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Abstract

AN ANALYSIS OF THE AFL-CIO'S UNION SUMMER PROGRAM: THE COLLEGE RECRUITED ORGANIZERS' CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE LABOR MOVEMENT

This honors research project is a qualitative analysis of the college-recruited organizers' contribution to union organizing. The starting point was Steve Early's essay "Membership-Based Organizing," in which he criticizes the use of college recruited union organizers as "mobile organizers." Early believes it is rank-and-file workers who should be trained as organizers, because he believes these types of organizers are the only ones who can truly revitalize the labor movement. Specifically, Early disparages the AFL-CIO's Union Summer program and Organizing Institute, which recruits college students to be "mobile organizers" and wherever they are needed. Early finds three reasons why college-recruited organizers are less likely to succeed. They are inexperienced, they are outsiders, and they bring unwelcome leftist and liberal ideology to the movement.

This causes me to ask a few questions. Does this mean college recruited union organizers are less likely to successfully organize than rank-and-file organizers? Are college-recruited organizers less experienced in organizing than rank-and-file organizers? Are they less knowledgeable about labor than rank-and-file organizers? Are college students more liberal than rank-and-file organizers and if so do these leftist ideas get expressed when union organizing? If these ideas are expressed are they counterproductive? Do college recruited students alienate workers more than rank-and-file organizers?

To answer these questions I needed to experience union organizing myself as a college student. I applied for the 2003 AFL-CIO's Union Summer and was accepted. I went to Queens, New York City to do field work with the 100% rank-and-file Retail Union. In my experience with the Retail Union I made observations contrary to Steve Early's.

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MOVEMENT**

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Introduction

In 1995, John Sweeney was elected president of the AFL-CIO, and with him he brought reform to the organization. Sweeney transformed union culture within the AFL-CIO to be on the offensive by actively organizing. One of the ways he did this was by forming Organizing Institute and Union Summer, which trains college students to be organizers and places them in local unions to participate in campaigns. This was a controversial action, because many scholars believed union revitalization depended on investing in locals and rank-and-file organizers, and that college recruited students were ineffective as organizers or labor movement participants. This paper is about the controversy surrounding the role of college-recruited organizers in the labor movement (Clawson and Clawson 1999). One of the critics against the use of college students is Steve Early.

Steve Early believes funds should be put strictly into local unions to train rank-and-file members to organize and there is next to no need for college-recruited organizers. Early makes his argument for this position, which will be addressed later in this paper.

In 2003, I took part in the AFL-CIO Union Summer. I received a week of training in Chicago and was then placed with a local rank-and-file Retail Union. For the privacy of the union I will refer to the union as the “Retail Union” and I will change the names of the participants in this paper. My personal observations of a rank-and-file local, the AFL-CIO's program and college recruited organizers lead me to argue that many of Early's positions are based on assumptions and weak correlations between organizer types and the likelihood of organizing successes.

I make the case that the type of organizer, whether it is rank-and-file or “college-recruited”, is of no consequence. The difference between the two is disappearing for a few reasons. First, the traditional industrial rank-and-file organizer is disappearing, because high tech service industry and workers are replacing this type of worker. The college-educated worker is also becoming the new rank and file organizer. Early assumes there is a hard line between working class and the college educated. Many “college-recruited” organizers come from a working class background even though their education moved them out of the blue collar industry into professional or high tech service industries. They still carry a blue-collar working class identity with them and possibly a pro-union ideology. As college-recruited organizers these students have both the insight of typical working class members and the new college educated working class, giving them a topical view of labor and making them invaluable for the organizing effort. Because of these reasons college-recruited organizers are indispensable to the labor organizing effort.

History of the Retail Union

The Retail Union was born in the 1930s in New York City when several smaller local unions signed on with the CIO in 1937. Throughout the 1950s the Retail Union attracted several more unions including the Jewelry and Novelty Union and the Cigar Makers Union. Today the Retail Union represents workers all over the United States and Canada.

CRISIS OF THE LABOR MOVEMENT

The reported percentages of the drop in union enrollment since the mid-70s differ from source to source, but what is agreed upon by experts is that the drop did happen, it was significant, and caused a change in labor culture in the United States (Clawson 2003).

A combination of aggressive organizing, economic expansion and a favorable political, legal and social climate allowed for unprecedented growth in union organizing and power in the United States in the 1930s and 1940s, in 1946, when the union share of the workforce peaked at 37 percent. Although membership continued to grow in absolute terms through the 1970s...After 1946, the percentage of the labor force belonging to unions dropped slowly but steadily to 21 percent by 1980...below 15 percent in 1995...With only 11 percent of the private-sector labor force now organized. (Bronfenbrenner, Friedman, Hurd, Oswald and Seeber 2-3)

The unions that survived had very little power to negotiate after they fell under attack, their numbers dwindled and "...frequently concessions were made on wages and benefits" (Clawson 2003, 97). This loss of membership and power has been blamed on a few things. First to blame is the union strategy of just protecting current membership or maintaining the internal labor market and not organizing new members (Cornfield 1991, 37-38). Second was the choice not to organize white-collar jobs at all, even though this was already a growing job field in the 1940s (Cornfield 1991, 37-38).

