

## 11 On the edge of equality?

### Working women and the US labour movement

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#### Introduction

The power of US unions – measured either by membership numbers or by economic and political clout – has sometimes seemed to be in virtual free fall in the last decades of the twentieth century. Yet the breathtaking decline of labour may have finally bottomed out and may even be beginning to reverse itself. In 1999, union density (the percentage of the labour force that is unionised)<sup>1</sup> reached its lowest point since the 1930s with only 14 per cent of workers (10 per cent of the private sector and 37 per cent of the public sector) belonging to unions (USDL 2000). But under the relentless drum beat of ‘organise, organise’ emanating from the AFL-CIO’s<sup>2</sup> new leadership under President John J. Sweeney, the haemorrhaging of membership has slowed. For the first time in 20 years, union density remained the same in 1999, and the absolute number of union members actually *increased* by some quarter of a million, boosting union membership to sixteen and a half million members. Of equal significance, the Sweeney administration’s aggressive leadership in politics since 1996 and its willingness to rethink ‘business as usual’ has earned it grudging respect from politicians, business leaders, and the public at large (Meyerson 2000).

Yet the US labour movement will have a long road back to the power and prestige it once enjoyed. Despite polls showing that a majority of US workers desire collective representation at work, actually organising a union and securing a contract is not easy (Freeman and Rogers 1999; Hart 1998). US labour law erects formidable hurdles to collective representation. Some one-third of the labour force fall outside the protections of the law, and many others face legal delays and loopholes that render freedom of choice and the right to association farcical (Cobble 1994a). US employers also oppose collective representation more vehemently than employers in other industrialised nations. The number of workers fired in organising campaigns continues to rise in the US, and many employers refuse to negotiate first contracts even *after* a majority of workers votes for union representation. Moreover, unionised employers persist in adversarial attitudes, bypassing contract mechanisms for problem solving and seeking out management consultants who specialise in de-unionisation strategies (Bronfenbrenner 1994).

Labour’s revitalisation in the US depends in large part on the degree to which this hostile legal and social environment can be modified. Yet labour’s fate also

depends on whether it can transform itself to meet the needs and aspirations of a changing workforce. Although opinion polls show consistent support for the *idea* of collective representation, attitudes towards what are perceived as the common *practices* of US unions are considerably less enthusiastic (Freeman and Rogers 1999; Hart 1998). The labour movement as we know it today emerged in the World War II era, some 50 years ago, and was created primarily to meet the needs of a male factory workforce. Yet the *majority* of workers are now in service and white-collar jobs and close to half are female. In part it is the ability of organised labour to recognise these discontinuities and remake itself to attract this new workforce that will determine whether workers opt for paternalistic, individualistic or collective solutions to their workplace dilemmas.

Labour women have been pushing for cultural and institutional change within the US labour movement for decades, and, as this chapter will argue, the impact of their efforts is now being increasingly felt. In the 1970s, a new labour feminism emerged, largely in conjunction with the rise of the larger middle-class women’s movement – a movement that reverberated throughout the society in the 1960s and 1970s, remaking law and sexual mores, and breaking apart many of the economic and social barriers that constrained women. In 1974, over three thousand women from 58 AFL-CIO unions descended on Chicago to found CLUW, a national organisation dedicated to improving the status of women, both as workers and as unionists (Milkman 1985: 311). Clerical workers, flight attendants, household employees, and others also formed organisations *independent* of the AFL-CIO unions in the 1970s, and in many cases they improved their wages and working conditions by relying on picketing, publicity, and lawsuits as well as traditional collective bargaining (Cobble 1999). The momentum continued into the 1980s with women in the large public sector unions leading successful pay equity strikes across the country (Hallock 1993). Although the middle-class women’s movement peaked by the end of the 1970s, the new assertiveness on the part of *labour* women has continued to force changes in the leadership and agenda of trade unions. Indeed, although the labour movement still retains vestiges of its industrial, male-identified past, as the twentieth-first century dawns, labour is repositioning itself as a leading institutional force for women’s economic advancement.

Organised labour has much to gain by this new partnership. Women could once be ignored – few were in unions and the paid labour force was predominantly male. But today, the power of labour rests as much on the loyalty and activism of its women members as its men, and labour’s future may well hinge on its ability to win the allegiance of the millions of women – some 88 per cent of all women workers – who are outside its ranks. Fortunately for labour, women are more favourably inclined to union membership and hence are more likely to respond to union organising appeals. This gender gap in union attitudes has held steady since the late 1970s. The latest Hart poll, conducted in 1997, found that 49 per cent of unorganised women would vote for union representation compared to 40 per cent of men (Hart 1998). And, when given the opportunity, women act on their pro-union beliefs, casting ‘yes’ votes in union elections more frequently than do men (Bronfenbrenner 1998).

Labour would do well to listen to its women members. For it is the issues women are articulating and the new institutional practices they are pioneering that are salient for the twenty-first century workforce, male and female. The feminisation of work and the transformation of the family have meant that the experiences of many men are coming to resemble those once associated solely with women. In the new competitive, restructured economy, men increasingly face low wages, lack of benefits, and economic insecurity. A greater proportion of men also hold service and white-collar jobs, work long dominated by women. And, with the rise of two-income families, more men now face what once was thought to be a peculiarly 'woman's problem': how to balance the dual demands of paid work and family. Women are at the forefront of economic change, and they are at the forefront of devising new forms of unionism that will appeal to a new generation of workers.

Women of course need unions as much as unions need them. The large-scale economic and political upheavals of the late twentieth century have stratified wealth, and women have not been immune from this phenomenon. In the US, women's economic status has improved relative to men, but inequities *among* women by class and race have increased (Blau 1998). Unions can help lessen these new economic inequalities among women. Unions also remain crucial to increasing the power and voice of working women politically and to securing democracy, dignity, and fair treatment at work.

On 11 March, 2000, some 25 years after the founding of CLUW, thousands of union women once again gathered in Chicago under the auspices of the Working Women's Department (WWD) of the AFL-CIO, hoping to be the forerunners of a new surge of labour feminism. An ebullient Rosa L. DeLauro, Democratic Congresswoman from Connecticut told a cheering audience: 'We now stand on the edge of equality. This generation of working women will write a new chapter in our story. It will say that in this time, working women seized the country's agenda, shattered the glass ceiling and removed the last of the remaining barriers' (AFL-CIO 2000a). DeLauro's sweeping prediction may be premature, but certainly, as this essay will show, there are grounds for optimism.

