A Signal Juncture: The Detroit Newspaper Strike and Post-Accord Labor Relations in the United States[1]

Chris Rhomberg
Fordham University

This essay uses a deviant case analysis of the 1995–2000 Detroit newspaper strike to critique and revise theories of strike activity. As the formal institutions regulating industrial relations in the United States have declined, workplace struggles have expanded or reentered into other arenas of the state and civil society. In addition, the essay develops the methodological concept of a "signal juncture," that is, moments of conflict that reveal a "collision" of underlying developmental paths. Unlike the more familiar concept of the critical juncture, a signal juncture reveals ongoing structural tensions and conflicting actors within otherwise continuous trends.

"One of the most bitterly fought labor battles of the 1990s was the strike in 1995 of six unions representing newspaper workers at the Detroit *Free Press* and the Detroit *News*," historian Philip Yale Nicholson writes. "All of the elements of the currently hostile labor-management environment were present in the five-and-a-half-year-long struggle" (2004, p. 321). From the point of view of conventional social science, however, this case was an anomaly. In an era of drastically reduced strike activity in the United States, the Detroit strike involved some 2,500 workers and lasted for 19 months, while the central conflict in the case remained unresolved in the

[1] Earlier versions of this article were presented at the Yale Law School Group on Work and Welfare, the Power, Politics, and Protest Workshop at New York University, and the visiting scholars seminar at the Russell Sage Foundation. Additional helpful comments were provided by Ellen Dannin, Jeffrey Haydu, Wolfgang Streeck, John Walton, Larry Isaac, Michael Schwartz, and the *AJS* reviewers. Support for this research was provided by the A. Whitney Griswold Fund at Yale University and by the American Sociological Association's Fund for the Advancement of the Discipline Award supported by the ASA and the National Science Foundation. Direct correspondence to Chris Rhomberg, Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Fordham University, 441 East Fordham Road, Bronx, New York, 10458. E-mail: rhomberg@fordham.edu

0002-9602/2010/11506-0005$10.00

courts for at least three more years. The strike also defied the pattern of institutional segmentation typical of American collective bargaining: six local affiliates of three different international unions negotiated, struck, and stayed together through the entire dispute, mobilizing substantial support from the surrounding community and from other unions across the country. While the employers ultimately prevailed, by some estimates the strike cost the newspapers as much as $300 million, including lost revenues and expenses for hiring replacement workers and private security (Greenhouse 2000; *Editor and Publisher* 2006).

The Detroit strike was both extreme, in terms of standard empirical measures, and deviant, from the point of view of traditional theory (Seawright and Gerring 2008). In fact, many industry observers saw it as simply a colossal mistake, driven by irrational decisions on the part of the unions, or management, or both (Picard and Lacy 1997; Burns 2004). Yet, despite its extraordinary features, the Detroit strike was indeed deeply emblematic of historic trends in American labor relations. In this article, I have two goals: First, using a strategy of deviant case analysis, I critique and reformulate mainstream theories of strike activity, moving beyond traditional models of economic bargaining and political incorporation to encompass changes in the current period. Second, I develop a methodological concept that I call a "signal juncture." Unlike the more familiar concept of the critical juncture, a signal juncture does not imply a radical shift or institutional turning point as a consequence of the events. Rather, the case serves as a window or signpost that reveals ongoing structural tensions and opposing currents within otherwise continuous patterns.

Social scientists have long treated moments of intense conflict or disruption as occasions when conventional perceptions are peeled away, exposing the durable social structures that shape everyday life (U.S. Kerner Commission 1968; Klinenberg 2002; Hartman and Squires 2006). "It is when hell breaks loose and all men [*sic*] do their worst and best that the powerful forces which organize and control human society are revealed," wrote sociologists W. Lloyd Warner and J .O. Low (1947, p. 1) in their classic study of a shoe workers' strike in Newburyport, Massachusetts. Such episodes, however, can also be read more dynamically, reflecting historical moments in which underlying developmental paths "collide" and latent contradictions become intensified or burst into the open (Orren and Skowronek 1996).

In this case, I argue that the Detroit newspaper strike displayed the tensions arising from the breakdown of the post–World War II system of labor relations in the United States. As the former institutions regulating labor conflict have declined, the boundaries of labor disputes have likewise become blurred, and workplace struggles have expanded into or reentered other arenas of the state and civil society. The collision of post-accord

developmental paths explains why the Detroit strike produced such extreme outcomes, while the case itself illustrates the ways in which the causal context and the cultural meaning of strikes have changed in the current period (Sewell 1996, p. 263).

The case study relies on data collected from approximately 100 interviews, conducted between October 2004 and October 2006, with key informants drawn from four categories of respondents: strikers and union leaders; company executives and representatives; nonstriking employees; and local and national civic leaders and public officials. I also collected hundreds of news stories from the *Detroit News*, *Detroit Free Press*, and the *Detroit Sunday Journal*, the weekly newspaper published by the strikers from 1995 to 1999, as well as reports from other major and local news, business, and professional media. Other archival sources include the trial transcript, exhibits, and decisions in the principal unfair labor practice complaints issued by the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB), along with legal records arising from other litigation. Finally, I obtained copies of documents from organizational and individuals' personal files, such as collective bargaining agreements, internal communications, flyers, public information, and videotape recorded by security forces and local television media.

I begin with a discussion of the concept of a signal juncture and the method of deviant case analysis and then review traditional strike theories. Next follows a brief summary of the case, highlighting its differences from conventional theory. Based on those anomalies, I spell out a revised approach and sketch a historical account of postwar American institutional development to locate the Detroit case as a signal juncture. A closer analysis of the events of the strike then shows why it occurred when and where it did and accounts for its specific form and outcome. Last, I conclude with some conditional revisions to strike theory and suggestions on the wider utility of the signal juncture as a methodological device.

SIGNAL JUNCTURES AND DEVIANT CASE ANALYSIS

Social scientists often employ models of path dependency to explain enduring institutional patterns. Such models typically include a set of antecedent conditions affecting actors' orientations and capacities, a contingent choice point or "critical juncture" when alternative paths are possible, a process of closure in which one road is taken and others blocked off, and various "lock-in" mechanisms that reproduce the chosen path or institutional order (Collier and Collier 1991; Mahoney 2000). Taken together, these elements produce a vision of history as a punctuated equilibrium of "trajectories and transitions," or periods of stable institutional

development bounded by moments of radical uncertainty and change (Abbott 1997; Pierson 2000).

Critics of this approach note that actors tend to disappear within structurally determined paths and reappear only in new critical junctures arising out of fortuitous circumstances or exogenous "shocks" (Haydu 1998; Thelen 2004). In addition, even seemingly stable periods may possess multiple, asymmetric institutional arrangements whose norms and rules continue to "abut and grate" against one another. To capture these dynamics, Orren and Skowronek advise "disassembl[ing] the period" in order to gain a clearer picture of the "seams and fissures that institutions introduce into the relationship between order and change" (Orren and Skowronek 1996, pp. 112, 120–21).

Deconstructing the period leads in turn to a reconsideration of junctures. The latter are defined as the coming together of two or more originally separately determined paths, in an event whose precise time and place remains contingent (Sewell 1996; Mahoney 2000). If multiple and even contrary institutional alternatives coexist in the same time frame, however, then their intersections may not be so random, atypical, or exogenous. Streeck and Thelen (2005) discuss the concept of "layering," that is, an active process of amendment, addition, or revision through which new institutional logics emerge on the fringe of an established system. Over time, the new arrangements attract defectors and outgrow the former core. The metaphor of "layering" suggests a spatially uneven process, in which concentrations of old and new institutional power persist in different organizational or geographic locales. As the balance of power shifts, the process of "un-locking" the old order may move from incremental erosion to more direct local confrontations along the seams and fissures between rival institutional paths. The result may then lead to what Streeck and Thelen call "displacement," as "traditional arrangements are discredited and pushed to the side in favor of new institutions and associated behavioral logics" (2005, p. 20).

I propose the signal juncture as a way to analyze these processes of institutional conflict and change. In any period, we may observe moments when structural tensions and alternative paths come together in unusually contentious ways, in which actors struggle to impose or defend their respective lock-in mechanisms and bind their opponents to their preferred norms and rules. Such moments, however, need not always result in turning points. If a critical juncture assumes a radical opening to a contingent future, the signal juncture reveals moments in which one path has gained (or retains) the advantage. At the same time, it uncovers endogenous sources of resistance that may prefigure further contention even if short-term outcomes reinforce existing trends.

How can we recognize particular moments as signal junctures? On this

point, I turn to the familiar method of deviant case analysis (Lipset, Trow, and Coleman 1956; Bennett and Elman 2006*a*). An anomalous case can be either empirically extreme, that is, an outlier on a scatterplot of data, or theoretically deviant, that is, unpredicted or nonsensical from the standpoint of established theory. By maximizing variation or difference on the dimension of interest, both types offer opportunities to search for and observe previously unexamined causes and effects (Flyvbjerg 2006; Seawright and Gerring 2008).

A case only becomes deviant, however, relative to a body of theory. The goal of the analysis is not just to explain away idiosyncratic data but to revise previous models and reconstruct a broader, more encompassing explanation (Paige 1999; Bennett and Elman 2006*b*). These features make the deviant case method especially useful for identifying and analyzing signal junctures. The case study serves as a diagnostic device, highlighting the contours of normalized institutional paths and providing a critical standpoint for generating new, more historically grounded theory.

In these terms, the Detroit newspaper strike was clearly an extreme case. Table 1 provides descriptive statistics for nearly all private sector strikes in the United States from 1984 to 2002.[2] Median strike size for the entire period is 93 workers, and median duration is 20 days. The Detroit strike covered units totaling 2,500 employees and lasted for 583 days, making it larger than 97% and longer than 99% of other private sector strikes during the period. By one estimate, fewer than 10% of such strikes from 1982 to 2001 involved multiple bargaining units striking against the same employer (Jake Rosenfeld, personal communication, 2008). In Detroit, no fewer than six local unions, representing diverse occupational groups, including white-collar professionals, blue-collar laborers, and skilled crafts, struck in unison against the newspapers.

Finally, the sheer incidence of strikes after 1980 fell dramatically from earlier decades. Figure 1 shows the number of strikes involving 1,000 or more employees from 1970 to 2000 (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics 2009). During the 1970s, an average of 289 major work stoppages occurred annually in the United States. By the 1990s, that number had declined to about 35 per year (Lambert 2005, p. 2). In contrast to this pattern, the Detroit strike stood out among a series of exceptional and extremely bitter strikes during the 1980s and 1990s, as noted below. The combination of depressed national strike rates and episodic, high-profile local confrontations suggests a conflict of wider trends in workplace governance and a historic change in the structural and institutional context for strikes.

[2] Table 1 is based on data from research reported in Rosenfeld (2006). My thanks go to Jake Rosenfeld for sharing his results with me.

TABLE 1
MEDIAN STRIKE SIZE AND DURATION, 1984–2002

Percentile	Size of Bargaining Unit	Duration in Days
1	7	1
5	14	2
10	20	3
25	40	8
50	93	20
75	230	50
90	580	114
95	1,200	185
99	6,000	365
Observations	9,309	9,198
Mean	476	46
SD	3,700	74

SOURCE.—Data from Jake Rosenfeld, personal communication, 2008.

Correspondingly, the Detroit case also deviated from the predictions of conventional strike theories.

THEORIES OF STRIKE ACTIVITY: TRADITIONAL MODELS

Rosenfeld (2006) notes that studies of aggregate strike activity in the United States "all but disappeared" following the 1982 decision by the federal Bureau of Labor Statistics to stop collecting data on strikes involving fewer than 1,000 workers (the majority of all strikes). Partly as a result, strike theories remain dominated by two primary traditions, the "economic" model and the "political/organizational" approach (Wallace, Rubin, and Smith 1988). As Franzosi (1989) observes, the economic model asks why strikes occur, while the political/organizational approach studies how workers mobilize for collection action.

