

BUIRA 2010

60th Anniversary Conference
Manchester Metropolitan University

Organising under New Labour: Evaluating Union Renewal Initiatives since 1997

Dr Melanie Simms
IROB - Warwick Business School
University of Warwick
Coventry, UK, CV4 7AL
Melanie.Simms@wbs.ac.uk

Dr Jane Holgate
Working Lives Research Institute
31 Jewry Street
London, UK, EC3N 2EY
j.holgate@londonmet.ac.uk

This paper is an early version of a book chapter and is not to be cited without permission

Introduction

The general election of 2010 presents a clear opportunity to evaluate the efforts of trade unions to renew themselves since 1997. Early evaluations of the impact of New Labour on trade unionism in the UK were mixed in their tone, but generally noted considerable scope for an improvement in the overall policy approach to trade unionism whilst also acknowledging that the 'devil is in the detail' (McIlroy 1998, McIlroy 2000, Smith and Morton 2001, Undy 1999, 2002, Howell 2004). Unsurprisingly, the statutory recognition legislation of 1999 provided some considerable cause for optimism that the 'background music' of employment relations (Gall 2003) had changed to one of political neutrality towards trade unions whilst still emphasising that it was very much the choice of the union movement as to how they might take advantage of such changes. As Tony Blair put it in his 1997 speech to the annual TUC conference, the approach was one of “fairness, not favours”.

This paper evaluates the impacts of union organising policies and initiatives since 1997. Whilst there have been other renewal initiatives such as the development of Union Learning Representatives (Wood and Moore 2005), the Union Modernisation Fund (Stuart and Martinez Lucio 2009), and a limited re-emergence of tripartism in the form of the Low Pay Commission (Brown 2002), this paper argues that any effective renewal of union fortunes will ultimately depend on their ability to extend membership and influence into new areas of the workforce. Thus, a longitudinal evaluation of organising efforts is particularly relevant and timely. Since 1997, the trade union movement has undertaken a range of organising initiatives initially stimulated by the development of the TUC's Organising Academy (OA). Since then, most affiliates have transferred organising policies and practice to their own strategies for membership develop and have developed union-specific practices that reflect the contexts in which they organise. This paper therefore takes the opportunity to look back at the consequences of the development of organising strategy and practice across the UK labour movement.

In doing so, we seek to address three central areas of concern. A first obvious concern relates to the impacts of organising activity on trade union membership. Specifically, what evidence is there that unions have been effective at both re-building membership in traditional areas of strength, as compared with extending membership into areas of membership under-representation? We argue that both are crucially important to reviving the fortunes of the trade union movement. Not only are there significant problems associated with declining density in workplaces where unions are recognised for the purposes of collective bargaining (Brown and Nash 2008), there are also considerable challenges in extending membership into un-unionised areas such as the majority of the private sector services. Added to this are the challenges that many groups of under-represented workers (young workers, BME workers, atypical workers etc.) face a potential 'double-exclusion' in the sense that they are more highly concentrated in areas of the labour market that unions struggle to organise, and that even if they work in unionised workplaces, they may well face difficulties

ensuring effective representation of their interests (Parker 2003, 2006, Kirton and Green 2002, Martinez Lucio and Perrett 2009).

A second area of concern relates to the impact of organising activity on collective bargaining, both at aggregate level across the UK economy and within individual sectors and workplaces. This is of central importance because of the traditional importance of collective bargaining in securing regulation of the employment relationship for UK workers. The dominant ‘model’ of UK employment relations has privileged the role of collective bargaining above, for example, legislative protection (Brown 2010). Whilst there is some indication that there has been a shift in this approach (Dickens and Hall 2010), most unions happily argue that they ultimately seek to return to a point where they are engaged as strong collective bargaining partners with employers.

Finally, the paper considers some of the broader objectives of organising activity that are seen particularly in evidence and writing from the US but also countries such as Australia and New Zealand. This set of concerns relates to issues such as the extent to which organising emphasises (or does not emphasise) worker self-organisation as opposed to an approach to trade unionism that rests on representation by professional union officers. Clearly, this intersects with debates about internal democracy within unions and the extent to which organising activity can be or should be ‘managed’ by union professionals (officers and organisers) (Simms 2007). Thus a final area of concern for this paper is the extent to which there is evidence of these kinds of developments in the UK and what the consequences are for union renewal activity more widely.

How should we evaluate organising?

Throughout the decade of the development of specialist organising activity, we have noted a marked change in approach in British unions. The early years of organising activity prompted many comments and stories from organisers and senior policy makers about the lack of overarching strategic direction to much of the organising activity taking place. A fairly typical example was of a so-called ‘hot shop’ campaign followed in detail for part of this research where workers in a call centre were dissatisfied about their working conditions and discussed in detail by Simms (2006). In brief, the union involved was approached primarily because the husband of one of the most vocal workers was a member and the campaign was taken on by the organising department because they were keen to expand into new territory and the call centre had links with one of the main employers organised by the union. Although the campaign was successful in gaining recognition for collective bargaining, the long-term sustainability of the campaign was called into question for a number of reasons. First, the union’s resources and expertise in supporting members outside the main areas of membership and activism were extremely limited. Second, the union’s leverage in the wider labour and service markets within which the targeted employer operated was extremely limited and this constrained their ability to secure bargaining outcomes. Third, the fact that the

workers were outside the core membership meant that they found it difficult to engage in the wider activities of the union which limited their influence and access to resources to support the union within the workplace.

This example illustrates some of the challenges of deciding – and evaluating – the purpose and outcomes of organising work. It illustrates the need to evaluate a broad range of organising outcomes. Simply increasing membership, activism, representativeness and participation does not necessarily ensure sustainable organising outcomes. In this example, the structure of the union in representing and engaging new membership groups was a barrier to ensuring sustainable success and the engagement and activism seen during the pre-recognition organising phase of this campaign eventually withered. Arguably, these workers are in a more advantageous position now that they have union bargaining and representation rights, but the hoped for revitalisation was not sustained.

However, the example above highlights two importantly different ways of evaluating organising activity. The first is against the objectives set by the union itself. In the case above, the key objective was to secure collective bargaining rights in this organisation. In this regard, the union was remarkably successful. But a broader evaluation must surely ask questions about how the establishment of collective bargaining in this organisation strengthens the union in this sector, promotes the interests of these members more widely within the union and society.