After John Sweeney's was elected in 1995, he brought back the old strategy of actively organizing, and this time the labor movement would attempt to organize any and all kinds of labor. Sweeney understood "...a new surge of unionism would take a different form from the past" (Clawson 2003, 104).

Early in Sweeney's reign Organizing Institute (OI) and Union Summer were created. First OI trained college-recruited students to be fluid and mobile organizers to work various campaigns. Then came Union Summer, an internship that placed college students in local unions to educate them about social movements in general and the labor movement specifically. From this internship many future OI candidates and union organizers were recruited. This new and revolutionary tactic to revitalize the movement is the cause of much controversy today.

Union Summer is modeled after the Civil Right's Freedom Summer campaigns of the 1960s and 1970s, which recruited college students to fight racial injustice. The AFL-CIO's Union Summer program was launched in 1996 and has seen around 3000 interns go through the program since its start. It was set up to give people a taste of what it was like to fight for social justice, especially economic and labor justice. The program educates students, trains them, and then places them with various local unions around the country for four weeks to gain firsthand experience in labor activism. The goals of the program are to send activists back to their communities and to recruit organizers to be placed with AFL-CIO locals (Northwest Labor Press Website).

DEBATE OVER COLLEGE RECRUITED ORGANIZATIONS

In his essay "Membership-Based Organizing," Steve Early makes an argument for the need to utilize only rank-and-file workers for organizing. Rank-and-file types are organizers who entered the labor organizing drive by working in that job field first. It is job specific, and some may argue, location specific as well. He also states that "mobile organizers" or college graduate organizers are a poor attempt by the AFL-CIO to counter dwindling union membership in the United States. Early specifically cites their Organizing Institute and Union Summer as a few of the programs propagating this ineffective way of organizing and Early puts forth two main arguments that this kind organizing is either ineffective or counter-productive. First, college recruited organizers bring radical and leftists ideas, such as socialism and communism, to the worker's movement that are counter to "mainstream" rank-and-file labor ideas, causing the workers to become alienated from the social movement.

...there was often considerable tension between younger leftists in the ranks and older ones in the leadership of organizing drives and strikes. Some veterans of the anti-war, civil rights and feminist movements became disenchanted with mainstream union methods.... (Early 1998, 84)

Second, college recruited organizers are used as "mobile organizers" who are ineffective, because they are outsiders and do not identify with the workers they are organizing. He explains this is only a job for these college educated "mobile workers" and therefore they lack passion, experience and knowledge for the cause of the labor movement.

Early starts off comparing two union types, one type using rank-and-file organizers and the other using college recruited organizers. The successful union using rank-and file organizers is the Teamsters Local 174 based in Seattle. This union trained its workers to work alongside fulltime rank-and-file organizers as part timers or volunteer organizers. Early states after three years of training, rank-and-file organizers had tripled the numbers of organized workers.

Early then looks at a union utilizing "OI [Organizing Institute] model" organizers in Mississippi in 1996. These "mobile organizers" were employed by Laborers' International Union of North America. It is noted these organizers pretended to be southern by faking accents even though they were from the north. This shows the "mobile organizer" also sees the value of being from the area they are organizing. Early highlights that one of the biggest complaints about mobile workers is they are ineffective, because they are not local and viewed as outsiders, therefore unable to relate to the workers. The company describes these organizers as "outsiders" who are there to rip them off, because they are full of "union-corruption," which as Early explains since they are not local residents, "...there is no sign of any LIUNA members who might be able to address such issues, one-on-one, with their fellow Mississippians" (Early 1998, 88).

Early then goes on to describe more rank-and-file successes in organizing. He attributes the success of these campaigns to the "...empowerment and 'ownership' of the drive..." (Early 1998, 89) that only rank-and-file organizing can create. A bottom up and not a "top down" strategy, which Early says is the strategy of the rank-and-file, nurture this empowerment. He explains that mobile organizers do not have the resources to fight aggressive resistance, contrary to rank-and-file organizers (Early 91). Besides the resources of political connections and community, Early also makes the point it is workers who change their co-workers views of the union, again showing how being local is beneficial to union organizing. It doesn't matter, "Whether a unit is blue- or white-collar, co-workers—not outside 'hired hands'—are often the only ones capable of overcoming internal resistance to unionization..." and the, "...CWA Local 1400 increased its largely female membership from 200 to 2000 by using a worker-to-worker approach that gradually changed long-standing anti-union attitudes" (Early 1998, 96).

