

# Class, Race and Corporate Power

---

Volume 8 | Issue 1

Article 1

---

## Innovations in Labor Studies - Incorporating Global Perspectives: From Exhortation to Making It Real

Kim Scipes

*Purdue University - North Central Campus*, [kimscipes@earthlink.net](mailto:kimscipes@earthlink.net)

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.fiu.edu/classracecorporatepower>

 Part of the [Sociology Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Scipes, Kim () "Innovations in Labor Studies - Incorporating Global Perspectives: From Exhortation to Making It Real," *Class, Race and Corporate Power*. Vol. 8 : Iss. 1 , Article 1.

Available at: <https://digitalcommons.fiu.edu/classracecorporatepower/vol8/iss1/1>

This work is brought to you for free and open access by the College of Arts, Sciences & Education at FIU Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Class, Race and Corporate Power by an authorized administrator of FIU Digital Commons. For more information, please contact [dcc@fiu.edu](mailto:dcc@fiu.edu).

---

## Innovations in Labor Studies - Incorporating Global Perspectives: From Exhortation to Making It Real

### Abstract

Ever since the mid-1840s, there has been an exhortation for workers of the world to unite globally. With the exception of a three-year period between 1946 and 1949 - with the founding and development of the World Federation of Trade Unions immediately after the end of World War II - this has been generally a call limited to rhetoric only. The growing understanding of a globalizing world today, however - affecting the world of work, workers and their organizations - suggests it time for workers to try to make it real. This paper examines two issues pertinent to this new understanding. First, we've got to come to terms with "globalization" and its complexity. And second, we need to recognize that there has been an explosion of globally-aware writings on labor that have emerged since the late 1970s.

### Keywords

Labor Studies, Globalization, Global Labor Solidarity

Ever since the mid-1840s, there has been an exhortation for workers of the world to unite globally (Armbruster-Sandoval, 2013: 614). With the exception of a three-year period between 1946 and 1949--with the founding and development of the World Federation of Trade Unions immediately after the end of World War II, and it wasn't complete even then--this has been generally a call limited to rhetoric only. The growing understanding of a globalizing world today, however--affecting the world of work, workers and their organizations--suggests it time for workers to try to make it real.

This paper examines two issues pertinent to this new understanding. First, we've got to come to terms with "globalization" and its complexity. And second, we need to recognize that there has been an explosion of globally-aware writings on labor that have emerged since the late 1970s.

With these issues identified, it is time to begin.

## **Globalization<sup>1</sup>**

The most important thing to understand about globalization is that it is more complex than we have been taught. For this to make sense, however, we must discuss globalization in general.

Globalization is an on-going process. Using the term means taking a planetary scope, no longer restricting one's analysis to the level of the nation-state. This does not mean that the nation-state is obsolete, irrelevant, etc., but that we cannot confine our political analysis to just the nation-state level. Jan Nederveen Pieterse expands on this:

*Among analysts and policy makers, North and South, there is an emerging consensus on several features of globalization: globalization is being shaped by technological changes, involves the reconfiguration of states, goes together with regionalization [for example, European Union, Latin Americanization-KS], and is uneven.<sup>2</sup>*

He further writes that while people oftentimes refer to time-space compression, "It means that globalization involves more intensive interaction across wider space and in shorter time than before" (Nederveen Pieterse, 2015: 8).

There are issues, however, concerning globalization where there are still considerable controversies. Following Nederveen Pieterse, this author argues that in addition to the above, globalization is multidimensional (that is, cannot be confined to just one aspect, such as economics, but includes things like politics and culture) and should be seen as a long-term phenomenon that begins thousands of years ago in the "beginnings in the first migrations of peoples and long-distance trade connections and subsequently accelerates under particular conditions (the spread of technologies, religions, literacy, empires, capitalism)" (Nederveen Pieterse, 2015: 70-71). In other words, globalization *predates* capitalism and modernity, which means it predates the "West." And, of course, that it did not begin in the 1970s.

While globalization is a much broader, deeper and longer set of processes than is usually recognized, these processes began accelerating in the early 1970s. Peter Dicken (2015: 1), writing independently of Nederveen Pieterse, agrees: "During the last three decades of the twentieth century, the *globalization* of the world economy developed and intensified in ways that were *qualitatively* very different from those of other periods." Nederveen Pieterse discusses some of the ramifications:

*If globalization during the second half of the twentieth century coincided with the "American Century" and the period 1980-2000 coincided with the dominance of Anglo-American capitalism and American hegemony, twenty-first-century globalization shows markedly different dynamics. American hegemony has weakened, the US economy is import dependent, deeply indebted, and mired in financial crises.*

*The new trends of twenty-first century globalization are the centers of the world economy shifting to the global South, to the newly industrialized countries, and to the energy exporters (Nederveen Pieterse, 2015: 24).*

He further points out these changes are taking place in economic and financial spheres, in international institutions, and in changing patterns of migration. He summarizes that "The unquestioned cultural hegemony of the West is past" (Nederveen Pieterse, 2015: 24-25).

While this author agrees with Nederveen Pieterse's thinking about globalization--including that it is multidimensional and that it predates modernity--there is another point about globalization: it is multilayered (Shiva, 2005; Starr, 2005; Scipes, 2012). This is an important point.

Business and governments have appropriated the term "globalization," insisting that is a monolithic force of good that is deluging the world, and is enveloping all within it, like a wall of flood water that cannot be stopped.

Activists initially responded to this by being against globalization; for instance, Amory Starr's 2005 book was titled *Global Revolt: A Guide to the Movements against Globalization*. However, activists came to see that we were not against globalization, but against the type of globalization that was being promoted and propagated (see, for example, Friedman, 1999).

A number of authors think a better idea is to recognize that there are two levels of globalization--a top-down, corporate/militaristic globalization, and a bottom-up, global movement for social and economic justice--and that these two levels are based on values completely antithetical to the other (Shiva, 2005). By that, I mean that globalization is *not* a monolith, a single, collective phenomenon, but argue it has at least two layers. So we can refer to as "globalization from above," and "globalization from below." What does that mean?