These two ways of evaluating organising activity are important because if we only take the approach of evaluating outcomes against the objectives unions set themselves, there is a risk that we limit our focus to only the objectives that are considered achievable at that moment in time. Unions are unlikely to set themselves objectives that are perceived to be impossible or even improbable, particularly given that organising is risky and resource intensive. Thus, we take as our starting point the view that the actual objectives set by unions are the outcomes of political and complex judgements about what is desirable and achievable at that moment. Whilst this tells us a great deal about the contemporary political context (both inside and outside the unions), it risks failing to engage with any broader ‘vision’ of what organising can and should be about. It is a legitimate criticism (Carter 2006) of some previous evaluation of organising activity (Heery et al. 2000, 2003) that it has mainly focused on evaluating initiatives against the objectives set by the unions themselves and, thus, risks taking a rather apolitical and ahistorical view of these developments. We therefore take the second approach as well; attempting to evaluate actual organising outcomes not just against the objectives that were set, but against a wider view of the changes that unions should make in order to (re)establish their roles as strong, independent voices of working people.

This second evaluation is undoubtedly harsher and more contested than the former. But if we do not make any comment on the outcomes of a decade of union organising activity in the UK as evaluated against some of the wider, political objectives, we risk taking a very narrow view both of what organising is and of what it could achieve. In this paper, we therefore comment on the evidence of whether or not unions have made progress towards the range of objectives set by the New Unionism project (Heery et al 2000) before moving on to consider relating to the wider political agenda underpinning (some) ideas about union organising.

In order for us to differentiate between different kinds of organising outcomes, we need to be clear about different ideas of union 'power'. Union power is a remarkably under-theorised area of labour relations, and yet it is so essential to evaluating organising activity and is very often taken for granted by both trade unionists and academics. Early theorists writing on power (French and Raven 1960) differentiate between coercive power and legitimate power. This is a particularly useful differentiation when it comes to thinking about labour unions and where they derive sources of power. Coercive power is, in essence, the power to get someone to do what you want them to do because the alternative would have a cost or some other negative effect on them. Unions use coercive power when they threaten to take industrial action, when they threaten to give an employer bad publicity, or when they 'harm' an employer in some other way. But threats only work some of the time and labour unions have to build open-ended relationships with employers that are not based on threats most of the time; thus, they need legitimacy in the eyes of both employers and workers and if they can establish legitimacy in the eyes of policy makers and politicians, so much the better although the latter is not essential.

Reading about and listening to ideas around organising in the UK and elsewhere for much of the past decade, it is clear that both trade unionists and academics are often very confused about what they want unions to achieve by investing in organising. In our view, this is because they are often confused about the extent they are hoping that organising activity will increase a union's legitimacy power or the extent to which they hope it will increase the coercive power. Different approaches to organising can achieve either, but they are likely to emphasise one over the other. This is why we think the issue of union democracy has become so problematic in some writing on organising (see Crosby 2005 for more detailed discussion of the issues). In the later sections of this paper, we argue that union democracy is absolutely essential to ensuring legitimacy power, but largely unnecessary to ensuring coercive power. With this distinction in mind, we want to consider the evidence relating to a range of different measures of organising outcomes; increasing membership, collective bargaining, organising under-represented workers, organising in new sectors, worker self-organisation and union democracy.

The research

The research presented in this paper has been collected in several phases since 1996 with each phase of data collection involving slightly different researchers. The project started at Cardiff University in 1996 in an effort to evaluate the TUC's Organising Academy. Early stages of the research project involved surveys of union policies, evaluation of training, and surveys of organising projects, although relatively little use is made of the quantitative evidence in this paper other than to inform the general direction of policy and practice in the early stages of developing specialist union organising within the UK labour movement.

Of more direct relevance were extensive periods of observation at the TUC Organising Academy including following through the first year of the training (1999-2000). Subsequent shorter observation visits were paid to the Academy training in 2001, 2005 and 2008. The specialist training that was subsequently established in the GMB, Unite and Usdaw unions was also observed in 2008.

Interview data has been collected throughout the research phases and the data set now consists of well over 250 interviews with policy makers, senior union officers, organisers and activists; 56 of which were undertaken as part of the most recent evaluation funded by the Nuffield Foundation in 2007. Documents such as organising policies, recognition agreements and recruitment materials have also been collected over this time. Finally, between the two of us, the authors have studied 8 organising campaigns in longitudinal detail. These periods of research have involved following through 'greenfield' organising campaign targeting different groups of workers, examining the whole process of planning and developing organising activity.

We are extremely grateful to the research team at Cardiff University for their continued support and encouragement and, of course, for allowing us continued access to the data despite having moved on to other roles.

Membership

In some respects, the most important outcome of organising is increasing membership. Undoubtedly part of the rationale for establishing the TUC Organising Academy, and one of the reasons why we have seen the wider 'turn' to organising, has been the collapse of union membership in the 1980s and 1990s. This is rational and logical; a large proportion of the income of most unions depends on membership subscriptions. Declining membership therefore has important negative impact on the income of most unions. Indeed, in the late 1990s, Michael Crosby, then the head of the Australian Congress of Trade Unions (ACTU) Organising Centre, was famous in Australia and the UK – and probably beyond – for presenting union officers with

his 'scary graph' that mapped the point at which union income and expenditure crossed and the financial basis of the union became untenable. But the argument is not just one of finances. Without members, unions as collective organisations are largely unsustainable. There are some alternatives - the French model of trade unionism, for example, focuses on recruiting activists rather than 'ordinary' members – but these tend to be specific to particular institutional contexts. Australia, the UK and the US all share an important focus on membership recruitment. In these systems, as membership declines, unions lose the legitimacy to speak as the collective voice of workers. Equally, declining membership limits the impact any collective action may have on employers i.e. their coercive power. Declining membership therefore has negative impacts on both the legitimate power and the coercive power of unions.

Our research shows that individual organising campaigns are usually very successful in recruiting members. This is not very surprising; organisers are trained to speak to workers and to persuade a considerable proportion of them to join the union. Our early research suggested that Academy Organisers typically recruited around 1000 members a year; easily enough to pay their salaries. The evidence in relation to individual unions is, however, a little more mixed. We do see evidence of strong membership growth in some unions and these do tend to be the unions that have recruited organisers, and that have been thinking more strategically about how to integrate organising into the wider work of the union.