Early concludes by investing in the locals' workers to organize themselves instead of putting the money into "mobile organizers" a "culture or organizing" (Early 1998, 99) is created. Early does see using the college recruited organizers as "...one way to jump-start national union organizing programs that are severely limited by their lack of local union involvement..." (Early 1998, 99), but Early explains this to be the only reason for these type of organizers and not a "long-term solution". Early concludes that saturating the movement with non rank-and-file organizers not only highjacks the movement from the worker, but also reinforces stereotypes that unions are only there to take your money and run, and that organizing is for "specialists [academically trained organizers]" only.

Not all scholars agree with Steve Early. Many see students as union organizers as a breath of fresh air and a way to revitalize a once dying labor movement. These advocates of student labor organizing programs such as Organizing Institute and Union Summer see them, at the least, as a way to change public perceptions and to create a generation of student labor

activists and sympathizers (Clawson 2003).

John Sweeney knew this public perception needed to be changed when he was elected in 1995 and his reforms take a community unionism approach to organizing. Community unionism "...is union organizing that takes place across territorial and industrial communities much larger than a single workplace" (Fine, 128). At the very least, as many advocates of the college-recruited organizer have argued, the AFL-CIO programs, such as Union Summer educates participants about the labor movement and even if they do not stay to be organizers they carry their knowledge and experience of the labor movement back to their communities, establishing a labor movement culture.

Others, such as Leslie Bunnage and Judith Stephan-Norris, see students as labor activists as a benefit because "...they are characterized by social change oriented values, the lack of issue satiation, flexible schedules and large blocks of time in which to concentrate social movement activities and has noted that almost half of the 1996 cohort reported an interest in participating in student labor groups" (Bunnage and Stephan-Norris 2004, 248). Students are also more likely to take risks such as being arrested (Clawson 2003), because they have less to lose such as reputation, time and employment. Bunnage and Stephan-Norris also recognize the student organizers bring youthful energy and have a history of running successful movements.

Bunnage and Stephan-Norris agree with Clawson that creating student organizers was not the only goal. Another purpose of programs like Union Summer is to create a "class consciousness" in "youth politics" (Bunnage and Stephan-Norris 2004, 228), eventually changing society's negative perception of labor unions. Clawson believes these underlying objectives are already happening (Clawson 44). Clawson gives specifics about how this new anti-sweatshop campus movement came after the first Union Summer internship, because those students went back to form groups like SLAC (Student Labor Action Coalition), which helped workers such as janitors and campus food service workers achieve better working conditions. Another group to come out of the student antisweatshop movement born of Union Summer was USAS (United Students Against Sweatshops), which launched a national campaign to pressure universities to buy university items like sports apparel from non-sweatshop companies. On many campuses the groups were successful, because the students united and were able to use their influence as consumers to force change. This labor awakening among college students is seen by Clawson and others as a result of college interns serving in the labor movement.

Steve Early reasons that the use of student-recruited organizers is not successful, because the trained students did not directly involve the workers in their own struggle at all levels. Amy Foerster agrees this is not a good way to organize, but she comments it is not isolated to just college recruited organizers. Foerster interviewed a graduate of Organizing Institute who validated what Early was saying about these kinds of organizers, but Foerster notes,

...this respondent probably did not intend these comments as a critique of organizers trained by the Organizing Institute. It is instead a criticism of a specific form of organizing, which allocates a significant amount of money and staff resources to a campaign without attention to the intensive "bottom-up," worker-inclusive strategies...[which are]...successful...The shortsighted campaigns described above exist at all levels of the labor movement, however, and are not specific to the campaign to the graduates of the Organizing Institute. (Foerster 2001, 169)

Early linked this top-down organizing method to “mobile organizers,” because he finds these organizers incapable of empowering the local workers. He sees this as happening because these organizers are not trusted. As a result, these organizers cannot get the workers to take ownership of the unionizing effort. The end conclusion of this top-down method results in failure. This link assumes the “mobile organizer” is only capable of, top-down. Organizing the inverse is assumed for rank-and-file organizers. It is thought only the rank-and-file is always successful in applying bottom-up organizing.

I do agree with the advocates, mentioned earlier, that “college-recruited” organizers are beneficial to the labor movement in the ways they believe them to be, but I see these as only a superficial assets of the “college-recruited” organizer. The “college-recruited” organizer has a more salient role in the labor movement, specifically the organizing effort. Not only is their role more prominent than Early recognizes, but some of the adverse affects correlated between “college-recruited” organizers and other parts of the labor movement are either assumed, exaggerated or are in fact, advantageous to the labor movement.

Early assumes the college-recruited organizer is synonymous with leftist.

