Reversing the “Model”

Thoughts on Jane McAlevey’s Plan For Union Power

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Contents

Jane McAlevey with Bob Ostertag, *Raising Expectations (and Raising Hell): My Decade Fighting for the Labor Movement* (London: Verso, 2014), 329 pages.

Jane McAlevey, *No Shortcuts: Organizing for Power in the New Gilded Age* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016), 253 pages.

Jane McAlevey, *A Collective Bargain: Unions, Organizing, and the Fight for Democracy* (New York: Ecco, 2020), 288 pages.

When Jane McAlevey talks about organizing, people listen. In the fall of 2019, McAlevey delivered an organizing training session via Zoom with translation gear to some 1,400 people in forty-four countries. When she broadcast more weekly sessions under Covid-19 isolation conditions, over 3,000 people logged in.[1] With organized labor in decline and crisis around the world, it's no wonder so many victory-starved leaders, activists, and sympathizers tuned in to hear this experienced union organizer explain her remedy for labor's long-standing ills. McAlevey, a community organizer turned labor organizer, turned academic, turned union consultant has a lot to say about the ills of labor and the craft of organizing. If you missed the Zoom series, you can read it in great detail in the three books she has written in the last several years. Rather than reviewing them separately or trying to grapple with over 800 pages of narrative, I'll attempt to summarize and critically analyze McAlevey's basic themes, methods, and analyses, though not necessarily in the order in which they appear in the three books.

First is McAlevey's useful distinction between organizations that engage in advocacy, mobilization, and actual organizing. Advocacy is the sorts of thing NGOs (non-government organizations) do that don't really involve their typically poor clients except in walk-on parts. Mobilization is the practice of many unions in which the members are occasionally activated for a campaign or even a strike and then sent back in silence to the workplace. United Auto Workers organizer and dissident Jerry Tucker used to call this the spigot approach—turning the flow of worker action on and off by command. McAlevey pretty much dismisses these approaches to social change and insists that organizing is meant to produce permanent sustainable worker organization and power. This, of course, is one reason why people pay attention when she speaks or writes.

Central to all three books and to her approach to revitalizing the labor movement is her model of organizing. This model, and she insists it is a model, can be found in schematic form in *No Shortcuts* (*54–55*), but is presented throughout these works in the context of gripping stories of her experiences as a union organizer, official, and consultant that bring the model to life. It has to be said, as well, that the organizing drives, contract negotiations, and campaigns she leads across these many pages, unlike many in recent decades, end up winning.

The model she advocates does not exist in a vacuum. It is explicitly counterposed to the narrower approach she attributes to legendary community organizer Saul Alinsky

[1] Liza Featherstone, "The Left in Lockdown" *Jacobin*, May 17, 2020.

and employed by many US unions, according to McAlevey. This is particularly the case in the years since John Sweeney became head of the AFL-CIO in the mid-1990s in an attempt to revive a slumping labor movement. Since it is painfully obvious that neither the top-down reforms implemented by Sweeney's "New Labor," as she calls it, nor the limited innovations in organizing tactics that have succeeded in turning things around for the labor movement as a whole actually work, McAlevey's counterposed organizing model has a lot of credibility.

The purpose of the model, McAlevey insists, is to activate workers so they can express and use the power they have in both the workplace and the community. It is not simply to increase union numbers at any cost, as her former employer, the Service Employees International Union (SEIU), often prioritizes, but to increase worker power. The initiative in her examples comes from the organizer whose job is to identify and develop the organic leaders in the workplace. This is not a simple task. Organic leaders are not necessarily the first persons to step forward during an organizing drive, much less the "loudmouth" who sometimes stands up to the boss. Rather it is the person in the work group to whom others look for advice or help in various aspects of life as well as on the job. Such natural leaders may be anti-union, as some of her experiences reveal, but it is the job of the organizer to win them over if possible. Identifying such leaders is only the first step. She cites William Z. Foster, former syndicalist and Communist Party leader in the 1930s, to the effect that "Organizers do not know how to organize by instinct, but must be carefully taught" (*No Shortcuts,* 33). The next task is to train new leaders in organizing methods.

Part of the training of organic leaders and, more generally, the rank-and-file, is the continuous charting or mapping of the workplace to locate the strengths and weaknesses of the organization and campaign. This becomes the basis for further actions. Along with this are what she calls "structure tests." These are essentially escalating collective actions that create confidence, demonstrate and test power, and build a solid majority of about 80 percent in order to win a representation election or eventually 90 percent to carry out a winning strike. Along with this goes "inoculation," preparing workers for the lies and barriers management or their hired union-busting guns will throw up to thwart the union drive. So far, all of this is pretty well known at least to the best union and workplace organizers. These ideas, without the official organizers' "lingo"—to use McAlevey's own term—can be found in *Secrets of a Successful Organizer* published by the worker education center *Labor Notes*, which draws on the experience of rank-and-file workplace organizers, activists, and leaders as well as union staff organizers.[2]

What is more original is McAlevey's approach to the post-representation phase of union organizing: the negotiation and campaign to win a first contract. As she points out, winning the first contract is a major stumbling block and almost half of new unions

[2] Alexandra Bradbury, Mark Brenner, and Jane Slaughter, *Secrets of a Successful Organizer* (Brooklyn: A Labor Notes Book, 2016).

fail to gain a first agreement. Most unions separate the representation phase from that of negotiating the contract. Once the union has won recognition, the organizers are pulled and sent elsewhere, and a new crew of professional negotiators along with lawyers is brought in. After all, negotiating a contract these days is complex. McAlevey argues convincingly that the two phases need to be continuous and connected in terms of personnel—for one thing because the organizers have presumably developed the trust of the workers. For another, the employers and their unscrupulous hired guns don't stop fighting, lying, and throwing up barriers once negotiations start. Quite the opposite.

Not only does McAlevey insist that the organizers must still lead the fight, but that negotiations should be open to any and all members. Many unions have rank-and-file "negotiating committees," but these famously sit in the hall or the next room forced to thrive on pizzas while the officials and lawyers do the real negotiating. McAlevey brings the workers and their leaders into the negotiating session. Some are trained to present demands; many come and go at lunch or break time. The horrified faces of management that she describes and their ineffective protests at such unconventional interventions build the solidarity of the workers. For readers who haven't experienced anything quite like this, her descriptions make terrific reading.