The Economic Model

Economic theories of strike activity begin with a market relationship in which employers and unions bargain the price of labor. Each party is assumed to enjoy organizational security, act rationally, and calculate the costs and benefits of the decision to strike. Ideally, through negotiation both sides should be able to estimate each others' concession schedules and thereby reach agreement without enduring the actual costs of a strike. In this model, the central puzzles are, first, the sheer incidence or frequency of strikes (or why they should occur at all) and second, the strong observed

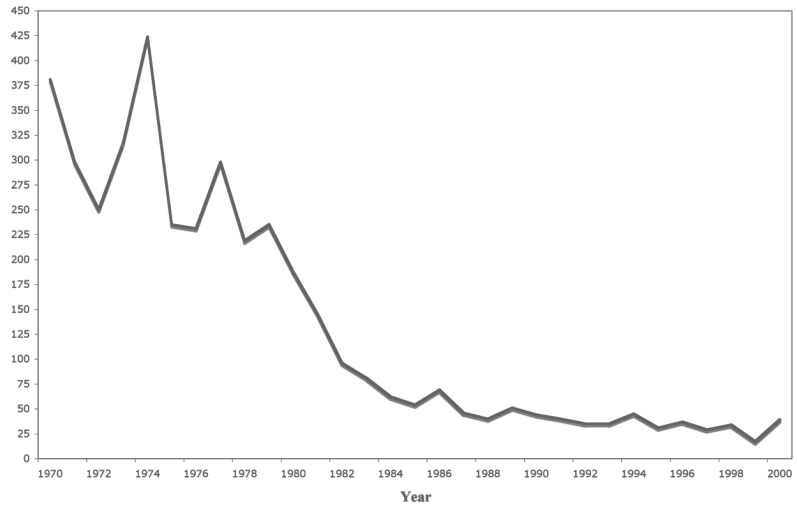

FIG. 1.—Number of major work stoppages, 1970–2000. Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (2009).

correlation of strike frequency with short-term fluctuations in the business cycle (i.e., strikes increase in a growing economy when labor markets are tight and wages lag behind inflation and decrease in downturns when unemployment is high).

For the first question, the conventional answer suggests some form of mistake or failure in bargaining, due to imperfect, uncertain, or asymmetric information, or the behavioral psychology of one or both sides (McConnell 1989; Kaufman 1992). Some economists stress the role of long-term bargaining relationships or coordination in reducing uncertainty (Reder and Neumann 1980). Others distinguish union leaders from the rank and file and attribute imperfect information to the latter: impelled to strike by restive members, leaders must equilibrate workers' wage demands with the economic needs of the firm (Ashenfelter and Johnson 1969). Critics note that this makes the bargaining relationship one-sided, that is, employers are presumed to make market-efficient proposals while only workers change their concession curve according to the level of unemployment and/or prices in the economy. The analysis of actors' behavioral mechanisms, moreover, fits uneasily with long-term changes in strike patterns, and why failures of information should vary systematically with exogenous economic conditions remains unclear (Franzosi 1989; Kaufman 1992).

The Political/Organizational Approach

While economists operate within a market model, political scientists and sociologists have developed an alternative view focusing on how strikes occur. In this approach, attention shifts to relations of conflict and power and, particularly, how law, political institutions, and organization shape workers' capacity for mobilization. So, for example, in the pre–New Deal United States, or in France and Italy through much of the 20th century, collective bargaining was poorly institutionalized, and strikes challenged both public order and the balance of power among groups. Political conditions, as much as economic ones, affected the forms of strike activity, as legal or political realignments provided workers with greater or lesser opportunities for collective action. In such circumstances, a key factor determining mobilization is workers' formal organization or level of unionization (Shorter and Tilly 1974; Snyder 1975; Cohn and Eaton 1989).

This approach historicizes the assumptions of the economic model: organizational security and rational cost-benefit calculation depend on a strong institutional framework governing relations between business and labor (Snyder 1975; Rubin 1986). Thus, the business cycle variables are most powerful in the United States in the post–World War II period, after the implementation of the 1935 National Labor Relations Act (NLRA, or Wagner Act). This period, often described as an era of labor "accord," both empowered workers and channeled their action toward specific means and ends (Bowles, Gordon, and Weisskopf 1983; Bluestone and Bluestone 1992). Under the accord, strikes became limited to distributional matters of wages and compensation arising at moments of contract renewal.

The accord represented a historic shift in U.S. state policy, from the repression of labor conflict to what McCammon (1993) calls a legal regime of "preventive integration." For some critics, institutionalization leads to co-optation and the suppression of worker militancy. Others, however, argue that political incorporation offers leverage from alliance with labor-friendly electoral parties. As a result, economic redistribution can be achieved peacefully through the welfare state, so that strikes become less necessary and eventually "wither away" (Korpi and Shalev 1980).

The political/organizational approach describes the channeling of labor militancy in the postwar period, but it remains unclear on the emergence of workers' solidarity and on how collective action may sometimes transform institutional regimes. Thus, while union density is positively correlated with strike size, the causal direction is often ambiguous; for example, under some conditions strike mobilization may stimulate union organizing (Franzosi 1995, p. 140). As important, the model does not account for the breakdown of the postwar accord, or the dramatic *deinstitutionalization* of American unions since around 1980 (Griffin, McCammon, and Botsko 1990).

Neither of the traditional economic or political theories account well for the post-accord experience in the United States. As Kaufman writes, "the level of strike activity in the 1980s plummeted to the lowest level of the post–World War II period and, furthermore, remained at this level even as the economic environment changed in ways that historically have led to increased strike rates" (1992, p. 119). Similarly, the "withering away" of the strike coincides here not with mature political incorporation but with rapidly falling union density and the retrenchment of the welfare state.

With the loss of comprehensive strike data from the U.S. government, new research in these areas began to diminish after the 1980s. Ironically, this occurred precisely as institutional changes were radically altering patterns of strike activity and opening a new and qualitatively distinct period in American labor relations. This junctural difference is signaled by the anomalous features observed in the Detroit strike. I turn now to a brief review of the events of the strike and its deviations from traditional theory.

AN EXCEPTIONAL CASE: THE DETROIT NEWSPAPER STRIKE, 1995–2000

On July 13, 1995, more than 2,000 workers went on strike at the morning *Detroit Free Press*, owned by Knight Ridder, Inc., the evening *Detroit News*, part of the Gannett media chain, and their joint operating Detroit Newspaper Agency (DNA). Members of six local unions, representing journalists, printers, press operators, circulation workers, and truck drivers, walked off their jobs after contract negotiations broke down amid charges of bad faith bargaining and unlawful declaration of impasse by the employers. Taking a hard line against the strike, the newspapers hired permanent replacements and effectively militarized their operations, spending at least $40 million on private security forces and paying more than $1 million to suburban municipalities to cover police overtime at their production and distribution sites (U.S. District Court 2000; Vega 2004).[3]

The conflict quickly turned violent and bitter, with hundreds of altercations, injuries, and arrests, particularly at the newspapers' giant printing plant in suburban Sterling Heights, Michigan. The strikers rallied support from the Detroit area community, organizing a circulation and advertising boycott, mounting civil disobedience and protest actions, and publishing

[3] Brief, summary accounts of the events of the strike may be found in *MetroTimes* (1996), Sacharow (1996), Gonyea and Hoyt (1997), and Schlagheck (2001).

their own alternative weekly strike paper. In addition, the strike drew upon the organized culture of labor solidarity in southeastern Michigan, and hundreds of rank and file members from other unions joined mass picket lines, in mobile teams deployed out of local and regional offices of the United Auto Workers (UAW) and other unions (King 2005). Prominent area civic, political, and religious figures also stepped forward to condemn the policy of permanent replacements and urge a settlement. By their own estimate, the two papers lost a combined $100 million in the first nine months, while circulation dropped by as much as a third. Yet the unions were unable to stop either production or distribution of the newspapers, and the strike stretched into its second year.

Meanwhile, the dispute generated an enormous body of litigation. The six unions, organized as the Metropolitan Council of Newspaper Unions (MCNU), formally struck over three principal unfair labor practice (ULP) complaints issued by the NLRB. The first complaint charged the DNA with unfairly transferring work out of the printers' bargaining unit, in violation of a previous agreement to negotiate such changes with the union. The second accused the *Detroit News* management of unlawfully declaring impasse, in order to impose a merit pay plan on the Newspaper Guild. Third, the NLRB charged that the companies had reneged on a prior commitment to bargain jointly on economic issues with the MCNU (National Labor Relations Board 1998).

Once the strike began, the employers systematically fired strikers for alleged picket line misconduct, some of them several times, which led to complaints of unlawful discharge issued by the NLRB (National Labor Relations Board 2004). The unions and several individual strikers filed federal civil rights cases against the employers, their security firms, and various local police and governmental authorities for conspiracy and police misconduct. In turn, the employers brought charges against the unions under the federal Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations (RICO) Act, and later named the UAW as a codefendant in the suit (Lengel 1996). Finally, union protests and hand-billing of customers at merchants advertising in the papers led to legal maneuvers with the NLRB and local police over the strikers' freedom of speech.

On February 14, 1997, after 19 months on strike, the unions made unconditional offers to return to work. But the employers announced that they would take back only a fraction of the striking workers, as new vacancies allowed. On June 19, 1997, an NLRB administrative law judge found the newspapers guilty of unfair labor practices that had "caused" and "prolonged" the strike. The judge ordered the companies to reinstate the striking workers, displacing, if necessary, the replacement workers, and making any strikers not reinstated eligible for back pay. Two days later, more than 60,000 union members and supporters from across the

country arrived in Detroit for a giant march and rally, in a national show of solidarity led by the AFL-CIO.

The newspapers immediately appealed the ruling and, despite an NLRB record of upholding more than 90% of such orders, a U.S. District Court judge refused to grant a 10(j) injunction requiring that all strikers be returned immediately to their jobs. In the spring of 1998, religious, civic, and union leaders across the Detroit metropolitan area convened a community summit to try to bring the parties together, again without success. In August 1998, the full NLRB in Washington, D.C., unanimously agreed that the strike was caused by management's unfair labor practices. But the companies appealed the decision to the federal courts, and the litigation continued. By the end of 1999, more than 200 strikers had been fired and several hundred more remained locked out.

The strikers' fate was now pinned to the unfair labor practice case. Already upheld by the regional and national NLRB, the charges in the Detroit case might have required the employers to pay out more than $100 million in back wages. On July 7, 2000, a federal appeals court overturned the NLRB decision, destroying the unions' hopes for a reinstatement order. Deprived of their legal leverage, the unions were forced to accept open shop contracts on management's terms. The last of the six unions settled in December 2000, and, more than five years after it began, the Detroit newspaper strike was over.

Ratification of the contracts, however, did not bring an end to the litigation. The agreements offered no amnesty provisions for fired strikers, including prominent writers and columnists who had participated in nonviolent civil disobedience, and appeals for unlawful discharge went on for at least four more years. Finally, most of the individual civil rights cases were dismissed or settled out of court, but at least one, involving striker Ben Solomon, went to verdict. On December 21, 2000, a federal jury in that case found the newspapers, the City of Sterling Heights, and its police officials guilty of conspiracy. A key piece of evidence at the trial was a series of memos from the city to the newspaper agency, from July 1995 to October 1996, itemizing weekly police overtime costs related to the strike. The memos were followed by checks from the company to the city made out for the exact amount, down to the penny, ultimately totaling nearly $1 million (U.S. District Court 2000).

While costly, the employers' victory nevertheless set a new standard in labor relations nationwide and prefigured subsequent mass lockouts in the 2003 southern California grocery and 2004 San Francisco hotel disputes (Leduff and Greenhouse 2004; Raine 2004). In 2002, President George W. Bush politically affirmed the companies' stance by appointing Robert Battista, lead counsel for the companies in the unfair labor practices trial, as chair of the NLRB. Meanwhile, in Detroit the strike per-

manently altered the newspapers' relationship to the local community. Circulation fell at eight times the rate for the industry as a whole between 1995 and 1999, and dozens of veteran journalists left the papers and the city, taking with them years of local knowledge and public memory (Barringer 2000). Finally, in late 2004 top executives at the DNA quit to take over the struggling *San Francisco Chronicle*, and in 2005, after 65 years in Detroit, Knight Ridder sold the *Free Press* to Gannett, which in turn sold the *News* to a national suburban chain.