...union revitalization and membership growth are not going to occur as a result of parachuting Peace Corps-type cadre into workplace campaigns after a crash-course in organizing...there was often considerable tension between younger leftists in the ranks and older ones in the leadership of organizing drives and strikes. Some veterans of the anti-war, civil rights and feminist movements became disenchanted with mainstream union methods.... (Early 1998, 84)

For the sake of making my next point only, I will assume this as well. History has shown unions, which are leftist, even radically left, are progressive allowing them to be more inclusive, tolerant and democratized than politically conservative rank-and-file unions and these leftist unions are just as successful as conservative unions in organizing, if not more so. Leftist organizers have often moved unions forward to become more non-discriminatory, while conservative unions were regressive and would let exclusion of minorities and women in an organization continue (La Luz and Finn 1998).

In the beginning of the twentieth century and continuing through the Great Depression and the Industrial Revolution, the AFL represented the conservative craft unions of the time. Kimeldorf and Stepan-Norris explain, "AFL locals were generally more exclusionary in their membership, more racist in their policies, and more autocratic in their governance than IWW or socialist-led unions" (Kimeldorf and Stepan-Norris 1992, 506). Meanwhile, leftist radicals and communists were organizing people in the height of the depression and were leading protests against evictions and demanding job programs (Clawson and Clawson 1999). There is evidence in today's union organizing that leftist unions are more successful at organizing, so political ideologies has little to do with labor victories and "...this inattention to organizing seems to stem partly from a simple failure of nerve. (Kimeldorf and Stephan-Norris 501).

Earlier I stated the “college-recruited” organizer being synonymous with leftist is an assumption, but even if a college-recruited organizer is a liberal, leftist college recruited organizers are complex people with a mix of ideologies and politics, as are rank-and-file organizers. These organizers left and right will not impose these ideologies while organizing

labor if they are to be successful. It is possible for activists to organize without bringing unrelated or extreme ideas to the labor movement, even if these organizers do strongly back these ideas. In "Against the Grain: Organizing TAs at Yale," Corey Robin and Michelle Stephens looked at organizing graduate students at Yale University. Robin and Stephens followed the history of two GESO union members and their contrary politics and backgrounds. One was a radical leftist and the other a staunch conservative without any experience in protesting or union activity. The more conservative student became one of the most active union members and did so in coalition with the radical member without sacrificing his personal political stance. Robin and Stephens explain this is possible and unions should not need to be based in radical leftist ideology to be successful.

Successful graduate student organizers have tried not to force people to believe in partisan or alienating ideologies. Their goal in the first conversation with a nonmember is not to talk at the person...organizers assume that while people do not need to subscribe to a radical ideology in order to join a union, they do need an analysis of their experience as individual[s]...that enables them to see what they share with their fellow students. (Robin and Stephens 54-55)

To organize successfully it is not prudent to impose liberal or conservative ideology or politics. It is not liberal or conservative ideologies that form the bonds of solidarity, but instead our commonality in us all being workers. This is true for "college-recruited" and rank-and-file organizers.

Early's arguments that college recruited students are seen as outsiders and are unable to relate to workers may be true in some cases, but this can also happen with rank-and-file organizers. Often anti-union campaign efforts paint organizers as outsiders who have no connection to the workers outside the unions' own selfish interest. In this post-industrial society, high-paying blue collar manufacturing jobs will continue to leave the U.S. and will be replaced by high-skilled white collar service jobs causing the university ranks to fill with more working class students pursuing education to compete for those white collar jobs. Because of this perpetual transition deeper into the post-industrial market the working class will transform to one consisting of white-collar workers having a more common background with college graduates of all fields (Clawson, 98). Early's point that mobile organizers, specifically college graduate recruited mobile organizers are perceived to be outsiders, but he overlooks the more the labor market becomes global the more likely U.S. manufacturing is going to relocate to cheaper economies outside of the U.S. Because of this exodus of manufacturing from the United States, unions consisting of industrial type rank-and-file organizers will organize outside of their trades and geographical locations. This will make the industrial rank-and-file just as much outsiders as the "college-recruited" organizer, if not more so.

...union decline has stimulated...structural innovations...the spreading of general unionism, i.e. the recruitment and organization of workers regardless of their craft or industry of employment. (Cornfield 1991, 33)

The rank-and-file organizer used to be local, but is now becoming mobile; not only in the space they are organizing, but also in the types of workplaces their union organizes. The exodus

of manufacturing and other blue-collar jobs from this country has left many unions without workers to unionize. Also workers have become afraid to unionize in fear of losing their job to people in another country. For these two reasons unions are breaking organizing etiquette of only organizing shops of their type and location in order to keep union strength. Union organizing has adjusted to the changes to survive and keep what strength and membership numbers they have.

Industrial workers can no longer deceive themselves into believing that the plant is merely closing for retooling. They have no choice but to think the unthinkable; the plant is gone and gone for good. These unions now seem ready to begin organizing sectors, which have never before been unionized. They are truly sleeping giants of labor. (LeBeau and Lynch, 1998, 106).