Accepting Nederveen Pieterse's claim that "globalization involves more intensive interaction across wider space and in shorter time than before" (Nederveen Pieterse, 2015: 8), we must look at the values of each of these levels of globalization. The values of top-down globalization are those that promote the unhindered spread of capitalist corporations around the world, and the militarism (and related wars and military operations) needed to ensure that it is possible. In other words, top-down globalization is the latest effort to dominate the world, all living beings and the planet. Accordingly, if one wants to attach the term neoliberal to globalization, then the understanding must be that this refers to *only* one level of globalization--the top-down level--and thus a particular level of globalization, and that it should not be considered synonymous with globalization as a whole.

Globalization from below, on the other hand, is life enhancing; it rejects domination in all of its forms, and seeks to build a new world based on equality, social and economic justice, and respect for all living beings and the planet (again, see Shiva, 2005).<sup>3</sup> The two world-views, and the values on which each are based, could not be more opposed. Globalization from below sees the value of all peoples and cultures around the world and seeks to enhance and celebrate them. Forces working to achieve globalization from below include the myriad struggles by people around the world--workers, peasants,

women, students, environmentalists, and more--to create a new world, a better world, that is life enhancing, not life destroying.

Progressive unions and struggles to create others are part of the global movement for economic and social justice (whether they recognize it or not), and that as they gain such consciousness, they will seek ways of developing global solidarity with workers and other unions, women, peasants, students, the urban poor, etc.

Thus, understanding that there are two different levels of globalization, and that they are opposed to each other, means that people need to choose: which side are you on?

## Writings on Globalization

What we have been seeing, particularly in North America as well as in Europe, although not generally recognized, is an explosion of literature devoted to taking a global perspective regarding labor and, generally speaking, building global labor solidarity.<sup>4</sup> This has not usually been with the analysis presented above, but simply noting how global changes have been affecting labor in at least some of the so-called “developed” countries. Considering the impact on workers in the so-called “developing” countries has been much more limited, but the increasing interaction is notable over the last 40 or so years.

Nineteen seventy-eight is where these developments began, with the publication of Don Thomson and Rodney Larson’s pathbreaking book, *Where Were You, Brother? An Account of Trade Union Imperialism* (1978), and the launching by Peter Waterman of a new journal he called NILS, the *New International Labour Studies*. Both projects were efforts to try to address the problems primarily of labour in the “Global South,” while also considering ramifications upon workers and unions in the Global North.<sup>5</sup>

Inspired particularly by *Where Were You, Brother?*, and encouraged personally by Don Thomson, labor activists from Northwestern Europe subsequently launched a British-based magazine, *International Labour Reports* (ILR), that published news and information bi-monthly from workers around the globe between 1984-90.<sup>6</sup> ILR specifically was designed to see what workers in the Global South could teach their comrades in the North about fighting multinational corporations, while getting workers in the North to support their Southern sisters and brothers in their struggles. ILR carried news and information literally from workers around the world, actively trying to build global labor solidarity.<sup>7</sup>

One important network promoted by ILR was Women Working Worldwide, a network intended to support women workers in garment and textiles, as well as electronics, around the world (see Hale and Wills, 2007).

At a conference formally launching the journal in late 1983 in Liverpool, ILR and Women Working Worldwide brought Wenilou Pradel to share her experiences in the Philippines with a European audience: in June 1982 at the Bataan Export Processing Zone, Pradel had helped lead 26,000 young workers--mostly women between the ages of 16 and 24--in the first general strike in any Export Processing Zone in the world!<sup>8</sup>

ILR played a particularly strong role in promoting the new labor movement then emerging in South Africa; these workers played a key role in fighting apartheid in their country. When the white government called a “State of Emergency” in late 1985, it was labor that largely enabled the liberation

movement to survive. These new “black” unions--in reality, they were multiracial, although predominantly with a black membership--were covered extensively in English by a range of South African writers, particularly writing in the excellent *South African Labour Bulletin* as well as academic journals, and there were also several high quality books published about this new labour movement.<sup>9</sup> There even was one that compared the new unions in South Africa with the new unions in Brazil (Seidman, 1994). However, these works were largely confined to South Africa and/or the academic world.<sup>10</sup> ILR publicized these workers' struggles globally, and primarily to labor audiences.

ILR also played an important role of projecting the rise of the KMU (*Kilusang Mayo Uno* or May First Movement) Labor Center of the Philippines. Founded in 1980 during the Marcos Dictatorship, the KMU transformed labor and its struggles in the country, and later played a key role in overthrowing Marcos in 1986 (see Scipes, 1996; West, 1997). In 1984, the KMU initiated an annual 10-day program to consciously help build international labor solidarity in 1984, inviting workers and labor leaders from around the world to travel to the Philippines to experience the reality of Filipino workers; this program continues today (see Scipes, 2000; see also 2015, 2020). According to Peter Waterman, “The ILR gave the Philippines and the KMU more attention than any other country or organization except South Africa and the COSATU” (Waterman, 1998: 133).

ILR published much more widely than this suggests; it literally published news and information about workers around the globe, bimonthly, for over six years. To my knowledge, no one has published anything about ILR.<sup>11</sup>

Each of these struggles, it might be added, were more important than just establishing a new labour center: each one of these emergent labour centers--CUT from Brazil, KMU from the Philippines, and COSATU from South Africa--played a key role in undermining dictatorship and enhancing democracy in their respective country.