But as many people before us have pointed out, membership in individual workplaces or in individual unions is not a sufficient measure of membership strength. Aggregate union membership has stabilised in the UK over the past 10 years. Whilst most unions would celebrate this as very good news after the haemorrhage of members between 1979 and 1997, there are two very serious notes of concern. First, this stabilisation has taken place in a comparatively benign environment. The Labour governments from 1997 to 2010 implemented key policy changes which have reinforced the legitimacy of unions. These include setting up a Union Modernisation Fund to channel money into efforts by unions to modernise their structures and processes, setting up a Union Learning Fund to encourage unions to promote learning in the workplace, introducing the statutory recognition procedures, and recognising unions as the legitimate voice of workers on a range of advice bodies such as the Low Pay Commission that recommends the rate of the National Minimum Wage. Whilst the Labour governments have consistently adopted the view that they would not repeal the restrictions on industrial action that were implemented by the Conservatives in the 1980s and early 1990s, and have not implemented everything that the unions would have liked, the period from 1997 onwards has undoubtedly been a political and legislative context which is more favourable to unions. It is of concern, therefore, that having invested so much in organising activity within a benign context, that aggregate union membership has done little more

than stabilise. Whilst it is probably true that membership would have declined further without the investment in organising, against this background, stabilisation is less than optimal.

The second note of concern is that the UK labour force grew significantly from 1997 until the financial crisis of 2008 and recession of 2009. So whilst absolute levels of membership have stabilised, the number of union members as a proportion of the total labour force (aggregate union density) has continued to decline (Forth and Bryson 2010, Barratt 2009). This indicates that the investment in organising over the past ten years has largely enabled unions to hold steady, rather than to expand into growing sectors of the economy. Much of the employment growth has been through migration and although there is undoubtedly evidence of innovative practice with some unions taking on the challenge of organising these workers (Holgate 2009a, 2009b, Simms and Holgate 2010b), evidently there has not been enough of this kind of work to keep pace with the growth in employment. The decline of aggregate union density is of concern because it influences the extent to which both legitimacy and coercive power can be used in collective bargaining and in representing the interests of membership more widely. This is particularly visible in relation to collective bargaining, to which our attention now turns.

Collective bargaining

Collective bargaining is a good example of how unions can use both legitimacy power and coercive power together. In the context of organising, unions are typically seeking two related objectives; securing collective bargaining gains at the level of the individual workplace and securing bargaining gains across a sector or sub-sector of the economy. In a greenfield campaign it is therefore unsurprising that a central objective will usually be to establish collective bargaining in those workplaces as this gives both legitimacy and a wider range of formal opportunities to use coercive power because in the UK setting a union has to fulfil a range of legal requirements before it can take industrial action.

At the level of individual campaigns, unions are not as successful as one might expect in securing collective bargaining rights from employers, even with the support of the statutory recognition legislation. It is difficult to give any accurate figures because it all depends on how we define 'a campaign'. The start and end points of union organising campaigns are often very vague and if workers prove not to be engaging with the union, it is very common that a union will divert resources away from that workplace very quickly. Nonetheless, if we look across the economy, Gall (Gall 2007) reports that there were only 131 cases of both statutory and voluntary recognition granted in 2005 (the most recent year for which figures are available) of which 27 were granted through the statutory processes and a further 9 were cases where the statutory processes were used to secure a voluntary deal.

What is perhaps more striking about Gall's data is that the number of recognition deals (both voluntary and statutory) being agreed each year has fallen markedly since a peak in 1999, 2000 and 2001. In these years, 365, 525 and 685 deals were made respectively. This almost undoubtedly reflects anticipation of, and then response to, the introduction of the statutory processes. Although the methodologies and time periods vary between Gall's figures and the figures given by the Central Arbitration Committee (CAC) whose job it is to apply and administer the statutory recognition processes, the data trend is very similar. Of course, the CAC only reports on claims taken through the statutory processes, but in the year ending March 2008 there were only 64 applications made. So there is little evidence that the 'turn to organising' in the past decade has radically transformed the patterns of new recognition for collective bargaining in the UK. In Gall's period of analysis (1995 to 2005) the 2133 recognition agreements for which he found detailed evidence covered just over 870,000 workers; substantial, but not sufficient to expand collective bargaining into new sectors of the economy or to keep up with the pace at which the labour force has expanded during that period.

But organising in the UK context does not only apply to greenfield sites where recognition is being established. It is therefore useful to look at what has been happening to collective bargaining in areas where unions are already established. Here there is a more positive note, Gall (2007) also highlights the extent to which cases of derecognition have fallen to almost nil since 2000; there have been fewer than 10 cases of derecognition in each year since 2000. Over the time period examined, the 126 cases of derecognition covered only marginally more than 40,000 workers, which does indicate that the union movement has been successful in extending bargaining coverage in absolute terms.

We also need to think about *where* recognition for collective bargaining is being strengthened, and here a very interesting story emerges. Our studies of organising campaigns are supported by data that focuses at an aggregate level which both suggest that unions are relatively cautious about the targeting of their organising activity. The CAC annual reports consistently show that the sectors that generates the most claims for statutory recognition are the manufacturing, transport and communication sectors which have tended to account for well over half and typically nearer three-quarters of applications for statutory recognition. This is supported by academic evidence (Blanden et al. 2006: 186) that draws on evidence of recognition agreements from the economy more widely and which show that

“On the one hand, new recognition agreements are increasing. On the other hand, they are concentrated in places where unions have traditionally been strong and unions are not making much headway in getting into the more dynamic firms that are likely to be the leaders of the future.”

This relatively bleak picture explains why Gall (2007: 78) characterises the trend data as “an emerging crisis for trade unions”. But he adds a crucial question mark at the end of this summary. Whilst undoubtedly the aggregate story is one of unions being relatively cautious in their targeting of organising activity, and in particular focusing on campaigns in sectors where there is already some union presence, it could be argued that this is a logical strategy in relation to consolidating collective bargaining strength.

In a detailed qualitative analysis of five greenfield campaigns that were successful in securing a union presence in the workplace (Simms 2005) we saw clear evidence of the difficulties presented to unions when they gain bargaining rights in a workplace where they have little or no presence in the rest of the sector. These problems include having little experience of the issues and pressures within the sector, having few levers to use in bargaining because competitor employers do not have to deal with unions and are therefore free to set wages, terms and conditions as they choose, and an inability to demonstrate the effectiveness of collective bargaining because of these difficulties. We know that members and activists are far more likely to walk away from unions they perceive as being ineffective, and predictably membership and activism collapsed, illustrating the problems of building sustainable unionism when the workplace so isolated within an un-unionised sector.

