

## Gender and Labour Disputes: Perspectives Past and Present

Conference, Nuremberg, Germany, 21/22 March 2019

Historically, and to this day, earning a living through paid work, as a form of socialisation, has been permeated by relationships of dominance and power, giving rise to substantial potential for conflict. The planned conference will aim to highlight aspects of societal and historical change through gender-sensitive analysis of disputes and conflicts in and around paid work. Both collectively organised forms of labour disputes, such as strikes called by unions, and more individual, decentralised types of conflict fall within the scope of the conference.

Traditionally, research in the social sciences has focused on the adversarial relationship between labour and capital. More recent work has driven the emergence of substantial differentiation and diversification in regard to this question. In a process commencing in the 1970s, feminist researchers have identified and theorised the gendering of labour, engaging in interdisciplinary discourse around the issue and creating links to critiques of capitalism, colonialism and bourgeois society and to a broad range of categories of social inequality including class, ethnic origin and sexual orientation. This work has made us aware of the need for intersectional perspectives in approaching the issue. In observing processes of gendering around labour disputes, we need likewise to take account of symbolic representations in media such as literature, film and images, which have documented and may influence the ways in which those engaged in labour disputes perceive their struggle, and of their development over time.

A survey of the current state of research on the gender(ed) aspect of labour disputes reveals a substantial, albeit complex field of theories, ideas, empirical studies and historical work, which suffers from limitations in terms of the disciplines addressing the topic. This field is the starting point for the proposed conference on 'Gender and Labour Disputes: Perspectives Past and Present'. The conference will seek to map this field as it is now, bring the discourse up to date and further its development. Centring its considerations on the three key ideas of interdisciplinarity, international comparison and theory-driven synthesis, the conference will invite international researchers and other relevant stakeholders from arenas such as trade unions to present for discussion their empirical work and theoretical reflections on the subject.

We hope to receive proposals for contributions to the conference that apply perspectives from a range of disciplines, particularly sociology, political science, economics, cultural studies, history and history education, gender and LGBTQ studies, media studies and cultural anthropology. We welcome presentations, in German or English, on topics including, but not limited to, the following:

- Gendered issues of dispute and forms of protest; the relevance of gender-specific organisational structures of labour in cases of industrial dispute; gender-specific circumstances and capacity for agency in relation to strike action and willingness to engage therein; related trade union attitudes.
- Gender in industrial relations and its implications for labour disputes: examples may include androcentrism in trade unions or low prevalence or impact of trade union representation in female-dominated areas of work.
- New forms of labour disputes in feminised service industries; labour-related inter- or intra-gender conflicts within distinct social classes.

- The role of gendered identities in, and the implications for, labour disputes and labour-related struggles: the production, institutionalisation and variation of gender differences in the context of (historical) shifts in power relations between capital and labour and the transformation of the world of work and the relevant historical actors' perceptions of these differences.
- A gender perspective on the significance in labour disputes of groups, actors and advocacy organisations outside trade unions and arising from civil society initiatives.
- Relationships of interdependency between reproductive labour/gender-specific divisions of labour and conflicts pertaining to paid work.
- Representations of labour disputes and gender in the media and culture, particularly historical culture: gendered framing of labour disputes, for instance in images of 'heroic' industrial struggle with masculine connotations; historically-based explorations of predominant patterns of, and controversies over, interpretation in films, historical novels, museums, textbooks, digital media.
- Historical aspects of the gendered cultural memory of industrial disputes held by specific groupings such as trade unions or particular industries or parties to a conflict.
- Comparative international analysis of labour disputes, particularly in relation to German-speaking countries and regions, the UK, France and Italy.

We hope to hear from researchers from a range of disciplines who have conducted, or are currently conducting, research projects or studies of outstanding significance on topics of interest to the conference. We will also welcome reflections, with a theoretical emphasis, from stakeholders in the field, such as trade union workers or members of women's industrial associations. We plan to publish selected conference proceedings. Limited funds for support with travel and accommodation expenses are available.

The conference organisers are Prof. Dr. Ingrid Artus (Institute of Sociology, FAU Erlangen-Nürnberg), Nadja Bennewitz (Department of Teaching History, FAU Erlangen-Nürnberg), Prof. Annette Henninger (Department of Political Science, Philipps Universität Marburg), Judith Holland (Institute of Sociology, FAU Erlangen-Nürnberg), Prof. Annette Keilhauer (Institute of Romance Studies/spokesperson, Interdisciplinary Centre for Gender, Difference and Diversity (IZGDD), FAU Erlangen-Nürnberg) and Dr Stefan Kerber-Clasen (Department of Socioeconomics, Universität Hamburg).

We invite you to submit an abstract of approximately one page in length, including the title of your proposed paper, an outline of its key question/s and methodology, information (where relevant) on the corpora of data or sources on which you will be drawing, and a brief discussion of the paper's theoretical context, to [claudia.figalist@fau.de](mailto:claudia.figalist@fau.de) and [ingrid.artus@fau.de](mailto:ingrid.artus@fau.de). Please submit your abstract in PDF format. The closing date for receipt of abstracts is 31 August 2018.