These sets of struggles--in South Africa, Philippines and Brazil--are important also in a larger theoretical sense: COSATU, CUT and KMU served as the basis for the theoretical concept of “social movement unionism” (see Scipes, 2014b, 2020).<sup>12</sup>

Along with these struggles by workers, there have also been writings and struggles against the “trade union imperialism” of the British Trades Union Congress, as well as the “labor imperialism” of the AFL-CIO.<sup>13</sup> Thomson and Larson’s book was the first on the former, while there have been three books on the latter (for an early account, see Radosh, 1969; subsequently, see Sims, 1992 and Scipes, 2010a). Additionally, there’s been at least one Ph.D. dissertation on the AFL-CIO’s Solidarity Center (Bass, 2012), another on the ramifications of resistance to the AFL-CIO’s foreign operations (Collombat, 2011), and a growing number of articles that have examined these issues in regard to the AFL-CIO (see, for example, Cox and Bass, 2012; Field, Jr., 2018; Schuhrke, 2019). There is another Ph.D. dissertation that focuses on the foreign activities of the Canadian Labour Congress (Nastovski, 2016b).<sup>14</sup>

Two edited collections that were particularly important in bringing notice of “third world” workers to Northern audiences were Cohen, Gutkind and Brazier’s *Peasants and Proletarians* (1979), and Roger Southall’s *Trade Unions and the New Industrialisation of the Third World* (1988).

There have been important efforts published to draw attention to labor (in particular) on a global level. These include books by Kate Bronfenbrenner (2007), Kim Moody (1997),<sup>15</sup> Ronaldo Munck (1988), Immanuel Ness (2016); Beverly Silver (2003), and Peter Waterman (1998). A very interesting effort, studying the global “white goods” industry, is by Edward Webster, Robert Lambert and Andries Bezuidenhout (2008). Peter Cole (2018) links dock workers in the San Francisco Bay Area with those in Durban, South Africa. A recent book that compares “mass strikes” in India’s automobile industry and

Brazil's construction industry, is Nowak (2019). Ronald W. Cox (2019) argued for the importance of workers' collective organization in challenging globalizing corporations. Five edited book collections that present case studies and discuss global labor include Alimahomed-Wilson and Ness, eds. (2018); Bieler and Lindberg, eds. (2011); Bieler, Lindberg and Pillay, eds., (2008); Hale and Wills, eds. (2005); and Scipes, ed. (2016), while strong edited collections in journals include Hanagan, ed. (2003), Scipes, ed. (2014), and Waterman and Wills, eds. (2001).

While there have long been academic journals that have published articles on labor globally on a case-by-case basis, the 2010s have seen the emergence of journals that are much more interested in developments around the world. Three that come immediately to mind are *Class, Race and Corporate Power*, the *Global Labour Journal*, and *The Journal of Labor and Society*, although *Labor Studies Journal* has been opening up more to labor around the world.

There have been an increasing number of articles that are thinking about labor in a global context. These include Anner (2011, 2015); Burawoy (2009); Brookes and McCallum (2017); Dobrusin (2014); Evans (2010, 2014); Herod (2003); McElroy and Croucher (2013); Munck (2010); Scipes (1984, 2007, 2009); and Waterman (2008).

One of the most exciting developments has been the development and promotion of efforts to actively build global labor solidarity among working people and their allies (among others, see Armbruster-Sandoval, 2005; Cole, 2018; Erem and Durrenberger, 2008; Kumar and Mahoney, 2014; Lambert and Webster, 2001; Nastovski, 2014, 2016a; Ness, 2016; Scipes, 2000, 2014a, 2015, 2020; Stillerman, 2003).<sup>16</sup> Some of this was captured in the section on "Building Global Labor Solidarity" (Scipes, 2016c: 36-45). In this section, issues discussed included "Historic Development of 'International' Labor Solidarity," "Motivations of Solidarity," "Solidarity Across Different Political Levels of Domination," "Scope of Substate Global Labor Solidarity: Multiple Actors," and "Different Levels of Global Labor Solidarity."

In the section on "Scope of Substate Global Labor Solidarity: Multiple Actors" (pp. 40-43), it was argued that efforts to build global labor solidarity included efforts by unions or bureaucratic labor organizations, but *it should not be confined to them*. This was important, because there have been an increasing number of efforts to build "global labor internationalism" by

*... rank-and-file and staff initiatives from within unions, worker/labor activist initiatives outside of unions, progressive activist initiatives initiated to help workers, and more. But these efforts could include establishing cross-border alliances of unions, workers' organizations, and worker solidarity groups, either in coalition or separately, with workers and their organizations in other political communities. These include solidarity campaigns, in which workers and activists in one country support the efforts of workers to support their own unions... (Scipes, 2016c: 40-41).*

To expand, some of the efforts known were listed. This included efforts such as the Southern Initiative on Globalization and Trade Union Rights (see Dobrusin, 2014; Lambert and Webster, 2001; O'Brien, 2019--and see the review of O'Brien at Scipes, 2019); the Labor Start network, the European dock workers' network (Fitz, 1990; Fox-Hodess, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020; Weir, 2004; Waterman, 1998: 79-110), Women Working Worldwide (see Hale and Wills, 2007), Asia Monitor Resource Centre, the Australia Asia Worker Links, the Maquila Solidarity Network, and the Coalition for Justice in the Maquiladoras (for the latter, see Vogel, 2006). International solidarity campaigns were mentioned, such as those between garment workers and consumers (again, see Armbruster-Sandoval, 2005; and Kumar and Mahoney, 2014), as well as efforts of by Canadian workers to support Palestinian workers through developing the Boycott, Divestment and Solidarity movement, after building an earlier labor campaign

against South African apartheid (Nastovski, 2014), and labor support committees, such as the Philippine Worker Support Committee. US Labor against War, which has worked to build solidarity between Iraqi and American workers, as well as with other labor movements, was referenced (Zweig, 2005). After noting that others were also helping to build global labor solidarity--and videographers, filmmakers, photographers, photojournalists, as well as singer/songwriters were specifically mentioned--the conclusion was, "This new global labor solidarity transcends traditional trade union internationalism/solidarity" (Scipes, 2016c: 40-43).

Despite the growing literature, especially in the edited collections, these experiences and writings had not been brought together in a unified manner. Peter Waterman (1998: 140-145) tried to overcome this weakness and came up with a list of 13 proposals for possible discussion and action, but this was not sufficient to theoretically understand global labor solidarity.