It is therefore not so surprising that unions that have sought to expand over the past decade, have focused on workplaces in sectors where there is already some bargaining presence. Lerner (cited in Crosby 2005: 743) introduces a further argument as to why this is a desirable approach. He stresses that “If only 10 percent of workers in an industry are unionised, it is impossible to have real union democracy because 90 percent of the workers are excluded.” In other words, Lerner argues that organising on an industrial or sectoral level is essential not just to secure bargaining leverage and make an effort to take wages out of competition, but to ensure a genuinely democratic representation of workers in that sector. Whilst the logic of this view is undeniable, some of the consequences are more contested. Crosby’s reading of this argument (Crosby 2005) is that this risks over-riding the views of members within the union, in favour of attempting to engage workers who are not (yet) members. Crosby argues that Lerner fails to differentiate between workers’ control over their jobs (linked to union density) and workers’ control over their own organisations (through union elections). He argues that both are centrally important and that “elections matter” (Crosby 2005: 743). We develop our own analysis of this view in our discussion of worker self-organisation later in this paper. But for the moment, it is sufficient to acknowledge that there are important, complex and contested links between organising, collective bargaining, and union democracy.

Before we move on to look at other outcomes, we should also note that there is evidence in the UK that the *scope* of collective bargaining is shrinking considerably. Several important studies

(Brown and Nash 2008, Moore and Bewley 2004) have looked at the content of bargaining agreements and concluded that the many collective bargaining rounds cover only 'core' issues such as pay, working time, holidays and training rather than an extended list of issues such as equal opportunities, training, or pensions. This seems to suggest that unions are not making a concerted effort to expand the scope of joint regulation as an outcome of organising efforts. This is again of very serious concern when we are seeking to evaluate organising outcomes against both the objectives that unions set themselves, and any wider view of what organising might seek to achieve.

In short, these findings signal a potentially very serious problem with the separation of organising and bargaining. As a consequence of most unions having separated these functions within the union structures, we see a problem in securing bargaining outcomes as a result of investing in organising activity. Whilst we are not suggesting that collective bargaining is the be all and end all of trade unionism or of organising work, it is – and always has been – a central pillar of union activity in the UK. Some unions such as the GMB are increasingly thinking about how to integrate the organising and bargaining functions. But these efforts at integration are by no means seen across the board and very serious questions remain about what role organising – and organisers – are likely to achieve if those efforts are not focused on securing gains from employers.

Targeting under-represented membership groups

A further element of this argument, frequently presented by those who focus their attention on the importance of unions increasing membership amongst under-represented groups, is that organising activity can and should target the engagement of specific groups of members in democratic structures. This is particularly seen amongst authors who discuss women's involvement in unions (Colgan and Ledwith 2000, Kirton 1999, Kirton 2005). Although women workers are proportionately represented amongst union membership, they are under-represented in the decision making structures. Thus, there are those who argue that if organising efforts do not attempt to address this, unions are likely to become increasingly irrelevant within contemporary workplaces and labour markets. Other groups such as young workers, and black and minority ethnic workers are under-represented in both the membership and representative structures of most unions.

The evidence on this issue is very mixed. Whilst the original objective to target under-represented groups was never as specific as it might have been, there are two major groups that can be considered to be under-represented in UK union membership; those working in sectors and workplaces where unions have traditionally struggled to organise, and those from minority groups where representation within unions has not been representative of the workforce population. Whilst these groups need to be dealt with as analytically separate, there are important overlaps

between them. Overall, minority ethnic workers, for example, are far more likely to be working in private service sector workplaces where union representation is low. Thus the issue of under-representation is multi-faceted and complex. The intention here is to unpick some of this complexity and evaluate both the strengths and the weaknesses of union activities.

There is only really one group of workers who can be identified in the empirical evidence as having been targeted for membership specifically because of their worker characteristics: migrant workers. Other groups have largely been dealt with as integral to the workplaces selected by unions for organising activity. Why this group has been dealt with separately is open to question. We suspect it reflects the fact that migrant workers have grown considerably as a feature of the UK labour market in the period under consideration; largely as a consequence of A8 expansion of EU membership to the eight Eastern European countries in 2004. In other words, this is a reflection of unions responding to labour market change.

Others have studied this phenomenon in far greater detail than we can here (Martinez Lucio and Perret 2009, Perrett and Martinez Lucio 2009a, 2009b and see Holgate 2009a for a review of the literature in this area), but it is notable that some separate organising activity has been targeted at this group. Putting to one side examples of organising campaigns that have taken place in workplaces or organisations that employ largely migrant workers (see Holgate 2005 for an example) which are discussed in the next section, there have also been examples of campaigns run to target migrant workers with information about working in the UK which cross workplaces, employers and sectors. Examples include the development of migrant worker branches in the GMB, the development of the Justice for Cleaners campaign in Unite (Holgate 2009b), and Unionlearn projects structured around the provision of English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) classes (Martinez Lucio and Perrett 2009, Martinez Lucio et al 2007).

Although these are all important examples of activity, it is important to note that the vast majority of migrant workers work in sectors where formal union representation is absent (Portes and French 2005) and the kinds of campaigns highlighted above are notable for the fact that they are atypical. Thus perhaps the more significant challenge is to expand union representation to those sectors and workplaces; the focus of the following section where, unfortunately, the assessment is rather pessimistic.

Organising in under-represented sectors

Data from CAC decisions in relation to the statutory recognition procedures, as well as macro-data (Blanden et al 2006, Gall 2007) persistently show that unions have mainly targeted workplaces in existing strongholds for greenfield organising activity. As Blanden et al (2006; 183) point out “[A]lthough the new recognition agreements have helped ‘stop the rot’ of secular

decline, these firms may not be the ones that can help unions increase aggregate membership substantially.” This “consolidation” or “close expansion” activity (Kelly and Heery 1989) is argued to be rational by many union policy makers. Consolidation activity or close expansion typically involves increasing membership density in organisations where unions already have recognition and/or seeking bargaining rights in organisations that are closely linked to workplaces where recognition already exists. This has the advantage to unions of maximising the return on their organising expenditure. Employer resistance is typically less in workplaces where there is already a working relationship. And some unions have invested in expanding recognition agreements to groups of workers in the same organisations, but who have not previously been covered by collective agreements.