A Deviant Case: Theoretical Problems

From the point of view of traditional theory these events were highly anomalous, suggesting substantive changes in the structural and institutional context for strikes. The Detroit strike lacked the traditional economic mechanisms of information or bargaining failure: the six unions had been established at the newspapers for decades, bargained individually and jointly with management, and had engaged in more than 60 negotiating sessions in the several months before the strike. The differences between the two sides were no mystery; union leaders had foreseen a looming confrontation as early as 1989, immediately upon the formation of the two papers' joint operating agency. "I can recall walking out of negotiations when the contract was signed in '89," said Jack Howe, the head of the press operators local, "and I can remember Tom Brennan saying to me, who was our president at the time, I was vice president, and he said to me, 'Jack, I don't think we will ever get another contract without a strike'" (Howe 2005). He was off by one contract. Teamsters Local 2040 bargaining committee member Jim St. Louis, representing the mail room workers, agreed. After his members ratified the 1992 agreement, he recalled, "I said I want to talk to you about the next one. And I said they are coming to get us. I'm warning you right now. . . . And I said you go take your overtime and you go take your extra days and you go put it in the bank because come next contract in '95 they're gonna come at us with both barrels and they're, in my opinion, they were already getting ready to make a strike" (St. Louis 2005).

By 1995, workers did have an economic incentive to protect their incomes: the unions had made wage concessions in previous contracts, and after years of losing money the papers had made a profit in 1994 of $55 million (Gargaro 1996). Yet the key issues igniting the 1995 walkout were not wages but complaints of employer unfair labor practices. Two of the complaints involved unilateral changes limiting the unions' ability to bargain over work and compensation, and the third was in defense of the coordinated bargaining procedure that had led successfully to a contract in 1992. "This strike has never really been about money, or even about

the number of workers to be bought out or laid off," declared the editors of the strike paper *Detroit Sunday Journal* in its November 19, 1995, inaugural issue. "Management has demanded or implemented policies that would virtually wipe unions off the playing field by denying representation to hundreds of employees or denying unions the ability to negotiate wages and other substantive issues."

The process of the 1995 negotiations also suggested basic changes in the operative rules of the game. The unions were especially alarmed by the employers' declaration of impasse and imposition of conditions, a dramatic departure from previous contract talks at the newspapers. Duane Ice, the attorney for the local Newspaper Guild, remarked, "After decades of bargaining, nobody could recall any instance when these employers, the *News* and *Free Press*, or any other newspaper in Detroit, had bargained to impasse and used the ultimate leverage under the NLRA, basically declaring an end to collective bargaining. . . . It meant the unions had no role in the outcome. Basically an employer would go through the motions, bargain impasse, and say, well, here are the terms and conditions. We're done" (Ice 2005).

In short, the strike was not strictly about dollars and cents but about the control of the workplace and the future of the bargaining relationship. As such, neither party followed conventional negotiating rituals or concession schedules. With an aggressive agenda for restructuring, the DNA began preparing for the strike almost immediately upon signing the 1992 contract. On May 12, 1992, without informing the unions, the newspapers filed a memorandum with the U.S. Department of Justice asserting the right to publish a combined daily edition of the *News* and *Free Press* in the event of a work stoppage (U.S. District Court 1997). Over the next two and a half years, DNA managers traveled to and consulted with other papers across the country and developed a detailed strike operations strategy embodied in two thick three-ring binders. As Alan Lenhoff, the newspapers' director of planning and development, recalled, "It started really long before the [1995] contract talks started, and a commitment was made to do a very complete planning job in any event. So, there was never a point that the negotiating team came back from the table and said, 'Things aren't looking good, you have to start planning hard.' We were doing it regardless." Once the strike started, the employers proved willing to absorb costs seemingly beyond rational calculation. Lenhoff mused, "I kept waiting for someone to say 'Stop! You're spending too much.' No one ever did" (Lenhoff 2004; Taylor 2008).

On the other side, the unions believed their organizational survival was at stake. Hence, their commitment persisted despite obvious weaknesses: as a work stoppage, the strike never fully succeeded in halting the production and distribution of the newspapers. Union leaders tacitly ac-

knowledged their inability to stop production, focusing their strategy instead on the circulation and advertising boycott and on the legal case. Even the decision to offer to return to work after 19 months merely shifted the central struggle to the arena of the NLRB and the courts, where it continued for over three more years. The contest to determine the legal status of the strike, and of the rights of the strikers, lasted for three times as long as the actual walkout.

Despite such odds, however, the unions were able to mobilize considerable resources against the newspapers. Solidarity reached beyond traditional boundaries, from the unity among white-collar, skilled craft, and blue-collar workers in the MCNU, to the support from consumers and local community leaders, to the participation of regional and national labor organizations. Against the traditional channeling and segmentation of labor disputes, how was that possible?

In this article I argue that the anomalous features of the Detroit strike reflected a broader collision of opposing institutional models of workplace governance in the United States. As a specific intersection or signal juncture of forces, the events of the strike displayed important shifts in the terrain of labor relations not captured by conventional theories of strike activity. To explain these features requires a revised and expanded approach, one more sensitive to historical context. Using the Detroit strike as a deviant case, then, I propose the following approach to track changes in the causes and forms of strike mobilization across different periods.

STRIKES IN HISTORICAL CONTEXT: AN ALTERNATE FRAMEWORK

Western (1997) argues that both economic and political factors have played a role in determining the level of union density in industrialized nations in the postwar era: market conditions generate structural conflicts between workers and employers, while institutions shape the ways in which societies manage those conflicts. Starting in the 1970s and 1980s, a number of changes—including global economic integration, the development of flexible production methods and information technologies, state deregulation of industry, and the rise of an ideology of shareholder value—coincided to increase market pressures on the employment relationship (Turner 1991; Wallerstein and Western 2000; Fligstein and Shin 2007). In liberal market economies with decentralized bargaining structures and lower union density (like the United States), employers were more likely to respond to these pressures by attempting to reduce labor costs. Their ability to pursue a low-wage, nonunion path, however, depended on opportunities arising out of the institutional context (Hollingsworth 1997; Western 1997, pp. 144, 183).

Building on this approach, I propose to modify traditional strike theory by disaggregating the two strands of the political/organizational model, distinguishing the three analytic dimensions or arenas of the economy, the state, and civil society. The latter concept has a long and complex genealogy, from Hegel and Marx to Tocqueville, Gramsci, and modern theorists like Habermas and Foucault (Keane 1988; Foley and Edwards 1998). Here, I take it to mean the field of voluntary association independent of or irreducible to the profit motives of the market and the coercive powers of the state (Cohen and Arato 1994; Habermas 1996, p. 299). As an analytic category, civil society is not a separate empirical location but a mode of action and a contested terrain, an arena not only of hegemony and discipline but also of solidarity and, potentially, resistance and collective action. Relations of civil society extend across the social environment and include workplace associations like unions as well as other affiliations like churches, ethnic and neighborhood associations, social and civic organizations, and the like (Warren 2001; Estlund 2003).

This framework is represented in table 2. No one dimension acts as a primary causal mechanism; the combination of factors in all three determines why and how strikes occur in a given historical context (Ragin 1987; Katznelson 1997). The economic arena includes the pressures of competition and supply and demand on actors in the labor market. Within the state, law and political institutions serve to regulate market forces on the one hand and to channel forms of worker militancy on the other. In turn, civil society comprises the nexus of cultural norms, collective identities, and social ties that make up what sociologists have traditionally called "community."

As Evans (2007) observes, a growing literature on American union revitalization has succeeded in "bringing civil society back in" to studies of labor (see also Clawson 2003; Milkman and Voss 2004; Turner and Cornfield 2007). Much of this recent work, however, has focused on union efforts to organize new members rather than on strikes per se. By contrast, traditional strike theory addresses the economic and political arenas but tends to ignore relations in civil society. In part, this reflects the historic conditions of the postwar accord, in which labor disputes were in practice institutionally confined to individual firms or workplaces. My inclusion of civil society in table 2, then, is not merely additive but historicizes both sides of the earlier theoretical debate, transforming the specific causal logic of the other two dimensions (Sewell 1996, p. 263). In this way, it distinguishes more clearly the relevant causal factors as well as the meaning of strike activity before, during, and after the period of the accord.

Thus, in the economy the focus shifts from information failures or behavioral dynamics within the realm of bargaining to the larger strategic responses of actors to market pressures on the employment relationship.

TABLE 2
Analytic Framework and Periodization: Strike Activity in the United States, 1890 to the Present

Period	Economy	State	Civil Society
Causal context	Market pressures on employment relationship	Regulation of market, institutional channeling	Cultural norms, social ties, "community"
Pre-accord, 1890–1937	Craft control (vs. Taylorist mass production)	Judicial repression of collective action	Boycotts, sympathy strikes, popular protest
Accord, 1937–81	Decentralized bargaining in manufacturing and trades (vs. layer of union avoidance)	NLRB procedures, industrial democracy, preventive integration (vs. Taft-Hartley, right to work)	Relatively excluded
Post-accord, 1981 to the present	Union avoidance, deunionization of industry	Weakened NLRB, hostile federal courts (ULP strike)	"Metro-Unionism" (consumer appeals, social movement tactics)

Similarly, the state's channeling of conflict under the accord represents not a final stage of incorporation but a temporary settlement, subject to deinstitutionalization. Finally, separating the emergence of worker militancy from its formal regulation permits a closer analysis of the variable interaction among labor, community, and other cultural movements across civil society as a whole (Isaac and Christiansen 2002; Roscigno and Danaher 2004; Isaac, McDonald, and Lukasik 2006).

The application of this framework leads to the periodization of American labor relations summarized in table 2. Labor historians have long recognized "community" as a site of working-class formation in the 19th and early 20th centuries. Throughout the pre–New Deal era, boycotts, sympathy strikes, and other forms of local communal action remained a vital part of workers' protest repertoire and the object of legal contention and repression by the state (Gutman 1976; Montgomery 1987; Dubofsky 1994). During the accord, many of these practices were prohibited as forms of "secondary" collective action. In the post-accord period, as American unions have lost institutional standing, density, and power, they have been forced to turn (or return) to organizing methods often labeled "social movement unionism" (Bronfenbrenner and Juravich 1998; Fantasia and Voss 2004; Lopez 2004). This has included strategies like home visits and other nonworkplace sites for member outreach, alliances with religious and community groups, corporate consumer campaigns, appeals to ethnic

or gender identities, and alternative organizational forms from advocacy groups to immigrant worker centers to mutual benefit associations—in other words, mobilization in civil society (Jarley and Maranto 1990; Turner, Katz, and Hurd 2001; Fine 2006).

This framework permits the identification of rival institutional paths according to their respective internal mechanisms within the three dimensions. In the next section, I outline the competing paths that emerged out of the limits of the postwar accord. Those limits allowed the "layering" of a nonunion employment path alongside and in opposition to the unionized core. The balance of power reached a turning point in the 1980s, as the management strategy of union avoidance expanded into a practice of more active displacement, supported by a probusiness federal government. Against the employer offensive, unions were forced to reinvent the forms and tactics of strike mobilization (Fantasia 1988).

The Detroit strike occurred during the third period in table 2, amid the collapse of the New Deal system and the ascendancy of the anti-union regime. This transition was neither immediate nor spatially uniform, and bitter conflicts persisted along the seams and fissures of the opposing institutional paths. The newspaper strike was by no means the only contentious labor struggle to occur during the 1990s. I argue, however, that as a signal juncture it best captured the collision between the old and new orders and the extent to which the rules of action had changed.

CROSS CURRENTS: THE BREAKDOWN OF THE ACCORD AND UNION RESPONSE

Prior to the 1930s, unions in the United States confronted a legal environment that historians have described as "judicial repression" (Hattam 1992; Dubofsky 1994). For decades, federal courts had repeatedly struck down workers' rights to organize and act collectively, as violations of the rights of property and combinations in restraint of trade. By contrast, the NLRA marked a radical break: Congress recognized that corporate law had already "enhanced employer power by transforming them from individuals into collective beings, while leaving employees with only the power of the individual" (Dannin 2004). To rectify the imbalance, Congress declared it the policy of the United States to encourage the practice of collective bargaining and protected workers' rights to organize for the purpose of negotiating terms and conditions of employment or other mutual aid or protection.

As Kochan, Katz, and McKersie (1994) argue, American employers only ever reluctantly embraced the principle of unionism, both before and during the period of the accord. Nevertheless, the New Deal system itself

possessed institutional limits that not only hastened its demise but also shaped the terms of post-accord labor conflict. To highlight these "unlocking" mechanisms, I focus here especially on (1) who could gain access to the rights and benefits of unionization, (2) what could be negotiated, and (3) how labor disputes might be settled under the law.

The Limits of the New Deal System: Who Gains Access?