Going beyond Waterman, this author tried to specifically theorize such developments; in "Multiple Fragments--Strength or Weakness? Theorizing Global Labor Solidarity" (Scipes, 2016c), global labour solidarity was discussed in considerable detail, and a theory of global labour solidarity was advanced:

*Global labor solidarity is an act, or an ongoing set of actions, by workers, their organizations, and their allied organizations, as well as by writers, artists and other activists, to support workers across political community borders in their efforts to enhance workers' lives, wages, working conditions and, sometimes, their every existence as determined by those affected. To strengthen the power and well-being of workers globally, workers must develop solidarity across political boundary borders in addition to developing solidarity with workers of their own country; global labor solidarity does not undercut solidarity by workers in the same country but instead develops the power, well-being, and knowledge of workers globally (emphases in original) (Scipes, 2016c: 45).*

Additionally, nine different types of solidarity were identified and illustrative references for each of the nine types was provided, which included building global labor solidarity (1) to establish and maintain unions and to improve wages, working conditions, security and other workplace-related issues; (2) to defend against common multinational or transnational corporations; (3) to improve the lives of workers and their families outside of the workplace, such as in their communities; (4) to fight against global and regional political-economic plans--such as the North American Free Trade Act, Free Trade Area of the Americas (NAFTA), or the Latin American "Commodity Consensus"--and other projects deemed harmful to their communities and general well-being; (5) to fight against militarism and invasion; (6) to fight against imperial activities; (7) to support oppressed peoples; (8) to help fight to help people liberate themselves; and (9) to support workers' efforts through developing innovative legal strategies and tactics, and to try to use treaty side-agreements to try to protect workers from victimization through legal and political institutions (Scipes, 2016c: 46-47).

Getting scholars to recognize that all labor takes place in a global social context is important, whether workers recognize it or not. Accordingly, it is encouraging to see books titled such as Stephanie Luce's *Labor Movements: Global Perspectives* (2014), as well as *Global Labour Studies* by Marcus Taylor and Sébastien Rioux (2018).

While there is a lot we know, we still need to understand changes in a multitude of areas: in the global economy and how they are affecting workers in all countries; the work of the established Global Union Federations as well as the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC); the global work of the AFL-CIO and especially its on-going work with the US Government's National Endowment for Democracy (NED); what is happening with workers in different countries, such as in Argentina, Brazil,



China, Egypt, India, Iraq, Iran, Mexico, the Philippines, South Africa, South Korea, Turkey, Venezuela and Vietnam, as well as others; how workers and unions have tried to build global labour solidarity, where it worked and where it has failed (and for what reasons for each), and this can be expanded upon. Yet we also need to know all of these things in the face of the accelerating climate crisis, a worsening global reality.<sup>17</sup>

## **Conclusion**

In short, there is over 40 years of published research on building global labor solidarity from the bottom-up, based on workers' experiences from around the world. Half of it should not be "thrown out" of a project to build global labour studies simply because the authors trying to understand the field were not aware of it. It is needed to learn from the earlier efforts so we can go beyond them; how can we understand what is happening with COSATU, for one example, if we don't know how it was created--and the fortunate thing is, because of previous work, we know how COSATU was created (see, for example, Baskin, 1991). This work needs to be included in our emerging field of study.

The larger point, however, is that now we know that struggles by progressive labor are part of the global movement for social and economic justice, and that the field of labor studies has expanded far beyond just an interest in labor organizations in a particular nation-state; it is understanding that "Workers of the World, Unite!" is no longer just an exhortation; it is a necessity.

## References

- Alimahomed-Wilson, Jake and Immanuel Ness, eds. 2018. *Choke Points: Logistics Workers Disrupting the Global Supply Chain*. London: Pluto Press.
- Anner, Mark.
- 2011. *Solidarity Transformed: Labor Responses to Globalization and Crises in Latin America*. Ithaca: ILR Press.
- 2015. "Worker Resistance in Global Supply Chains: Wildcat Strikes, International Accords and Transnational Campaigns." *International Journal of Labour Research*, Vol. 7, Nos. 1-2: 17-34.
- Armbruster-Sandoval, Ralph.
- 2005. *Globalization and Cross-Border Labor Solidarity in the Americas: The Anti-Sweatshop Movement and the Struggle for Social Justice*. New York: Routledge.
- 2013. "Review of *AFL-CIO's Secret War against Developing Country Workers: Solidarity or Sabotage?*" *Contemporary Sociology*, Vol. 42, No. 4, July: 614-615.
- Baskin, Jeremy. 1991. *Striking Back: A History of COSATU*. Johannesburg: Ravan Press.
- Bass, George Nelson III. 2012. "Organized Labor and US Foreign Policy: The Solidarity Center in Historical Context." Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, Department of Political Science, Florida International University, Miami. On-line at <http://digitalcommons.fiu.edu/etd/752> (accessed on March 21, 2020).
- Bieler, Andreas and Ingemar Lindberg, eds. 2011. *Global Restructuring, Labour and the Challenges for Transnational Solidarity*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Bieler, Andreas, Ingemar Lindberg and Devan Pillay, eds. 2008. *Labour and the Challenges of Globalization: What Prospects for Transnational Solidarity?* London and Ann Arbor: Pluto Press.
- Bronfenbrenner, Kate. 2007. *Global Unions: Challenging Transnational Capital Through Cross-Border Campaigns*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- Brookes, Marissa and Jaime K. McCallum. 2017. "The New Global Labour Studies: A Critical Review." *Global Labour Studies*, Vol. 8, No. 3: 201-218. On-line at <https://mulpress.mcmaster.ca/globallabour/article/view/3000> (accessed on March 21, 2020).
- Burawoy, Michael. 2009. "The Global Turn: Lessons from Southern Labour Scholars and their Labour Movements." *Work and Occupations*, Vol. 36, No. 2: 87-95.
- Cohen, Robin, Peter C.W. Gutkind, and Phyllis Brazier, eds. *Peasants and Proletarians: The Struggles of Third World Workers*. New York and London: Monthly Review Press.
- Cole, Peter. 2018. *Dockworker Power: Race and Activism in Durban and the San Francisco Bay Area*. Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press.