College recruited student organizers have become important to the labor organizing movement. Many white-collar shops, including universities, have become hot shops. It is the college graduate union organizer whose background resembles the white-collar fields like the nurse, the doctor, and the graduate student. Manufacturing jobs are being moved overseas and conventional rank-and-file organizers are losing their traditional blue-collar workers to organize (Needlman 1998). Clawson and Clawson remark, "Labor activity...has concentrated on manufacturing and low-wage service work, but much of the employment growth has been in highly educated and white collar employment..."(Clawson and Clawson 1999, 115). And Cornfield explains union membership has declined because there has been a "...a shift from a blue-collar goods producing economy toward a white-collar, service-providing 'post-industrial' economy [that has] generated union membership losses..."(Cornfield 1991, 29). To the white-collar professionals it is the industrial rank-and-file organizer who has become the outsider. It is now the college graduated union organizer who has become the new rank-and-file organizer, because he is organizing his own kind, which are workers who have been trained, in colleges, for work using high-end cognitive skills instead of manual labor.

Earlier in this section Steve Early noted many of these non-rank-and-file organizers come from other movements and Early saw this as a detriment, because they supposedly brought liberal politics, which was "...disenchanted with mainstream union methods..."(Early 1998, 84). I argue this experience these organizers brought from other social movements is a benefit to the labor movement. In a broader study of social movements it has been observed that movements in a positive protest cycle are more likely to positively affect peripheral movements. Early comments that college recruited organizers are often war and government protesters who have been recruited as labor organizers. Although Early sees this as a negative, it can be a positive, because it has been shown that other successful social movements and its leaders have revitalized and motivated an otherwise complacent labor movement. This is a new social movement theory which argues social movements are not "a single movement," but instead are "bounded" and "...intermovement relations and [focuses on] ways in which social movements give rise to and/or shape other movements" (Isaac and Christiansen 2002, 725). This happens because movements such as the labor movement are influenced by the positive upswing of the original social movement's protest cycle and the organizers brought their organizing experience to the labor movement, causing it to be reshaped and revitalized by a new movement. An example of a social movement positively influencing another movement is the civil rights movement

revitalizing the labor movement (Isaac and Christiansen 2002), the women's movement and the peace movement. Another example is the unemployment movements of the 1930s on the labor movement (Chen and Wong 1998). All of these are examples of one movement positively affecting another movement.

METHODS

This will be a qualitative paper based on notes written on participant observation, interviews with rank-and-file workers and secondhand analysis of established works to introduce, analyze and discuss the controversy of college recruited labor organizing. Out of respect for privacy I will be referring to the union I interned with as the Retail Union and I will be changing the names of the individuals mentioned in this paper. There is plenty of established work to counter Steve Early's piece against the progressive and college recruited organizer. I will cite these works, but it is my observations that make my case a stronger one. I took part in participant observation research by interning with the AFL-CIO's Union Summer program. I used this internship to gain an inside perspective to the labor movement and specifically an organization that recruits college students to be organizers.

The program involved college students from all over the country from all backgrounds, political and religious beliefs, ethnicities and ages. In 2003 training in Chicago went from about 8AM to about 8PM and some nights later. The training was given by rank-and-file organizers, university scholars in labor history, and some employees sitting on organizing councils trying to organize their own shops. The training involved labor movement history, team building exercises, labor tours, learning labor folk music, role playing, performing actions, standing on picket lines, talking with workers and whatever else they could fit into a week of training. After the training was over the interns were sent in teams of six to various spots around the country. My team was sent to New York City.

The first few days in New York City we got settled in the dorms at St. Johns University in Queens. On Monday we started work by meeting at the Retail Union office for a few days of training on this specific union and we met the rest of the team. After this we split into teams of two to three interns and worked with various organizers on different campaigns in different stages of being organized. Sometimes all six of us interns met together to work and sometimes we met with other teams and unions in NYC to carry out actions or to give them reinforcements for a big campaign.

ORGANIZING IN UNION SUMMER

One of Early's biggest points about college students being too inadequate to be legitimate labor organizers is that these students are one-dimensional in their life experiences making them unable to relate to people and workers. From my experience working with rank-and-file organizers in New York City, I saw this was not a trait necessarily exclusive to college student organizers only; our older and more experienced rank-and-file mentors in the union local were also very capable of alienating people. I had stated earlier in this paper that relating to workers does not have to do with the type of organizer, but the personality of the individual. In the following paragraphs I make note of the exclusionary and alienating behavior towards student interns and workers organizing with a rank-and-file conservative union.

On an occasion when traveling in the car with Todd, the organizer I was working with, I asked what he thought about interns working as organizers for the summer. Todd replied, "It's a very good thing because they can take what they learn back to their schools. These students need labor information, because most think unions are bad and not all of them are corrupt. Also students need leaders." I asked if he thought leadership skills and education about the labor movement were the only reasons to have college students work in the labor-organizing field as interns. He replied, "The best way to do it is rank-and-file. If something happens you [rank-and-file organizers] can relate to it." The irony of this conversation is at the same time Todd is talking about being able to relate and include workers he is excluding and alienating us interns. Todd's attitude towards us was the mildest of all the organizers, but it was still exclusionary behavior.

