

Cartographies of resistance and solidarity: Labor on the move

Heidi Gottfried, Wayne University, Detroit

Abstract

After experiencing stagnation and decline in the waning years of the last century, labor organizing appears to be on the upswing. A scan of recent labor organizing activities reveals not only new groups represented, but also locates new organizations coalescing in diverse spaces and places on multiple scales. The transformation to a more service-oriented economy with its low-wage, feminized and racialized workforce and with its globalization of labor and capital, is rescaling terrains of production and reproduction, creating new bases of identity and solidarity, and prompting workers to develop new organizational strategies for representing the interests of an increasingly diverse labor force. Yet, we still lack an understanding of the prospects for and challenges to migrant labor organizing in new economic geographies at this critical conjuncture. New types of political subjects as well as new hybrid bases of worker organizations form in the changing landscapes of capitalism and the transnational political economy of care. The paper maps cartographies of resistance and solidarity, excavating local geographies and buried histories informing inter-scalar processes and resulting contradictions and tensions.

Biography

Heidi Gottfried is Associate Professor of Sociology at Wayne State University. She has co-edited numerous special issues and books on gender, work and the economy, including *Global Labor Migration: New Directions* (University of Illinois Press, 2022) (with Eileen Boris, Julie Greene, and Joo-Cheong Tham); *Handbook on the Sociology of Work and Employment* (with Stephen Edgell and Edward Graner) (Sage, 2015); and *Care Work in Transition: Transnational Circuits of Gender, Migration and Care*, in a special issue of *Critical Sociology* (co-edited with Jennifer Jihye Chun). Her books include *Gender, Work and Economy: Unpacking the Global Economy* (Polity Press, 2013) and *The Reproductive Bargain: Deciphering the Enigma of Japanese Capitalism* (Brill, 2015). She is currently working on a Trans-Atlantic Platform funded project, “Who Cares: Rebuilding Care in a Post-Pandemic World,” consisting of country teams from Brazil, Colombia, Canada, France, UK, and US. The project investigates the impact of the pandemic on the practices of both care providers and care recipients and seeks to identify the strengths and weaknesses of care systems that became apparent as governments grappled with finetuning policy responses to the fastmoving coronavirus.