- Cole, Peter, David Struthers and Kenyon Zimmer, eds. 2017. *Wobblies of the World: A Global History of the IWW*. London: Pluto.
- Collombat, Thomas. 2011. "Several Souths: The Dynamics of the International Labor Movement in the Americas." Unpublished PhD dissertation, Political Science Department, Carleton University, Ottawa, Canada. On-line at [www.ieim.uqam.ca/IMG/pdf/these-Collombat-2010.pdf](http://www.ieim.uqam.ca/IMG/pdf/these-Collombat-2010.pdf) (accessed on March 21, 2020).
- Cox, Ronald W. 2019. *Corporate Power, Class Conflict and the Crisis of the New Globalization*. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books.
- Cox, Ronald W. and G. Nelson Bass. 2012. "The Foreign Policy of Organized Labor in the Context of Globalization" in Ronald W. Cox, ed., *Corporate Power and Globalization in US Foreign Policy*. London and New York: Routledge: 56-78.
- Dicken, Peter. 2015. *Global Shift, 7<sup>th</sup> Ed: Mapping the Changing Contours of the World Economy*. New York and London: The Guilford Press.
- Dobrusin, Bruno. 2014. "South-South Labor Internationalism: SIGTUR and the Challenges to the Status Quo" in Scipes, ed., 2014: 155-167.
- Erem, Susan and E.P. Durrenburger. 2008. *On the Global Waterfront: The Fight to Free the Charleston 5*. New York: Monthly Review Press.
- Evans, Peter.
- 2010. "Is It Labor's Turn to Globalize? Twenty-First Century Opportunities and Strategic Responses." On-line at <https://mulpress.mcmaster.ca/globallabour/article/view/1082> (accessed on March 21, 2020).
- 2014. "National Labour Movements and Transnational Connections: Global Labour's Evolving Architecture Under Neoliberalism." *Global Labour Journal*, Vol. 5, No. 3, September: 258-282. On-line at <https://escarpmentpress.org/globallabour/article/view/2283> (accessed on March 21, 2020).
- Featherstone, David. 2012. *Solidarity: Hidden Histories and Geographies of Internationalism*. New York and London: Zed Press.
- Field, Jr., Thomas C. 2018. "Transnationalism Meets Empire: The AFL-CIO, Development, and the Private Origins of Kennedy's Latin American Labor Program." *Diplomatic History*, Vol. 41, No. 2: 305-334.
- Fitz, Don. 1990. "La Coordinadora: A Union without Bureaucrats" in Don Fitz and David Roediger, eds., *Within the Shell of the Old: Essays on Workers' Self-Organization--A Salute to George Rawick*. Chicago: Charles H. Kerr: 88-96.
- Fox-Hodess, Katy.
- 2017. "(Re-) Locating the Local and National in the Global: Multi-Scalar Political Alignment in Transnational European Dockers' Union Campaigns." *British Journal of Industrial Relations*, Vol. 55, No. 3: 626-647.

- 2018. "Dockworkers of the World Unite: Transnational Class Formation and the New Internationalism." Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, Department of Sociology, University of California-Berkeley.
- 2019. "Worker Power, Trade Union Strategy, and International Connections: Dockworker Unionism in Colombia and Chile." *Latin American Politics and Society*. Vol. 60, No. 3: 1-26. On-line at [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/333495769\\_Worker\\_Power\\_Trade\\_Union\\_Strategy\\_and\\_International\\_Connections\\_Dockworker\\_Unionism\\_in\\_Colombia\\_and\\_Chile](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/333495769_Worker_Power_Trade_Union_Strategy_and_International_Connections_Dockworker_Unionism_in_Colombia_and_Chile) (accessed March 21, 2020).
- 2020. "Building Labour Internationalism 'from Below': Lessons from the International Dockworkers Council's European Working Group." *Work, Employment and Society*, January 23. On-line at <https://doi.org/10.1177/0950017019862969> (accessed March 21, 2020).
- Friedman, Thomas L. 1999. *The Lexus and the Olive Tree: Understanding Globalization*. New York: Picador.
- Hale, Angela and Jane Wills. 2007. "Women Working Worldwide: Transnational Networks, Corporate Social Responsibility and Action Research." *Global Networks*, Vol. 7, No. 4: 453-476.
- Hale, Angela and Jane Wills, eds. 2005. *Threads of Labour: Garment Industry Supply Chains from the Works' Perspective*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Hanagan, Michael, ed. 2003. "Labor Internationalism." *Social Science History*, Vol. 27, No. 4, Winter: 485-499.
- Herod, Andrew. 2003. "Geographies of Labor Internationalism." *Social Science History*, Vol. 27, No. 4, Winter: 501-523.
- Kumar, Ashok and Jack Mahoney. 2014. "Stitching Together: How Workers are Hemming Down Transnational Capital in the Hyper-Global Apparel Industry" in Kim Scipes, ed., 2014.: 187-210.
- Lambert, Rob and Eddie Webster. 2001. "Southern Unionism and the New Labour Internationalism." *Antipode*, Vol. 33, No. 3: 337-362.
- Luce, Stephanie. 2014. *Labour Movements: Global Perspectives*. Cambridge and Malden, MA: Polity Press.
- MacShane, Denis, Martin Plaut and David Ward. 1984. *Power! Black Workers, Their Unions, and the Struggle for Freedom in South Africa*. Boston: South End Press.
- McCoy, Alfred W. 2019. "How Climate Change Could End Washington's Global Dominion." *TomDispatch*, February 28. On-line at <https://www.counterpunch.org/2019/03/01/how-climate-change-could-end-washingtons-global-dominion/> (accessed March 21, 2020).
- McElroy, John and Richard Croucher. 2013. "The Turn to Transnational Labor History and the Study of Global Trade Unionism." *Labor History*, Vol. 54, No. 5: 491-511.
- Moghadam, Valentine M. 2020. *Globalization and Social Movements: The Populist Challenge and Democratic Alternatives*, 3<sup>rd</sup> Ed. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.

Moody, Kim. 1997. *Workers in a Lean World: Unions in the International Economy*. London and New York: Verso.

Munck, Ronaldo.

--- 1988. *The New International Labour Studies: An Introduction*. London and Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Zed Books.