Under the NLRA, American unions did gain considerable power to regulate the labor market. In organized sectors, "pattern" bargaining took wages out of competition between firms. Within the firm, employers typically retained control over new hiring, but contractual provisions for seniority, rights for promotion and recall, and other benefits helped stabilize employment and offered job security to workers previously exposed to arbitrary dismissal and often wild fluctuations in the availability of work. In addition, union contracts often set the standard for nonunion employers in the same industry. However, divisions rapidly emerged between higher-wage jobs in the unionized core of the corporate economy and a broad range of less stable, low-wage, nonunionized jobs in competitive sectors on the periphery (Gordon, Edwards, and Reich 1982).

These divisions often overlapped with or reinforced existing patterns of discrimination in the labor market. At the behest of southern Democrats in Congress, the act itself excluded agriculture and domestic service, which remained the largest employment sectors for African-Americans as late as 1940 (Katznelson 2005). In the skilled trades, most AFL craft unions were racially exclusive by custom or rule, while in manufacturing, minority workers commonly obtained only the lowest-paid, hardest jobs, and with low seniority they were frequently "last hired, first fired." Some unions, notably among those allied with the Congress of Industrial Organizations, worked to overcome these barriers, but many did not (Honey 1993; Horowitz 1997; Needleman 2003). The lack of access to good jobs aggravated problems of minority unemployment and poverty in central cities, deepening the divide between urban black and suburban white civic and cultural spheres. During the accord, American labor bridged these divides at best in only limited ways, even in highly unionized areas like Detroit (Sugrue 1996; Farley, Danziger, and Holzer 2000).

What Gets Negotiated?

Second, employers and the government set strict limits on the kinds of issues subject to collective bargaining. Decisions by the NLRB and the courts distinguished "mandatory" subjects covering issues of compensation and work rules from broader "permissive" issues to which the parties

could agree, but were not required, to negotiate (McCammon 1990). Throughout the period, managers adamantly resisted union efforts to bargain over matters related to the direction and control of the firm (Harris 1982; Bluestone and Bluestone 1992).

In addition, bargaining was typically conducted at the level of the plant or firm, not the level of the industry, and was limited to those work sites and units that had undergone NLRB certification. As a result, employers could and did erode bargaining units by reclassifying jobs and transferring work away from union jurisdiction. The 1947 Taft-Hartley Act further excluded frontline "supervisors" from protection and allowed states to ban the "union shop," and more than a dozen states, mainly in the South, quickly did so.

The effect of these boundaries was to legitimize a rival, nonunion path of development and to give employers a crucial exit option. Taft-Hartley denied labor rights to workers in expanding white-collar sectors of the economy, while leaving unions concentrated in an eventually declining blue-collar sector. Within the industrial core, companies increasingly relocated their facilities away from unionized urban centers to suburban and rural areas, to nonunion southern states, and to other countries around the world (Sugrue 1996; Cowie 1999). In time, the parallel layer of nonunion labor approached the norm even in traditionally unionized industries, increasing the pressure on firms still committed to collective bargaining (Soskice 1999). By the 1980s, the union avoidance strategy had developed into its own industry, with an array of nationally known business consultants, law firms, industrial psychologists, and private security "strike management" services (Logan 2006).

How Are Disputes Settled?

Finally, the system of labor relations in the United States had another distinctive feature: unlike in many other industrialized nations, the government did not intervene in the process to ensure settlements. The law only set the ground rules for bargaining, and contracts remained voluntary agreements between unions and management. Yet the integrity of the bargaining process required that both parties be free to walk away from the table. Thus, the law explicitly protected the right to strike; indeed, without it, the employment relationship approached the character of compulsory labor (Dubofsky 1994, p. 101; Pope 2002). The system had built-in incentives to come to terms, and the strike remained a last resort. Work stoppages imposed pain on both sides, employers lost production and profits, and workers lost wages and subsistence (Reder and Neumann 1980). Nevertheless, while the law was intended to reduce industrial strife,

it relied on the right to strike as a key mechanism of reproduction and as an essential guarantee of the free exchange of labor.

Almost immediately, however, Congress and the courts began to erode the statutory protection for the right to strike. Restrictions on unions' sympathetic action under Taft-Hartley and administrative case law further bounded and compartmentalized disputes, turning public attention and responsibility away from what were increasingly framed as private market transactions. Federal courts refused to protect strikes for permissive demands challenging managerial control and prohibited most "wildcat" (i.e., unauthorized by the union) strikes during the life of the contract (McCammon 1990, 1993). And although workers could not be fired for striking, the Supreme Court in its 1938 *Mackay* decision ruled that employers could "permanently replace" them, a technical difference that would fundamentally alter the balance power between the two sides. For, if employers could operate unimpeded during a strike, they would have far fewer incentives to reach agreement in bargaining (Gould 2004).

The Mackay doctrine allowed firms not only to avoid unionization in new facilities but to displace unions in existing ones. For much of the postwar period, employers generally accepted the status quo ante in unionized sectors. In the 1981 Professional Air Traffic Controllers Organization (PATCO) strike, however, U.S. President Ronald Reagan summarily fired the striking federal air traffic controllers (who, as public employees, were not protected by the NLRA). Reagan's actions announced a landmark shift in the government's attitude toward workers' rights, implemented in the private sector by his appointments to the NLRB. With this opening, employers in traditionally unionized industrial sectors quickly adopted more aggressive tactics, seeking to abrogate pattern bargaining and drive down the cost of labor (Kochan et al. 1994; Gross 1995; McCartin 2006).

The PATCO strike marked a critical juncture in the role of the state, the displacement of the New Deal system by opposing institutional norms and behavioral logics. In industry, the turning point was the 1983 strike of a coalition of Arizona copper mining unions led by the United Steelworkers of America. In that year, the Phelps Dodge corporation broke with other copper producers and refused to agree to common contract terms, leading to a strike that began at the end of June. Determined to break the strike and the unions, and protected by Arizona state police and national guard, the Phelps Dodge management hired permanent replacements and continued to operate using strategies developed by specialists at the University of Pennsylvania's Wharton School. The following year, the replacement workers voted to decertify union representation at the Phelps Dodge mines, and the strike ended in February 1986 when the unions' legal appeals were exhausted (Rosenblum 1995). The victory

of Phelps Dodge was followed by a series of strikes in the 1980s, of New England paper workers, midwestern meatpackers, Greyhound bus drivers, and others, in which the employers' use of permanent replacements led to bitter defeats for the unions (Green 1990; Getman 1998).

The newfound ease of replacement dovetailed with legal rules that allowed employers unilaterally to implement their last offer upon declaration of impasse. The previous mechanisms that once encouraged settlement were now reversed: employers gained incentives to reach impasse quickly and terminate bargaining, while unions often scrambled to find ways to prolong negotiations in order to stave off impasse (Dannin 2004). Even profitable employers soon began to demand steep concessions, in effect daring workers to strike, knowing that the outcome might easily result in displacing the union (Bandzak 1992; Harris 2002). As employers pursued radical restructuring plans during the 1980s and early 1990s, unions found little aid from Republican administrations in the federal government. The result was a dramatic drop in strike volume, as the meaning of the strike was transformed from a strategic bargaining mechanism and protected legal right to a high-risk protest tactic in defense of the principle of unionism itself.

The Labor Movement: Strategic Responses

Confronted by the new conditions, American unions developed at least two strategies, inside and outside the framework of the NLRA. First, while the law permits replacement of "economic" strikers seeking better wages and working conditions, it forbids permanent replacement of workers who strike against employers' unfair labor practices (ULP). Such strikers are entitled to reinstatement when they end their strike, and employers who refuse to take them back may be liable for back pay. Although the process of adjudication might take years, the prospect of massive liabilities for back wages could be used to restore a balance of power in negotiations.

By the 1990s, unions had learned to ensure that strikes targeted unfair labor practices in order to gain some protection against permanent replacement. The strategy led to some notable victories, including a UAW strike at Colt Firearms in Hartford, Connecticut, which ended in 1990 with a $13 million back pay settlement and the buyout of the company by a coalition of private investors, the union, and the state of Connecticut (Simmons 1994; Lendler 1997). For the most part, however, the ULP strike remained a defensive tactic, while highlighting the shift in the framing of disputes from the particular issues on the table to the future of the bargaining relationship.

A second, more highly public, alternative strategy went beyond the simple work stoppage and aimed at mobilizing support from the sur-

rounding community. This has taken various forms, from consumer boycotts to demands for state intervention to demonstrations and civil disobedience, all designed to open up the political space for action and to frame individual disputes in terms of larger cultural meanings and collective identities. In urban labor markets, these forms of mobilization may be described as a kind of community-based or "metro" unionism, taking advantage of geographic union density and gaining resources from organizations in local civil society (Gordon 1999; Turner and Cornfield 2007).

Among the more successful examples of this strategy has been the Service Employees International Union's Justice for Janitors campaigns (Milkman 2006). The type has developed especially in service sectors with spatially anchored or locally organized employers, like large hospitals or hotels, citywide restaurant or janitorial contractor associations, or state-subsidized nursing homes and home health care agencies, all drawing upon low-wage urban, minority, and often immigrant workforces. Under such conditions, local unions might well have the resources and density to organize in the community and bargain effectively within urban and regional contexts.

These strategic turns developed out of the limits of the postwar accord. The segmentation of union and nonunion labor markets distanced unions not only from unorganized workers but also from other groups in the urban community. Employers' ability to exit gradually made nonunion conditions the standard in many industries, even in those with formerly high union densities, putting the survival of the remaining unionized shops at risk. Finally, the shift in state policy left unions less able to rely on traditional legal protections for workers' rights. The erosion of their former power forced them to adopt alternate strategies, reconstructing their strike leverage through legal means and reaching out to groups formerly left out of collective bargaining disputes.

The transition to a post-accord labor regime was neither an immediate nor spatially even process. Rather, as their competing institutional norms crossed and grated against each other, the tensions between the old and new orders accumulated in particular sectors and locales. The decade of the nineties witnessed major strikes of coal miners in Appalachia, aluminum workers in West Virginia, and food processors, tire makers, and heavy machinery workers in Decatur and Peoria, Illinois, among others (Juravich and Bronfenbrenner 1999; Franklin 2001; Brisbin 2002). Yet those struggles occurred mainly in smaller factory towns or remote mining areas, often distant from wider media attention or public impact. At the same time, as Lopez (2004) and Milkman (2006) have shown, new community-based organizing drives were emerging from the urban margins, where accord-era institutions were historically weak (as among immigrant janitors and construction workers in Los Angeles) or had already col-

lapsed (e.g., Pittsburgh nursing home workers amid the ruins of the steel industry).

Each of those cases departed from the general pattern of declining union mobilization, and each signaled the spread of labor conflict to new arenas. In Detroit, however, traditional postwar unionism remained unusually strong. The local newspaper unions operated in a highly populated urban center, appealing directly to workers, consumers, and businesses across a metropolitan area with a robust labor movement and relatively high union density. The alignment of actors and conditions in this case, then, offers the sharpest contrast between the old and new systems of labor relations and best illustrates the properties of the signal juncture.

A SIGNAL JUNCTURE: THE COLLISION OF PATHS IN DETROIT

I argue that, as an episode of postwar labor strife, the Detroit newspaper strike exhibits features of what I call a signal juncture. I have defined *signal juncture* as a moment when layered or competing institutional paths "collide" in a specific setting or locale. Unlike a critical juncture, the signal juncture marks not a radical turning point but the extent to which one path has gained or maintains ascendancy. At the same time, it reveals ongoing structural tensions and opposing currents within otherwise continuous trends.

In the following pages, I trace the collision in this case of the post-accord management and union paths, including the "trigger" events that led them into a direct confrontation in Detroit. As a deviant case, the newspaper strike epitomized or "signaled" the contradictions embodied in the ascendant anti-union path of institutional development. Beginning with why the strike occurred, I show the economic logic behind management's strategy and why they were prepared to risk a walkout. Similarly, I show the sources of local labor solidarity and why the unions chose to resist, leading to the polarization of conflict. I then examine how the events and outcomes of the strike signaled the changing terrain of labor relations during the period.

The Intersection of Competing Paths: Why Detroit?

In the last decades of the 20th century, the local newspaper business was transformed by the shift to publicly traded stock ownership, repeated waves of mergers and acquisitions, and exposure to market pressures on a corresponding scale. During this time, the most profitable chains enjoyed operating margins of 20% or better, while demands for immediate high returns fueled an aggressive cost-cutting and downsizing of the workplace.