In the sections that follow, we identify the concerns articulated by working women and assess the degree to which unions are serving as a means to realise these aspirations. We conclude with an analysis of the barriers to further progress. Our conclusions are based primarily on data drawn from Cobble's earlier historical and case study research on women and unions (Cobble 1991, 1993, 1994a, 1994b, 1996, 1999). In addition, we rely on new data generated through telephone and face-to-face interviews with fifteen key union respondents and a written questionnaire we administered that solicited information from all national unions with over 100,000 women members. The response rate was 83 per cent and included a representative group of blue-collar as well as white-collar unions.

### **The feminisation of labour**

Women's share of union membership grew steadily in the decades following World War II as the feminisation of the workforce picked up speed. Less than a tenth of

union members (or 800,000) were female before 1940; by 1954 close to 3 million women belonged to unions, some 17 per cent of all union members. In the 1960s and 1970s an even more dramatic change in the gender balance of organised labour occurred as unionism spread to female-majority sectors of the economy such as education; federal, state and municipal government; and, to a more limited degree, health care. Many of the most powerful and vocal internationals within the labour movement – AFSCME, SEIU, and the teacher unions – now had large female constituencies (Cobble 1993: 10–11). Today, 40 per cent of the labour-movement is female, approaching parity with women's 46 per cent share of the labour force (USDL 2000). And, as Karen Nussbaum, head of the AFL-CIO's WWD, is fond of pointing out: 'With five and a half million women members, the AFL-CIO is the largest working women's organisation in the country' (Nussbaum 2000).

Union leadership has feminised as well, spurred in part by the growing numbers of women members. Yet some of the most recent gains in female leadership, particularly at the national level, are also a result of the emergence of a new commitment to inclusion and diversity at the highest levels of the US labour movement. In 1995, for example, with the election of new national officers at the AFL-CIO, an immediate and dramatic change occurred in the number of women in executive level leadership within the Federation. The 'New Voice' slate, which won the first contested election for top officers since the AFL-CIO's founding in 1955, consisted of John J. Sweeney (SEIU) for Federation President, Richard Trumka (UMWA) for Secretary-Treasurer, and Linda Chavez-Thompson (AFSCME) for the new position of Executive Vice-President. Chavez-Thompson, a Mexican-American born to Texas sharecropper parents, had spent years organising public sector workers as a local AFSCME vice-president after an initial stint as a secretary for a local union affiliated with the Laborer's International (Meyerson 1998; Gray 2000). With her election, a woman became a top officer of the AFL-CIO for the first time, and a new third executive officer position was added to the Federation structure. The new administrative team moved quickly to bring other women and minorities into leadership within the Federation. They expanded the AFL-CIO Executive Council, the top Federation governing board, from 35 to 54, thus making it possible to diversify leadership significantly. The council now has seven women members (making it 13 per cent female), a far cry from 1980 when Joyce Miller, then president of CLUW, became the first woman to infiltrate its all-male ranks. Four of the seven are women of colour (Gray 1993; Gilliam 2000; AFL-CIO 2000b).

Sweeney also established a new department devoted to the interests and needs of women, the WWD. Its mandate was 'to bring the concerns of working women into every nook and cranny of the labour movement and to turn the labour movement into an activist voice of all working women' (Nussbaum 1998: 57). Sweeney convinced Karen Nussbaum, a veteran clerical organiser, to leave her directorship at the US Women's Bureau and take over as the Department's head. Finally, Sweeney increased the number of women department heads at the Federation headquarters from 6 to 50 per cent, prompting one prominent female AFL-CIO staffer to declare that truly a 'qualitative change' had occurred within the Washington headquarters (Meyerson 1998; Nussbaum 1998; Mills 2000).

Women made noticeable inroads into the executive suites of a growing number of the largest and most powerful of the national unions in the 1990s as well, broadening a trend evident in the 1980s. As Table 11.1 reveals, the last two decades have witnessed a significant jump in the number of women on the executive boards of AFSCME, SEIU, and the garment unions (now merged as UNITE). Increases also occurred on the top governing boards of the CWA, UFCW, and HERE. In addition, the UAW, a union that had always reserved one executive board position for a woman, now has two women board members, one of whom was the first woman *elected* to a *non-reserved* slot (Gray 2000). A 'glass ceiling' still blocks the rise of women into top executive positions in some sectors of the labour movement. Yet as Table 11.1 shows, the heavily male-dominated executive boards of the IBT (with one woman) or the IBEW (with no women) are now the outliers rather than the norm among unions with large numbers of women members.

The movement of women into top leadership positions is likely to continue, given the number of talented women in the pipeline. The lower and middle levels of union leadership feminised earlier than did the top executive offices, and the change has been more extensive. A critical mass of secondary women leaders emerged in the decades following World War II in the large CIO industrial unions (Cobble 1994b). The wave of public sector organising in the 1960s and 1970s produced additional women leaders. By the 1980s, the number of women local officers as well as the number of women paid staff at the local and regional level in some unions was considerable (Needleman 1986; Gray 1993). According to our recent survey, these gains have been sustained and extended in the last decade. In 2000, for example, some 46 per cent of AFSCME's 3,641 locals and approximately 35 per cent of SEIU's 300 locals have female leaders. Other unions such as the CWA, NEA, and UNITE also report large numbers of women staff and local leaders.

Data on minority women and union leadership is virtually non-existent. Yet what data does exist suggests a little-noticed but significant phenomenon. Women of colour, like white women, continue to be severely under-represented in union leadership, especially at the higher levels, but the representation gap may actually be less for African-American women than for white or Latina women. In a national survey conducted in the late 1970s, the US Commission on Civil Rights (1982: 18), found, for example, that although a smaller *absolute* number of African-American women held local leadership positions than white, a greater *proportion* of African-American women were in leadership. More recently, the propensity of African-American women to move into formal and informal leadership has been noted by Diane Harriford (1993) in her study of the New York City chapter of CLUW. She attributes black women's activism to long-standing traditions of black female leadership in the church and the civil rights movement.

But to what degree has the rise in the number of women members and leaders been accompanied by a corresponding shift in the agenda and institutional practices of the US labour movement? We attempt to answer that question in the following sections by identifying the workplace issues being articulated by working women and assessing the degree to which they are finding an ally in organised labour.