Another time when with the Retail Union I observed exclusionary behavior and attitudes. Our intern team was made up of six members, two females and four males, all college students. One of the first things I noticed about the union was it was made up of strictly rank-and-file organizers and had a very "boys club" feel. Some of the organizers on the first day made remarks about our age and student status. The comments made by the organizer were derogatory towards us and implied we were some upper class elitists, because we were in college. Specifically they made remarks about the internship just being a party for us and that all we were interested in was drinking and partying our way through our positions with the local. When the organizers had to leave the conference room where we were receiving a briefing on the union's history and tactics, they turned on the television and one organizer remarked "Sorry we don't have MTV here kids. You will have to watch the grown up channel." After coming back to the room they gave us unsolicited advice of where to go to "party" and drink. We were there to work, but it was clear these organizers had trouble relating to us and didn't understand these remarks and assumptions were offending and alienating us.

This attitude towards us for being college students was expressed again, when one of the other interns asked if they would be getting a hotel in New Jersey to be closer to the CVS campaign (It was a three and a half hour drive away) and an organizer said no because "college students unsupervised is not a good thing", and laughed. This was an implication we were spoiled college party animals, needing to be babysat and not taking the labor movement seriously. In another incident, when walking out to the two cars, another organizer said, "The babes go with us and the guys go that way." This comment was said jokingly, but something didn't feel right. Later, one of the female interns, Cathy, stated she didn't like it either, and she said she felt like she was not being taken seriously because of her sex. On another occasion, Cathy returned from the CVS campaign fuming. Some sexist comments were made to her and the other female intern, Sandra. Cathy said it was a "boys club" all day. They made comments to the girls such as telling them "to get us some lunch." Sandra was called "boo," a term of endearment, by a male organizer, which Sandra found offensive in a professional atmosphere and coming from somebody she barely knew.

An example of the rank-and-file organizers not being able to relate to workers happened on a health care campaign. These nurses and specialists worked with mentally handicapped adults at a facility called A Very Special Place (AVSP), and taught them how to use everyday life skills. The workers ranged from office administrators, nurses, therapists, bus drivers, cooks and so on, and were mostly female workers.

Some of the rank-and-file organizers had a hard time connecting to pink-collar workers.

When working at one of the satellite sites this inability to relate became evident. This office for AVSP was small and it had six to twelve office workers. This office was an administrative office and it was suspected these workers worked directly with, or were management. One particular day we were outside this office, passing out fliers, but nobody was taking them. I approached one worker with a flier and she very graciously said, "No thank you, I already have one." The organizer with us approached her and confrontationally said, "No you don't. This is our first time out here. Who did you get a flier from? Point that person out." The woman became uncomfortable and rushed inside. This approach may work in a factory, but was surely not appropriate for this type of worker or atmosphere. From these situations I gathered Early's assessment of college students being the only kind of organizer unable to relate to people outside of their normal environment to be untrue. This trait of alienating people is more of a personality trait to individuals regardless of the type of organizer they are.

Besides being treated as if we were spoiled and insincere about our involvement in the labor movement, it was assumed we were liberal and there to advance this liberal agenda. This is a view shared by Steve Early. Early's first statement is that the college recruited organizer comes from leftist college campus movements bringing their far left or liberal ideas, causing disruption and splits within mainstream organizations, however our politics had never been discussed with the host organizers and even among us interns there was very little discussion, because our politics were not relevant to the situation at hand. Even if the interns categorized, in Chicago I met many individuals of an assortment of political leanings in the Union Summer program. I met conservatives, southern Baptists, wobblies, communists, socialists, anarchists, republicans, feminist, and many more types in the Union Summer program. Many of the participants in the Union Summer internship were participants in other movements such as movements against inner city poverty, civil rights movements through NAACP, Anti-War movements, gay rights movements, feminists movements, Anti-Trade agreement movements, anti-nuclear movements, the anti-gentrifying movement in Chicago, literacy campaigns and many others. Some talked about their politics in depth during our free time in Chicago, but none let their politics affect organizing workers into a labor union at the local cite. Early stated this membership to these other social movements, some perceived as liberal, fell out of line with more mainstream politics of the labor movement, but I argue these social movement activists brought vast experience in organizing. The study of social movements has found it is usually a core group of activists usually taking part in several different movements, and depending on the cycle of the movement others will come and go. Often participants in one social movement are participants in another social movement; for instance, participants from the women's movement also participated in the peace movement and nuclear movement of the 1960s and 1980s (Meyer and Whittier 1998). I noticed the interns who had experience in these movements were much more creative in organizing, much bolder in carrying out actions, more confident in house calls, and took a leadership role over those who were new to social movements in general and labor movements specifically. These are skills universal to all social movements and the organizing effort.