As the largest newspaper group in the nation, Gannett typified the new lean-and-mean corporate model, operating about 80% nonunion throughout the chain, primarily in single-paper markets in small and medium-size cities across the country (Gruley 1993; Cranberg, Bezanson, and Soloski 2001).

Gannett's 1986 purchase of the *News* from its longtime local owners was the decisive trigger or switching event that brought the postwar union avoidance path directly into the Detroit newspaper market. With Gannett's consent, Knight Ridder immediately filed for an antitrust exemption to allow the two publishers to form a joint operating agency. After three years of intense negotiations and litigation going all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court, the newspapers won their case. The DNA was formed in November 1989, eliminating business competition between the *News* and *Free Press* and creating a one-on-one confrontation between the unions and the new monopoly agency at the bargaining table.

Executives at Gannett were now determined to bring labor costs in Detroit into line with those at their other papers, but they would have to do so on site. Although classified as manufacturing, newspaper publishing combines features of several sectors, relying on close relations with local consumers and advertisers and employing a range of professional, clerical, production, and transportation workers. Their spatial embeddedness makes newspapers less footloose than most manufacturing enterprises and less able to seek lower wages through relocation. Moreover, as carriers of the union avoidance path, Gannett managers viewed the unions' influence as an infringement on their legitimate authority. "The employees think they work for the union rather than the company," Gannett's senior vice president for labor relations complained in a March 1995 internal memo. "This has, and will continue to cost us a great deal of money unless we get control" (Jaske 1995).

On the management side, no other actors were prepared to moderate this stance or prevent an impending polarization. With a majority on the DNA board, Gannett officials dominated the contract negotiations while Knight Ridder remained at best a junior partner. "The way the negotiations were conducted is they [Gannett] weren't calling and saying what do you think we ought to do about this," Knight Ridder CEO P. Anthony Ridder recalled. "It was more we [Knight Ridder] were saying what the hell is going on?" (Ridder 2005). Similarly, the metropolitan region was home to the Big Three American automakers, some of the largest corporations in the world. Yet the Big Three historically looked far beyond Detroit, and the city lacked the kind of tightly knit, locally oriented business elite that might have intervened to help mediate the dispute or broker a settlement. Even the Detroit Chamber of Commerce initially remained

neutral toward the strike, much to the displeasure of the DNA (Thomas 1989; Fitzgerald 1995).

As in the prominent strikes of the previous decade, the newspaper strike was driven by the restructuring demands of a profitable major national corporation. Yet despite the unfavorable national environment for strikes, the Detroit area continued to possess significant resources grounded in the norms of the old accord. First, Detroit was a stronghold for two of the most powerful unions that virtually defined American labor in the postwar era. More than half of the striking newspaper workers were members of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters (IBT), and Michigan Teamsters Joint Council 43 was the former province of the legendary Jimmy Hoffa, whose son, James Hoffa, Jr., would become president of the IBT in 1998. Metropolitan Detroit was also home to the UAW's international headquarters and several of its regional administrative divisions. The "downriver" UAW Region 1A, with 60 local affiliates under regional director Bob King, led a weekly forum for local union activists and would play a prominent role in picket line support. Similarly, the president of the Metropolitan Detroit AFL-CIO assigned his executive secretary to coordinate outreach to elected officials and to build up the circulation and advertising boycott, months before the strike began (Hecker 2004; Martin 2005).

The concentration of legal and institutional resources was no less notable. The area boasted several nationally known union labor law firms: the printers local and the MCNU employed Samuel McKnight, a highly regarded expert in newspaper labor relations who had worked on the 1990–91 *New York Daily News* strike. The Newspaper Guild's Local 22 had Duane Ice, a veteran of the Phelps Dodge strike and of the litigation surrounding the formation of the newspapers' joint operating agency. By 1995, their legal advocacy could take advantage of the political opportunity provided by a more activist NLRB under the Democratic administration of President Bill Clinton. Indeed, the NLRB Region 7 office, based in Detroit, was considered to be particularly experienced in and positively disposed toward the principles of industrial unionism (Gruley 1993, p. 208; Sleigh 1998, pp. 145–47; Rabin Hammell 2006).

The unions' contracts with the newspapers expired on April 30, 1995, but the parties agreed to extend them while negotiations continued. As the talks broke down, McKnight and others filed charges of bad faith bargaining and unlawful declaration of impasse, ensuring that any strike would be conducted as an unfair labor practice dispute. At the end of June the companies told the unions they would no longer extend the contracts, and on July 5 the *News* announced that it would unilaterally implement a merit pay system on the Guild. Fearing the loss of key organizational and procedural protections, the unions set a strike deadline

for July 13. "The DNA was threatening to cancel the arbitration process, the union security provision, and the dues checkoff," said Teamsters Local 372 secretary-treasurer and MCNU chair Alfred Derey. "The DNA knew this was an act of war . . . [because] if you do this, one supervisor firing the wrong guy could cause a walkout, and we're going to be out there. I said don't put yourself in this position. Don't put us in this position" (Derey 2005).

Desperate to preserve their rights under the old system, the union leaders saw no alternative to a strike. Refusing to concede, they placed their faith in the ULP protections and the boycott. "This is a union town," Derey said publicly a week before the strike deadline. "We believe the subscribers out there will support us" (Craig 1995). Thus, the economic power of two large national corporations collided with the institutions of industrial unionism and the culture of labor solidarity in the region. The competing postwar paths of collective bargaining and union avoidance clashed directly with each other, and the conflict spilled out into the courts and the streets.

Signaling Change: Strike Mobilization and Outcomes

The above sequence of events explains *why* the strike happened at the particular juncture that it did, with the collision of opposing institutional paths. Its signal character is illustrated in *how* the events of the strike played out, across the arenas of economy, state, and civil society. The Detroit strike was a landmark in post-accord labor relations and would serve as a test of the ascendant anti-union path. From the forms of strike mobilization to the mechanisms that led to its defeat, the strike revealed the extent to which the terrain of labor conflict had changed.

The expanded role of civil society, for example, can be seen in the process of strike mobilization. The unions relied heavily on the embedded culture of labor in the region, for the unity among the striking workers, for material aid from the wider union movement, and as the key to the boycott strategy. Solidarity was maintained across blue-collar, skilled craft, and professional occupational divides, perhaps most notably in the case of the Newspaper Guild. While just under half of the striking Guild members eventually crossed picket lines, far more stayed out than the employers anticipated, even after the threat of permanent replacement.

Managers expressed perplexity that middle-class professionals should risk their jobs to strike alongside less educated blue-collar workers (Finley 2004; Shine 2005). Many Detroit journalists, however, had previous knowledge of unionism from personal or family experience, believed in its legitimacy, and saw it as a defense of professional values and autonomy. Striking *Free Press* editor Nancy Dunn felt that "most of the people who

went into the newspaper business went into the business because they believed in the power of newspapers to do good, and when they start to do things either deceptively or illegally, or immorally, then you just don't stand with them if you really believe, if you went into the business for that reason" (Dunn 2005). *Free Press* reporter Patricia Montemurri added, "It's very easy for [the newspapers] to take advantage of your professional dedication to getting news and telling a story. . . . That's why I belong to a union, that's why I expect to be paid overtime, and all that was threatened" (Montemurri 2005).

Equally important, the strike benefited from the organizational strength of the labor movement in Detroit. Especially in the first months, picket lines and rallies drew hundreds and at times thousands of supporters from other unions, while strategic and material aid was coordinated through local and regional offices of the AFL-CIO, UAW, and other union organizations. Locally, labor's political clout ensured support from various government officials. In support of the boycott, leading Democratic politicians refused to give interviews to nonstriking reporters, and municipal and county governments pulled their legal advertisements from the papers. Long-standing ties between Detroit labor and civic organizations also brought endorsements from civil rights, faith-based, and other community groups. More than 200 local civic figures were arrested for civil disobedience in support of the strike, including religious leaders, officers of the National Organization for Women, U.S. congressional representatives, and state, county, and city elected representatives (Konrad 1996*a*, 1996*b*).

Finally, grassroots support was essential to the strategic focus on the circulation and advertising boycotts. In 1995 southeastern Michigan counted more than 600,000 union members, behind only the New York, Chicago, and Los Angeles regions (Hirsch and Macpherson 2009), and the share of union households provided a sizable base and audience for the public appeal. The strikers conducted one-on-one outreach to home subscribers, persuaded the UAW to ban rack sales in auto plants (a move that alone cut daily circulation by 25,000), and leafleted customers at retailers who advertised in the papers. To a significant degree, these efforts worked—the companies admitted to losing $100 million in the first nine months and were unable to provide circulation data to the national Audit Bureau of Circulation (ABC) through the first year (Sacharow 1996; Wenner 2001).

These actions revealed the depth of the culture of labor solidarity in the region. If civil society set the stage for mobilization, however, it also imposed limits. Incidents of property damage and confrontations on the picket line (highly publicized by the newspapers) weakened early community support for the strike (Fitzgerald 1996). As the strike dragged on,

protest fatigue began to set in, and public interest and awareness became more difficult to sustain, especially after the 1997 offer to return to work. More broadly, the community campaign faced the tasks of organizing on the social terrain of Detroit, with its postwar legacies of suburban metropolitan fragmentation and racial division. Before the strike, the employees at the papers were disproportionately white, relative to the central city population. During the strike, the unions won support from traditional civil rights and liberal leaders, but many ordinary black Detroiters felt distant from both sides and did not see the struggle as their own (Bray 2005; Webb 2006).

The arena of civil society neither stands alone nor replaces the state and the economy in determining outcomes. Although they engaged in their own campaign of public relations, the employers recognized the unions' influence in Detroit and relied on their advantages in other arenas. Corporate executives ignored most local civic and political leaders and expressed public disdain for the NLRB (Freedman 1996). Instead, the companies found allies in other levels of the state, colluding with suburban police departments to protect access to their facilities, using court injunctions, the RICO suit, and other judicial means to restrict picketing and public protest, and aggressively firing strikers, including five of the six MCNU local union presidents, for alleged picket line infractions.

Fearful of jeopardizing their members' jobs, union leaders were unwilling to force a political crisis or escalate protest into nonviolent mass disruption against the law. Their dependence on the adjudication of the ULP case, however, contributed to the more than five years' duration of the entire dispute. Finally, despite inflicting enormous losses on the newspapers, the strike failed to disrupt the employers' economic mechanisms for maintaining their position. The newspapers recruited professional and skilled craft replacements from across the country, downsized workforce levels in production and distribution, and hired unskilled replacement workers at lower wages. As the two largest newspaper chains in the nation, they had the resources to absorb losses in the Detroit market and await the decision of the federal court. Their actions were fully supported by investors; throughout the strike, the stock prices of the publicly traded companies were never seriously affected (Peterson 1997).

In the newspaper strike, the two sides each invoked different and conflicting institutional norms: the companies pursued a neoliberal agenda of corporate restructuring and management flexibility, while the unions mobilized to defend New Deal principles of collective bargaining. The collision of these paths in Detroit produced the extreme levels of contention witnessed in the strike, exposing latent tensions and patterns arising from the fall of the postwar accord.

During the postwar era, American unions gained an institutional footing

in the core sectors of the economy under the NLRA, while a layer of union avoidance grew alongside and apart from the New Deal system. The balance of power between the two paths shifted in the early 1980s, after the critical junctures of the PATCO and Phelps Dodge strikes. By the mid-1990s the Detroit strike signaled the consolidation of the ascendant anti-union regime, while highlighting emergent forms of labor mobilization and resistance.

CONCLUSION: STRIKE THEORY AND INSTITUTIONAL CHANGE

In this article, I have two goals: First, I use a deviant case analysis of the Detroit newspaper strike to critique and reformulate theories of strike activity. Second, I develop a methodological concept that I call a signal juncture. In this concluding section, I return to these respective goals, beginning with the revision of strike theory. I then elaborate on the concept of a signal juncture and discuss its utility in other contexts.

Strike Theory: Some Conditional Propositions

In an era of declining union strength and strike activity in the United States, the Detroit newspaper strike was an exceptional case. As a deviant case, however, it provides an opportunity to critique and reformulate theories of strike activity. I propose a three-dimensional framework that permits a deeper analysis of historical process than earlier strike theories have allowed. Economically, the causal factors shift from the behavioral dynamics at the bargaining table to the strategic responses of actors to market pressures on the employment relationship. Politically, the assumption of mature union incorporation or co-optation gives way to historical variability and the consequences of deinstitutionalization. Finally, bringing civil society back in illustrates how the meaning of strike action has changed. In the post-accord era, the strike has been transformed from a strategic bargaining mechanism and protected legal right to a more basic struggle, across the economy, state, and civil society, to reconstitute the spaces governing labor relations and workers' rights.