--- 2010. "Globalization and the Labour Movement: Challenges and Responses." *Global Labour Journal*, Vol. 1, No. 2. On-line at <https://escarpmentpress.org/globallabour/issue/view/123> (accessed March 21, 2020).

Nastovski, Katherine.

--- 2014. "Workers Confront Apartheid: Comparing Canadian Labor Solidarity Campaigns Against South African and Israeli Apartheid" in Kim Scipes, ed.: 211-237.

--- 2016a. "Worker-to-Worker: A Transformative Model of Solidarity--Lessons from Grassroots International Labor Solidarity in Canada in the 1970s and 1980s" in Kim Scipes, ed., 2016: 49-77.

--- 2016b. "Towards Transformative Solidarities: Wars of Position in the Making of Labour Internationalism in Canada." Unpublished PhD dissertation. Toronto: York University. Link: [https://yorkspace.library.yorku.ca/xmlui/bitstream/handle/10315/33340/Nastovski\\_Katherine\\_2016\\_Ph.d.pdf?sequence=2&isAllowed=y](https://yorkspace.library.yorku.ca/xmlui/bitstream/handle/10315/33340/Nastovski_Katherine_2016_Ph.d.pdf?sequence=2&isAllowed=y) (accessed March 21, 2020).

Nederveen Pieterse, Jan.

--- 1989. *Empire and Emancipation: Power and Liberation on a World Scale*. New York: Praeger.

--- 2015. *Globalization and Culture: Global M lange*, 3<sup>rd</sup> Ed. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield.

Ness, Immanuel. 2016. *Southern Insurgency: The Coming of the Global Working Class*. London: Pluto Press.

Nowak, J rg. 2019. *Mass Strikes and Social Movements in Brazil and India: Popular Mobilisation in the Long Depression*. Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan.

O'Brien, Robert. 2019. *Labour Internationalism in the Global South*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Radosh, Ronald. 1969. *American Labor and United States Foreign Policy*. New York: Random House.

Schuhrke, Jeff. 2019. "'Comradely Brainwashing': International Development, Labor Education, and Industrial Relations in the Cold War." *Labor: Studies in Working Class History*, Vol. 16, No. 3: 39-67.

Scipes, Kim.

--- 1984. "Industrial Policy: Can It Lead the US Out of Its Economic Malaise?" *New Labor Review*, No. 6, Spring: 27-53. Updated and republished in pamphlet form (December).

- 1996. *KMU: Building Genuine Trade Unionism in the Philippines, 1980-1994*. Quezon City, Metro Manila: New Day Publishers. (Soon to be put on-line for free.)
- 2000. “Communicating Labor Internationalism: The KMU’s ‘International Solidarity Affair.’” January. On-line at <http://globalsolidarity.antenna.nl/scipes.html> (accessed March 21, 2020).
- 2001. “Social Movement Unionism: Can We Apply the Theoretical Conceptualization to the New Unions in South Africa—And Beyond?” LabourNet Germany, June 5. On-line in English (with incorrect date, 2003) at <http://archiv.labournet.de/diskussion/gewerkschaft/smuandsa.html> (accessed March 21, 2020).
- 2007. “Neo-Liberal Economic Policies in the United States: The Impact on American Workers.” *Z Net*, February 2. On-line at <http://zcomm.org/znetarticle/neo-liberal-economic-policies-in-the-united-states-by-kim-scipes/> (accessed March 21, 2020).
- 2009. “An Alternative Perspective for the Global South—Neoliberal Economic Policies in the United States: The Impact of Globalisation on a ‘Northern’ Country.” *Indian Journal of Politics and International Relations*, Vol. 2, No. 1, January-June: 12-47. On-line at <https://zcomm.org/znetarticle/neo-liberal-economic-policies-in-the-united-states-by-kim-scipes-1/> (accessed March 21, 2020).
- 2010a. *AFL-CIO’s Secret War against Developing Country Workers: Solidarity or Sabotage?* Lanham, MD: Lexington Press.
- 2010b. “Why Labor Imperialism? AFL-CIO’s Foreign Policy Leaders and the Developing World.” *Working USA*, Vol. 13, No. 4: 465-479.
- 2012. “Globalization from Below: Labor Activists Challenging the AFL-CIO Foreign Policy.” *Critical Sociology*, Vol. 38, No. 2, March: 303-323.
- 2014a. “Building Global Labor Solidarity Today: Learning from the KMU of the Philippines.” *Class, Race and Corporate Power*, Vol. 2, Issue 2, Article 2. On-line at <https://digitalcommons.fiu.edu/classracecorporatpower/vol2/iss2/2/> (accessed March 21, 2020, also, republished in Scipes, ed., 2016: 139-152.)
- 2014. “Review Essay: *American Labor’s Global Ambassadors: The International History of the AFL-CIO during the Cold War*, edited by Robert Anthony Waters, Jr., and Geert van Goethem.” *Working USA: The Journal of Labor and Society*, Vol. 17, No. 2, June: 283-288.
- 2014c. “Social Movement Unionism or Social Justice Unionism? Disentangling Theoretical Confusion Within the Global Labor Movement.” *Class, Race and Corporate Power*, Vol. 2, No. 3, November. On-line at <http://digitalcommons.fiu.edu/classracecorporatpower/vol2/iss3/9> (accessed March 21, 2020).
- 2015. “Celebrating May Day, KMU Style.” *Countercurrents.org*, October 8. On-line at [www.countercurrents.org/scipes081015.htm](http://www.countercurrents.org/scipes081015.htm) (accessed March 21, 2020).
- 2016a. “Labor Imperialism” in Immanuel Ness and Zak Cope, eds. *The Palgrave Encyclopedia or Imperialism and Anti-Imperialism*. London: Palgrave Macmillan: 1294-1304.