There are some examples of particularly innovative practice. The TGWU section of Unite, for example, has explicitly developed an expansionist strategy (see Simms and Holgate 2010a for further discussion). There are also examples of some of the smaller, cash-rich unions seeking to expand. Specifically the ISTC and GPMU which had strongholds in the declining steel and paper industries respectively were early supporters of the Academy. They developed slightly different approaches. The ISTC adopted what they called ‘community unionism’ and sought to organise in the sectors where ex-steelworkers and their families now worked. They argued their stronghold was in communities which had developed to provide labour for steel plants and that now those plants no longer hired large numbers of workers, the union should seek to recruit and organise in the, often service based, workplaces that had taken their place. In 2004, the union merged with several smaller unions and calls itself Community to reflect this strategy and these values.

The GPMU took a similar approach in response to declining employment in the printing industry, but it was more successfully able to use the statutory recognition legislation because although there had been a wave of de-recognition efforts in printing throughout the 1980s and 1990s, many workers had retained either membership or an affiliation to the union despite not having bargaining rights. In practice, this meant that there were pockets of considerable membership density where majority support for the union was comparatively easy to demonstrate, but where employer hostility to union recognition had blocked bargaining for many years. Alongside this approach, the GPMU did attempt to expand beyond printing. Largely this work was undertaken by Academy organisers and involved targeting workforces working in similar geographical locations to members in existing firms; for example, workplaces on an industrial estate near a small print shop. Again, this strategy yielded some membership expansion, but little overall membership growth. The union eventually merged with Amicus (later Unite) in 2004.

These examples are notable because they are atypical. The main picture of union organising activity over the past decade has been one of consolidation and close expansion rather than expansion into new sectors. Most notably, overall, there has been very little expansion into the private service sector. Membership density in the private service sector still hovers around 15.5% reflecting a steady downward trend from around 20% in 1997 (Forth and Bryson 2010). Of course, there is also a significant public sector effect here. Public sector unions make up a large proportion of the Organising Academy sponsors. And these unions generally have fewer opportunities to expand their recognition agreements as most public sector workers have union representation rights. Thus, for these unions, consolidation activity is the only feasible organising activity that they can undertake.

But there are notable exceptions. The Public and Commercial Services union (PCS), for example, has had large numbers of members transferred to the private sector as a result of privatisation policies of successive governments over the past 20 years. Many of these members have taken with them their union representation rights as a result of complex European Union legislation which, in principle, protects some of these workers' terms and conditions as they are transferred to the private sector (McMullen 2006). This has given the PCS a foothold in many private sector organisations which had previously been largely un-unionised. Whilst efforts to capitalise on these organising opportunities have had mixed outcomes, they do at least represent an opportunity – and in many respects a necessity - for some public sector unions to expand into new territories.

In short, while there is evidence that some unions have been seeking to expand into new territories, this is not the overall picture. Overall, collective bargaining coverage is now around 32% compared to 36% in 1999, reflecting a slight downward trend in both public and private sectors (Forth and Bryson 2010). It is therefore hard to avoid the conclusion that 13 years of organising activity has made comparatively little impact on formal, aggregate measures of union power. Of course, it is impossible to know whether decline would have been worse in the absence of such activity. We strongly suspect it would have been and that much of the stabilisation of union membership has resulted from the kinds of activities described above. But on these measures there is comparatively little cause for celebration within the union movement as the UK moves into a period that is likely to be both politically and economically significantly more challenging than the previous 13 years. But as anyone who has every discussed organising with a union organiser will know, organising is not just about numbers. It is also about building a strong and (relatively) independent structure of worker representation. We feel that it is important to try to capture this kind of 'cultural' development in our evaluation and, despite the methodological difficulties of evaluating something that is inherently difficult to 'measure', we feel that our data allows us important insight into the extent to which the UK union movement

has developed ideas about worker self-organisation, union democracy, and making links beyond the workplace. It is to this that our attention now turns.

Worker self-organisation and union democracy

One of the central notions within organising is that it should encourage membership activism so that workers are encouraged to take collective action to address their own problems and issues at work. Through collective action around relevant workplace issues, it is then hoped that workers will come to experience the effectiveness of collective action and join the union. This ‘mobilisation’ approach (Kelly 1998) places at its core workers taking responsibility for addressing their workplace issues, rather than relying on paid officers and as such, it raises some crucial issues about ideas of union democracy. Union democracy is a highly contested notion. In previous sections, we have already raised the question of whether union democracy relates to the processes through which members participate in their union, or whether we should take a broader view of what would traditionally have been called ‘industrial democracy’ i.e. the need to engage workers in the decision making of their employers at both organisational and industrial or sectoral levels.

We take the view that whilst both are important objectives of organising, ‘industrial democracy’ in the UK context is largely secured through collective bargaining which has been discussed previously. Unlike, for example, Germany, we have no institutional mechanisms for industrial democracy to extend beyond collective bargaining, nor are we likely to in the foreseeable future. As a result, we suggest that arguments about what institutional or legislative frameworks for wider industrial democracy may or may not be desirable are beyond the scope of this paper. Of course, if organising efforts were sufficiently successful to (re)establish unions as powerful actors within the economic and political environment such debates would not only be logical, but essential. But at this point in time, we want to focus on the internal mechanisms available to members to participate in their unions. In doing so, we differentiate between participation at workplace level, and participation in the wider structures of the union.

It is difficult to get evidence about what is happening in organising campaigns in individual workplaces, but we can make some helpful inferences from our in-depth qualitative case studies of campaigns. Although these are mostly greenfield campaigns, we nonetheless get important insight which indicates significant variability both within and between campaigns. Variation within a campaign tends to be related to the individual activists in particular workplaces, and this is where activist training becomes so important. It is important to note that there are increasing opportunities for activists to be trained in organising techniques and principles. But until relatively recently, activist training in most unions had – at best – a single module on organising which rather undermined much of the good work done during organising campaigns, and

undoubtedly sent very mixed messages about what role(s) unions want their activists to take on. In 2009, the TUC launched the Activist Academy which is certainly a positive development in this area, and many individual unions are giving serious thought and resources to ways of developing activists more effectively.

Variation between campaigns is largely related to the policies and practices of individual unions and this is perhaps conceptually one of the most interesting issues emerging from our extensive studies of organising activity. In the earlier section on collective bargaining, we highlighted the difficulties confronting unions if they pay insufficient attention to the link between organising and bargaining. There is a serious danger that un-coordinated organising activity results in individual workplaces being organised, but little opportunity to secure effective collective bargaining gains because of the lack of unionisation in the wider industry or sector. But we also argue that the reverse is equally problematic. Organising that is driven too much from the top or from the centre of the union can be just as unsustainable.