This approach historicizes the debate between traditional economic and political theories of strikes. The traditional economic model presupposed organizational security and a strong institutional order. The New Deal system established a relationship between collective actors, centralizing wage determination for multiple workers through collective bargaining between unions and management. In the absence of formal or informal sanctions, however, employers in the United States may instead prefer to decentralize and individualize wage setting (Hollingsworth 1997). Without

incentives grounded on state enforcement of workers' rights, union density, or credible threats of disruption, then, employers will seek not just concessions but the *elimination* of the collective bargaining relationship.

This is not a failure of information. Rather, it reflects a structural tendency of one party to try to exit the relationship. Bargaining does tend to be one-sided, but not in the way traditionally portrayed. Instead of firms setting a standard of efficiency and unions negotiating an acceptable compromise, in a liberal market economy employers are motivated to reduce unionized labor to a nonunion standard. Negotiating to impasse, imposing conditions, locking out workers, and breaking strikes all destroy the function of collective bargaining, whether or not the union is actually decertified. Workers, therefore, may at times be impelled to strike not for specific economic gains but to ensure the employer's respect for the relationship with the union.

The New Deal system both channeled labor conflict and established a framework of democratic rights in the workplace. Under the accord, collective bargaining was concentrated in the firm and limited to bread-and-butter economic issues, depoliticized in the form of state procedural regulation, and insulated from the local community. The preventive integration of conflict, however, proved historically temporary, and without protection for the right to strike a key mechanism sustaining the previous system has been lost. In the post-accord period, the state has largely reverted to a policy of judicial repression, in the form of the administrative weakness of the NLRB and the ideological antagonism of the federal courts. The resulting legal regime might therefore be described as aimed at the preventive isolation, rather than integration, of workers' collective action in the employment system.

The most outstanding feature of contemporary strike rates is their drastic and sustained overall decline starting from the 1980s (Rosenfeld 2006). Unlike the previous economic and political theories, the proposed model predicts this historical outcome: with deinstitutionalization (i.e., declining union density in economic sectors and reversion to judicial repression in the state), the frequency and impact of strikes can be expected to decline within the current regime. At the same time, labor struggles that do occur are more likely to spread out into civil society, in contrast to the earlier period. Does that mean that unions that ally with community actors are more likely to win strikes? Not necessarily—in Detroit, the newspaper companies deployed tremendous resources to override pressure from the NLRB and an alliance of unions, local civic leaders, and members of the reading public. Future analyses of strikes will need to specify, for each case, the historic local conjuncture of forces in the economy and the state as well as in civil society.

The newspaper strike was fought on a civic terrain of postwar sub-

urbanization, urban industrial decline, and metropolitan class and racial segregation epitomized by Detroit. As cities in the United States change, however, unions may find new or different configurations of civil society. In areas where labor and other structural inequalities coincide, where new immigrant or minority working-class communities combine with local cultures of union militancy, or where organizational and discursive strategies rearticulate previously divided group identities, there may be greater possibilities for collective action. The outcomes may prefigure a new layer of opposition to the dominant anti-union regime.

The Signal Juncture: Between Continuity and Change

In this study, I propose the concept of a signal juncture as a way to analyze relations between institutional order and change. In short, the concept applies the logic of deviant case method to the framework of path dependency theory. Unlike the more familiar critical juncture, a signal juncture occurs not at the beginning or the end of a path, but in the middle. A critical juncture is a transformative case, remaking the rules between one period and another. A signal juncture is more properly a deviant case, departing from the dominant pattern but thereby exposing the forces and countertendencies that persist within generally continuous trends.

This approach allows us to further deconstruct the process of change between paths or periods. The traditional model conveyed an image of a holistic period interrupted by a contingent, external shock, leading to the swift adoption of a new regime and its systemic reproduction along a unitary path. The proposed model calls attention to internal structural tensions that endure within periods. The result is a more spatially and temporally uneven process of path consolidation, marked by episodes of conflict where opposing institutional logics continue to collide with one another, producing exceptional moments that deviate from standard theory or conventional historical interpretation.

Such unusually contentious moments may not in fact be so rare and, within periods, will typically take the form of signal junctures registering how far a dominant path has gained (or is losing) ascendancy. As episodes of collective action, however, their outcomes are ultimately contingent; the possibility remains that conflict may escalate into a more transformative critical juncture (Rhomberg 2004, p. 206). The sequence of signal junctures within a period should draw an arc tracing the rise and decline of institutional paths and the emergence of new forms of struggle. At the end of a period, a struggle that might have been another signal juncture may instead break out into a larger historical turning point, announcing a new core institutional path or regime.

As a methodological device the signal juncture is applicable to a variety

of conflict situations beyond labor disputes. As a criterion for identification, the relevant case should exhibit a juncture or collision of opposing institutional norms or logics in a specific time or place. This may occur in such familiar venues as legislative battles over major reforms, electoral campaigns that polarize along deep fault lines, constitutional or criminal trials that question the limits of justice, or any number of social movement protests or uprisings. While the case may appear as deviant within a larger, dominant regime, the analysis should show how it epitomizes or signals underlying tensions and countertrends.

So, for example, the history of welfare state policy is replete with "unsuccessful" reforms that mark the ebb and flow of institutional change. In the mid-1990s, critics blamed the defeat of President Clinton's Health Security Bill on the failure of an overreaching and anachronistic welfare state liberalism. The campaign was "deviant" because it allegedly defied the popular values of market deregulation that became dominant in the 1980s under the Reagan administration. Clinton himself later appeared to renounce the principles of the reform when he famously declared in his 1996 State of the Union address that "the era of big government is over."

By contrast, Skocpol (1996) shows that Clinton's "managed competition" proposal already incorporated Reagan-era elements of conservative antitax and deficit reduction politics. By so doing, it delegitimized its own promises of security and the rationale for government-led reform. More than a failure of political tactics, the bill's defeat indicated deeper, underlying oppositions that Clinton's moderate, technical approach could not overcome. In retrospect, the episode is better seen as a signal juncture in a longer-term contest, dating from the early 20th century, between public and private modes of health care provision.

As Hacker (2002) and Klein (2003) have shown, the failure of Progressive era and early New Deal national health care reform allowed private voluntary health insurance to develop as an employment-linked "benefit" in a system of welfare capitalism, emphasizing group contracts with employers, cash indemnity to patients for professional fee-for-service, and experience-rated premiums. At the same time, health care, civic, and labor activists developed a range of alternatives, including prepaid service plans, occupational and community-based health centers, and community rating, along with proposals for national health insurance. Advocates of public care achieved a major advance with the creation of Medicare and Medicaid in 1965, expanding the "layer" of nonmarket insurance provision among the elderly and the poor. Nonetheless, in the postwar era the coalition of employers, insurance companies, and the medical profession succeeded in making job-based, tax-subsidized private group health in-

surance the core method of financing health care for working-age adults and their dependents.

As the cost, complexity, and fragmentation of health care provision have continued to grow, the foundations of the private insurance regime have increasingly eroded. Recent efforts at reform, however, have again exposed recurrent structural and institutional contradictions. The goal of universal coverage confronts the barriers of rising costs and private insurers' demands for profitability. Powerful market actors resist competition from proposed government-run programs, while consumers with employer-provided insurance are reluctant to give up their existing benefits. The fate of the Clinton bill itself is now part of the institutional terrain: in Congress, Republican opponents see greater advantage in political deadlock than in allowing Democrats to claim a legislative victory. To date, the public health care mode has not yet ever achieved dominance as the core institutional path. The failure of the Clinton reform, then, represented not the collapse of a decadent liberalism but a signal juncture in a long-running challenge to the still hegemonic private insurance regime.

Other types of conflict may also take the form of a signal juncture. A very different example may be found in the troubled history of race in the United States. In the 1920s a resurgent, nativist Ku Klux Klan movement attracted some 4–6 million members nationwide, becoming perhaps the largest right-wing movement in American history before rapidly disintegrating by the end of the decade. In traditional liberal historiography, this "second" Klan was an exceptional case, the extremist reaction of a declining provincial lower middle class to the dominant trends of industrialization, urbanization, and mass immigration (Higham 1971; Hofstadter 1977). Using collective behavior theory, sociologists Lipset and Raab described the second Klan as an antipragmatic "status backlash" movement, the "last desperate protest of a 19th-century Protestantism in the course of eclipse" (1970, pp. 110, 143). Symptoms or by-products of modernization, such movements periodically arise but without altering basic patterns of assimilation in American life.

More recent research has challenged this traditional view. Studies of local Klan membership lists have shown that the organization appealed to a broad, urban middle-class constituency, and the movement was strongest where native white Protestants were an overwhelming majority, not a declining or minority group (Goldberg 1981; Moore 1991; Lay 1995). In many areas in the North and West, the Klan eschewed overt violence, expressed ordinary white middle-class racial values, engaged successfully in mainstream and electoral politics, and supported a range of popular "civic" reforms. The new studies affirm that the Klan behaved much like the way sociologists now think social movement actors normally do behave, drawing on structurally based resources, capitalizing on political

opportunities, and rallying popular support. Far from a simple backlash, their efforts represented a forward-looking attempt to maintain the social and material conditions for a privileged racial and class status and to build the foundations of a new civic and political community (Rhomberg 2005).

In this context, the second Klan appears not as an aberration but as a signal juncture in what King and Smith (2005) claim is an underlying tension between two evolving but linked sets of "racial institutional orders" in American political development, "white supremacism" and "transformative egalitarianism." From the 1890s to the 1930s, King and Smith argue, a postslavery white supremacist order held sway in all three branches of the federal government and in virtually all southern and many western states, enforcing a system of racial segregation, disfranchisement, and exclusion of nonwhite immigrants. If ethnic conflict nevertheless persisted between native Protestants and urban immigrants, the discourse of race formed the template for its resolution, recasting lines of community among European Americans and establishing white identity as a condition of assimilation (Dawley 1992; Gerstle 2002).

The second Klan appeared under a larger white supremacist order, before the rise of the modern civil rights movement and the end of the legal system of Jim Crow. Since then a transformative egalitarian order has prevailed, but not without its own tensions and countertrends, including de facto residential and school segregation, the retrenchment of federal powers to intervene in state and local practices, and informal mechanisms of reproducing white advantage (Massey and Denton 1993; Royster 2003). As King and Smith (2005, p. 84) write, "Egalitarian norms now bar the deployment of overtly white supremacist language, but when it comes to concrete policies, the modern racially egalitarian order often lacks the power to overcome its anti-transformative opposition."

In the ongoing opposition between paths, the signal juncture registers the impact of moments of contention beyond their own eras. The redefinition of group boundaries and the racialization of urban space during the 1920s survived the demise of the Klan as an organization and helped crystallize a norm of white suburban middle-class formation that remained a cultural force and source of collective identity, even after the Great Depression and World War II. Long after the earlier movement had disappeared, suburban white middle classes in the South and West would form a popular base for the conservative Republican resurgence in government and the rise of the New Right (Marsh 1990; McGirr 2001).

These brief illustrations merely suggest the wider utility of the signal juncture as a methodological and heuristic device. In recent years historical sociologists have begun to move beyond the traditional path dependency model of trajectories and transitions. Scholars like Haydu

(1998), Thelen (2004), and others have offered more nuanced accounts of how change can occur gradually through adaptation, renegotiation, and evolution within otherwise stable institutional settings. The analysis here aims to show how structural conflict, polarization, and displacement also persist and may give rise to endogenous sources of resistance and change.

The signal juncture applies the logic of deviant case method to the model of path dependency. The result contributes not only to the formal analysis of institutional change but also to the generation of new substantive theory or historical interpretation. In the fields of industrial sociology, social movement studies, and labor history, the analysis of the Detroit case adds to a much-needed revival of debate on strike theory. Traditional approaches misconstrue the historical context of current patterns of strike activity: older theories of political incorporation did not anticipate the effects of deinstitutionalization, while economic models fail to see that the stakes are no longer merely dollars and cents but the very presence of workers and employers at the bargaining table. In the absence of strong countervailing forces, employers will attempt to exit collective bargaining and eliminate the relationship with the union. In countries like United States, with comparatively weak protections for labor rights, workers must sometimes strike to defend the collective relationship between employer and employees.