Table 11.1 Female membership and leadership in selected labour organisations with large numbers of women members, 1978–2000

<i>Labour organisation</i>	<i>Year</i>	<i>Women members (thousands)</i>	<i>Women as percentage of members</i>	<i>Women as percentage of officers and executive boardmembers</i>
NEA	1978	1,240	75	55
	1985	1,000	60	33
	1990	1,600	72	45
	2000	1,500	61	33
AFSCME	1978	408	40	3
	1985	450	45	4
	1990	600	50	17
	2000	728	52	38
UFCW	1978	480	39	3
	1990	663	51	8
	2000	700	50	11
SEIU	1978	312	50	15
	1985	435	50	18
	1990	420	45	34
	2000	650	50	32
AFT	1978	300	60	25
	1985	366	60	32
	1990	455	65	32
	2000	600	60	39
IBT	1978	481	25	0
	1985	485	26	0
	1990	400	25	0
	2000	450	30	4
CWA	1978	259	51	0
	1985	338	52	6
	1990	338	52	6
	2000	320	51	12
HERE	1978	181	42	4
	1985	200	50	8
	1990	143	48	4
	2000	185	48	18
ACTWU	1978	331	66	15
	1985	228	65	9
	1990	160	61	20
Now UNITE	2000	165	66	30
ILGWU	1970	279	80	7
	1983	219	85	13
	1990	145	83	22
	Now UNITE	2000	165	66

Sources: For 1978–1990 see Cobble (1993): 11. Data for 2000 are from a written survey of unions conducted by Cobble and Michal with the help of Mary Jean Soupis.

## Women and wages

US unions consistently identify raising wages as a central demand of the movement. The last decade is no exception. The recent AFL-CIO slogan, 'America Needs a Raise', and President Sweeney's book of the same title are indicative of the Federation's priorities (Sweeney 1996). Indeed, some pundits claim that the US labour movement is doing more than any other institution to return questions of economic inequality to the forefront of liberal and progressive reform in the US (Meyerson 2000). The need is pressing since class and race income disparities have widened in the US since the early 1970s. Real wages inched forward in the late 1990s, after declining since 1973, but the rise in overall *wealth* of the top fifth of the population far outpaced the gains for the bottom two-fifths. In particular, African-Americans saw their income and wealth erode in relation to Euro-Americans (Levy 1998).

Realising that collective bargaining could only *partially* solve the wage problem given the small percentage of unionised workplaces and the weakened economic clout of US unions, the AFL-CIO intensified its efforts in the political arena. The AFL-CIO pressed Congress to raise the minimum wage, and, in partnership with community groups, churches, and civil rights organisations, led a nationwide movement to pass 'living wage ordinances'. Both campaigns have enjoyed a surprising degree of success. In 1996, legislation raised the federal minimum wage from \$4.25 to \$5.15, the first increase in five years. 'Living Wage Ordinances', which usually require the payment of a wage higher than the federal minimum along with health benefits and other entitlements, were enacted first in Baltimore in December 1994. They have now spread to dozens of municipalities across the country (Kusnet 1998; Uchitelle 1999).

Although not targeted specifically at women, these kinds of universal initiatives do benefit women disproportionately. Sixty per cent of minimum wage workers in the US are female, some seven million women. The majority of these women are white, but women of colour are over-represented: they represent 22 per cent of US women but one-third of all minimum wage workers (Malveaux 2000). Any action improving wages for the poorest workers thus affects women and minorities more than any other group.

But what about the persistent wage gap between men and women? Minimum wage and living wage legislation help this problem because such approaches raise women's wages disproportionately. Organising women into unions closes the gender wage gap as well. Research has shown, for example, that union women earn 38 per cent more than non-union, and that the gender wage gap is less among organised than unorganised workers (WWD 2000; Spalter-Roth *et al.* 1994). But many labour women are endeavouring to ensure that strategies specifically focusing on closing the gender wage gap are included in labour's wage campaigns. And it appears they have partially succeeded. Since 1998, much of the AFL-CIO activity directed towards raising wages has been conducted under the rubric of 'America's Working Families', and 'fair pay' for women has been a key element of the programme.

In 1997, the WWD launched a full-scale political campaign on behalf of 'fair pay' legislation. The labour movement had been the key player in the bitter and

extensive comparable worth battles of the 1980s – battles that resulted in major wage gains for unionised women in the public sector. Indeed, significant pay equity wage hikes occurred *only* in states with strong public sector unions. But the movement stalled in the late 1980s, stymied by unfavourable court decisions and the resistance of private sector employers (Hallock 1993). Women workers, however, continued to identify equal pay as their number one priority, in part because after decades of steady but slow progress, the gender wage gap was still wide. In 2000, women earned 72 cents for every dollar earned by men, a slight decline from the 74 cents they received in 1996. White women fared best, earning 73 per cent of what all men make. African-American and Latina women made less relative to all men, earning 65 and 53 per cent respectively (NCPE 2000; Cummings 2000).

In 1998, the AFL-CIO supported the Paycheck Fairness Act, national legislation that would amend and improve the 1963 Equal Pay Act. As the Equal Pay Act currently stands, pay discrimination claims are limited to the few situations where women and men are doing 'substantially the same' work. The new legislation would allow a broader range of jobs to be evaluated for gender bias. It would also toughen the remedies allowed under the Equal Pay Act and funnel more resources into enforcement. Although the federal legislation sought by the AFL-CIO appears unlikely to pass in the near future, five 'fair pay' laws have passed at the state level and additional laws are being considered in 27 states, pushed primarily by the state federations of the AFL-CIO. Indeed, for the first time equal pay has made its way to the *top* of the list of the legislative priorities determined by the state federations (Nussbaum 2000; Cummings 2000).

In line with the AFL-CIO's emphasis on 'America's Working Families', fair pay has been presented more as a family issue than one of economic justice for individual women. The literature from the WWD calls attention to the loss of family income when women experience discrimination in pay. 'Unequal pay hurts men too,' the WWD points out, especially those in so-called 'women's jobs' (WWD 2000). The strategy is an inclusive one that downplays gender division and emphasises the benefits of fair pay for women, men, and children. Yet as the five thousand cheering Chicago attendees at the Working Women's Conference 2000 demonstrate, 'fair pay' is still an issue that is linked to women's empowerment and that resonates deeply with women's desire for recognition and respect.