- 2016b. "Introduction" to Kim Scipes, ed.: 1-21. On-line at [https://www.academia.edu/25374866/INTRODUCTION to Scipes ed Building Global Labor Solidarity](https://www.academia.edu/25374866/INTRODUCTION_to_Scipes_ed_Building_Global_Labor_Solidarity) (accessed March 21, 2020).
- 2016c. "Multiple Fragments--Strengths or Weakness? Theorizing Global Labor Solidarity" in Kim Scipes, ed.:23-48. (Available for downloading at [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/315617986\\_Multiple\\_Fragments--Strengths\\_or\\_Weaknesses\\_Theorizing\\_Global\\_Labor\\_Solidarity](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/315617986_Multiple_Fragments--Strengths_or_Weaknesses_Theorizing_Global_Labor_Solidarity)). (Accessed March 21, 2020.)
- 2017. "Addressing Seriously the Environmental Crisis: A Bold, "Outside the Box" Suggestion for Addressing Climate Change and other Forms of Environmental Destruction." *Class, Race and Corporate Power*, Vol. 5, Issue 1, Article 2 (April). On-line at <http://digitalcommons.fiu.edu/classracecorporatpower/vol5/iss1/2> (accessed March 21, 2020).
- 2018a. "I Read the News Today, Oh Boy! Observations from a Week in the Philippines." *Counterpunch*, August 6. On -line at <https://www.counterpunch.org/2018/08/06/i-read-the-news-today-oh-boy-observations-from-a-week-in-the-philippines/> (accessed March 21, 2020).
- 2018b. "Another Type of Trade Unionism IS Possible: The KMU Labor Center of the Philippines and Social Movement Unionism." *The Journal of Labor and Society*, Vol. 21, No. 3, September: 349-367. On-line at [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/327472612\\_Another\\_type\\_of\\_trade\\_unionism\\_IS\\_possible\\_The\\_KMU\\_Labor\\_Center\\_of\\_the\\_Philippines\\_and\\_social\\_movement\\_unionism](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/327472612_Another_type_of_trade_unionism_IS_possible_The_KMU_Labor_Center_of_the_Philippines_and_social_movement_unionism) (accessed March 21, 2020).
- 2019. "Labour Internationalism in the Global South: The SIGTUR Initiative by Robert O'Brien: A Review Essay by Kim Scipes." *Journal of Labor and Society*, Vol. 22, No. 4: 920-925.
- 2020. In press. *Building Global Labor Solidarity: Lessons from the Philippines, South Africa, Northwestern Europe and the United States*. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books.

Scipes, Kim, ed.

- 2014. "Global Labor Solidarity." *Working USA*, Vol. 17, No. 2, June: 141-288.
- 2016. *Building Global Labor Solidarity in a time of Accelerating Globalization*. Chicago: Haymarket Books.

Seidman, Gay. 1994. *Manufacturing Militance: Workers' Movements in Brazil and South Africa, 1970-1985*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press.

Shiva, Vandana. 2005. *Earth Democracy: Justice, Sustainability, and Peace*. Cambridge, MA: South End Press.

Silver, Beverly. 2003. *Forces of Labor: Workers' Movements and Globalization Since 1870*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Sims, Beth. 1992. *Workers of the World Undermined: American Labor's Role in US Foreign Policy*. Boston: South End Press.



- Southall, Roger, ed. 1988. *Trade Unions and the New Industrialization of the Third World*. London: Zed Press.
- Starr, Amory. 2005. *Global Revolt: A Guide to Movements against Globalization*. London and New York: Zed.
- Stillerman, Joel. 2003. "Transnational Activist Networks and the Emergence of Labor Internationalism in the NAFTA Countries." *Social Science History*, Vol. 27, No. 4, Winter: 577-601.
- Taylor, Marcus and Sébastien Rioux. 2018. *Global Labour Studies*. Cambridge and Medford, MA: Polity Press.
- Thomson, Don and Rodney Larson. 1978. *Where Were You, Brother? An Account of Trade Union Imperialism*. London: War on Want.
- Vogel, Richard D. 2006. "Lessons from South of the Border: Listening to the CJM." *Monthly Review*, November 12. On-line at <https://mronline.org/2006/11/12/lessons-from-south-of-the-border-listening-to-the-cjm/>.
- Waterman, Peter.
- 1998. *Globalization, Social Movements and the New Internationalism*. London and Herndon, VA: Mansell.
- 2008. "A Trade Union Internationalism for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: Meeting the Challenges from Above, Below and Beyond" in Andreas Bieler, Ingemar Lindberg and Devan Pillay, eds.: 248-263.
- Waterman, Peter and Jane Wills. 2001. "Space, Place and the New Labor Internationalisms? Beyond the Fragments?" *Antipode*, Vol. 33, No. 3, July.
- Waters, Robert Anthony, Jr., and Geert van Goethem, eds. 2013. *American Labor's Global Ambassadors: The International History of the AFL-CIO During the Cold War*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Webster, Edward, Robert Lambert and Andries Bezuidenhout. 2008. *Grounding Globalization: Labour in the Age of Insecurity*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- West, Lois. 1997. *Militant Labor in the Philippines*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
- Weir, Stan. 2004. "Introduction to Coordinadora" in George Lipsitz, ed., *Singlejack Solidarity*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press: 153-163.,
- Zweig, Michael. 2005. "Iraq and the Labor Movement: The Remarkable Story of USLAW." *New Labor Forum*, Vol. 14, No. 3: 61-67.



---

<sup>1</sup> This section on globalization is drawn largely from Scipes, 2016b: 16-17.

<sup>2</sup> The point about unevenness is very important. It means that these processes affect countries differentially, and so forth. In fact, they can affect different regions in the same country differentially.

<sup>3</sup> Just as I was completing this article, I received a copy of Valentine Moghadam's latest book, *Globalization and Social Movements* (2020). She places her work in the World Systems Theory (WST) tradition, which I reject. (For the best theoretical challenge to WST that I have seen, see Nederveen Pieterse, 1989: 29-45.) Nonetheless, Moghadam raises the issue of social movements emerging in response to what I would call "top-down" globalization, and she specifically includes Islamist movements, which she sees as reactions to "Western" globalization.