All of these organizing techniques, McAlevey argues, need to be developed in a strategic context. Simply responding to random "hot shops" where workers contact a union for help will not expand labor's power sufficiently to make a difference (*No Shortcuts,* 202–3). Union campaigns should be "industrial or geographic" in nature. In particular, she emphasizes service industries that can't be moved abroad, notably education and healthcare, which also have the advantage of close community connections. Her own experience in healthcare organizing is a clear example of an industrial orientation. In such strategic campaigns, for example, experienced organizers can draw "on workers in the same union but in a different unionized facility, who have experience winning hard-to-win NLRB [National Labor Relations Board] elections and big strikes..." (*A Collective* Bargain, 158–9). This strategic emphasis seems sensible but certainly leaves a lot of unorganized workers, who don't fit the strategy de jour, out of the picture.

Despite the vivid narrative and the positive ideas, as I read through these three books, I became more aware of McAlevey's emphasis on the initiative of the professional organizer (or officer or consultant) in virtually every phase of union life. Although I had been on a panel with McAlevey and heard her speak a few years ago, I hadn't picked up this consistent, at times overarching, emphasis on domination by staff organizers in representation elections, contract campaigns, and even strikes. Despite my own long-time emphasis on rank-and-file initiative and power, like most people concerned with the future of unions, I recognize that organizers are an important part of the labor movement. I even did a stint as one back in the day. They are often thrust onto the front lines of combat with capital, make personal sacrifices, and do, indeed, help workers get organized to gain representation, win an initial contract, conduct a victorious strike, and sometimes build workplace organization. To be fair, in *No Short Cuts* McAlevey attacks the notion put forward by some organizing directors "that the workers often get in the way of union growth deals" (51). Nevertheless, throughout the three books, it is *professional organizer initiative* that recurs again and again and plays the central and dominant role in all the campaigns she is directly involved in, and even in some cases where this emphasis is misplaced, such as her discussions of the teachers' unions in Chicago (*No Shortcuts,* 101–42) and Los Angeles (*A Collective Bargain,* 199–231). The initiative of countless "untrained" workplace organizers and the part played by experience in their development is by and large absent.

Simple numbers and common sense dictate that unions cannot possibly be revitalized, democratized, and massively expanded through the initiative of professional organizers and other staffers alone. They simply cannot do everything and be everywhere during every day in a movement of millions trying to organize tens of millions. Failures aside, their successes at best produce incremental growth that cannot even keep up with membership attrition. Even the multiplication of such organizers several times over, though it would help matters, could not possibly produce the sort of exponential growth in both numbers and power needed to shift the balance of class forces that McAlevey and the rest of us desperately seek.

Without grassroots initiative, day in and day out, of countless unidentified workplace organizers—be they organic leaders, activists, or interested members with titles no grander than shop steward or local union officer—unions cannot function, let alone grow. McAlevey's idea of using unionized workers to approach the unorganized in the same industry is obviously a good one. But if this is left only to the *initiative* of labor's too few, overworked organizers, it won't be nearly enough. Worse yet, if this sort of worker- to-worker organizing occurs only with the *permission* of top leaders, which is typically the case, it will never be enough, or display the sort of initiative that can impress the unorganized and give them a sense of ownership in the union. Clearly, it will take much more of the sort of worker self-activity and initiative we saw among industrial workers in the 1930s, or among public employees in the 1960s and 1970s, and that we have seen recently in the 2018–19 strikes of education workers, as well as the first signs of action by workers at Amazon, Instacart, Uber, and other corners of the digitalizing economy in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic. I will look in greater detail at this question below. To investigate the problem further, however, we need to look at what McAlevey sees as the roots of union decline over the last half century.

"Who Killed the Unions?"

This is the title of a key chapter in McAlevey's most recent book, *A Collective Bargain: Unions, Organizing, and the Fight for Democracy,* the most "big picture" of her three books. The bulk of her answer to this question is straightforward: Taft-Hartley and subsequent court decisions, professional union-busters, and globalization. Each of these has played an important role in throwing up barriers to organizing—at least in those all too few cases where workers or a union even attempt to seek representation. Taft-Hartley gives the boss a legal advantage, the union-busters provide the muscle and intimidation, while globalization allows employers to threaten to move abroad and close up shop. The record shows that these are, indeed, frequently effective in derailing organizing drives and first-contract campaigns. This story is true as far as it goes, although it downplays the far more persistent role of management in fighting and demoralizing unions and workers, day in and day out. It is also the official union leadership's explanation for the decline, retreat, and crisis of the organizations they lead. The problem with this story is that it lets the top leadership, the union hierarchy, off the hook for its own role in the crisis of organized labor, certainly in the US.

This is not a question of good or bad people. All union leaders are not the same. Some are clearly much better than others, and that can make a difference. The problem lies in the whole practice of bureaucratic business unionism that emerged in the US most clearly during and after World War II. Taft-Hartley and McCarthyism played a role in this to be sure, but business unionism as a philosophy and practice had its roots way back in the era of Samuel Gompers and his "pure and simple" unionism. The post-World War II expansion and modernization of this old view, however, was based primarily in the simultaneous abandonment of fighting over control of the workplace and labor process in favor of focussing on wages and benefits—America's "private welfare state." This, in turn, led to an increased insulation of the leadership, administration, and conduct of bargaining from the membership. Along with this came the unions' turn from a broader social agenda, their political defeat, and Taft-Hartley. Labor historian Nelson Lichtenstein has controversially, but correctly, called this turn away from efforts to win broad social gains politically toward the private welfare state a "product of defeat, not victory."[3]

By the early 1950s, this defeat included productivity bargaining that linked wages and benefits to worker productivity increases (and hence speed-up) and, more recently, lean production, extreme work standardization, digitally driven tasks, surveillance, and so forth. Even before this, the inclusion in most contracts of "managements' rights" (to control the workplace) and "no-strike" clauses (during the life of the contract) became a feature of bargaining that surrendered the unions' ability to fight over working conditions and their members' ability to resist through direct action.

Instead, union members got the multilayered grievance procedure that postponed settlement and stripped workers of a major source of power. McAlevey is justifiably critical of such grievance procedures but doesn't recognize their roots in this fundamental compromise with management. The surrender of shop-floor power to management also involved the side-stepping of labor's own racial problems in its organized work sites, which, among other things, led to the failure of "Operation Dixie," the CIO's at-

[3] Nelson Lichtenstein, *State of the Union: A Century of American Labor* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002), 99–100.

tempt to organize the South in the late 1940s, thus further undermining labor's growth and bargaining power.

