AC-Stock

**I Affirm**

**Definitions:**

**Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica, [The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica, “Strike”, Encyclopaedia Britannica, https://www.britannica.com/topic/strike-industrial-relations ] /Triumph Debate**

**Strike**, **collective refusal by employees to work under the conditions required by employers.** **Strikes arise for a number of reasons**, though principally in response to economic conditions (defined as an **economic strike** and **meant to improve wages and benefits**) or **labour practices (intended to improve work conditions**). Other **strikes can stem from sympathy with other striking unions or from jurisdictional disputes between two unions.** Illegal **strikes include sit-down strikes, wildcat strikes, and partial strikes (such as slowdowns or sick-ins). Strikes may also be called for purely political reasons (as in the general strike).**

#### **Merriam-Webster**

**[“Definition of Recognize”, Merriam-Webster Dictionary, https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/recognize ] /TriumphDebate**

Definition of **recognize** transitive verb 1: **to acknowledge formally**: such as a: to admit as being lord or sovereign b: to admit as being of a particular status c: to admit as being one entitled to be heard : give the floor to d: to acknowledge the de facto existence or the independence of 2: to acknowledge or take notice of in some definite way: such as a: to acknowledge with a show of appreciation recognize an act of bravery with the award of a medal b: to acknowledge acquaintance with recognize a neighbor with a nod

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**The value is justice**

**The criterion is minimizing structural violence**

1. Structural violence is based in moral exclusion, which is fundamentally flawed because exclusion is based on arbitrarily perceived differences.

**Winter and Leighton 99**|Deborah DuNann Winter and Dana C. Leighton. Winter|~Psychologist that specializes in Social Psych, Counseling Psych, Historical and Contemporary Issues, Peace Psychology. Leighton: PhD graduate student in the Psychology Department at the University of Arkansas. Knowledgable in the fields of social psychology, peace psychology, and justice and intergroup responses to transgressions of justice~ &quot;Peace, conflict, and violence: Peace psychology in the 21st century.&quot; Pg 4-5 acessed 7/20/2019

Finally, to recognize the operation of structural violence forces us to ask questions about how and why we tolerate it, questions which often have painful answers for the privileged elite who unconsciously support it. A final question of this section is how and why we allow ourselves to be so oblivious to structural violence. Susan Opotow offers an intriguing set of answers, in her article Social Injustice. She argues that our normal perceptual/cognitive processes divide people into in-groups and out-groups. Those outside our group lie outside our scope of justice. Injustice that would be instantaneously confronted if it occurred to someone we love or know is barely noticed if it occurs to strangers or those who are invisible or irrelevant. We do not seem to be able to open our minds and our hearts to everyone, so we draw conceptual lines between those who are in and out of our moral circle. Those who fall outside are morally excluded, and become either invisible, or of [lesser worth ] demeaned in some way so that we do not have to acknowledge the injustice they suffer. Moral exclusion is a human failing, , but Opotow argues convincingly that it is an outcome of everyday social cognition. To reduce its nefarious effects, we must be vigilant in notic ing and listening to oppressed, invisible, outsiders . Inclusionary thinking can be fostered by relationships, communication, and appreciation of diversity. Like Opotow, all the authors in this section point out that structural violence is not inevitable if we become aware of its operation, and build systematic ways to mitigate its effects

1. Institutionalized biases cloud our view of what is morally right and what is not. We need to see things from all perspectives in order to have a clear and coherent moral discussion.

**Mills 05** The crucial common claim—whether couched in terms of ideology and fetishism, or androcentrism, or white normativity—is that all [moral] theorizing, both moral and nonmoral, takes place in an intellectual realm dominated by concepts, assumptions, norms, values, and framing perspectives that reflect the experience and group interests of the privileged group (whether the bourgeoisie, or men, or whites). So a simple empiricism will not work as a cognitive strategy; one has to be self-conscious about the concepts that “spontaneously” occur to [us] one, since many of these concepts will not arise naturally but as the result of social structures and hegemonic ideational patterns. In particular, it will often be the case that dominant concepts will obscure certain crucial realities, blocking them from sight, or naturalizing them, while on the other hand, concepts necessary for accurately mapping these realities will be [are] absent. Whether in terms of concepts of the self, or of humans in general, or in the cartography of the social, it [is] will be necessary to scrutinize the dominant conceptual tools [as] and the way the boundaries are drawn. This is, of course, the burden of standpoint theory—that certain realities tend to be more visible from the perspective of the subordinated than the privileged