Even in periods of overwhelming institutional hegemony, seemingly deviant cases of conflict can illustrate crucial underlying dynamics and stimulate more historically grounded theory. The signal juncture offers an additional tool for scholars to gain analytic leverage from anomalous events that might otherwise disappear from view. We need not dismiss such cases as outliers or historical failures; such extreme or intense moments, when all do their worst and best, may well reveal powerful social forces. "We did not make history," one former newspaper striker said years after the strike. Perhaps not, but their actions helped disclose some of the forces that did.

REFERENCES

Abbott, Andrew. 1997. "On the Concept of a Turning Point." *Comparative Social Research* 16:85–101.

Ashenfelter, Orley, and George E. Johnson. 1969. "Bargaining Theory, Trade Unions and Industrial Strike Activity." *American Economic Review* 59:35–49.

Bandzak, Ruth A. 1992. "The Strike as a Management Strategy." *Journal of Economic Issues* 26:645–59.

Barringer, Felicity. 2000. "The Strike That Ate Circulation: In Detroit, Profits Are Up but Readers Have Left." *New York Times*, July 17.

Bennett, Andrew, and Colin Elman. 2006*a*. "Complex Causal Relations and Case Study Methods: The Example of Path Dependence." *Political Analysis* 14:250–67.

———. 2006*b*. "Qualitative Research: Recent Developments in Case Study Methods." *Annual Review of Political Science* 9:455–76.
Bluestone, Barry, and Irving Bluestone. 1992. *Negotiating the Future: A Labor Perspective on American Business*. New York: Basic Books.
Bowles, Samuel, David M. Gordon, and Thomas E. Weisskopf. 1983. *Beyond the Waste Land: A Democratic Alternative to Economic Decline*. Garden City, N.Y.: Anchor Press/Doubleday.
Bray, Hiawatha. 2005. Telephone interview with author. New York, February.
Brisbin, Richard, Jr. 2002. *A Strike Like No Other Strike: Law and Resistance during the Pittston Coal Strike of 1989–1990*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.
Bronfenbrenner, Kate, and Tom Juravich. 1998. "It Takes More than House Calls: Organizing to Win with a Comprehensive Union-Building Strategy." Pp. 19–36 in *Organizing to Win: New Research on Union Strategies*, edited by Kate Bronfenbrenner, Sheldon Friedman, Richard W. Hurd, Rudolph A. Oswald, and Ronald L. Seeber. Ithaca, N.Y.: ILR Press.
Burns, Ben. 2004. Interview with author. Detroit, October.
Clawson, Dan. 2003. *Next Upsurge: Labor and the New Social Movements.* Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press.
Cohen, Jean L., and Andrew Arato. 1994. *Civil Society and Political Theory*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press.
Cohn, Samuel, and Adrienne Eaton. 1989. "Historical Limits on Neoclassical Strike Theories: Evidence from French Coal Mining, 1890–1935." *Industrial and Labor Relations Review* 42:649–62.
Collier, Ruth, and David Collier. 1991. *Shaping the Political Arena: Critical Junctures, the Labor Movement, and Regime Dynamics in Latin America.* Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press.
Cowie, Jefferson. 1999. *Capital Moves: RCA's Seventy-Year Quest for Cheap Labor.* Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press.
Craig, Charlotte. 1995. "Unions Set a Strike Deadline for Newspapers." *Detroit Free Press*, July 7, p. 1-E.
Cranberg, Gilbert, Randall Bezanson, and John Soloski. 2001. *Taking Stock: Journalism and the Publicly Traded Newspaper Company*. Ames: Iowa State University Press.
Dannin, Ellen. 2004. "From Dictator Game to Ultimatum Game . . . and Back Again: The Judicial Impasse Amendments." *University of Pennsylvania Journal of Labor and Employment Law* 6:241–94.
Dawley, Alan. 1992. *Struggles for Justice: Social Responsibility and the Liberal State*. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.
Derey, Alfred. 2005. Interview with author. Lapeer, Mich., May.
Dubofsky, Melvyn. 1994. *The State and Labor in Modern America*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.
Dunn, Nancy. 2005. Interview with author. Dearborn, Mich., May.
Editor and Publisher. 2006. "Philly Newspapers and Union Council Extend Talks, Guild Strike Deadline May Be Pushed Back." *Editor and Publisher*. http://www.editorandpublisher.com/.
Estlund, Cynthia. 2003. *Working Together: How Workplace Bonds Strengthen a Diverse Democracy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Evans, Peter. 2007. Foreword. Pp. vii–ix in *Labor in the New Urban Battlegrounds: Local Solidarity in a Global Economy*, edited by Lowell Turner and Daniel Cornfield. Ithaca, N.Y.: ILR Press.
Fantasia, Rick. 1988. *Cultures of Solidarity: Consciousness, Action and Contemporary American Workers.* Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press.
Fantasia, Rick, and Kim Voss. 2004. *Hard Work: Remaking the American Labor Movement*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press.
Farley, Reynolds, Sheldon Danziger, and Harry Holzer. 2000. *Detroit Divided: A Vol-*

ume in the Multi-City Study of Urban Inequality. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.
Fine, Janice. 2006. *Worker Centers: Organizing Communities at the Edge of the Dream.* Ithaca, N.Y.: ILR/Cornell University Press.
Finley, Nolan. 2004. Interview with author. Detroit, October 25.
Fitzgerald, Mark. 1995. "Pick a Side: Detroit Newspapers' Chief Challenges Chamber of Commerce and United Way to Choose a Side in the Ongoing Newspaper Strike." *Editor and Publisher* 128 (November 4): 26.
———. 1996. "Feeling the Effects of the Strike." *Editor and Publisher* 129, September 28, p. 11.
Fligstein, Neil, and Taekjin Shin. 2007. "Shareholder Value and the Transformation of the U.S. Economy." *Sociological Forum* 22:399–424.
Flyvbjerg, Brent. 2006. "Five Misunderstandings about Case-Study Research." *Qualitative Inquiry* 12:219–45.
Foley, Michael W., and Bob Edwards. 1998. "Beyond Tocqueville: Civil Society and Social Capital in Comparative Perspective." *American Behavioral Scientist* 42:5–20.
Franklin, Stephen. 2001. *Three Strikes: Labor's Heartland Losses and What They Mean for Working Americans.* New York: Guilford Press.
Franzosi, Roberto. 1989. "One Hundred Years of Strike Statistics: Methodological and Theoretical Issues in Quantitative Strike Research." *Industrial and Labor Relations Review* 42:348–62.
———. 1995. *The Puzzle of Strikes: Class and State Strategies in Postwar Italy.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Freedman, Eric. 1996. "Picketers Protest as CEO Vega Defends Newspapers." *Detroit Sunday Journal*, April 14, p. 10.
Gargaro, Paul. 1996. "Old Ways Gone, Impasse Persists." *Crain's Detroit Business*, July 8, p. 1.
Gerstle, Gary. 2002. *American Crucible: Race and Nation in the Twentieth Century.* Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press.
Getman, Julius. 1998. *The Betrayal of Local 14: Paperworkers, Politics, and Permanent Replacements.* Ithaca, N.Y.: ILR/Cornell University Press.
Goldberg, Robert Alan. 1981. *Hooded Empire: The Ku Klux Klan in Colorado.* Urbana: University of Illinois Press.
Gonyea, Don, and Mike Hoyt. 1997. "Fallout from Detroit." *Columbia Journalism Review*, May/June, pp. 36–41.
Gordon, Colin. 1999. "The Lost City of Solidarity: Metropolitan Unionism in Historical Perspective." *Politics and Society* 27:561–85.
Gordon, David M., Richard Edwards, and Michael Reich. 1982. *Segmented Work, Divided Workers: The Historical Transformation of Labor in the United States.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Gould, William B., IV. 2004. Interview with author. Palo Alto, Calif., December.
Green, Hardy. 1990. *On Strike at Hormel: The Struggle for a Democratic Labor Movement.* Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
Greenhouse, Steven. 2000. "After 5 and a Half Years, a Labor War Ends at 2 Detroit Papers." *New York Times*, December 19, p. A32.
Griffin, Larry J., Holly J. McCammon, and Christopher Botsko. 1990. "The 'Unmaking' of a Movement? The Crisis of U.S. Trade Unions in Comparative Perspective." Pp. 277–92 in *Change in Societal Institutions*, edited by Maureen T. Hallinan, David M. Klein, and Jennifer Glass. New York: Plenum Press.
Gross, James A. 1995. *Broken Promise: The Subversion of U.S. Labor Relations Policy, 1947–1994.* Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
Gruley, Bryan. 1993. *Paper Losses: A Modern Epic of Greed and Betrayal at America's Two Largest Newspaper Companies.* New York: Grove Press.

Gutman, Herbert. 1976. *Work, Culture, and Society in Industrializing America: Essays in American Working-Class and Social History*. New York: Knopf.
Habermas, Jürgen. 1996. *Between Facts and Norms: Contributions to a Discourse Theory of Law and Democracy*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press.
Hacker, Jacob. 2002. *The Divided Welfare State: The Battle over Public and Private Social Benefits in the United States*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Harris, Howell John. 1982. *The Right to Manage: Industrial Relations Policies of American Business in the 1940s*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.
Harris, Seth. 2002. "Coase's Paradox and the Inefficiency of Permanent Strike Replacements." *Washington University Law Journal* 80:1185–1274.
Hartman, Chester W., and Gregory D. Squires. 2006. *There Is No Such Thing as a Natural Disaster: Race, Class, and Hurricane Katrina*. New York: Routledge.
Hattam, Victoria. 1992. *Labor Visions and State Power*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press.
Haydu, Jeffrey. 1998. "Making Use of the Past: Time Periods as Cases to Compare and as Sequences of Problem Solving." *American Journal of Sociology* 104:339–72.
Hecker, David. 2004. Interview with author. Detroit, October.
Higham, John. 1971. *Strangers in the Land: Patterns of American Nativism, 1860–1925*. New York: Athenaeum.
Hirsch, Barry, and David Macpherson. 2009. *Union Membership and Coverage Database from the Current Population Survey*. http://www.unionstats.com/.
Hofstadter, Richard. 1977. *The Age of Reform: From Bryan to FDR*. New York: Knopf.
Hollingsworth, J. Rogers. 1997. "The Institutional Embeddedness of American Capitalism." Pp. 133–48 in *Political Economy of Modern Capitalism*, edited by Colin Crouch and Wolfgang Streeck. Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage Publications.
Honey, Michael K. 1993. *Southern Labor and Black Civil Rights: Organizing Memphis Workers*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.
Horowitz, Roger. 1997. *Negro and White, Unite and Fight! A Social History of Industrial Unionism in Meatpacking, 1930–90*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.
Howe, Jack. 2005. Interview with author. Detroit, April.
Ice, Duane. 2005. Interview with author. Royal Oaks, Mich., May.
Isaac, Larry, and Lars Christiansen. 2002. "How the Civil Rights Movement Revitalized Labor Militancy." *American Sociological Review* 67:722–47.
Isaac, Larry, Steve McDonald, and Greg Lukasik. 2006. "Takin' It from the Streets: How the Sixties Mass Movement Revitalized Unionization." *American Journal of Sociology* 112:46–97.
Jarley, Paul, and Cheryl Maranto. 1990. "Union Corporate Campaigns: An Assessment." *Industrial and Labor Relations Review* 43:505–24.
Jaske, John. 1995. Memorandum to Doug McCorkindale, March 6. Charging Parties Exhibit 5, *Detroit Newspaper Agency*, 7-CA-37361 et al., Region 7, National Labor Relations Board, Detroit.
Juravich, Tom, and Kate Bronfenbrenner. 1999. *Ravenswood: The Steelworkers Victory and the Revival of American Labor*. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press.
Katznelson, Ira. 1997. "Structure and Configuration in Comparative Politics." Pp. 81–112 in *Comparative Politics: Rationality, Culture and Structure*, edited by Mark Irving Lichbach and Alan Zuckerman. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
———. 2005. *When Affirmative Action Was White: An Untold History of Racial Inequality in Twentieth-Century America*. New York: W. W. Norton.
Kaufman, Bruce E. 1992. "Research on Strike Models and Outcomes in the 1980's: Accomplishments and Shortcomings." Pp. 77–129 in *Research Frontiers in Industrial Relations and Human Resources*, edited by David Lewin, Olivia S. Mitchell, and Peter D. Sherer. Madison, Wis.: Industrial Relations Research Association.
Keane, John. 1988. "Despotism and Democracy: The Origins and Development of the Distinction between Civil Society and the State, 1750–1850." Pp. 35–71 in *Civil*

