

Journal of Industrial Relations (JIR)

CALL FOR PAPERS

Collective Action: Engaging Ideas, Interests and Institutions

Special Issue: *Journal of Industrial Relations*, Vol. 59(4), September 2017

**Symposium:
School of Management and Labor Relations, Rutgers University
17-18 March 2016**

**Symposium Organisers & Special Issue Guest Editors:
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This special issue probes innovation processes in workers' collective action around the world, inviting scholars to contribute papers on labour's attempts to develop new sources of solidarity, align group interests and leverage existing institutions to improve work standards and social security. In focusing on workers' agency and efforts to renew labour power resources, this journal issue seeks to challenge the dominant emphases in contemporary research on structural constraints and unions' declining influence.

The need for innovation in collective action could not be more pressing. As the global economy entered its third wave of integration, the interconnected fate of workers across the world has been thrown into stark relief. The growth of transnational competition has deeply challenged existing labour market institutions. Moreover, developments such as the IT-enabled modularization of global value chains, businesses' turn to self-regulation, and record levels of migration have triggered political realignments that pushed the major organizational vehicles for working-class power – labour unions and social democratic parties – into profound crises.

In terms of theory-building, the special issue is no less urgent. Its inquiry into labour actors' strategic capacity to identify, create and act upon new opportunities is conceived in genuinely global terms that combine attention to transnational processes with cross-regional comparisons. It thus seeks to address long-standing criticisms of country-focused scholarship, without abandoning the unique leverage of country and regional expertise.

Industrial relations (IR) scholars are well-placed to drive forward multidisciplinary theorizing on the changing governance of work across the world. The relational focus at the core of IR research is particularly attentive to changing distributions of power and control,

which facilitates exploration of the processes behind collective action and the patterns of interaction between collective actors (Tapia et al. 2015). Moreover, industrial relations scholars have a strong record of leveraging empirical studies of distributional conflicts for theorizing the complex patterns of conjunctural causation in the world of work (Jackson et al. 2013).

In the quest to explain the evolving politics of cooperation, we invite work that employs the rich conceptual repertoire that has been developed for studying concertation and coordination as logics of collective action (see Ornston and Schulze-Cleven 2015). The editors particularly encourage contributors to pick up where earlier scholarship on union revitalization left off (Frege and Kelly 2004), and to explore promising points of intersection with theorizing on social movements in sociology and historical institutionalism in political science. By engaging in constructive multidisciplinary dialogue on how to move beyond common reductionist assumptions, including narrow notions of economic rationality and equilibria, such an endeavour promises a better conceptualization of the shifting political dynamics at the work-welfare nexus. Comparative and transregional proposals are particularly welcome. Key questions guiding the special issue include:

- How have labour actors around the world changed the framing of common causes and their mobilization strategies, either within unions (Gumbrell-McCormick and Hyman 2013) or in alternative and less institutionalized forms of organization?
- Have workers experimented with new sites of contestation and accommodation, including cities and global supply chains, as complements to national arrangements (Kaine and Wright 2015)?
- Outside of public statutes and private collective bargaining, what other forms of regulation have labour activists pursued (Hassel 2008)? Are these alternative regulations effective? Have such efforts complemented or crowded out public regulations and industrial relations institutions?
- How have workers leveraged constraints – from labour’s internal organization to aspects of the external environment (Caraway et al. 2015, Schulze-Cleven and Weishaupt 2015) – into new initiatives?
- What are the effects of new technologies – including internet-based forms of communication – on labour power? Have they helped facilitate worker mobilization and solidify otherwise transient solidarities (Heckscher and McCarthy 2014)?
- What strategic approaches have other industrial relations actors – including employers and the state – taken towards labour’s collective action (Katz et al. 2015)? Have actor strategies converged or diverged across countries (Katz and Darbishire 2000), and what are their implications for transregional processes?
- What have workers in China – a critical player in the third wave of globalization – learned from their counterparts abroad about increasing power through collective action in the country’s particular political-economic context (Liu and Smith 2016, Elfstrom and Kuruvilla 2014, Chan 2012, Lee 2007)?
- How can regional or national cases be comparatively contextualized to yield insights into broader causal processes and institutional changes (Pierson 2003)?
- What are the lessons for developing institutionalist theorizing on innovative collective action, including agents’ abilities to use and recombine ideational and material endowments (Herrigel 2010)?

Symposium and Special Issue Process:

While participation in the symposium is not a mandatory condition for submission to this special issue, we strongly encourage it. Abstracts of between 250 and 500 words should be submitted to transformingwork@gmail.com by 15 December 2015. The abstracts should clearly indicate the relevance of the proposed paper to the special issue theme, and outline the aims, method and significance of the proposed paper.

The organisers aim to advise the authors if their abstracts have been accepted by 31 December 2015. Authors are expected to submit full papers (formatted to *JIR* standards) by 1 March 2016. This will ensure that the papers can be distributed to other participants for their perusal prior to the symposium. Following the event, authors will have until 15 June 2016 to submit their papers to the *JIR*'s online submission system for peer review. Final revised versions of accepted papers must be submitted to the *JIR* by 1 March 2017.

Timeline for the *JIR* September 2017 special issue:

- 15 December 2015 – Deadline for submission of abstracts to the symposium organizers at transformingwork@gmail.com
- 31 December 2015 – Notification of acceptances and invitations to write full papers
- 1 March 2016 – Deadline for full paper submissions for presentation at symposium
- 17-18 March 2016 – Symposium at Rutgers University-New Brunswick, USA [Questions related to the content and logistics of the symposium should be directed to the organisers, whose contact details are below.]
- 15 June 2016 – Deadline for submission of papers to the *JIR*'s online submission system for peer review
- 1 March 2017 – Deadline for submission of accepted papers to the *JIR*
- September 2017 – Publication of *JIR* Special Issue, Vol. 59(4).

Guidelines for Contributors:

- The length of the full manuscript (including references, tables, etc.) should be between 7,000-8,000 words (max). Please note that it is not possible for us to include papers that exceed this length, nor can we accommodate a large number of tables or figures.
- The anonymised manuscript should include a separate title page with the author's affiliation and full contact details, including the author's (or each author's) full name, institution, postal address, email address, phone and fax numbers (noting the corresponding author). Authors should also provide a brief biographical note (100 word limit) on the title page.
- The manuscript should include a brief abstract (150-200 words) and 3-5 keywords.
- The manuscript should follow the Harvard (author, date) system of referencing, with endnotes (if necessary and kept brief) rather than footnotes.
- For the full *JIR* submission guidelines and style guide, please consult the *JIR* website at <http://jir.sagepub.com>.

JIR Online Submission Process:

Visit <http://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/jir> to login and submit your article online to the *JIR*.

To submit a manuscript, follow these steps:

1. Navigate to the JIR's *ScholarOne Manuscripts* site at <http://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/JIR>.
2. If you are not already registered, to submit a manuscript you will first need to register with the system.
3. To register, click the **Create Account** tab for new users.
4. Supply the requested information.
5. You will need to enter information in fields marked with "req."
6. Please take note of the user ID and password you create, to log into the system in the future.
7. Once your account is created, click the link to log in.
8. To submit a manuscript, click the **Author Center** link, and then select **Click here to submit a manuscript**.

IMPORTANT: Please check whether you already have an account in the system before trying to create a new one. If you have reviewed or submitted a paper to the journal in the past year, it is likely that you already have an account.

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