All of this led to a decade or so of worker rebellion in the 1960s and 1970s by Black and white workers—often inspired by the civil rights movement and characterized by rank-and-file caucuses, Black caucuses, wildcat strikes, contract rejections, and the energizing of a new generation of industrial workers. With few exceptions union leadership did everything possible to crush the rebellion, helping to diminish rather than harness the energy of this social upsurge.[4] Such growth as labor experienced in that period came largely from the self-initiative of public sector workers, a process I participated in twice as a rank-and-file volunteer activist and leader, and once as a staff organizer.

The decline of the unions in terms of numbers, organizing efforts, victories, and the use of the strike accelerated in the aftermath of this failed rebellion as union leaders turned to wage and benefit concessions, labor-management cooperation schemes, two-tier wage systems, and an increased reliance on rightward moving Democratic politicians and pressure tactics that did not depend on worker self-activity. This disarmed the labor movement as a whole without in any way blunting capital's offensive against the unions and workers in general. In 1979, United Auto Workers' president Doug Fraser referred to capital's offensive as "one-sided class war."[5]

Among the shocks that introduced labor's retreat and the entire neoliberal era were the 1980–82 double-dip recession that destroyed millions of unionized manufacturing and other jobs, the Chrysler bailout and associated union concessions that ended pattern bargaining in auto, setting the precedent for other industries, and US president Ronald Reagan's firing of the striking air traffic controllers. But it was the subsequent behavior and practices of the union leadership of the major unions, with few exceptions, that further institutionalized long existing inclinations toward class collaboration. This, in turn, has made it even more difficult to organize the unorganized, a side of the story missing in McAlevey's analysis of union decline.

Unions are contradictory organizations. They are both institutions and social movements meant to combat the pressures of capital on wages and conditions.[6] The tendency toward bureaucratization in unions is not an example of Robert Michel's "iron law of oligarchy," nor an inevitable "Weberian" cure for large organizations. The problem stems from the leadership's position as negotiators caught between the demands of capital not only for lower immediate costs, but for the long-term profitability and

[4] For multiple examples of this see Aaron Brenner, Robert Brenner, and Cal Winslow, eds., *Rebel Rank and File: Labor Militancy and Revolt from Below During the Long 1970s* (London: Verso, 2010); Heather Ann Thompson, *Whose Detroit? Politics, Labor, and Race in a Modern American City* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2001).

[5] Kim Moody, *US Labor in Trouble and Transition: The Failure of Reform from Above, the Promise of Renewal from Below* (London: Verso, 2007), 104.

[6] See, for example, Sheila Cohen, *Ramparts of Resistance: Why Workers Lost Their Power and How to Get It Back* (London: Pluto Press, 2006), 149–73.

survival of the business in the vortex of real capitalist competition, on the one hand, and the needs of the membership, on the other. To deal with this contradictory situation the elected leadership tends to insulate itself and its institutional resources from membership pressure, while nonetheless occasionally calling on that membership to give it the power it needs in negotiations to resist management's pressure—up to and including a strike. It is this dilemma that gives the "union," that is the top leadership in particular, the appearance of being a "third party" as McAlevey describes it in *No Shortcuts* (96).

McAlevey, of course, is right that the union is not a "third party", as some management experts would have it, but a working class institution. Nevertheless, it is one that necessarily attempts to mediate the contradictions inherent in the capital-labor relationship. This is one reason why almost all the "reforms" and "new" tactics of the 1990s and beyond implemented by the officialdom have emphasized forms of pressure that bypassed the self-activity of the membership: corporate and "leverage" campaigns; the fake counter position of "organizing" and "service" models; union mergers that give the appearance of growth while increasing bureaucracy; the conglomerate nature and fragmented departmentalism of most unions resulting from mergers; the recruitment of former student radicals rather than members as organizers; "neutrality," or as McAlevey calls them "election procedure agreements" with management to facilitate organizing; the election of Democrats of any sort at all levels, and the insane split in the movement with the formation of the Change-to-Win federation in 2005.

It is also a fact that in most unions organizers are accountable to the union officialdom that hired them, not to the membership or those they are organizing. Some organizers maintain a good deal of autonomy and initiative, as McAlevey did in her time with the SEIU in Las Vegas vividly described in *Raising Expectations*. Nevertheless, organizers are responsible to those who pay their wages, send them where *they* want them, and supply or deny them resources to carry out their assignment. There is, of course, no law that organizers cannot be chosen by the union membership just as the leaders are, but that would rub against the grain of business unionism even at its best.

There is an alternative, or at least a strong countertendency, to this long-standing trend toward bureaucratization of the unions and the routinization of collective bargaining away from the influence of the membership. It lies in union democracy stemming first of all from *direct* democracy and worker-initiative in the workplace, most commonly in the form of elected and *collective* workplace organization—not just isolated stewards buried in case work. The "representative democracy" characteristic of most unions is insufficient to create leadership and staff accountability. This is because it involves only the occasional exercise of selection within a structure in which incumbent leaders have control of union resources and lines of communication. More often than not, the officialdom is capable of constructing a machine or loyal network strong enough to prevent the erosion of its power even if the individuals at the top change from time to time. It is for this reason that simply running slates against incumbent leaders seldom changes things significantly.[7]

This is where the idea of rank-and-file movements based in strong workplace organization, caucuses, and networks that connect the various worksites comes into the picture. I will discuss this below in the context of McAlevey's discussion of the reform movements in the Chicago and Los Angeles teachers' unions as well as the 2018–19 upsurge in teacher strikes. But first, let's look at the final point in her explanation of "who killed the unions?" It's one of the top leadership's most effective alibis—globalization.

Imports, Outsourcing, and "The Other"

One of the most common explanations for labor's decline and retreat in the United States coming from union organizers, leaders, and sometimes friendly think tanks and academics is the loss of American jobs to overseas outsourcing and/or imports. To be sure, fingers are pointed at the employers who do this outsourcing and importing, but the focus is inevitably on the foreign "other." The foreign perpetrators have changed somewhat over time from the Japanese steel and automakers of the 1970s and 1980s, to the Mexican *maquiladoras* of the 1990s and 2000s, and most recently, of course, the Chinese who seem to make everything and be everywhere even though they account for just one-fifth of US imports. The story has just enough truth to be credible. Jobs in some industries such as textiles and garment have been all but wiped out by imports, while inputs to other goods production have gone overseas.