Society and the State: New European Perspectives, edited by John Keane. London: Verso.
King, Bob. 2005. Interview with the author. Detroit, April.
King, Desmond, and Rogers Smith. 2005. "Racial Orders in American Political Development." *American Political Science Review* 99:75–92.
Klein, Jennifer. 2003. *For All These Rights: Business, Labor, and the Shaping of America's Public-Private Welfare State*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press.
Klinenberg, Eric. 2002. *Heat Wave: A Social Autopsy of Disaster in Chicago*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
Kochan, Thomas, Harry Katz, and Robert McKersie. 1994. *The Transformation of American Industrial Relations*. Ithaca, N.Y.: ILR Press.
Konrad, Rachel. 1996*a*. "24 Arrested as Protesters Urge Papers to Negotiate." *Detroit Free Press*, April 12, p. 4E.
———. 1996*b*. "Witnesses Get NLRB Warning." *Detroit Free Press*, May 3, p. 6-E.
Korpi, Walter, and Michael Shalev. 1980. "Strikes, Power, and Politics in Western Nations, 1900–1976." *Political Power and Social Theory* 1:301–34.
Lambert, Josiah B. 2005. *"If the Workers Took a Notion": The Right to Strike and American Political Development*. Ithaca, N.Y.: ILR Press.
Lay, Shawn. 1995. *Hooded Knights on the Niagara: The Ku Klux Klan in Buffalo, New York*. New York: New York University Press.
Leduff, Charlie, and Steven Greenhouse. 2004. "Tentative Deal Is Reached in Grocery Labor Dispute." *New York Times*, February 27, p. A16.
Lendler, Marc. 1997. *Crisis and Political Beliefs: The Case of the Colt Firearms Strike*. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press.
Lengel, Allan. 1996. "Legal Recourse: Strike Spawns Lawsuits with Charges from Sabotage to Brutality." *Detroit Sunday Journal*, July 7, p. S7.
Lenhoff, Alan. 2004. Interview with author. Detroit, November.
Lipset, Seymour Martin, and Earl Raab. 1970. *The Politics of Unreason: Right-Wing Extremism in America, 1790–1970*. New York: Harper & Row.
Lipset, Seymour Martin, Martin A. Trow, and James S. Coleman. 1956. *Union Democracy: The Internal Politics of the International Typographical Union*. Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press.
Logan, John. 2006. "The Union Avoidance Industry in the United States." *British Journal of Industrial Relations* 44:651–75.
Lopez, Steven Henry. 2004. *Reorganizing the Rust Belt: An Inside Study of the American Labor Movement*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press.
Mahoney, James. 2000. "Path Dependence in Historical Sociology." *Theory and Society* 29:507–48.
Marsh, Margaret. 1990. *Suburban Lives*. New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press.
Martin, Michelle. 2005. Interview with author. Detroit, May.
Massey, Douglas, and Nancy Denton. 1993. *American Apartheid: Segregation and the Making of the Underclass*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.
McCammon, Holly J. 1990. "Legal Limits on Labor Militancy: U.S. Labor Law and the Right to Strike since the New Deal." *Social Problems* 37:206–29.
———. 1993. "From Repressive Intervention to Integrative Prevention: The U.S. State's Legal Management of Labor Militancy, 1881–1978." *Social Forces* 71: 569–602.
McCartin, Joseph. 2006. "A Historian's Perspective on the PATCO Strike, Its Legacy, and Lessons." *Employee Responsibilities and Rights Journal* 18:215–22.
McConnell, Sheena. 1989. "Strikes, Wages, and Private Information." *American Economic Review* 79:801–15.
McGirr, Lisa. 2001. *Suburban Warriors: The Origins of the New American Right*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press.

MetroTimes. 1996. "The Year in Review." *MetroTimes*, July 3, pp. 10–11.
Milkman, Ruth. 2006. *L.A. Story: Immigrant Workers and the Future of the U.S. Labor Movement*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.
Milkman, Ruth, and Kim Voss. 2004. *Rebuilding Labor: Organizing and Organizers in the New Union Movement*. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press.
Montemurri, Patricia. 2005. Interview with author. Detroit, June.
Montgomery, David. 1987. *The Fall of the House of Labor: The Workplace, the State, and American Labor Activism, 1865–1925*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Moore, Leonard. 1991. *Citizen Klansmen: The Ku Klux Klan in Indiana, 1921–1928*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.
National Labor Relations Board. 1998. *Detroit Newspaper Agency, et al.* 7-CA-37361, et.seq. 326 NLRB no. 64, p. 781. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office.
———. 2004. *Detroit Newspaper Agency, et al.* 7-CA-38079, 342 NLRB no. 42, pp. 223–315. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office.
Needleman, Ruth. 2003. *Black Freedom Fighters in Steel: The Struggle for Democratic Unionism*. Ithaca, N.Y.: ILR Press.
Nicholson, Philip Yale. 2004. *Labor's Story in the United States*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
Orren, Karen, and Stephen Skowronek. 1996. "Institutions and Intercurrence: Theory Building in the Fullness of Time." Pp. 111–46 in *Nomos*, vol. 3, *Political Order*. Edited by Ian Shapiro and Russell Hardin. New York: New York University Press.
Paige, Jeffery. 1999. "Conjuncture, Comparison, and Conditional Theory in Macrosocial Inquiry." *American Journal of Sociology* 105:781–800.
Peterson, Ivar. 1997. "After the Detroit Strike, Unions Switch Tactics." *New York Times*, March 11, p. A19.
Picard, Robert G., and Stephen Lacy. 1997. "Commentary: Lessons from the Detroit Newspaper Strike." *Newspaper Research Journal* 18:19.
Pierson, Paul. 2000. "Not Just What, but When: Timing and Sequence in Political Processes." *Studies in American Political Development* 14:72–92.
Pope, James Gray. 2002. "The Thirteenth Amendment versus the Commerce Clause: Labor and the Shaping of American Constitutional Law, 1921–1957." *Columbia Law Review* 102:1–123.
Rabin Hammell, Linda. 2006. Interview with author. Detroit, July.
Ragin, Charles C. 1987. *The Comparative Method: Moving beyond Qualitative and Quantitative Strategies*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press.
Raine, George. 2004. "Hotel Workers' Lockout Off for Now—Employer's, Union OK 60 Day Cooling-Off Period: Neighbors and Merchants Sure to Welcome Quiet during Holiday Season." *San Francisco Chronicle*, January 23. http://www.sfgate.com/. Accessed July 23, 2007.
Reder, Melvin W., and George R. Neumann. 1980. "Conflict and Contract: The Case of Strikes." *Journal of Political Economy* 88:867–86.
Rhomberg, Chris. 2004. *No There There: Race, Class, and Political Community in Oakland*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press.
———. 2005. "Class, Race and Urban Politics: The 1920s Ku Klux Klan Movement in the United States." *Political Power and Social Theory* 17:3–34.
Ridder, P. Anthony. 2005. Interview with author. San Jose, Calif., June.
Roscigno, Vincent J., and William F. Danaher. 2004. *The Voice of Southern Labor: Radio, Music, and Textile Strikes, 1929–1934*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
Rosenblum, Jonathan. 1995. *Copper Crucible: How the Arizona Miners' Strike of 1983 Recast Labor-Management Relations in America.* Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press.
Rosenfeld, Jake. 2006. "Strike Predictors in the Modern United States." Presented at the annual meeting of the American Sociological Association, Montreal, August 14.

Royster, Deirdre. 2003. *Race and the Invisible Hand: How White Networks Exclude Black Men from Blue-Collar Jobs*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press.
Rubin, Beth A. 1986. "Class Struggle American Style: Unions, Styles and Wages." *American Sociological Review* 51:618–33.
Sacharow, Anya. 1996. "Walking the Line in Detroit." *Brandweek*, July 22.
Schlagheck, Carol. 2001. "Living in the Wake of a Newspaper Strike." *Quill*, March.
Seawright, Jason, and John Gerring. 2008. "Case Selection Techniques in Case Study Research: A Menu of Qualitative and Quantitative Options." *Political Research Quarterly* 61:294–308.
Sewell, William, Jr. 1996. "Three Temporalities: Toward an Eventful Sociology." Pp. 243–80 in *The Historic Turn in the Human Sciences*, edited by Terrance McDonald. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
Shine, Neal. 2005. Interview with author. St. Clair Shores, Mich., April.
Shorter, Edward, and Charles Tilly. 1974. *Strikes in France, 1830–1968*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Simmons, Louise. 1994. *Organizing in Hard Times: Labor and Neighborhoods in Hartford*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
Skocpol, Theda. 1996. *Boomerang: Health Care Reform and the Turn against Government*. New York: W. W. Norton.
Sleigh, Stephen. 1998. *On Deadline: Labor Relations in Newspaper Publishing*. Bayside, N.Y.: Social Change Press.
Snyder, David. 1975. "Institutional Setting and Industrial Conflict: Comparative Analyses of France, Italy and the United States." *American Sociological Review* 40: 259–78.
Soskice, David. 1999. "Divergent Production Regimes: Coordinated and Uncoordinated Market Economies in the 1980s and 1990s." Pp. 101–34 in *Continuity and Change in Contemporary Capitalism*, edited by Herbert Kitschelt, Peter Lange, Gary Marks, and John Stephens. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
St. Louis, James. 2005. Interview with author. Detroit, May.
Streeck, Wolfgang, and Kathleen Thelen. 2005. "Introduction: Institutional Change in Advanced Political Economies." Pp. 1–39 in *Beyond Continuity: Institutional Change in Advanced Political Economies*, edited by Wolfgang Streeck and Kathleen Thelen. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Sugrue, Thomas J. 1996. *The Origins of the Urban Crisis: Race and Inequality in Postwar Detroit*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press.
Taylor, John. 2008. "The Detroit Newspaper Strike: A Template for Employers on Preparing for and Operating during a Labor Strike." *Labor Law Journal* 59:166–89.
Thelen, Kathleen. 2004. *How Institutions Evolve: The Political Economy of Skills in Germany, Britain, the United States, and Japan*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Thomas, June Manning. 1989. "Detroit: The Centrifugal City." Pp. 142–60 in *Unequal Partnerships: The Political Economy of Urban Redevelopment in Postwar America*, edited by Gregory Squires. New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press.
Turner, Lowell. 1991. *Democracy at Work: Changing World Markets and the Future of Labor Unions*. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press.
Turner, Lowell, and Daniel Cornfield. 2007. *Labor in the New Urban Battlegrounds: Local Solidarity in a Global Economy*. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University/ILR Press.
Turner, Lowell, Harry Katz, and Richard Hurd. 2001. *Rekindling the Movement: Labor's Quest for Relevance in the 21st Century*. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University/ILR Press.
U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. 2009. "Major Work Stoppages in 2008." Table 1: Work Stoppages Involving 1,000 or More Workers, 1947–2008. http://www.bls.gov/news.release/archives/wkstp_02112009.pdf.

U.S. District Court. 1997. *Mahaffey, et al. v. Detroit Newspaper Agency, et al.* No. 95-CV-75724. Class Action Complaint. Eastern District of Michigan, Southern Division, Detroit.
———. 2000. *Solomon v. City of Sterling Heights, et al.* No. 98-CV-73900. Trial Transcript. Eastern District of Michigan, Southern Division, Detroit.
U.S. Kerner Commission. 1968. *Report of the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders*. New York: Bantam Books.
Vega, Frank. 2004. Interview with author. Detroit, October.
Wallace, Michael, Beth A. Rubin, and Brian T. Smith. 1988. "American Labor Law: Its Impact on Working-Class Militancy, 1901–1980." *Social Science History* 12:1–29.
Wallerstein, Michael, and Bruce Western. 2000. "Unions in Decline? What Has Changed and Why." *Annual Review of Political Science* 3:355–77.
Warner, W. Lloyd, and Josiah Orne Low. 1947. *The Social System of the Modern Factory: The Strike; A Social Analysis*. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press.
Warren, Mark. 2001. *Democracy and Association*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press.
Webb, Crawford. 2006. Interview with author. Detroit, July.
Wenner, Kathryn. 2001. "Whither the Guild?" *American Journalism Review* 23:46–49.
Western, Bruce. 1997. *Between Class and Market: Postwar Unionization in the Capitalist Democracies*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press.