~~AND prefer current structural oppression over “visible” existential threats~~

**~~Nixon 11~~** ~~(Rob, Rachel Carson Professor of English, University of Wisconsin-Madison, Slow Violence and the Environmentalism of the Poor, pgs. 2-3)  
Violence [and oppression] [are] customarily conceived as an event or action that is immediate in time, explosive and spectacular in space, and as erupting into instant sensational visibil[e]ity. We need, I believe, to engage a different kind of violence, a violence that is neither spectacular nor instantaneous, but rather incremental and accretive, its calamitous repercussions playing out across a range of temporal scales. In so doing, we also need to engage the representational, narrative, and strategic challenges posed by the relative invisibility of slow violence. Climate change, the thawing cryosphere, toxic drift, biomagnification, deforestation, the radioactive aftermaths of wars, acidifying oceans, and a host of other slowly unfolding environmental catastrophes present formidable representational obstacles that can hinder our efforts to mobilize and act decisively. The long dyings-the staggered and staggeringly discounted casualties, both human and ecological that result from war's toxic aftermaths or climate change-are underrepresented in strategic planning as well as in human memory. Had Summers advocated invading Africa with weapons of mass destruction, his proposal would have fallen under conventional definitions of violence and been perceived as a military or even an imperial invasion. Advocating invading countries with mass forms of slow-motion toxicity, however, requires rethinking our accepted assumptions of violence to include slow violence. Such a rethinking requires that we complicate conventional assumptions about violence as a highly visible act that is newsworthy because it is event focused, time bound, and body bound. We need to account for how the temporal dispersion of slow violence affects the way we perceive and respond to a variety of social afflictions-from domestic abuse to posttraumatic stress, environmental calamities. A major challenge is representational: how to devise arresting stories, images, and symbols adequate to the pervasive but elusive violence of delayed effects. Crucially, slow violence is often not just attritional but also exponential, operating as a major threat multiplier; it can fuel long-term, proliferating conflicts in situations where the conditions for sustaining life become increasingly but gradually degraded.~~

**Permissibility and presumption affirm: statements are more likely to be true than false-if I say my name is Brock it’s much more likely that my name is Brock than me lying.**

**Conscience errs aff, always-lying makes you feel guilty. If the resolution wasn’t true but I claimed it was, it would be against my self interest as a rational agent because it would be causing me emotional pain.**

**Also, a right logically is unconditional-more conditions mean more opportunities for infringement. Thus only an unconditional right protects what it is trying to protect-any conditions placed mean slippery slopes and abuse. This is intuitive.**

**Contention Level**

(Advocacy: A just government must recognize the right to strike because it strengthens unions and leads to positive benefits. The right to strike is unconditional because the ability to balance power in the workplace and protect against structural harms must always be available to workers) **We are talking about a hypothetical just government and that’s why we differ from the status quo.**

* **Does not mean workers can’t enter contracts that remove their right to strike**
* **Does not mean procedural suggestions can not be in place--companies can still temporarily replace workers, we’re not prohibiting that**

**Contention 1: Worker-Employer Power Balance**

**Subpoint A) Recognizing the right to strike strengthens unions**

#### 

#### **Centralization of recognition through national legislation alleviates much of the burden from unions, and allows them to more effectively target and resolve the concerns of their members.**

**Visser, ’19** [Jelle Visser is emeritus professor of sociology at the University of Amsterdam, Published: 10/04/2019, “Trade Unions in the Balance”, International Labour Organization, [**https://www.ilo.org/actrav/pubs/WCMS\_722482/lang--en/index.htm**](https://www.ilo.org/actrav/pubs/WCMS_722482/lang--en/index.htm) ] /Triumph Debate