We see this in a number of campaigns that have been launched because – and only because - they have been strategically important to the union for some reason. Typically, this might be because of some kind of change of ownership (for example, if an employer sub-contracts or outsources a particular activity which transfers some union members into another employer) or because a union is seeking to expand beyond its core territories. Whilst both kinds of organising are necessary, there are examples of campaigns that have been pursued even where there is little enthusiasm from workers. Because of the voluntarist nature of British labour relations, it is quite possible that managers may agree to a union presence, or even to collective bargaining, without a strong demand for it from workers. Thus, we have seen cases where unions pursue some of these campaigns and attempt to build membership and activism, but where the membership withers quickly. We argue that this kind of organising is equally as unsustainable as campaigns where there is membership enthusiasm, but where there is a lack of co-ordination.

Which returns us to important questions about ideas of union democracy. Conventional writing on union democracy tends to focus on membership activism. Indeed Fairbrother (1989, 2000), for example, argues that workplace activism is the key driver of both organising and of union renewal more widely and Bramble (1995) argues that efforts at co-ordination as ‘stifling’ renewal opportunities. On the basis of having observed many campaigns, we take a different view. In common with Voss and Sherman (2000) we argue that organising activity is an area that needs co-ordination if it is to succeed in developing sustainable and effective trade unionism. This is explicitly not the same as arguing that organising strategy should be driven from ‘top down’ or ‘centre out’. Crucially, we see the role of the ‘top’ or the ‘centre’ as being one of co-ordination and allocation of scarce resources, rather of control over what happens in the workplace itself.

We also argue that without developing strong workplace activism and membership, organising is achieving little.

This highlights the paradox of organising; there is almost no evidence that organising activity is currently happening spontaneously within UK workplaces so it must be promoted by professional union actors (officials, organisers, policy makers). But if those professionals do manage to create effectively organised workplaces, ultimately, these two loci of activity may well come into conflict with each other. And this is where the structures of union democracy i.e. the internal decision making structures of the union, are so important. If centrally co-ordinated organising efforts are successful in creating dynamic workplace organisation this should be seen in workplaces that have high levels of membership, members who participate in the activities of the union (including, but not limited to, bargaining), membership that is representative of the workforce in those workplaces, and – and this is hugely important – the confidence to set the union agenda that is relevant in that workplace. The first three of these objectives are rarely contested by either workplace activists or by union professionals. The latter, which we consider to be a central part of any consideration of any meaningful definition of worker self-organisation, is highly contested.

Indeed, it is this point that is really the key difference between the different approaches of different unions that we have described elsewhere (see Simms and Holgate 2010a for an initial discussion). Many trade unionists, commentators, and academics are very critical of the kind of organising undertaken by, for example, Usdaw. We use Usdaw as an example here because we have described their approach in more detail than many other unions, and also because they are very clear that a key focus of their organising activity is about recruitment, not because we think their approach is any more problematic than many other unions we have worked with. Usdaw's approach fully accepts the importance of increasing membership, of ensuring representativeness, and of developing activists. However, the structure and culture of Usdaw places far less emphasis on building worker self-organisation. In part, this is because of the labour markets within which Usdaw organises. Within retail, workers often work on temporary and/or part-time contracts, and labour turnover is high which can make these workplaces difficult to organise. Usdaw has taken the view that one way around these challenges is to work with employer support wherever possible. And the politics of that approach cannot be ignored. One consequence of a more 'partnership' oriented approach is that it leaves less scope for members to build a workplace trade union culture that develops a collective and independent voice around relevant workplace issues than in unions that place less emphasis on working co-operatively with employers. So, whilst Usdaw has undoubtedly been successful in recruiting members and growing the union, and has had some considerable success in identifying workplace activists, there is little emphasis on building worker self-organisation. Importantly, it should be noted that

many within the union would argue that this is neither a desirable nor an achievable objective and it doesn't therefore matter whether one rejects it because of a political stance, or because of an acceptance that it would be difficult to achieve organising in these sectors; the end result is the same.

Inevitably, however, unions that do seek to develop strong, self-organising workplaces are highly likely to find tensions between the central co-ordination of union activities (including organising) and the aspiration to involve members at workplace level so that they make decisions that are relevant to them. This is a further paradox inherent within organising. But we argue that it is a paradox that has always been inherent within trade unionism more generally and is not specific to organising activity. What is different is that some ideas about organising – although not all as we can see from the Usdaw example above - relate either explicitly or implicitly to an objective of increasing the democratic participation of members.

In practice, most unions – and certainly most organisers – are committed to the objective of increasing the democratic participation of members. And where organising campaigns are successful in increasing membership and representation structures there are relatively few examples of evidence of efforts to control members in a direct manner. Indeed, in some respects our findings show that it can be officers and organisers who are disappointed by the fact that members seem un-enthused about participating in the workplace structures. One officer of a large union that had run both greenfield and in-fill campaigns in large private sector employers stressed at length how hard she tried to encourage members to take on representation and bargaining roles – not always successfully: *“My approach is that they [workplace activists] should be doing this kind of thing for themselves.”* She went on to say *“I think they [activists] should have the responsibility for it [the campaign]. It's their workplace, their problems, not mine.”*

This is a fairly typical view of many officers and of almost all organisers. Indeed, whilst it is undoubtedly the case that not all union officers share this view, we have yet to come across an organiser who does not broadly share this approach. Where officers do not share this view, it can lead to tensions (Simms 2010). Focusing for the moment on campaigns where officers and organisers do share this approach, it is clear even there in those campaigns there can be frustrations about getting workplace activists to take on these roles. This is particularly evident in greenfield campaigns where workers often have little previous experience of unions. In some respects this can be an advantage in that their expectations can be shaped throughout the campaigns. But in practice these new union members, activists and representatives often need time and training to build and develop experience. A further complication is that in greenfield campaigns, our research shows that the range of activities taken on by activists can be very different from the roles adopted once recognition has been granted and the union is more

established. These different roles demand different skills and require, we argue, acceptance of the fact that the pre- and post- recognition phases of greenfield organising are very different, requiring different skills, and sometimes different activists.