## Work and family: it's about time

Women workers desire time off for themselves and their families as well as income and benefits that allow for the best possible care for loved ones. Organising around 'the politics of time', to use Carmen Sirianni's phrase, has a long history in the US (Sirianni 1988). The demand for shorter hours was the principal concern of the US labour movement in the nineteenth century (Roediger and Foner 1989). In the early twentieth century, the labour movement continued to press for shorter work hours through collective bargaining clauses and legislative statutes such as the Fair Labor Standards Act, which established the forty-hour, five-day week as the norm in 1938. In the post World War II era, work time declined further as

unionised workers achieved retirement benefits, vacations with pay, sick leave, and even, as in the case of the longshoremen, a guaranteed annual wage. Yet these advances did little for parents or other caregivers trying to balance the demands of household labour with those of wage labour. The free time came as 'lumps of leisure' – the weekend, the month of vacation – or as time at the end of one's life in the form of additional years of retirement. Those bearing and raising children needed more time off from employment in their child rearing years, a shorter work *day*, good part-time jobs, and more control over their time so that the unpredictable day-to-day demands of the household sphere could be met.

Only in the last decade has a movement emerged in which time for dependent care was central. With the entry of married women and mothers into the wage sphere, the dissolution of the traditional family, and the aging of the workforce, the problems of those juggling paid work and family life are pressing. In 1993, former President Clinton responded to a coalition of labour and women's groups voicing these concerns by signing the FMLA, a law that had been vetoed twice before by the first President Bush. The FMLA requires employers with over 50 employees to grant up to three months of unpaid leave for the birth or adoption of a child or for the care of a sick family member. It is shockingly inadequate when compared to the rights and benefits for caregivers legislatively-mandated in most other industrialised countries. Forty-one million workers (40 per cent of the private sector) are not covered; the leave is also short and *unpaid*. Yet it was the first federal law in the US that provided a universal right or entitlement to caregivers. US family policy before the 1990s consisted of income supplements for widows (so-called mothers' pensions), income support for poor female heads of household and their children (welfare), and universal but minimal tax deductions for dependants and for child care expenses. (Katz 2000; Gordon 1994).

Given this lacklustre governmental response and the continued lengthening of work hours – the US now has the longest working hours among the wealthy nations – it is not surprising that the candidates in the US 2000 Presidential race felt the need to offer some promises of relief. One problem for political reform, however, is the lack of consensus on exactly what public policies would make a difference to the majority of working parents. A second involves the small (but at times vocal) part of the US population that actively *opposes* both governmental and private sector initiatives benefiting families, arguing that 'family-friendly' policies discriminate against single and childless individuals. Just as troubling, a sizable percentage of the American public is simply indifferent to the problem or believes that family issues are private and best addressed *without* the help of government or employers. Even in surveys conducted by the AFL-CIO, many of the reforms necessary to resolve the work and family dilemma do not emerge as high priorities (Hart 1998: 79, 83). Yet as Gerstel and Clawson (2000) have noted, the low ranking of work and family concerns may reflect workers' reluctance to see family benefits as a legitimate social entitlement and may say more about the low expectations of workers than about the actual level of worker need.

Despite the many obstacles, the movement perseveres. Their approach has been appropriately multi-pronged, targeting business practices, legislative statutes and

public attitudes. In the 1980s and 1990s, many businesses instituted so-called 'family-friendly' benefits such as childcare, flex-time, and paid leaves, largely to retain the talents of women professionals and managers. Few of these benefits were extended to the blue-collar, non-professional workforce (Holcomb 2000). A small but growing number of unions have tried to change that situation, at least for unionised workers, by bargaining for a range of family benefits. ACTWU, AFSCME, HUCTW, and other unions established child care centres and secured contract clauses providing paid leave, flex-time, limits on overtime, and wage and benefit parity for part-timers. The union approach to family policy historically also has included bargaining for health care coverage, higher wages, and economic security (York 1993; Landau 1999; Grundy and Firestein 1997; Firestein 2000; Cowell 1993).

In addition, since the 1970s, the labour movement has been an active partner in the coalitions pushing for increased public funds for child care centres. These initiatives drew fierce opposition from the business and conservative community. At the federal level, they met defeat first from a Republican Presidential veto and then from a Republican-dominated Congress. But in the 1990s, a union-initiated child care coalition in New York won substantial state monies for a child care fund; other union-led coalitions are at work in Washington, Massachusetts, and California. The labour movement has also been the leading advocate of improving the quality of child care by raising the pay and working conditions of child care providers. Nationally, child care workers are the lowest paid occupational group, earning less than parking lot attendants. In 1999, child care workers voted to unionise in Philadelphia and Seattle, and many joined with parents in 'worthy wage campaigns' aimed at increasing state subsidies for child care centres (Nussbaum 1998; Landau 2000; Lazarovich 2000).

Further, the labour movement has lobbied for improved family leave at the state and federal level. One goal is to amend the federal FMLA, extending the law to additional sectors of the economy and mandating that the leave be paid rather than unpaid. At the state level, the labour movement and its allies among women's organisations, religious groups, and low-wage community groups seek to pass state laws with more generous leave provisions and to include pregnancy and family care as a legitimate reason to claim disability or unemployment. In May of 1999, a labour-led coalition in Maine succeeded in passing a state law that extended the benefits of the FMLA to a broader range of workplaces (Nussbaum 2000).

Although progress on paid leave as well as 'family-friendly benefits' to date has been slight, work and family issues may be the next reform frontier. The AFL-CIO rhetoric emphasising America's working families is ubiquitous, and male union leaders such as Gerald McEntee, president of AFSCME, and Brian McLaughlin, head of the NYCLC, have been outspoken supporters. McLaughlin called child care 'a fundamental issue, like the 8-hour work day, minimum wage or occupational health and safety'. The NYCLC also adopted a 'Work and Family Bill of Rights' in September 1998. Developed by a group of New York women labour activists in conjunction with the Labor Project for Working Families in Berkeley (California), the 'Work and Family Bill of Rights' is now in the process of being endorsed by

additional labour bodies. A far-sighted, inclusive document, it claims five 'fundamental rights related to work and family': 1) the right to a living wage, including fair pay; 2) the right to paid family and medical leave; 3) the right to have control over work hours; 4) the right to quality child and elder care that provides living wages for the care provider; and 5) the right to adequate health care coverage (Grundy and Firestein 1997; Firestein 2000).

Labour women will need partners outside of organised labour if substantial progress is to occur in recognising and securing such rights. Yet if the passage of the FMLA is any indication, coalitions can be built when work and family concerns are conceptualised broadly. Despite the naysayers, the work/family dilemma affects everyone. It is about the reproduction of society and how children are nurtured. It is about how each and every citizen will spend their elderly years. And, it is about ensuring that the everyday pleasures of friendship, family, and community are not sacrificed to the seemingly insatiable demands of the global market for more time on the job.