***In comparative studies of union membership and union density,* the institutions that contribute most to the explanation of variations across countries and over time are: organization and reach of collective bargaining, workplace representation, union administration of unemployment insurance and benefit provision** (Brady, 2007; Checchi and Visser,2005; Ebbinghaus and Visser,1999; Rasmussen and Pontusson, 2017; Scruggs and Lange, 2002; Western, 1997). All of these studies consider a selected group of about 20 advanced industrial countries with annual data going back to the 1960s or even 1950s. Here I want to explore to what degree these institutions deem the unions 'secure' and explain the variation in union density rates across the world. I begin with considering the organization and reach of collective bargaining, defining collective bargaining as centralized when at least two-third of its coverage is achieved through negotiations and agreements with employers' association rather than with single firms. When sectoral negotiations account for less than one-third of bargaining coverage, and most or all bargaining takes place at firm or enterprise level, collective bargaining is decentralized. In between we have a situation of medium centralization. I only consider bargaining that affects wages, implemented through agreements that bind firms in wage setting in substantive or procedural terms. Applying these criteria, the dataset can be divided into three categories: 44 countries with only or mainly firm-level bargaining, 19 countries with medium-level centralization and 25 countries with centralized bargaining. The mean bargaining coverage rate doubles at each step, from an average 14 per cent of all workers under decentralized bargaining, to 28 per cent under medium centralization and 65 per cent under centralization. For the remaining 52 countries, excluding China, Cuba, Belarus and some Arab countries, there is not enough data on the coverage or organization of collective bargaining. In the three groups, with centralized, partly centralized and decentralized bargaining, there is a reasonably equal distribution of countries at different levels of development. This gives some confidence that we actually identify the effects of institutions on the level of unionization. **Centralization lowers the organizing costs of trade unions. Industry-wide bargaining allows unions to establish sector-wide wages and limits the risk that 'bad' employers drive out 'good' employers. It also alleviates the need for unions to seek and gain recognition in each firm, and makes unionization of workers in small firms more feasible and less necessary. *Under centralized bargaining conditions, unions need only to organize and mobilize workers in large or strategic firms in order to set the pattern for the entire industry. Unions can therefore worry less about the unionization of workers in small firms, as long as these firms stay members in the employers' federation that sign the national or sectoral collective agreement, or as long as these agreements are legally extended to them*** (Hayter and Visser, 2018). This is one of the reasons why bargaining centralization and bargaining coverage rates are much more strongly correlated (r =0,78) than centralization and union density (r, „, =0,51) and also why the gap between unionization in large and small firms can be significant under conditions of centralized bargaining, an issue to which I shall return in the final section of this paper. ***The second institution of importance is union recognition and union access to workplace representation. This is often found to be the decisive factor, together with union involvement in the provision of unemployment or health insurance.* Uncontested workplace representation allows unions to concentrate on issues of productivity, pacify employers, and police the 'social custom' of membership through direct benefits and contacts in the workplace**. This can be regulated in different ways. In some countries like the United States or the United Kingdom, trade unions must fight for recognition on a firm-by-firm basis, showing that they represent a majority among the workers they claim to represent. In other countries such as Germany or Austria, workplace representation is indirectly guaranteed as a statutory right through the mandated works counciL Recognition can also be guaranteed by nationwide agreement between the main union and the employers' organization, as in Scandinavia. ***Compared to a statutory obligation on employers, a central agreement signed by employers raises fewer issues of compliance and may therefore be considered a stronger guarantee of union recognition and access rights. Using a simple '0' (firm-based), '1' (statutory) and '2' (agreement) coding, it turns out that recognition of union representation rights is strongly correlated to the union density rate, r,, =0,69***.

#### **Strikes can push back against monopsony power to ensure workers see the benefits of production**

**Bahn 19 [Kate Bahn, the director of labor market policy and interim chief economist at the Washington Center for Equitable Growth, August 29, 2019, “The once and future role of strikes in ensuring U.S. worker power,” The Washington Center for Equitable Growth,** [**https://equitablegrowth.org/the-once-and-future-role-of-strikes-in-ensuring-u-s-worker-power/**](https://equitablegrowth.org/the-once-and-future-role-of-strikes-in-ensuring-u-s-worker-power/)**]/Triumph Debate**