One incident in particular indicated this perception of us being radical liberals by the host organizers towards us student interns in New York City. Since we were in New York City, September 11th, 2001 came up many times and thus the war in Iraq. None of us interns commented on it much, but the organizers, understandably, had plenty to say about it. One day while talking about the war, an organizer pointed to a tattered and torn American flag rose on a

pole and commented, "... service members are dying for that right there," meaning the freedom and liberty the U.S. flag represents. I was a Marine and stood in ceremonies to raise and take down the colors many times. I knew there was a ceremony for putting a destroyed flag to rest. It involves burning the flag to put it in its formal resting place, so I said the flag should be burned. The organizer assumed I meant burnt in the way protesters in demonstrations had burnt the flag. The organizer began denouncing me and my liberal politics, which I had never claimed to have. When I tried to explain he cut me off and cursed at me, and alluded to me not knowing what I was talking about. I did not continue to argue, because there was no point. This was typical of how we were treated while with the union.

It was assumed because I was a "college recruited" organizer I was liberal. This is, as I stated earlier, an over inflated assumption by Steve Early, which seems to be shared by some rank-and-file organizers. My politics regardless of what they may be are of no consequence to the senior organizers, but because they thought us to be young inexperienced college students they thought us to be liberal and unable to relate. With some arrogance they thought themselves to be the better organizers and able to relate better with workers and with other organizers. It is leftists, historically and currently, who have not only been more inclusive in their organizing, but have also been more aggressive and therefore more successful. In the past when leftist unions were more progressive they used college-recruited students as innovators for social movements such as labor movements. Within the rank-and-file unions there is intolerance of the new college recruited organizer, just as there has been intolerance for minorities and women in the past. The liberal agenda of the college student is an assumption and heavily inflated by the conservative union ideology and it seems the college student is excluded not so much because they cannot relate to people for the purpose of organizing, but more because it is perceived they are not part of the worker identity created in the industrial age.

Early also makes an argument that college recruited organizers are viewed as outsiders, therefore unable to successfully organize workers. Early's argument against the mobile organizer is becoming one against the traditional rank-and-file organizer. There are a few examples of rank-and-file organizers perceived as outsiders by the workers they were trying to organize.

One example is when the Retail Union worked a campaign to organize nurses; the union's focus is usually department store and retail store employees. While spending time with some of the organizers, they told of us of past campaigns. They explained, even though it was not their type of shop, they had branched out into healthcare, because these shops were extremely hot for organizing. The organizers explained this had led to confrontations with health care unions, because these unions saw the Retail Union as "outsiders" and this caused deep animosity between the unions. Bobby, one of the organizers explained, "There are unions out there who don't like us, because we are all over." I was told in one situation a medical union undermined the Retail Union at hospital by spreading lies about them and "getting into bed" with management. The Retail Union organizer told me the other union had no sense of the labor movement, but I only heard one side of it. The end result was a continuing feud between the unions. None of this is beneficial for the labor movement or its workers.

Another time the Retail Union union was trying to organize workers at a CVS drug store in New Jersey, but the union was seen as outsiders not because they were organizing outside of their trade, but this time outside of their location. This union had failed 21-1 in the vote. The only vote for the union was an organizers son. While leafleting on another, more successful campaign, I asked the lead organizer: "Why did the CVS campaign flop and why did this one

(AVSP) take off right from the beginning? Was it because Staten Island (where AVSP was located) was a pro union area and New Jersey was not?" The organizer answered, "No, we dropped the ball."

He said it was partly because of the pro-union and anti-union areas but it was also because the organizers had too many campaigns going on in New York, and New Jersey was too far away to give it real time. He also said it was because "We were seen as 'outsiders'. Bennys [New Yorkers] are not looked on favorably." Coastal residents of this part of New Jersey saw New Yorkers as outsiders, because they obviously were not from that geographical location, but this was intensified by the fact that this was a vacation spot for New Yorkers. They vacationing New Yorkers owned expensive beachfront property and they benefited by development of this area. Those New Yorkers who benefited from this were labeled "Bennys." The union busting law firm, Lewis and Jackson, capitalized on this situation and used it on the New York union. The organizer said he also suspected some anti-union tactics from the management side since six people signed cards and they did not even get those votes. When the management and hired union busting law firm of a shop of any campaigns we worked on would oppose the union organizing effort by the Retail Union the very first tactic they would try is to convince the workers that the union were outsiders there to exploit them. In fact though, it is now the traditionally industrial rank-and-file worker who is becoming just as much the outsider as the "college-recruited" organizer is considered as we go further into this post-industrialist era, because they are no longer organizing their own kind in their local area.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, Steve Early compares two kinds of organizers in his piece—the "college-recruited" and the rank-and-file organizer. Early looks at specific successes of rank-and-file organizers and one failure of "college-recruited" organizers and uses this as evidence that only the rank-and-file organizer is capable of organizing successfully. Early states two reasons why college-recruited organizers are destined to fail. First, they are "mobile" organizers without ties to the local area or to the trade. Second, these "college-recruited" organizers are usually from other social movements showing that they will take part in any movement that is considered radical, giving them the appearance of being liberals. Since these organizers are liberal they do not fit into the mainstream ideologies of the labor movement, causing tension between themselves and the rank-and-file organizers and the workers they are attempting to organize.