The post-recognition phase is, of course, essentially an in-fill campaign. In-fill campaigns are where issues of the relationship between union organising and union democracy really come to the fore. Here, activists and representatives often have a great deal of experience within their unions, and can often have very strong ideas about how they envisage the relationship and the division of decision making responsibilities between officers and activists.

Social movement unionism

Some authors and commentators have seen the opportunity to broaden debates about organising to include ideas about the focus of unions more generally. One important strand of this has been an increasingly strong view that unions can and should develop a form of ‘social movement unionism’ (Johnson 1994, Clawson 2003). Typically this tends to focus developing formal and informal links between unions and other social justice campaigns to improve workers’ rights. This implicitly accepts a more radical view of the role unions can play in social change and promoting social justice which may conflict with some of the more institutional and regulationist objectives discussed above. In the UK, there is relatively little evidence of this kind of organising, although this view has been most closely associated with ‘community unionism’ (Wills and Simms 2004) which focuses on increasing the links between the workplace and the wider community, and on recognising and building on workers’ roles and connections beyond their workplace. What is important here is that the focus of such organising activity is far beyond any immediate improvements in workers’ terms and conditions (although these may accrue from such activity), and that the union attempts to become relevant to workers’ lives beyond a workplace, industry or sectoral level. Social movement unionism has a far broader view of the role of the union; taking it beyond the workplace and into the wider political sphere.

And, again, we need to be alert to the different national contexts. UK unions have a long history of taking up broadly defined social justice campaigns and issues including anti-racism campaigns, concern with local development issues, and an extremely active engagement in the ‘learning agenda’. But the focus on collective bargaining, the separation of the Labour Party and the trade union movement, and the dominance of the idea of incremental rather than revolutionary change, all help to explain why UK unions have tended to prioritise a focus on workplace bargaining rather than see these kinds of wider community activity as central to their approach.

Our research indicates that the interest and investment in organising activity is still located very much at workplace level, and prioritises the objective of securing improvements in workers’

terms and conditions of employment. This is not the same as saying that unions have no interest in the wider social movement agenda; rather that it is not their central priority. We argue that this does reflect a certain lack of imagination on behalf of unions. Elsewhere, it has been argued that certain labour market conditions such as the employment of large numbers of contingent workers can place a considerable imperative on unions organising 'beyond the enterprise' (Heery et al 2004). We do see evidence that particular labour markets can create this kind of union response and there are certainly examples of unions organising freelance and self-employed workers in this way. But this is by no means the dominant form of union organising in the UK.

Conclusions

In a broad sense, the evidence of the impact of organising initiatives is very mixed and not optimistic in relation to questions of a wide-scale union renewal. In large part, we have argued in this paper that this in part a consequence of the dominant focus of organising practice targeted at membership development and, occasionally, securing recognition for collective bargaining rather than the wider and more political objectives of promoting worker self-organisation or social movement unionism.

Our analysis has allowed a more complex evaluation of the dynamics of particular outcomes in different unions and different sectors than has previously been put forward in much of the UK literature. This has allowed us to develop a more complex argument than has been outlined in previous literature and one that can more convincingly account for the diversity of objectives and outcomes identified across the union movement. We argue that whilst at a general level, there has been an interest in increasing membership at the expense of a more radical 'vision' of organising, there are notable exceptions such as some of the work undertaken by the RMT which has placed considerable emphasis on strengthening membership voice and activism.

Overall though, our analysis has a decidedly pessimistic tone. Returning to the relevance of the wider political and economic context of the period since 1997, it is clear that unions have largely failed to use the more benign environment to renew themselves in a convincing manner. Whilst membership levels have stabilised, this is against a background of a growing labour market. Although there are examples of innovative projects to attract new and under-represented groups of vulnerable workers (such as migrant workers), there is considerable evidence that collective bargaining strength during this period has declined in almost all sectors. Equally, there is little evidence of any sustained development of the kind of social movement unionism discussed in US literature. On all of these measures, the UK union movement is judged to be at least no stronger - and probably weaker - than it was in 1997 despite the changes in the institutional and political context.

References

- Barratt, C (2009) 'Trade Union Membership 2008'. London: Department of Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform and National Statistics.
- Blanden, J, Machin, S and van Reeve, J (2006) 'Have unions turned a corner? New evidence on recent trends in union recognition in UK firms.'. *British Journal of Industrial Relations*. 44: 2: 169 - 190.
- Bramble, T. (1995) 'Deterring democracy? Australia's new generation of trade union officials' *The Journal of Industrial Relations*. September 1995. pp 401-426.
- Brown, W. (2002) 'The operation of the Low Pay Commission' *Employee Relations*. 24(6) pp595-605.
- Brown, W. (2010) 'Negotiation and collective bargaining' in T. Colling and M. Terry (eds.) *Industrial Relations: Theory and Practice*. Chichester: Wiley.
- Brown, W. and Nash, D. (2008), 'Collective bargaining under New Labour', *Industrial Relations Journal*, 39:2.
- Carter, B. (2006), "Trade union organising and renewal: a response to de Turbeville", *Work, Employment and Society*, Vol. 20 pp.415-26
- Clawson, D. (2003) *The Next Upsurge: Labour and the New Social Movements*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- Colgan, F. And Ledwith, S. (2000) 'Diversity, identities and strategies of women trade union activists'. *Gender, Work and Organization*. 7 (4) pp 242 – 257.
- Crosby, J (2005) 'Democracy, density, and transformation: we need them all.' *Working USA*. 8: December: 733-753.
- Dickens, L, and Hall, M. (2010) 'The changing legal framework of employment relations' in T. Colling and M. Terry (eds.) *Industrial Relations: Theory and Practice*. Chichester: Wiley.
- Fairbrother, P. (1989) *Workplace Unionism in the 1980s: A Process of Renewal*. Workers Educational Association: London.
- Fairbrother, P. (2000) *Unions at the Crossroads*. Mansell. London.
- Forth, J. and Bryson, A. (2010) 'Trade union membership and influence 1999-2009?'. Presentation to Department for Business Innovation and Skills. June 2010.
- French, JPRJ and Raven, B. (1960) 'The bases of social power' in Cartwright, D. and Zander, A. (eds.) *Group dynamics* New York: Harper and Row: 607-623.
- Gall, G. (2003) 'Introduction' in G. Gall (ed.) *Union Organizing: Campaigning for Trade Union Recognition*. Routledge.
- Gall, G. (ed.) (2003) *Union Organizing: Campaigning for Trade Union Recognition*. Routledge.
- Gall, G. (ed.) (2006) *Union Recognition: Organising and Bargaining Outcomes*. Routledge.
- Gall, G (2007) 'Trade union recognition in Britain: an emerging crisis for trade unions?'. *Economic and Industrial Democracy*. 28: 78 - 109.
- Gall, G. (ed.) (2009) *The Future of Union Organising: Building for Tomorrow*, Palgrave.