The Case of Steel

One of the unions that routinely points to imports as the major source of lost jobs is the United Steelworkers of America (USWA). Steelworker employment has, indeed, plunged in the last four decades or more, as has the membership of the USWA. Imports are one factor in this job loss, but by no means the only or even the most important cause. Another is productivity. To put it simply, the workforce in US steel production fell by about 6 percent between the early 1980s and 2017 while the "man-hours" required to produce a ton of steel fell by 85 percent. The major reason for this was the rises of electric arc (AR) "mini-mills" that require far less labor per ton than traditional basic oxygen furnace (BOF) mills.

Imports rose to about a quarter of US steel consumption by the 1980s and to an average of 30 percent between 2012 and 2018, after which they fell back to 25 percent. Mini-mills, on the other hand, have risen from 31 percent of domestic production in the 1980s to around 60 to 65 percent in the last two decades. This is about 50 percent of

[7] For the best detailed discussion of building union democracy see Mike Parker and Martha Gruelle, *Democracy is Power: Rebuilding Unions from the Bottom Up* (Detroit: A Labor Notes Book, 1999).

total consumption, a far larger share than imports. Employment in BOF mills, where almost all union members work, of course fell over the years. What seems clear is that more of these lost union jobs fell to productivity, on the one hand, and the shift of domestic production to non-union mini-mills, on the other, than to imports. The USWA did little to resist job reorganization or to organize the mini-mills.[8]

One of the problems with citing imports, including outsourced intermediate inputs, as an explanation for the loss of union jobs, however, is that US manufacturing output as measured by the Federal Reserve grew by about 130 percent, or a fairly healthy 3.5 percent average a year, over the neoliberal period from 1982 to 2019.[9] Even if imports took a significant bite out of US production, growth on this scale should have created jobs. That is, imports could explain why domestic production grew somewhat more slowly than in the "golden" pre-global era of the 1950s and 1960s, but they cannot account for such a massive loss of manufacturing jobs within this level of growing domestic output. The reason for this scale of job loss lay primarily in the double whammy of recurrent recessions resulting from capitalist turbulence and productivity gains from management's application of lean production and work-pacing technology. That is, the contradictory course of capital accumulation, on the one hand, and management-led class struggle, on the other, drastically reduced employment in manufacturing despite significant growth in output. Table I shows the loss in manufacturing production jobs during the four major recessions of the neoliberal era.

Table I

Manufacturing Production Jobs Lost During Recessions

[8] International Trade Administration, "Steel Imports Report: United States," May 2020, *Global Steel Trade Monitor*, Legacy.trade.gov; Bruce A. Blonigen, Benjamin H. Liebman, and Welsey W. Wilson, "Trade Policy and Market Power: The Case of the US Steel Industry," *NBER Working Paper Series*, Working Paper 13671, December 2007, www.researchgate.net) the US Steel Industry/figures?lo=1; Frank Giarratani, Ravi Madhavan, and Gene Gruver, "Steel Industry Restructuring and Location," (Pittsburgh: Center for Industry Studies, University of Pittsburgh), May 7, 2012; Nicholas Tolomeo, Michael Fitzgerald, and Joe Eckelman, "US Steel Sector Thrives as Mills Move Up Quality Ladder," *Insight*, S&P Global Platts, May 9, 2019; Associated Press, "A Trump Weighs Tariffs, US Steelmakers Enjoy Rising Profits", March 13, 2018.

[9] Federal Reserve Statistical Release, Industrial Production and Capacity Utilization, G.17 (419), December 17, 2019, www.federalreserve.gov.

Years[(1)]	**Manufacturing**
1979–1982	2,751,000
1990–1991	663,000
2001–2003	2,198,000
2008–2010	1,797,000
Total	**7,409,000**

If repeated recessions eliminated jobs on a monumental scale, significant productivity growth between recessions prevented the recovery of the vast majority of these jobs once growth resumed. Between 1990 and 2000 productivity in manufacturing rose annually by 4.1 percent, while from 2000 to 2007, just before the Great Recession, it increased by an average of 4.7 percent a year.[10] This was sufficient to hold down job growth despite a significant increase in manufacturing output per year from recession trough to recovery highpoint in the 1980s (4.1 percent) and 1990s (6.4 percent). From 2001 to 2007 output grew by an annual average of only 2.8 percent, compared to 4.1 percent for productivity costing some two million jobs even before the next recession. From 2009 to 2019 output grew by 2.4 percent a year, and productivity increased by about 2.5 percent so that manufacturing employment grew only slowly by about 1 percent a year, mostly in lower-productivity jobs.[11] The embrace of labor-management cooperation by union leaders and the acceptance of lean production and work-intensifying technology that enabled these levels of productivity cost millions of jobs.

[10] Bureau of Labor Statistics, "Labor Productivity and Costs," data.bls.gov; Conference Board, International Comparisons of Manufacturing Productivity and Unit Labor Costs Trends, 2012 (New York: Conference Board, 2013), 7.

[11] Bureau of Labor Statistics, "Production and Nonsupervisory Employees," 2019; The FRED* Blog, "How's Manufacturing"; for a more detailed analyses of why imports are not the major culprit and productivity matters, see Kim Moody, *On New Terrain: How Capital Is Reshaping the Battleground of Class War* (Chicago: Haymarket Books, 2017), 8–13, 191–5; Kim Moody, "Productivity, Crises and Imports in the Loss of Manufacturing Jobs," *Capital & Class*, 44, no. 1 (2020): 47–61.

(1) From January of first year to December of last.
Source: BLS (2018d) "Production and Nonsupervisory Employees, Total Private, Manufacturing," Data, Tables & Calculators by Subject; National Bureau of Economic Research, "US Business Cycle Expansions and Contractions," 2012.

(1) From January of first year to December of last.
Source: BLS (2018d) "Production and Nonsupervisory Employees, Total Private, Manufacturing," Data, Tables & Calculators by Subject; National Bureau of Economic Research, "US Business Cycle Expansions and Contractions," 2012.
(1) From January of first year to December of last.
Source: BLS (2018d) "Production and Nonsupervisory Employees, Total Private, Manufacturing," Data, Tables & Calculators by Subject; National Bureau of Economic Research, "US Business Cycle Expansions and Contractions," 2012.