### Organising and representing women

Not only has the leadership and agenda of labour been feminised, but there are signs that institutional practices are starting to change as well. For years, a myth persisted that women workers were harder to organise, and that labour should invest its organising resources where the supposed likelihood of return was greater, that is, among labour's historic base of male manufacturing workers. Despite the persistent poll results contradicting these notions – some even showing that the hardest units to organise were factories with white male employees in the majority – labour continued to spend only a fraction of its organising resources in reaching the female-majority occupations and industries (Bronfenbrenner 1998).

But attitudes towards women as potential organising targets changed significantly in the 1990s. More women than men joined unions in the 1990s, and many of the organising breakthroughs occurred among women, particularly women of colour and immigrant women. HERE membership rebounded, for example, as the union organised thousands of women and non-white service workers in the giant hotels of Las Vegas and elsewhere in the 1980s and 1990s (Cobble and Merrill 1994). Similarly, SEIU experienced success in its campaigns among home health care workers, predominately African-American and Latina women (Cobble 1996). These victories bode well for the future of organising, especially given the current composition of the labour force. In 1999, 23 per cent of the labour force was minority (13 per cent African-American, 11 per cent Hispanic, and 4 per cent Asian), and the numbers are growing, particularly among Hispanics (Hunt and Rayside 2000: 401).

Yet the shift of resources towards sectors in which women and minority men predominate is but a first step in changing long ingrained institutional practices. Of equal importance is the need to rethink the very assumptions embedded in a unionism whose institutional structures arose in the context of mass production. The legal and institutional framework within which labour relations is currently

conducted is a product of the New Deal era. Relying on the factory as the prototypic work place, policy and practice assumed a rigid and non-overlapping demarcation between employee and employer, an adversarial relation between worker and boss, and a homogeneous, semi-skilled workforce with little interest in career advancement or workplace governance (Cobble 1991, 1994a).

The dichotomous, adversarial model of labour relations, still dominant today, is not a good fit for today's workforce. In many work places the roles of employer and employee are blurred: employees work in teams, take responsibility for control over quality, work design, and work organisation, and may even take on such 'management' functions as hiring, firing, and co-worker discipline. Indeed, for many service and white-collar workers, the quality of the service they provide and the amount of control they exert over the service interaction or the provider-client exchange is as central to their financial security and job satisfaction as the employer-employee relationship. Many front-line service workers, for example, desire a new kind of unionism in which preserving the intrinsic rewards of the service encounter – seeing the patient's health improve, calming a distraught two-year old – is seen as a critical aspect of employee representation (Cobble 1996). Similarly, many professionals and knowledge workers want a unionism that devotes attention to professional development, training, and improving the status of their occupations. Indeed, the majority of workers (regardless of industry and occupation) indicate a desire for a less combative unionism. They want a union that helps secure the success of the enterprise, enables employees to advance individually and collectively, and responds to workers' psychological as well as their economic needs (Hart 1998; Freeman and Rogers 1999).

A number of unions have begun rethinking traditional models. Unions organising professionals and white-collar workers such as the teacher unions (NEA and AFT) and the new organisations emerging among doctors, psychologists, and computer programmers are now seriously engaged in reconceiving their representational practices to better meet the needs of these groups (Kerchner *et al.* 1997). Unions representing non-professional (or non-credentialled) pink and white-collar workers also are sending a different message to their constituencies.

SEIU, for example, broke with traditional models of both organising and representation in their efforts to unionise home care workers in the 1980s and 1990s. Home care workers typically assist the elderly and the disabled in their own homes, offering an alternative to institutionalised care. Rather than organise on a site-by-site basis, SEIU relied on community-based organising in which they targeted all home care aides within a particular locale and drew upon local institutions and community leaders for support. They emphasised the quality of the service relationship between client and aide and the ways in which the union would benefit both parties. By 1995, some 45,000 home care workers had signed up in California alone; flourishing union locals also existed in Chicago, New York, New Orleans, and other cities (Kilborn 1995; Walker 1994). In 1999, after a twelve-year campaign, an additional 75,000 home care workers in Los Angeles County voted for union representation. Their first contract, signed in August 1999, boosted home care worker salaries to \$6.25, provided health benefits for the first time, and

established a job registry. The job registry helped enhance the service relationship by making it easier for clients to find potential aides and for aides in problem situations to find new employers (Cobb 1999).

HUCTW, which secured its first contract with Harvard University in 1988 (after a *fourteen-year* battle), has also been consistently innovative in organising and representation. As epitomised in their slogan 'You don't have to be anti-Harvard to be pro-union', the HUCTW organisers rejected the anti-boss, anti-employer approach to organising (Hurd 1993). In the words of Kris Rondeau, one of the lead organisers, 'we didn't organise against the employer. Our goals were simply self-representation, power, and participation' (Green 1988: 5). And once HUCTW began collective bargaining negotiations with Harvard, the union insisted on a non-traditional approach. Collective bargaining sessions took place in the style of the Polish Solidarity negotiations, with large numbers of small teams grouped around tables, working out compromises on specific issues. Collective bargaining involved, according to Rondeau, 'many initial days where our people simply told their life stories. You see, management needed to know the realities of our lives and to know that our lives were as important as theirs' (Rondeau 1991).

The first round of negotiations produced significant wage gains for clericals, new child-care and family-leave policies, and a decidedly experimental form of workplace governance. Instead of the older industrial model of problem solving in which management takes responsibility for productivity, quality, and discipline, the HUCTW-Harvard agreement called for an elaborate system of joint committees. These committees would resolve disputes between workers and supervisors and recommend improvements in service delivery and working conditions (Hoerr 1993; Hurd 1993).

Some commentators view the involvement of unions in these kinds of participatory cooperative structures as a sign of declining militancy and union weakness. The Harvard model suggests otherwise. It demonstrates that militancy and employee solidarity need not be based on unwavering opposition to management. Their more flexible, open-ended, and 'cooperative' structures enhanced their power *vis-à-vis* management. By creating structures that encouraged involvement, the union forged a powerful organisation in which commitment and creativity flourished. In their last round of negotiations, HUCTW won a 30 per cent wage increase, improved benefits, and in one of their hardest-fought battles, finally achieved raises, enhanced job security and benefit parity for part-time employees (Cobble 1996; Landau 2000).