- Heery, E., Simms, M., Delbridge, R., Salmon, J., and Simpson, D. (2000) 'The TUC's Organising Academy: an assessment.' *Industrial Relations Journal*. Vol. 31, No. 5.
- Heery, E., Delbridge, R., Simms, M., Salmon, J., Simpson, D. (2003) 'Organising for renewal: a case study of the TUC's Organising Academy' in D. Cornfield and H. McCammon (eds.) *Labor Revitalization. Research in the Sociology of Work*. New York, JAI Press.
- Heery, E., Conley, H., Delbridge, R and Stewart, P (2004) 'Beyond the enterprise: trade union representation of freelancers in the UK.' *Human Resource Management Journal*. 14: 2: 20-35.
- Holgate, J (2009a) 'The role of UK unions in the civic integration of immigrant workers'. Labor Unions and Civic Integration of Immigrant Workers research project.
- Holgate, J (2009b) 'Unionising the low paid in London: the Justice for Cleaners campaign'. Case study. Labor Unions and Civic Integration of Immigrant Workers research project.
- Howell, C. (2004) 'Is there a third way for industrial relations?' *British Journal of Industrial Relations*. 42 (1) pp 1-22.
- Johnson, P. (1994) *Success while others fail: social movement unionism and the public workplace*. ILR Press, Ithaca,
- Kelly, J (1998) *Rethinking Industrial Relations. Mobilization, Collectivism and Long Waves*. London: Routledge.
- Kelly, J. and Heery, E. (1989) 'Full-time officers and trade union recruitment' *British Journal of Industrial Relations*. 27(2) pp 196-213.
- Kirton, G. (1999) 'Sustaining and developing women's trade union activism: a gendered project?' *Gender, Work and Organization*. 6 (4) pp213 – 223.
- Kirton, G. (2005) 'The influences on women joining and participating in unions' *Industrial Relations Journal*. 36(5) pp 386 – 401.
- Kirton, G. And Greene, A-m. (2002) 'The dynamics of positive action in UK trade unions: the case of women and black members' *Industrial Relations Journal*. 33 (2) pp 157 – 173.
- McIlroy, J. (1998) 'The enduring alliance? Trade unions and the making of New Labour 1994-1997' *British Journal of Industrial Relations*. 36(4) pp 537-564.
- McMullen, J. (2006) 'An analysis of the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) regulations 2006' *Industrial Law Journal*. 35 (2) pp 113- 139.
- McIlroy, J. (2000) 'New labour, new unions, new left' *Capital and Class* pp 11-46.
- Martínez Lucio, M and Perrett, R (2009) 'Meanings and dilemmas in community unionism: trade union community initiatives and black and minority ethnic groups in the UK.' *Work, Employment and Society*. 23: 4: 693-710.
- Martínez Lucio, M, Perrett, R, McBride, J and Craig, S (2007) 'Migrant workers in the labour market. The role of unions in the recognition of skills and qualifications'. London: Unionlearn, Research paper 7.

- Moore, S. and Bewley, H. (2004) 'The content of new voluntary trade union recognition agreements 1998-2002: Report of preliminary findings' *Employment Relations Research Series No 26*. Department of Trade and Industry: London.
- Parker, J. (2003) 'We're on the road to somewhere: women's groups in unions', *Industrial Relations Journal*, 34 (2) pp 164-184.
- Parker, J. (2006) 'Towards equality and renewal: women's groups, diversity and democracy in British unions' *Economic and Industrial Democracy*. 27 (3) pp 425-462.
- Perrett, R. And Martinez Lucio, M. (2009) 'Trade unions and relations with black and minority ethnic community groups in the United Kingdom: the development of new alliances?' *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*. 35 (8) pp 1295-1314.
- Portes, J. and French, S. (2005) *The Impact of Free Movement of Workers From Central and Eastern Europe on the UK Labour Market: Early Evidence*. Department for Work and Pensions: Working Paper Number 18.
- Simms, M (2005) 'Organising Service Workers: Evidence from Five Trade Union Campaigns'. University of Wales. Unpublished PhD thesis.
- Simms, M. (2006) 'The transition from organizing to recognition: a case study' in G. Gall (ed.) *Union Recognition: Organising and Bargaining Outcomes*. London: Routledge.
- Simms, M. (2007) 'Managed activism: two union organising campaigns in the not-for-profit sector' *Industrial Relations Journal*. 38(2) pp 119-135.
- Simms, M. (2010) 'Workplace representatives in service sector organising campaigns: roles and tensions'. Paper presented at the 2010 CRIMT-CIRA annual conference, Quebec, Canada.
- Simms, M. and Holgate, J. (2010) 'The organising model: an empirical critique' *Work, Employment and Society*. 24: 1
- Simms, M. and Holgate, J. (2010) '10 years of the TUC Organising Academy' *International Journal of Human Resource Management*. 21: 3 pp 355-370.
- Smith, P. and Morton, G. (2001) 'New Labour's reform of British employment law: The devil is not only in the detail but in the values and policy too' *British Journal of Industrial Relations*. 39(1) pp 119-138.
- Stuart, M. and Martinez Lucio, M. (2009) 'What does modernisation mean for trade unions in Britain?' Talk given to the Industrial Relations Research Unit, University of Warwick.
- Undy, R. (1999) 'New Labour's industrial relations settlement: the third way?' *British Journal of Industrial Relations*. 37(2) pp 315-336.
- Undy, R. (2002) 'New Labour and New Unionism, 1997-2001: but is it the same old story?' *Employee Relations*. 24(6) pp 638-655.
- Voss, K., and Sherman, R. (2000) 'Breaking the iron law of oligarchy: union revitalization in the American labor movement' *American Journal of Sociology* 106(2) pp 303-349.

Wills, J. and Simms, M. (2004) 'Building Reciprocal Community Unionism in the UK.' *Capital and Class*. Vol. 82. 59-84.

Wood, H. and Moore, S. (2005) An Evaluation of the UK Union Learning Fund - its Impact on Unions and Employers. Working Lives Research Institute Report.