Pinning all this job loss on "globalization" lets the labor officialdom off the hook in two damaging ways. First it reinforces the sort of labor nationalism that sees the foreign "other," rather than the home-based boss as the culprit. At its worst this has been expressed in the "Buy American" slogan of the 1970s and 1980s, a lingering sentiment that Trump has played effectively. Even at its most liberal where, for example, concerns for the negative impact of NAFTA on Mexican workers in the maquiladora plants are sometimes expressed, this approach still encourages nationalist sentiments and takes the fight for secure and decent employment out of the hands of workers and into those of the lobbyists and legislators who are supposed to stem this tide of foreign goods with "fair trade."

Second, while even the strongest of unions with the best of leaders could do little in the context of collective bargaining about capitalism's tendency toward recurrent crises, they could certainly have done a good deal about labor intensification resulting from lean production, and the work-pacing and surveillance technology that prevented the recovery of jobs between recessions. Instead, for nearly four decades most union top-level leaderships have engaged in joint "problem solving" and cooperation with management, wage and benefit concessions, strike-avoidance tactics, one-sided political dependency, appeals to nationalism, and their own form of "social distancing" from the membership. Throughout these books, McAlevey's criticism of this type of union leaders— the norm for decades—focused primarily on Andy Stern and his associates at the national level of SEIU. For all her contempt for some other top leader and "clueless" unions, McAlevey lets the majority of the contemporary labor officialdom off the hook on all these counts.

CIO "Model"?

McAlevey sees her method of organizing as rooted in the CIO's "high-participation model anchored in deep worker solidarities and cooperative engagement in class struggle" (*No Shortcuts,* 30). Though high-participation and solidarity were certainly central to the birth of the new industrial unions of the 1930s that eventually formed the Congress of Industrial Organizations, (CIO), to call the events that led to this a "model" is a stretch to say the least. This turbulent upsurge bore little resemblance to a well organized and conducted NLRB or "election procedure agreement" (neutrality) representation election, collective bargaining campaign, or even the "model" strikes that McAlevey describes. Rather it arose from a mass grassroots-initiated strike movement that began in 1933 when the number of strikes more than doubled and that of strikers grew by over three-and-a-half times, most without any official union leadership. This disorderly strike wave would continue through to its highpoint in 1937 when the victory of General Motors workers' unconventional and illegal sit-down strikes turned the tide in favor of the new unions.[12]

The course of events that led to that victory doesn't resemble McAlevey's model or that of most representation campaigns in recent decades. As I wrote in the introduction for the republication of Sidney Fine's classic *Sit-Down:*

The order of events in Flint in 1936–37 were the opposite: build the union in the workplace among those willing to join, take action according to plan even with a minority membership, demonstrate the power of the union, win recognition and bargaining, and recruit a majority.[13]

I am not suggesting this will necessarily work in today's circumstances, but that as circumstances change so might the way and the sequence in which workers organize themselves. Like those of automobiles, organizing "models" can get out of date.

During the first three or so years of the upsurge of the early 1930s, the as-yet unidentified or developed "organic leaders" and activists in hundreds of mines, mills, and factories led their fellow workers into action and organization without waiting for the professional organizers to arrive. This was the case even when in 1933 John L. Lewis sent his (often leftist) organizers into the coalfields in anticipation of the passage of Franklin Delano Roosevelt's Section 7(a) of the National Industrial Relations Act (NIRA) which was supposed to grant the right to organize. As recent research by historians Michael Goldfield and Cody Melcher has shown, his organizers reported in 1933 that "the miners had been organizing on their own." These authors concluded that, "rank-and-file miners, often led by radicals and unassisted by the UMWA itself, organized virtually every mine before the passage of the NIRA" in 1933.[14] The same was true of steelworkers, 150,000 of whom flooded the old Amalgamated Iron and Steelworkers on their own for a time in 1933, and 37,000 went on strike three years before Lewis set up the Steel Workers Organizing Committee (SWOC) in 1936.[15] This was even more the case in other industries like auto, rubber, and electrical goods without any pre-existing national union—at best there were Federal Locals of the AFL which rapidly proved ineffective and were abandoned by the workers.[16]

When the upsurge in auto began in 1933–35, the Communist organizers Bob Travis and Wyndam Mortimer, whom McAlevey cites, and the socialist activists and organiz-

[12] See, for example, Irving Bernstein, *Turbulent Years: A History of the American Workers, 1933–1941* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1969); and Sidney Fine, *Sit-Down: The General Motors Strike of 1936–1937* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1969).

[13] Kim Moody, "Introduction", Sidney Fine, *Sit-Down: The General Motors Strike of 1936–1937*, new edition (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2020, in press).

[14] Michael Goldfield and Cody R. Melcher, "The Myth of 7(a): Worker Militancy, Progressive Legislation, and the Coal Miners" *Labor: Studies in Working-Class History* 16, no. 14 (December 2019): 49–65. The UMWA is the United Mine Workers of America.

[15] David Brody, "The Origins of Modern Steel Unionism: The SWOC Era," in Paul F. Clark, Peter Gottlieb and Donald Kennedy, eds., *Forging a Union of Steel: Philip Murray, SWOC, & the United Steelworkers* (Ithaca: ILR Press, 1987), 15–16.

[16] Bernstein, *Turbulent Years*, 440–3, 604–7.

ers she doesn't—Kermit Johnson (in Chevy 4) and Roy Reuther (Travis's assistant in 1936–37)—were rank-and-filers in various plants around the Midwest. While already leaders and organizers in their workplaces, Travis in Toledo, Mortimer in Cleveland, and Reuther in Detroit, they became staffers in Flint only after autoworkers across the Midwest had been in motion for almost three years. In other words, that era's "organic leaders" and activists stepped forward on their own as rank-and-file organizers (sometimes as part of worker-based political tendencies) well before there were any full-time organizers. Along with the key role played by radical rank-and-file workplace leaders, the birth of the CIO was a classic example of collective worker self-activity.

More particularly, McAlevey credits her organizing techniques to Hospital Workers' Union Local 1199 before the merger of a majority of its local unions with the SEIU in 1998. Though her direct experience was with 1199 New England, which covers Connecticut and Rhode Island, she attributes the organizing model to the union's founding Local 1199 in New York under the leadership of Leon Davis. Local 1199 is famous for its militancy, atypical social unionism, "Bread and Roses" cultural program, embrace of the civil rights movement, and endorsement by Martin Luther King, Jr., among other things. Local 1199's founding leaders, Leon Davis and Elliott Godoff, were Communists who had originally formed a union of pharmacists in the 1930s. Their Communist-led union then organized hospital workers in New York City beginning in the late 1950s before the on-air trials of McCarthyism and the House Un-American Activities Committee had been fully swept away by the winds of a new era of revolt—quite an achievement.

