

CALL FOR PAPERS

Work Matters: 28th Annual International Labour Process Conference Rutgers University, March, 15-17, 2010

SPECIAL INTEREST STREAM: Alternative Work Organisations

Acute and deep economic crises, like the one we are currently experiencing, have always had an important role in reshaping people's lives and societies. By momentarily breaking the flow of production and consumption, destroying wealth and creating unemployment, economic crises interrupt the regular working of accepted socio-economic systems and open the room to popular protests and searches for alternatives. In the labour movement's history one of the forms in which the dominating system has been contested and responses to crisis have been found has been through workers' run and controlled production. Defined as workers self-management or *autogestion*, to use the more catchy Spanish definition, different forms of workers' empowerment at the level of production have been used in different geographical contexts alongside the history of the capitalist system of production. Reverting taken for granted assumptions about property and capital control of the labour process, cases of workers' self-management can be seen as an alternative work organisation, a theoretical proposal to overcome capitalism and a form of radical struggle and rank and file strategy for collective action.

We thus invite papers with both an empirical and/or theoretical focus, based on historical, contemporary, worldwide cases that can assess workers' experiences with alternative forms of work organisation, particularly, in relation to the following issues

- Labour process and decision-making
- Workers' collective actions and struggles for emancipation
- Social theory of work
- Alternative to capitalist societies

Research questions that address these issues may include:

- What is the historical-political development of workers' control, its legacy and contemporary cogency?
- What is the theoretical relevance of all these attempts to challenge the 'natural' state of capitalist work relations?
- What would an alternative model look like?
- What would be the state's role in promoting this alternative?
- Should be workers' organisations actively supporting factories occupations and self-management?
- Are there feasible, sustainable long-term alternatives to conventional capitalist organisations?

- How market competition influence this new model?
- Which type of values will it be supporting?
- Who is going to take decisions in the new organisations? Will there be any leaders?
- What role, if any, for managers?
- How will tasks be distributed among workers?

We would welcome contributions from both academics and labour activists with different background and interdisciplinary approach based on worldwide examples of alternative forms of work organisations.

We would be happy to discuss initial ideas for papers with potential contributors

Presented papers will be considered for an edited book on Alternative Work Organisation to be published by Palgrave in Spring 2011.

Stream Organisers:

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The Conference:

The Annual International Labour Process Conference is a leading conference on work and employment. It brings together academics and policy makers from the sociology of work and employment, labour studies, business and management, human resource management, industrial relations, organization studies and a range of other disciplines. Selections of conference papers are published in edited books, with twenty now published. It is intended that a selection of papers from the women's work stream will be published in a journal special edition. Abstracts for the stream should be between 350-500 words and can be either theoretical and/or empirical. Abstract contents should enable the referees to determine what issue, development or problem is being investigated, how it is investigated, what the findings are and what contribution is being made to understanding in the field.

ILPC 2008 Conference Organizers:

Prof. Eileen Appelbaum

Prof. Adrienne Eaton

Dean David Finegold

Dr. Mary Gatta

For questions about the conference please contact: ilpc2010@ilpc.org.uk

Please submit to www.ilpc.org.uk by October 31, 2009