In the United States, Labor Day, which falls on the first Monday of September, is when we honor the history of the U.S. labor movement in striving for benefits and empowerment of workers across the economy**. Strikes play an important role in empowering workers vis-à-vis their employers. By withdrawing their labor power, workers are able to balance the scales against the owners of capital, who rely on workers for production and providing services.** Strikes have declined in frequency, popularity, and success over the past four decades, yet today, amid rising economic inequality, they are once again becoming an important tool in exercising worker power to ensure that the gains of profitability and economic growth can be broadly shared. The history of strikes in the United States Washington University in St. Louis sociologist Jake Rosenfeld examines the role of work stoppages in his recent book What Unions No Longer Do, and finds that strikes at large firms began declining in the mid-1970s, according to data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics’ Work Stoppages file. Rosenfeld then digs deeper to estimate the trends of strikes at firms both large and small by calculating a broader measure using data from the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service from 1984 to 2002. He finds a peak in strikes in the late 1980s and then a stark decline after. The decline of strikes is a result of a variety of factors. One is the increased use of replacement hires, especially after the PATCO strike of 1981, when President Ronald Reagan summarily fired 11,000 air traffic controllers who were striking for higher pay and a reduced work week. President Reagan quickly replaced those striking workers with 4,000 air traffic control supervisors and Army members, sending a powerful message to U.S. workers about the use of strikes in labor disputes. But even before this historic turning point, the Taft-Hartley Act of 1947 limited the ability of workers to strike. This included restrictions on secondary boycotts and picketing, both of which make striking especially difficult in today’s increasingly fissured workplace, where you cannot strike against the corporation that is at least partly responsible for your workplace conditions but not technically your direct employer. For example, workers at the franchises of McDonald’s Corporation who attempt to unionize are not protected by the Fair Labor Standards Act when picketing against McDonald’s because they are, most commonly, the employees of a franchisor, rather than of the main corporation. These factors, along with a general increasing business hostility toward unions and lack of enforcement of labor protections, have ultimately made strikes less effective as a tool for collective bargaining in the United States. Increasing interest in unions among U.S. workers today At the same time, **there is an increasing consensus** today **that unions are a positive force for increasing worker power and balancing against economic inequality. In polling of support for unions and specific aspects of collective bargaining**, Equitable Growth grantee Alex Hertel-Fernandez of Columbia University, along with William Kimball and Thomas Kochan of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, find that support for unions has grown overall, with nearly half of U.S. workers in 2018 saying they would vote for a union if given the opportunity. This is a significant increase from one-third of workers supporting unionization in 1995. According to their research, workers primarily value unions’ role in collective bargaining and ensuring access to benefits such as healthcare, retirement, and unemployment insurance. **Strikes have historically been one of the strongest tools used by unions to ensure they have power to engage in collective bargaining**. But striking was viewed as a negative attribute in the survey done by Hertel-Fernandez, Kimball, and Kochan. Yet, when they presented workers with the hypothetical choice of a union exercising strike power with other attributes of unions, such as collective bargaining, support increased. But strikes, of course, do not take place in a bubble. The wider climate of worker bargaining power and institutions that support labor organizing plays a role in making this historically crucial tool effective again. So, too, does the power of employers to resist these organizing efforts when the labor market lacks competition that would increase worker bargaining power. The role of monopsony power in the U.S. labor market Monopsony power is a situation in the labor market where individual employers exercise effective control over wage setting rather than wages being set by competitive forces (akin to monopoly power, where a limited number of firms exercise pricing power over their customers.) In a new Equitable Growth working paper by Mark Paul of New College of Florida and Mark Stelzner of Connecticut College, the role of collective action in offsetting employer monopsony power is examined in the context of institutional support for labor**.** Paul and Stelzner construct an abstract model with the assumption of monopsonistic markets and follow the originator of monopsony theory Joan Robinson’s insight that unions can serve as a countervailing power against employer power. Their **[A] model shows that institutional support for unions, such as legislation protecting the right to organize, is necessary for this dynamic process of balancing employers’ monopsony power.** In an accompanying column, the two researchers write that they “find that a lack of institutional support will devastate unions’ ability to function as a balance to firms’ monopsony power, potentially with major consequences … In turn, labor market outcomes will be less socially efficient.”

**Subpoint B) Recognizing this right leads to tangible change**

#### **The short-term strikes in the Fight for Fifteen movement have seen raises in wages and benefits for millions of workers**

**Ashby 17 [Steven Ashby, Clinical Professor at University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 2017, “Assessing the fight for fifteen movement from Chicago.” Labor Studies Journal, 42(4), 366–386.** [**https://doi.org/10.1177/0160449X17742794]/**](https://doi.org/10.1177/0160449X17742794%5d/) **Triumph Debate**