The subsequent history of 1199, however, does not reveal a democratic union adept at training grassroots leaders, at least above the workplace delegate (shop steward) level. When Davis retired in 1982, the union fell into a decade of leadership crisis as first Davis' handpicked successor, Doris Turner, and then her replacement, Georgiana Johnson, proved unprepared and incapable of leading or uniting the union. This was primarily because they had been given little leadership experience or responsibility, which remained in the hands of Davis and other top leaders. This story has been told in detail in *Upheaval in the Quiet Zone*, a history of 1199 by Leon Fink and Brian Greenberg that, oddly enough, McAlevey recommends (*No Shortcuts,* 84).[17] What it revealed was that, despite its elected system of one delegate per twenty-five workers, 1199 was not a particularly democratic union, nor did it attempt to bargain over the nature of hospital work, or as Fink and Greenberg put it, 1199 "pressed no claims for work reorganization" and limited its bargaining to wages and benefits.[18] In both regards, it was, despite its militancy and social movement characteristics, fairly conventional in its organizational and bargaining practices. It was, in fact, a union with a highly centralized leadership in the person of Leon Davis, who said:

[17] Leon Fink and Bryan Greenberg, *Upheaval in the Quiet Zone: A History of Hospital Workers' Union Local 1199* (Urbana IL: University of Illinois Press, 1989), 181–243.

[18] Fink and Greenberg, *Upheaval*, 202.

The membership can only be a sounding board, even the delegates...they can't make decisions...The idea of wisdom emanating from the bottom is full of shit, not because they are stupid but because they have a job which is not running the union and knowing all the intricate business about it. Consequently, their inability to come up with initiatives is limited.[19]

This, of course, is the more frequently unspoken assumption of business-union leaders throughout the American labor movement. It is the central reason that genuine leadership development is *not* a part of most union cultures above routine stewards' training, and why leadership transitions are mostly managed affairs even though there is an election. In the case of 1199 it led not only to a decade of internal chaos and racial conflict, but to this union's eventual subordination to the even more bureaucratic structure and bizarre leadership of the SEIU under Andy Stern. Ironically, this kind of all too typical top-down leadership also means that all those "organic leaders" back in the workplace never really have the opportunity to take initiative beyond grievance filing, or to learn of the "complexities" that are the monopoly of the inner sanctum.

This doesn't mean that the organizing "model" proposed by McAlevey is wrong per se in today's limited context. What it does mean is that it is by itself insufficient to produce the kind of democratic, workplace-based, member-led unions, like those of the early CIO, needed to take on capital, expand, and lay the basis for bigger political changes. It should be obvious that most of today's unions in the US have failed to grow and win because they are bureaucratically incapable of deploying the collective power of the members beyond the framework of conventional bargaining and equally conventional strike strategies and tactics. There are exceptions in a number of the effective strikes of the last few years or even a longer period, but they are just that—exceptions. There is much more to winning a strike these days than just getting the 90 percent participation McAlevey proposes. The question then arises, one that McAlevey does not address despite her discussion of West Virginia, Chicago, and Los Angeles teachers' strikes: How we are to make our unions suitable for class struggle in an era in which the forces arrayed against workers are more massive than ever?

In other words, how are we to transform most of today's bureaucratic unions into democratic organizations with genuinely accountable officials and staff? How are we to gain collective membership power beyond occasional "participation?" How are we to get unions in which workplace leaders are allowed to lead, there is a culture of debate and dissent rather than conformity in the name of "unity," and an atmosphere in which rank-and-file initiative in the fight with capital is encouraged? There are plenty of examples of efforts to democratize unions and improve their ability to fight the boss. These range from large-scale ones like the Teamsters' reform movement that nearly toppled the Hoffa bureaucracy in 2017 to scores of local rank-and-file caucuses and movements, the best known example of which is, of course, the Coalition of Rank-and-File Educators (CORE) that toppled the old guard of the Chicago Teachers Union

[19] Fink and Greenberg, *Upheaval*, 203–4.

in 2010. What then does McAlevey say about this and other aspects of the democratic upsurge of teacher militancy and organization of the past several years?

Reversing the "Model"

It would be unthinkable these days to write a book on US unions without covering the great teachers' rebellion of 2018–2020. While McAlevey doesn't present this as the industry-wide upsurge it has become, she does include accounts of the West Virginia education workers strike and the reform movements in the Chicago Teachers Union (CTU) and the United Teachers of Los Angeles (UTLA). To my mind, these important struggles have more in common with the real CIO upsurge from 1933 to 1937 and that of public sector workers and rank-and-file rebels in the 1960s and 1970s than most union struggles these days. These were struggles initiated, organized, and led in the first instance, not by professional organizers, but by workers who had "a job which is not running the union," as Leon Davis so indelicately put it, but were nonetheless organizers in the full sense of that word. Only after winning election to top positions and initiating the process of transforming the union did they hire full-time organizers to help firm up the union and prepare for the subsequent strikes.

Despite all the stressful hours teachers put in both in and out of school these days, these self-selected leaders and activists managed to organize grassroots caucuses, community alliances, stronger workplace organizations, and mass strikes that have rippled through America's education system. Grassroots leaders from West Virginia and half a dozen other "red" states along with the successful caucus-based union takeovers in Chicago (CORE), Los Angeles (UTLA), and partially in Massachusetts have changed the picture of teacher unionism dramatically in a few short years.

It is worth noting, therefore, that in the case of the Chicago and Los Angeles examples McAlevey discusses, the order of her "model" is reversed. First, the untrained rank-and-file workers organize, lead a series of fights, and take over. Only then are the full-time organizers hired, most of whom come from the ranks and have no formal training (*No Shortcuts,* 120–1; and *A Collective Bargain,* 199) but a good deal of experience. In these examples and many others, it was in fact "wisdom emanating from the bottom" that made the elevation of struggle and the transformation and democratization of the union possible. McAlevey, of course, knows that workers can develop leadership skills in the course of struggle, but for her this seems to be something exceptional and "extraordinary." She writes of the workers at the Smithfield packing plant in North Carolina with a tone of surprise, "as the story of this fight will show, the intensity of the previous fight made some of the workers' leaders extraordinarily skilled, because of their experience in *struggle*" (*No Shortcuts,* 154–5). That struggle involved two mass wildcat strikes in 2006 led by the immigrant Latino workers in the plant before the UFCW organizer arrived.