HUCTW has paid attention to negotiating *relationships* as well as negotiating *contracts*. For many clerical workers, the rules and norms governing their interactions with students, faculty, and other 'clients' are as important as their wages and benefits. An opportunity for the union to renegotiate the traditional service norms arose in the early 1990s when the Harvard administration offered 'skills training' for clerical workers in how to handle the stress of working with intemperate and demanding students, faculty (the worst), and other university personnel. At one infamous session, a management trainer counselled the attendees to 'think of yourself as a trash can' – a vessel that would simply fill up with everyone's ill humour throughout the day

and then could be dumped after work. Needless to say, many of the clerical workers did not want to think of themselves as trash cans. At that point, the union pushed for its own training classes that would emphasise the necessity of ending the 'customer is always right' rule and developing more humane norms for clerical–customer relationships (Eaton 1996).

HUCTW is not alone in its attention to curtailing abusive employee–customer relationships. Flight attendant unions, for example, have pressed for more leeway in customer–client interaction and disputed management's continuing allegiance to the notion that the customer is always right, whether belligerent, sexually overbearing or abusive. In one showdown in the early 1990s, American Airline attendants struck successfully for higher wages, more control over their schedules, and an end to management practices such as sending attendants home who report to work with pimples and firing workers who return incivility in kind. A mandatory 'Commitment to Courtesy' class in which instructors divided flight attendants into small groups and assigned them to draw pictures showing 'attendants being nice' particularly galled the women. 'People got livid', one activist explained (Ciotta 1994; Kilborn 1993).

The unilateral attempt by employers to regulate customer interaction can backfire with disastrous consequences for the employees, in part because such regulation constricts women's own methods of controlling interpersonal interactions, especially with aggressive men. In 1999, the Oakland, California, Safeway grocery store chain instituted a new policy, requiring clerks to smile, make extended eye contact, and offer to carry groceries for able-bodied male customers. One employee, uncomfortable with the behaviour of two male customers, asked to be excused from carrying their groceries. The manager refused, insisting that she accompany the men into the parking lot, and she was assaulted. The UFCW local's complaint about the new rules failed to generate much of a response from Safeway, but the 'smile rule controversy' provoked an uproar in local print and electronic media. Radio call-in talk shows, editorial columns, and internet exchanges buzzed with opinions about whether 'smile rules' were a consequential and serious labour issue and who had the right to create the rules of social encounter (Ross 1999; Veverka 1999; McNichol 1998). In her 1983 book, *The Managed Heart*, Arlie Hochschild argued that many service jobs involve 'emotional labor' or forced emotional effort. She called for a new workplace movement that recognised a worker's right to control their emotions (their 'heart') in much the same way as nineteenth-century factory workers insisted that their bodies be protected from unwarranted abuse. Her call is being heard by an increasing number of unions.

### Sexuality, sex discrimination, and the workplace

Unions have been and continue to be more effective in advancing the needs of women when those needs are seen as compatible and even complementary with those of men. Thus, raising women's wages, increasing union membership among women, and even establishing family-friendly benefits have all garnered male support in part because they have been framed as *class* demands that would benefit

working women and men. Union leaders, male and female, have argued that fair pay for women would increase family income, organising women would strengthen the entire labour movement, and family-friendly benefits would help everyone. It has been more difficult, however, to construct a rationale for cross-gender coalitions dedicated to changing traditional sexual practices and deeply embedded gender norms at work. Issues of sexuality and gender ideology have divided working-class men and women in the past and continue to do so today.

Historically, the labour movement helped men achieve 'manhood' by winning for them a provider wage, by giving them more control, autonomy, and independence at work and by fighting to diminish expectations of deference and servility, especially in those service jobs held by minority men (Montgomery 1979; Chateaubert 1997). In contrast, if achieving manhood was a central animating concern of the labour movement for men, many women, especially since the late 1960s, sought to use their workplace organisations to *dismantle* notions of 'womanhood' and 'femininity' on the job. Women clerical workers in the 1970s, for example, formed separate advocacy organisations such as 9to5 because they felt male-dominated unions were not sensitive to their concerns. For them, wages were secondary to securing respect and dignity – goals that could be achieved only by *ending* gendered job expectations such as serving coffee, running personal errands for the boss, or having one's personal appearance be more important in hiring and promotions than any other criteria (Cobble 1999).

Similarly, flight attendants, organised by the Pilots, Transport Workers, and Teamsters in the post-World War II decades, broke away from the male-dominated unions en masse in the 1970s, forming their own unions and, in 1972, setting up a cross-class women's alliance called Stewardesses for Women's Rights. Their issues, like those of clerical workers, involved changing the gendered norms for their occupation – issues they rightfully perceived would be misunderstood or considered frivolous by many men. They were concerned about the new more sexualised uniforms they were required to wear, the indignities that followed from the company ads presenting flight attendants as 'sex objects in the sky', and the pressures to appear forever young, slim, and sexually alluring. Flight attendants knew that the airlines were making a profit by selling their personalities and sexuality. They wanted to end 'sexploitation' by desexualising their image and by having more say over how their personalities would be packaged and at what price they would be marketed. In short, they wanted control over and just compensation for their sexual and their emotional labour (Cobble 1999).

By the end of the 1970s, the separatist organising among women ebbed, and many women's labour organisations reaffiliated with mixed-gender national unions or, as in the case of 9to5, negotiated an affiliation agreement with SEIU that set up a new clerical division within the union, allowing for considerable autonomy. Yet the ideological divide between union men and women concerning sexuality and appropriate gender roles has not closed. Segregation by sex in working-class jobs is still firmly entrenched, despite ongoing efforts to end sex-typing and help women break into the higher-paid male-dominated trades (O'Farrell 1999). Indeed, the lack of progress in integrating blue-collar men's jobs is all the more glaring given

the rapid movement of women into white-collar male bastions such as law, medicine, and management (Reskin and Padavic 1994). And, although many labour organisations now publicly endorse such policies as moving women into non-traditional jobs and ending sexual harassment, women often find their local union unable to help when problems implementing these policies arise.