She seems to be on to something important, distinguishing those who reject top-down globalization out of a desire to maintain the existing status quo from those who reject the premises and values of top-down globalization and who seek to build a world based on economic and social justice. This would allow us to theoretically understand labor centers, like the AFL-CIO, who resist aspects of top-down globalization--for example, transfer of production out of the United States--but who do not reject the premises and values of top-down globalization and the resulting efforts to dominate and control other people's and countries. Accordingly, this could lay the groundwork for further explaining why the AFL-CIO generally refuses to support, and often rejects, efforts to build a new world.

<sup>4</sup> This is not an attempt to oversee the entire body of work subsumed under the rubric of globalization; feminists have been increasingly writing from this perspective, as have anarchists, and as have scholars from many different perspectives. Focus herein is confined to the world of labor.

However, the expansion of literature that is labor-related yet globally-aware has been considerable--this is not an effort to cover the entire field, but focuses on what this author believes to be some of the most important writings to date. As one who has done considerable research around the world, and has published widely, as well as one who has been actively trying to build global labor solidarity since 1983, this is a perspective distinct in the field.

<sup>5</sup> In 2017, Marissa Brooks and Jamie K. McCallum published an article titled "The New Global Labour Studies: A Critical Review" in the journal *Global Labour Studies*. Unfortunately, these authors chose to begin their study in the year 2000, not understanding that the field had been developing since the late 1970s; they simply discarded over 20 years of critical research.

From my reading, Brooks and McCallum focus overwhelmingly on the writings that lead to contributions to creating "broad" theory--academic theorization--and ignore efforts to learn from working people and their experiences "on the ground." Their article, from my perspective, suggests much more than they deliver.

<sup>6</sup> Having attended the founding conference of ILR in Liverpool during late 1983 by chance, I was asked to serve as the North American representative of the journal, to which I agreed, and served in this role between 1984-89.

I have been actively involved in trying to build global labor solidarity since 1983, and have written extensively ever since, focused on researching the KMU Labor Center of the Philippines, combatting labor imperialism, challenging the AFL-CIO's foreign policy, developing the concept of "social movement unionism," and writing about/theoretically advancing global labor solidarity. In addition to the articles listed on line, I bring a number of my writings across the years into a single volume (Scipes, 2020) that will be published during the Summer of 2020.

There are a number of scholars--in addition to Brookes and McCallum (2017)--who ignore this researcher's work, even when on point, or who do nothing more than list some of these publications.

---

Generally, they refuse to address the claims and arguments made therein; for examples, see Moody (1997), addressed in Scipes (2014c); see Waters and Van Goethem, eds. (2013), addressed in Scipes (2014b); or see O'Brien (2019), addressed in Scipes (2019). Please excuse the extensive utilization of my own writings in this article, which are used when alternative satisfactory analyses have not been found.

For a complete, on-line listing of this author's writings--many with links to the actual article to which reference is made--please see <https://www.pnw.edu/faculty/kim-scipes-ph-d/publications> (accessed on March 21, 2020).

<sup>7</sup> ILR was published from 1984 to 1990, when it was forced to close after being attacked by a British corporation via British libel laws, which are much more restrictive than US laws; basically, in England, once challenged, you must prove you didn't present false information, where in the US, those charging libel have to show you did.

<sup>8</sup> It was through a number of conversations with Pradel at the conference that I became intrigued about the KMU and what she told me was taking place in the Philippines.

I first traveled to the Philippines in January-early February 1986, leaving only 20 days before the overthrow of the dictator, Ferdinand Marcos. I published the first--and, to date, only--nation-wide study of the KMU (Scipes, 1996). For an account of "Organization in Bataan," where the export processing zone is located, and the struggles in which Pradel and these workers engaged, see Scipes, 1996: 159-180. Altogether, I have made nine research trips to visit the KMU (see Scipes, 2018b), with the last one in July 2018 (see Scipes, 2018a).

I hope to place my entire 1996 book on-line in the near future, as the rights to it have been transferred back to me.

<sup>9</sup> For one of the most complete bibliographies to that date on labor in South Africa, see Scipes, 2001; for a more extensive listing, see my on-line "Contemporary Labor Issues" bibliography at <https://faculty.pnw.edu/kim-scipes/contemporary-labor-issues-bibliography/#SouthAfrica> (accessed March 21, 2020--you may have to scroll up to get it).

<sup>10</sup> One account of the early struggles by black workers in South Africa, which got more general exposure at least in the US, is MacShane, Plaut and Ward (1984).

<sup>11</sup> I have a chapter on the journal in Scipes (2020), which better illustrates its range of coverage of workers' struggles around the world.

<sup>12</sup> As explicated in the article, the concept of "social movement unionism" came from an analysis of CUT, KMU and COSATU--particular labor centers from the Global South--but this concept, spread particularly by Moody (1997), was inappropriately applied to unions in the Global North, where it has been incorrectly applied and propagated. In Scipes (2014c, 2020), I disentangled this theoretical confusion.

<sup>13</sup> Because the terms "trade union imperialism" and "labor imperialism" refer to the same thing--domination of local labor movement by a labor movement from another country-- the terms are generally used interchangeably. However, because these dominative activities are not limited to activities just between two labor movements, but are usually done in conjunction with a government and/or security services (CIA in the US; Colonial Office in the UK) as well as with reactionary trade union officials, I argue that the term labor imperialism is the more appropriate (Scipes, 2010a). For a theoretical explanation of labor imperialism, see Scipes (2010b); for an overview of the concept, see Scipes (2016a).

<sup>14</sup> Brooks and McCallum (2017) report on none of these issues listed above: they report nothing about the emergence of COSATU and KMU, even though there is a considerable literature on each, especially

---

COSATU; they do not discuss the issue of “social movement unionism” nor the labor centers’ roles in restoring democracy in their countries; they do not address the issue of labor imperialism; nor they do not discuss the efforts of the KMU to build global labor solidarity.

<sup>15</sup> For some strange reason, Moody (1997) ignores the KMU despite knowing about them. See comments on this in Scipes (2014c, 2020).

<sup>16</sup> Brookes and McCallum (2017: 207-208) mention a number of case studies of international-based labor campaigns.

<sup>17</sup> For a review of the situation, including the literature on the subject, see Scipes, 2017. And see McCoy, 2019.