Early further states because "college-recruited" organizers are mobile, they are seen as outsiders and unable to connect to workers, in contrast to how the rank-and-file organizer is seen. Early believes that a successful organizer must be from the same area and the same profession as the workers being organized. Early neglects to point out that when any union tries to organize a shop, regardless of the type of the organizer, the shop's management uses the strategy of accusing the union as being "outsiders".

The data gathered from observation of the Retail Union does not necessarily concur with Early's observations. The data shows inability to relate to people, specifically workers, is not a characteristic unique to the "college-recruited" organizer. On many occasions the rank-and-file organizers with Retail Union failed to connect with not only the interns they were working with, but also workers they were organizing. This fact negates Early's conclusions that only the

college-recruited organizer fails to relate to people because of their limited experience. Seasoned rank-and-file organizers can also fail to relate people and workers.

As for the argument Early makes that the “college-recruited” organizer is less likely to succeed at organizing because they are viewed as outsiders is also not only applied to this type of organizer. In the organizing effort in New Jersey we saw that rank-and-file organizers were viewed as outsiders because they were not from around that geographical area making them, in this case, “mobile organizers.” The truth of it is on all campaigns organizers are characterized as outsiders. This does not necessarily make any of these organizers incapable of organizing shops, however. Early’s argument against the college-recruited organizer is irrelevant because all organizers can be viewed as outsiders and they succeed at least some of the time. Even if the rank-and-file organizer was viewed by the workers as less of an outsider than the college-recruited organizer, this is quickly a changing as the parameters of organizing changes for the rank and file organizer. With the traditional blue-collar manufacturing jobs leaving the country along with membership numbers, these organizers are now branching out to organize outside their trades and geographical locations. Doing this is redefining rank-and-file.

It is not the type of organizer that makes a campaign successful, but the individual talents and experiences of that individual. I do agree with Steve Early that the background and value system of any type of organizer does need to be similar to that of the workers they are organizing, but to think college graduates do not have the working class experience and that they are all liberal is merely an assumption with weak correlations. I differ from Early on the point that I believe the student recruited organizer needs to be included with Early's traditional industrial old school rank-and-file organizers in the category of working class and in the category of rank-and-file. There is a place for the college-recruited organizer as the labor force transitions into a high-end service industry requiring advanced education and less manual labor. Individuals from the working class are entering universities in greater numbers to compete for these higher functioning jobs. Also Early commented college students are transplanted from social movements on campus into the labor movement, which he sees as a bad thing. But he doesn’t consider how these veteran activists bring vital skills universal to all social movements.

Although I did spend five weeks observing Union Summer interns and organizers, there were limitations in both my observations and research. My observations were limited to only those five weeks, which was just a snapshot of both the Union Summer program and the organizing effort. I was not able to expand my observation past this time. A survey, given to interns and host organizers at the beginning and ending of the internship with interval, nominal, ordinal and open-ended questions to collect qualitative and quantitative data would have been beneficial in better gauging the success and experience of Union Summer, and different types of organizers and interns. Some things I would have asked on the survey would help me learn how views of interns and host organizers of the labor movement and union summer changed from beginning to end of the program. How many labor movement actions did the interns later take part in, either passively or actively? It would have also been good to compare the success rates between college-recruited filled unions and old industrial rank-and-file unions, and to find established quantitative data to bolster my research. I also was not able to use any established quantitative data to show successes and failures for each kind of organizer, which may have supported my arguments. These limitations make my research incomplete, meaning there is room for further research.

The future of American labor is not completely certain, but what is certain is that the perception of working class and rank-and-file needs to be broadened. Working class no longer is just the industrial blue-collar definition of working class and the meaning of rank-and-file is being expanded upon equivalently with the global market and the meaning of what local is. What is considered to be local now surpasses the Local unions' immediate neighborhoods. Working class now encompasses subgroups such as the white collar and the pink-collar workers, which require a more educated worker. The conventional industrial unions may not fit these more intellectual jobs, to which the labor market is shifting. These professions are replacing the industrial blue-collar labor jobs and becoming a dominant type of work. These old school unions must adapt and adapting means unions have to relate to these workers by hiring college educated organizers. As demonstrated in this paper there is a place in labor organizing for the college recruited organizer and this needs to be recognized.

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