation to workers who do not meet NLRA definitions of employees (Heckscher 2001, 76).

At the very least, the traditional labor movement could increase this outreach and support. The AFL-CIO's other constituency groups could reach out to identity-based network groups. More outreach to managerial professional associations could be done by the professional unions (perhaps along the lines of the AFT's affiliation with the NY Psychological Association), through the Professional Employees Department, or even through a return to the Federal Labor Union strategy of the early AFL as suggested by Cobble (2001). And, as traditional unions increase their experimentation with new forms of organization, they should consider ways of providing services and structures for managerial workers. In essence, unions can, and we believe should, approach these workers "where they are." Alternatively, managerial unionism might evolve on its own and in its own forms; ultimately, it would be important for an independent managerial labor movement to ally itself to the more traditional labor movement.[14]

Ignoring these workers undermines the labor movement's claim to broad representation of the U.S. workforce, a claim that is key to its social and political legitimacy. As Osterman et al argue, "to meet the preferences and the needs of a more representative cross-section of the work force, unions must move to an organizing and recruiting strategy and image that reaches individuals outside their core constituency" (2001, 123). Further, unions will need to "adopt the occupational, craft, and professional models of organizing and to view union membership as a lifelong commitment and relationship in which the union provides services aimed at maintaining members' employability and their access to changing job opportunities" (2001, 124).

We encourage the labor movement to reach out to these groups of employees not only because it is ultimately in the interest of the labor movement to do so, but also because it is in the interest of the employees involved to be represented by an independent labor organization. It seems clear to us that while professional associations, networks, and pressure

groups provide some benefits to their members, they are ultimately limited in the degree to which they are likely to eliminate the unmet need for greater voice at work on the part of managers and supervisors. Caucuses are limited to certain types of employees in identity groups defined by personal characteristics. They face realistic constraints on how much they advocate for workers' interest when that interest is not one of the employing corporation (as is inevitable on occasion), and are not likely to evolve in a way that increases their ability to engage in effective political or economic advancement of members' interests. Pressure groups appear to have difficulties maintaining themselves as permanent organizations with sufficient on-going bargaining power to effectuate change. Professional associations are constrained by the limited professionalization of management and by their ambivalence regarding whose interests—members or employers—they support when those interests differ. Managers and supervisors often need independent union representation, whether that is achieved through collective bargaining or one of the other methods of unionism.

Notes

1   Cobble's figures for supervisors, managers, and professionals excluded because of managerial responsibilities sum to 25,178,000, out of a total excluded (public and private) of 50,582,000.

2   In doing this, we relied on two questions, one that asked whether the respondent was a manager and a second that asked managers if they were lower, middle, or upper management. Respondents identifying as upper management were screened out by Freeman and Rogers. There were 2049 non-managers, 117 lower managers (who we assume are primarily first-level supervisors) and 242 mid-management respondents in the data we analyzed.

3   The legal status of supervisors was debated within the Dunlop Commission in 1994-95, in the last major effort to revise labor law. The legal status of supervisors differs substantially across states and has been a contentious issue in public-sector labor law (Eaton and Voos 2003). Furthermore, in numerous legal cases the supervisory status of various workers has been at issue, particularly for professional workers who arguably also have some supervisory duties (for a listing of a subset of these in the private sector, see Abraham, Eaton and Voos 2003).

4   The Worker Representation and Participation Survey asked many interesting questions about the forms of voice desired or preferred. Unfortunately,

most were either not asked of managers or were asked of managers in refer-ence to their role as managers rather than in their role as employees. In Table 2, we focus on the limited items asked of managers where they were either clearly or plausibly responding as employees.

5   Mid-managers expressed *more* doubts about the effectiveness of such com-mittees. When it comes to employee-chosen committees, however, lower managers differed from the other groups—seeing them as significantly less effective. (This may reflect concern among lower-level managers about the impact of employee-chosen committees on their own authority as manag-ers.) Strikingly, mid-managers saw employee-chosen committees as more effective than management-selected committees.

6   The findings of Freeman and Rogers on these questions were controversial within the labor movement. Our own view is that the organizations "work-ers want," like conflict-free marriages, are not realistic.

7   Hyde identifies another "form" of caucus: unorganized griping and net-working. These forms are typically too "unorganized" for our purposes.

8   Source for this was interviews with representatives, 10/5/00, 10/10/00, and 11/13/00.

9   While management has attained some degree of abstract specialized knowl-edge (management is widely taught in universities, for example), manage-rial organizations have not moved on to convince the public that special licensure is necessary for those entering the occupation, though the exist-ence of management certification programs may be a step in that direction.

10   BLS data indicates that 64 percent of workers in NJ state government are covered by a union contract, as are 71 percent in local government. We are confident that this is a substantial understatement.

11   In the eleven states with broadest coverage, 65 percent of local government and 60 percent of state government employees are unionized according to CPS data which likely underestimate membership. This compares to 50 percent and 37 percent in states with mixed coverage for different occupa-tional groups or first level supervisors only and 47 percent and 32 percent in states with some public sector bargaining but no coverage of supervisors.

12   The GSS is a regular personal interview survey of U.S. households con-ducted by the National Opinion Research Center (NORC) at the Univer-sity of Chicago. It includes a broad range of questions that are repeated over many years and are used by a wide range of social scientists. Questions about unions are not common in the GSS. This is, of course, an understate-ment of union membership, as measured in other surveys. The Bureau of Labor Statistics reports that 7.1 percent of workers in "executive, adminis-trative, and managerial" occupations were union represented in 2002.

13   Of course, unions should support legislation to expand the number of employees who are covered by federal labor law, just as many private sector unions supported legislation creating venues for the representation of public sector workers in many states.

14   The AFL-CIO is part of but is not the same as "the labor movement." The labor movement, in our view, clearly includes un-affiliated professional associations like the NEA and arguably a much wider array of organizations of or for workers.

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