The most glaring recent example of such local union failure occurred in the Mitsubishi Auto plant in Normal, Illinois. In this relatively new plant, women held one-fifth of the high-wage auto jobs, an unusually high proportion of women for an auto assembly plant. On 9 April, 1996, the EEOC filed one of the largest class action sex discrimination suits in US history, claiming that as many as 500 of the 893 women in the plant had suffered sexual harassment. In June of 1998, Mitsubishi settled the case, agreeing to pay \$34 million dollars to the plaintiffs, the largest cash settlement of its kind. Unfortunately, many of the aggrieved women felt that their local union, UAW Local 2488, failed to take their repeated complaints of harassment seriously. The union local did file grievances on behalf of women whose jobs were threatened by harassing supervisors; they also backed a male union member whose job was jeopardised because of alleged harassment. But they did little to eliminate or contain the problem of male *union* members sexually harassing female co-workers (Grimsley and Swoboda 1996; Crain and Matheny 1999; UAW 2000).

Of course, the reactions of this one union local should not be taken as the pattern followed by the majority of local unions or as indicative of the behaviour or attitudes of national labour leadership. At other unionised auto plants, for example, the UAW had managed to set up joint labour-management committees empowered to deal with the problem. Mitsubishi, however, resisted the UAW's attempt to add such committees to their contract; they also refused the International Union's proposal in June of 1996 for a jointly sponsored sexual harassment awareness programme (Grimsley and Swoboda 1996; UAW 2000). Yet it is significant that in the last three decades, many (if not the majority) of sex discrimination and sexual harassment suits in unionised workplaces have been filed *without* the active support of the union. Women workers frequently are forced to turn for help to outside organisations such as the National Organisation of Women, or as in the Mitsubishi case, to the Chicago-based women's group, Women Employed (Crain and Matheny 1999).

Thus, a problem exists for many women union members that needs greater attention from the labour movement. The explosion of litigation and public debate over sexual harassment makes it clear that the forced expression of sexuality at work is objectionable to women and that many women experience negative employment consequences because of it. Women who refuse sexual advances are often fired and/or suffer considerable loss of income and promotional opportunities. In many non-traditional blue-collar settings, a hostile work environment can be physically dangerous as well as emotionally debilitating. In other words, sexual harassment is a union issue: it's about job security, wages, and health and safety as well as basic workplace dignity. Yet many unions have not yet found a way of communicating these ideas to their members. Until they do, they will be unable to respond to the audible and expressed needs of many of their women members without alienating other members.



Some scholars have argued that class-based structures such as unions are premised on a 'united front ideology' and are *inherently* incapable of addressing gender issues like sexual harassment. They have advocated 'separately-organised women's unions' and changes in the labour law that would allow employers to bargain with groups organised around identities other than class (Crain and Matheny 1999: 1,600). But in the US context of adversarial class relations, care must be taken to preserve the class power of women as well as their minority rights within male-majority unions. Strengthening the intra-union bargaining power of women through women's committees, women's departments, and set-asides that guarantee minority representation in leadership would best accomplish these dual goals.

Extensive educational initiatives are also in order. Many unions have excellent policy statements about sexuality, affirmative action, and gender discrimination, but these sentiments have yet to reach the shop floor level. Educational programmes must tackle the problem head-on by engaging the profound differences that shape men's and women's experience of gender and sexuality. A culture of unity can only be built and maintained when the real differences among members are acknowledged. For women, sexuality is about pleasure, but it is also about physical danger and violence in a way difficult for most men to understand. Yet there is reason to believe that the differences can be bridged and that a basis for unity is possible. The issue of sexual harassment, it is important to remember, did not enter the vocabulary until the late 1970s; it is only now being publicly debated. Union men joined with women to support pay equity and eventually came to embrace it as a matter of gender justice. Similarly, it is likely that they will come to view sexual harassment as an affront to women and as a violation of the union principles of fairness, equality, and dignity for all.

The recent emergence of a formal alliance between labour and the gay rights movement certainly indicates that unions can take the lead on issues of sexuality. In the last two decades, the workplace sexual norms of enforced heterosexuality and the practice of linking workplace privileges and benefits to heterosexuality and heterosexual marriage have come under increasing criticism. Sexual minorities, unlike other minorities, are not included as a 'protected class' in the 1964 Civil Rights Act, the federal statute prohibiting employment discrimination on the basis of race, religion, sex, national origin, age, and disability. In 39 of the 50 states, once their sexual identity is public, sexual minorities can be immediately fired. Since only marriages between men and women are legal in the vast majority of states, same-sex couples are denied access to health care, pension coverage, and other workplace-based benefits. Sexual minorities also suffer adverse employment consequences because they often can not participate comfortably in the workplace rituals and bonding that are premised on heterosexual identity. As a result, they are sometimes perceived as poor team players, loners, or social misfits (McCreery and Krupat 1999; Schneider 1988).

In August 1997, the AFL-CIO affiliated a new constituency group of lesbian, gay, and bisexual workers, called Pride at Work (PAW). The momentum for such an alliance had been building for decades. Gay and lesbian union members began mobilising for workplace rights in the 1970s, forming local caucuses at individual

work sites and setting up gay rights committees within national unions. In October 1983, SEIU won passage of a resolution condemning discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation at the AFL-CIO convention, 'a small but significant first step towards formalising and nurturing a budding alliance between gay activists and union activists', wrote AFL-CIO President Sweeney. In 1987, when the AFL-CIO sponsored a reception at their Washington headquarters for gay and lesbian union activists, talk about forming a national organisation turned to action. The SEIU's 'lavender caucus' took the lead, and in 1994 PAW had its founding convention (Lander 2000; Sweeney 1999; Roberts 1993).

PAW, unlike other social identity groups affiliated with the AFL-CIO such as CLUW, is open to union and non-union workers. And, although PAW relies principally on labour organisations to help achieve its aims, it sees itself as raising issues of class and worker rights within other gay rights groups. Specifically, PAW calls for passage of ENDA, which would prohibit employment discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, and the broadening of the FMLA to include domestic partners in the definition of family. They also encourage unions to bargain contract language protecting gay workers from discrimination and extend spousal benefits to domestic partners. The Senate narrowly defeated ENDA in 1996, after intense lobbying from the AFL-CIO and other civil rights allies, but a similar version of the bill is currently pending in Congress. And, since 1974, when Ann Arbor, Michigan, bus drivers negotiated the first collectively bargained ban on 'discrimination based on sexual preference', auto workers, janitors, grocery store clerks and countless others have pushed for and won such provisions. As of October 2000 some one-fifth of the largest employers have such policies, many having added them in the last year. The top three auto companies, for example, recently agreed in negotiations with the UAW to offer domestic partner benefits to some 400,000 employees nationwide. The strong gay and lesbian subgroup in the UAW is widely credited for the victory. The war against homophobia and employment discrimination is far from won, but the increasing commitment of the labour movement to gay rights as fundamental human rights is a notable advance (Sweeney 1999; Tillotson 2000; Brook and Silverstein 2000; Chernow 2000).