The "model" McAlevey proposes is less a replica of the early CIO's rise than an effort to stretch the essentially restraining and routinized Wagner Act/Taft-Hartley framework of industrial relations to its limits. For decades, however, rank-and-file initiative in this context has been muted by a combination of the monopolization of real decision-making at the top, the routinization of bargaining and shop-floor grievance handling, the ceremonial and boring nature of most union meetings and conventions, and it has been further paralyzed by the fear generated by the economic insecurity of the neoliberal era. Substituting greater and more skilled organizer initiative cannot undo this routinized institutional framework by itself.

In this context, the attempt to find more effective ways to organize and fight can be traced to the debate over organizing that began in the 1990s inspired by victories like the Los Angeles Justice for Janitors campaign in 1990 and the ascent of John Sweeny's "New Voice" team in 1995. It was carried further in the works of Kate Bronfenbrenner, Tom Juravich, Ruth Needleman, Bruce Nissen, Bill Fletcher, Jr., and many others, as well as in the pages of *Labor Notes* and the books it has published. At least two conclusions followed from that research and debate in terms of unionization drives: membership involvement in organizing produced more representation wins, and community support can make a difference;[20] that is, when these practices themselves do not just become more routinized rituals or temporary "mobilizations" in a top-down "strategy," as often happens.

The ideas McAlevey is proposing add to the best of these conclusions whatever their actual origins. They have been and will be used to extract victories from time to time. Nevertheless, even taken together all these innovations in organizing have not turned things around. On the contrary, they have at best contributed to the rearguard resistance to American labor's continued retreat in the face of relentless employer aggression. We have to ask if they are sufficient for both the conditions and the possibilities that have emerged in recent years and are now taking shape. If not, what can we point to that might make a real difference?

Much has changed in the US labor movement and the context in which it has struggled to survive over the past three or four decades. The working class and union membership are more racially diverse, and women play a much larger role in both. Most unions after the mid-1980s reversed the anti-immigrant positions often held prior to the acceleration of immigration. At the same time, the very nature of work and the labor process has morphed yet again from simple, lean production to its digitally driven reign of super-standardization (eat your heart out Frederick Taylor), surveillance, and work intensification. This transformation of work now embraces virtually all types of labor. The increasing tendency of educated "millennials" to be pushed down into the working

[20] For some of the works in this research and debate see: Kate Bronfenbrenner et al, eds., *Organizing to Win: New Research on Union Strategies* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1998; Lowell Turner, Harry Katz, and Richard W. Hurd, eds., *Rekindling the Movement: Labor's Quest for Relevance in the 21st Century* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2001); and Ruth Milkman and Kim Voss, eds., *Rebuilding Labor: Organizing and Organizers in the New Union Movement* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2004).

class brings a new source of energy but also uncertainty about one's social or class identity. The multiple connections of the production of goods and services have been tightened by the development of a global, information-driven logistics infrastructure that didn't exist even at the dawn of the twenty-first century.

All of this can seem overwhelming, yet some of these changes also present new opportunities for working class organization and action. The tightening of work and the connections between workplaces, between goods producers and service producers, and their key points of convergence in major urban and metropolitan areas has rendered employers more vulnerable.[21] McAlevey makes note of this briefly, but it is an aspect of contemporary capitalism that needs analytical development as a strategic framework.[22] The downward mobility of so many "millennials" brings some new energy to the digitalized, sometimes irregular or platformed workforce from younger workers who are not that different from today's teacher insurgents. At the same time, increased racial diversity and the growing role of women often give today's struggles a more representative, universal, and solidaristic character than many of those in previous eras.

What may prove to be the most important development in creating a renewed labor movement, however, is the increase in worker self- activity. As David McNally has shown, this has increasingly taken the form of mass strikes across the world by many different groups of workers and others, a major sign of changing times.[23] In the US, the teachers' movement is the most obvious example of this, but it is evident in the rise of nurse militancy and unionism as well. Direct actions by immigrant workers go back to the 2006 "Day Without Immigrants" and Smithfield strikes McAlevey discusses. But they arise almost continuously in unexpected corners of the economy, such as small actions at Amazon as well as larger ones in the traditional "pastures of plenty," like Washington state's apple orchards.

Perhaps most unexpected, of course, are the many signs of worker self-activity that have arisen amidst the twin crises of renewed recession-cum-depression and the Covid-19 pandemic that accelerated it. There have been strikes demanding protective gear, paid time off, and other safety measures. Union bus drivers in Detroit and workers at Briggs and Stratton in Milwaukee struck for protection. Nonunion workers struck at Instacart, Whole Foods, Walmart, Target, and Fed Ex. Workers at Amazon, for example, have gone where traditional unions feared to tread. Countless lesser actions have also demonstrated worker self-activity. The worker-initiated Amazonians United has engaged in "deep organizing," as they call it, forming locals across the country,

[21] Kim Moody, "Labour and the contradictory logic of logistics" *Work Organization, Labour & Globalisation* 13, no. 1, 13(1) (Spring 2019): 79–95

[22] For some more works on this see Deborah Cowen, *The Deadly Life of Logistics: Mapping Violence in Global Trade* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2014); Jake Alimahomid-Wilson and Immanuel Ness, eds., *Choke Points: Logistics Workers Disrupting the Global Supply Chain* (London: Pluto Press, 2018); and Moody, On New Terrain, 59–69.

[23] David McNally, "The Return of the Mass Strike: Teachers, Students, Feminists, and the New Wave of Popular Upheavals," *Spectre* 1: no. 1 (2020), 18–33.

contacts around the world, and building on small actions with an approach in which there are no professional organizers, which again mixes up McAlevey's order of things.[24]

While it may seem remote from union activity, even the mass widespread protests against the police murder of George Floyd in Minneapolis represent a form of self-activity that is likely to influence events beyond even its immediate focus on the depth of racism and police brutality in the US. Urban upheavals, protests, and riots were an integral part of the rebellion of the 1960s and 1970s. Black workers who rebelled in the streets of Detroit in 1967 were among those who struck and formed Black or integrated caucuses in the auto plants in the following years. My own experience in both public sector organizing in the 1960s and rank-and-file activity, and in a very long strike of telephone workers in the early 1970s, convinced me of the impact Black militancy had on the thinking and actions of both Black and white workers in that period.