### **Racial/ethnic minorities and US labour**

The particular situation of women of colour has been noted throughout this essay. The wage gap is greater for African-American and Latina women than for white, and they suffer more acutely from long-standing patterns of job segregation and discriminatory pay and promotion practices. Not surprisingly, as the US labour movement eliminated the remaining racial bars to membership in the post-World War II era, women of colour outpaced other workers in joining unions. African-American women, in particular, are more organised than other groups and, as mentioned earlier, are highly visible as leaders and activists in their unions (AFL-CIO 2000a)

Approximately one-fourth of the membership of the US labour movement is minority, making it one of the most integrated institutions in the US. Still, racial and

ethnic minorities continue to organise separately *within* the labour movement to advance their interests inside the house of labour as well as in society at large. At the national level, women of colour belong to a number of AFL-CIO constituency groups organised on the basis of race and ethnicity. African-Americans founded the first of these, the APRI, in the late 1960s. An outgrowth of the civil rights movement, the APRI seeks 'racial equality and economic justice' by engaging in political and community education, legislative action, and voter registration, and by supporting union organising campaigns. The APRI was later joined by other constituency groups based on racial/ethnic identity: the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists (CBTU) in 1972, the Labor Council for Latin-American Advancement (LCLAA) in 1973, and the Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance (APALA) in 1992 (Hunt and Rayside 2000; AFL-CIO 2000a; APRI 2000).

In addition to these national constituency groups, women of colour have organised alongside minority men to form caucuses within national and international unions; they have also participated in organising separate conferences and leadership institutes specifically for women of colour. The national women's committee of CBTU, for example, has held an all-day women's conference every year since 1982 with over a thousand black women participants. In 1999, LCLAA and CLUW sponsored their first Leadership Conference for Latina Women (LCLAA 2000; Needleman 2000).

## Conclusion

Progress in forging a strong and equal partnership between women workers and the US labour movement has been slow and at times barely visible. Yet as we enter a new century there is evidence that considerable change has now occurred in that relationship. Women make up two-fifths of union membership, they are approaching leadership parity in many unions, many of their concerns have been incorporated into labour's agenda at the highest levels, and attention to diversity is now more the norm than the exception within the labour movement.

Yet the inclusion of women and the adoption of an agenda that better meets their needs has occurred within a framework that is limited by its failure to acknowledge fully the gender differences that still exist between men and women. Women and men still work in very different kinds of jobs, and while they have common problems, they also have some starkly different experiences as well. The labour movement must acknowledge these differences by embracing a variety of organisational and representational practices and by inventing new approaches better suited to the service and white-collar sectors in which women predominate.

Moreover, the reframing of issues such as pay equity and dependency care as family issues has been important in gaining male support (a pragmatic necessity that cannot be overlooked). But the emphasis on 'family' rather than on 'women' must not obscure the still fundamental reality that these are issues that affect men and women *differently* and that women's needs are only *partially* met when they are defined as the same as men's. Many women's relationship to the family is different because they bear and nurse children and because the burdens of dependent care

still fall on them. Gender norms and sexuality affect job expectations and social interactions for men and women in profoundly different ways. These differences need to be understood just as the differences *among* women must be acknowledged. It is not too much to expect that men (as well as women) build a movement in which solidarity is based on empathy as well as mutual identity and self-interest. The politics of diversity is not a zero sum game. The strongest bonds are those that grow out of recognising difference as well as commonality.

At bottom, gender progress for working women is dependent on forces outside the labour movement as well as forces within. The fate of organised labour (and the fate of its women members) will be determined in large part by political, economic, and social forces beyond its control. The labour movement needs to remake itself and reach out to new constituencies, but its resurgence is predicated on the degree to which those constituencies respond and whether the larger society sees labour and 'the labour question' as legitimate and worthy of support. The labour movement is transforming in light of the new realities of identity politics; so too must its natural allies – the so-called new social movements based on identity – change as well. They must reciprocate the favour and begin to incorporate and understand issues of class. Indeed, the very dichotomy of 'social identity movements' and 'class-based movements' must be dissolved. Class, the late E. P. Thompson insisted, is a social identity, one that is made out of the cultural and material fabric of our lives (Thompson 1963). The question is not whether class or gender or race should be given priority, but whether it will finally be understood that workers come in all sizes and shapes, and that there is no *one* class identity or consciousness because there is no *one* worker. A new and vibrant working-class politics can be built, but only when no one *particular* experience is taken as the *universal*.

## Notes

- 1 In the US, union density is a measure restricted to dues-paying employees in workplaces where employers have signed collective bargaining contracts.
- 2 The US labour movement has one national federation, the AFL-CIO. It was created in 1955 from a merger of two older federations, the AFL and the CIO. Currently there are some 68 national or international unions (international is used for those unions with membership in Canada) affiliated with the AFL-CIO. These national/international unions have close to 30,000 locals, many of which affiliate with the 51 AFL-CIO state federations and the 590 central labour councils that exist (Meyerson 2000; AFL-CIO 2000b). There are also national/international unions as well as local unions that are not affiliated with the AFL-CIO. These are commonly called independent unions.

## Abbreviations

APRI	A. Philip Randolph Institute
AFL-CIO	American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organizations
ACTWU	Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union
AFSCME	American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees
AFT	American Federation of Teachers

APALA	Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance
CBTU	Coalition of Black Trade Unionists
CLUW	Coalition of Labor Union Women
CWA	Communications Workers of America
EEOC	Equal Employment Opportunities Commission
ENDA	Employment Non-Discrimination Act
FMLA	Family and Medical Leave Act
HERE	Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees International Union
HUCTW	Harvard Union of Clerical and Technical Workers
IBEW	International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers
IBT	International Brotherhood of Teamsters
ILGWU	International Ladies Garment Workers Union
IWPR	Institute for Women's Policy Research
LCLAA	Labor Council for Latin American Advancement
NCPE	National Committee for Pay Equity
NEA	National Education Association
NYCLC	New York Central Labor Council
PAW	Pride at Work
SEIU	Service Employees International Union
UAW	United Auto Workers
UFCW	United Food and Commercial Workers International Union
UMWA	United Mine Workers of America
UNITE	Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees
USDL	United States Department of Labor
WWD	Working Women's Department

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