Furthermore, the protests and rioting in response to George Floyd's murder have been more visibly multiracial than those in the 1960s or even Ferguson. To a greater degree than in previous protests and riots over police murders of Black people, those over George Floyd's death have had more union support, including union bus drivers who refused to carry prisoners for the police in New York and elsewhere. On the other hand, many top leaders including Rich Trumka of the AFL-CIO stopped short of criticizing the police "unions" for their complicity in defending killer cops.[25] Given the intensity of these mass demonstrations, there's no doubt that today's protesters and rioters will return to their jobs cleaning the offices of the rich, assisting the sick in hospitals, stacking shelves in a supermarket, or picking and packing in a warehouse with "attitude." Protest and militancy are contagious. Just as the upsurge that began in Ferguson created a new wave of activists and gave birth to Black Lives Matter, so this latest rebellion in the streets by working class people may create unknown workplace leaders and activists who will be disinclined to take the boss's shit anymore.

Crisis, of course, is the midwife of change, something the powers-that-be understand all too well. The economic crisis of the 1930s produced the great labor upheaval of that period as well as the New Deal, while that of the 1970s and early 1980s gave rise to the neoliberal era, as capital and its political acolytes turned against virtually all the supporting elements of working class life. The Covid-19 pandemic and depression have laid bare many of capitalism's fault lines, while making countless workers aware of their central place in the entire reproduction of life *and* the boss's profits. Simultaneously,

[24] For this and a summary of such actions up to June 2020 see Jane Slaughter "In a Pandemic, Finding Ways to Fight New and Old Foes" *Labor Notes* 495, June 2020, 1, 3–4; Bridget Read, "Every Food and Delivery Strike Happening Over Coronavirus" The Cut, May 27, 2020; Celine McNicholas and Margaret Poydock, "Workers are Striking During the Coronovirus: Labor Law must be Reformed to Strengthen this Fundamental Right," *Working Economics Blog*, Economic Policy Institute, June 22, 2020; Chance Zombor, "Why Is It Never "Class Struggle" When Black Workers Fight Back?," *Portside*, July 5, 2020.

[25] Saurav Sarkar, "Twin Cities Labor Mobilizes Against George Floyd Murder" *Labor Notes*, May 29, 2020; www.labornotes.org; Alexia Fernandez Campbell, "As Protests Grow, Big Labor Sides with Police Unions" Center for Public Integrity, June 5, 2020.

it has exposed how little employers and politicians care about the daily plight of working class people and driven some of these people to direct action under very difficult circumstances. It is perhaps premature to say: It's our turn. But the increase in working class self-activity is surely a sign of something new.

More than that, it is an invitation for unions to adjust and act. If there is a continued surge of collective self-organizing and actions, it may be neither a simple series of "hot shops" nor a neat industry- or sector-wide movement. The distinction between the two is likely to be blurred—in part because interactions of "industries" and the supply chains and digital flows of finance that connect workplaces are complex and will no doubt change as a result of the pandemic and depression. Today's supply chains and logistics clusters don't just connect factories to warehouses to stores; they also link to services, and services to factories, warehouses, and so on. They are all about motion within and between worksites. Actions at one can bring down the other. Workers in this context are not likely to wait for organizers to bring a neat "industry" focus. In this context, a static view of strategy can become a barrier.

A similarly static view of working class attitudes can also be a hindrance in responding to a changing situation. In 2019 Gallup took two polls that indicate important changes in the way many Americans view society. The 2019 poll on whether or not Americans approve of labor unions found that 64 percent did, up from an all-time (since 1947) low of 48 percent in 2009.[26] A poll on political attitudes that same year found that 43 percent of those who responded thought socialism would be a "good thing" for the country. When Gallup asked a similar question in 1942 only 25 percent thought socialism would be a good thing. In 2019, 58 percent of those between eighteen and thirty-four years approved of socialism. It wasn't just those college-educated millennials who thought socialism was okay. Among all ages, those with a college degree liked it by 45 percent, while those without one thought it good for the country by 46 percent. "Non-whites" approved by 57 percent.[27]

That is, more US residents as of 2019, including many working class people, not only like labor unions, they even think socialism is a good thing. Some, of course, were introduced to the idea of socialism via Bernie Sanders's two runs for president and were even willing to vote for a self-proclaimed democratic socialist in 2016 and 2020. But the approval of socialism was already on the rise as indicated by an earlier Gallup poll in 2010 when 36 percent approved of socialism.[28] Just what they meant by socialism remains to be seen. But the fact is, there were precious few socialist organizers or agitators among the millions who answered in favour of socialism. Capitalism pushed them in this direction, and they drew their own conclusions.

The Gallup organization didn't speculate on how these two sets of opinions might relate to one another and to the first green shoots of worker self-organization, but we

[26] Gallup, "Labor Unions," Gallup Historical Trends, 2019, news.gallup.com.

[27] Ibid.

[28] Frank Newport, "Socialism Viewed Positively by 36% of Americans," *Gallup News Service*, February 4, 2010.

should. We probably won't see red flags waving in the streets of America any time soon, but minds are opening just as more people are acting. As Gramsci said, "the first step in emancipating oneself from political and social slavery is that of freeing the mind."[29] The long-festering problems and now almost 1930s-type underlying conditions are producing these changes, but it is the *convergence* of new thinking on organization and politics, on the one hand, and increased action, on the other, that are the major ingredients in a potential social explosion on a scale not seen for decades.

The rise of collective worker self-activity and therefore, of natural workplace organizers will be the biggest "structure test" of America's unions and labor leaders in generations. The advice McAlevey offers in her "model" is mostly good and useful. But it addresses institutional arrangements that have decayed without suggesting how to change them. At the same time, the "model" preserves or even enhances a dominant place for the professional organizer that can miss or even discourage the most fundamental ingredient of power—collective worker initiative from below. Perhaps the time has come to reverse the "model."

[29] Quoted in *Theory & Struggle: Journal of the Marx Memorial Library*, Number 121 (2020), back cover.

Kim Moody
Reversing the “Model”
Thoughts on Jane McAlevey’s Plan For Union Power

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