My goal in this paper is to dissect what makes the Fight for Fifteen movement special and praiseworthy; give some examples from the Fight for Fifteen movement in Chicago based on interviews and four years of conversations at Fight for Fifteen actions; add some perspective as a labor historian; and reply to left critics of the campaign.1 I will discuss the scope and duration of the campaign; its viability; the tactics of one-day strikes and civil disobedience; the degree of worker involvement and the idea of a militant minority in historical context; the role of community participation in Fight for Fifteen actions; and messaging and a media campaign.2 There has been extensive reporting, much of it listed in the endnotes, and two books on Fight for Fifteen. Beyond $15: Immigrant Workers, Faith Activists, and the Revival of the Labor Movement (New York: Penguin Random House, 2017) by Jonathan Rosenblum, the campaign director of the SeaTac Airport campaign, and The Fight for Fifteen: The Right Wage for a Working America (New York: New Press, 2016) by David Rolf, the president of the Seattle-based Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 775, make the case for the $15 an hour minimum wage and describe in detail the Seattle campaign. My view is that the movement should be honestly analyzed as it is, and not clouded by criticisms of past actions by the SEIU—which, too often, is the case. We should, for example, view Fight for Fifteen through the same lens that we view the CIO and its central leader John L. Lewis during the 1930s labor upsurge. Lewis was simultaneously a great and a deeply flawed leader, but this does not detract from our praise of the CIO in the 1930s.3 My paper is an emphatic defense of Fight for Fifteen as innovative in multiple important ways that point in the right direction for a labor movement that needs to fully resist the anti-labor onslaught. Scope and Duration **The huge scope of the movement is impressive.** In most traditional union organizing, the scope of the campaign is limited to one employer at one worksite in one city. **Fight for Fifteen, instead, seeks to organize all the fast-food workers in the downtown area of a city.** The campaign targets scores of worksites and multiple employers. (Although, over the past two years**, the movement has especially targeted McDonald’s, the industry leader with 17 percent market share, $25 billion annual sales, and the second largest private employer** in the world with more than 1.9 million employees working at 36,000 stores.) Moreover, Fight for Fifteen has organized workers in 340 U.S. cities—doubling its number from just two years ago. As the Guardian newspaper headlined about the April 15, 2015 protests involving an estimated 60,000 people, “Fight for Fifteen Swells into Largest Protest by Low Wage Workers in U.S. History.”4 The fast-food workers often refer to their movement as a continuation of the Poor Peoples’ Campaign, a national effort to unite and mobilize low-wage workers, which disintegrated after Dr. King’s assassination in 1968.5 That movement, too, had its critics within the civil rights movement and among progressives. And, recently, the campaign has spread beyond organizing the 3.7 million fast-food workers to organizing many other sectors.6 Airport workers, United Parcel Service (UPS) warehouse workers, adjunct professors, Wal-Mart workers, childcare workers, hospital workers, home healthcare aides, Brinks guards, and other low-wage workers have joined protests demanding a raise in pay and a union. The duration of the movement is praiseworthy. Most traditional union organizing campaigns are relatively brief, lasting a few months. Workers at a company get together to talk about grievances they have with their employer. They call a union for assistance. They form a worker committee to plan the union campaign and to talk to every worker about signing a union card and getting involved. They submit signed cards to the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB; or if they are public sector, to the state’s public employees’ labor board), and a union recognition vote is scheduled weeks later. Meanwhile, the worker committee has to deal with the employer’s anti-union campaign.7 A vote, administered and monitored by the labor board, is held on one day usually at the worksite. If the union gets a majority, the company is legally required to bargain a contract. If the majority of the workers who vote indicate they do not want a union, then the union staff leave, the worker committee dissolves, and often members of that committee quit their jobs.8 The Fight for Fifteen movement is not focused on a labor board-administered election. They, instead, seek to build a workers’ movement with popular support that pressures the companies to recognize the union and negotiate a contract—a strategy first pioneered by the SEIU’s Justice for Janitors campaign in the 1990s. **The strategy is in response to weak labor law that makes the election period too rigged in favor of the employer illegally intimidating and harassing workers who have signed union cards into voting against the union.** The Fight for Fifteen movement began with a one-day strike in November 2012 in New York City. To date, there have been twelve one-day walkouts, with the number of participating stores and cities steadily increasing. And there have been marches and rallies including at the McDonald’s headquarters in Oak Brook outside Chicago. While the SEIU cannot, one would assume, indefinitely fund a campaign that costs millions of dollars a year, they so far have shown no signs of withdrawing. The union said in 2012 that they were committed to a multi-year campaign, and they are fulfilling that pledge. They have spent at least $30 million on this one campaign (with some estimates as high as $70 million); recent news reports point to a $12 million expenditure in 2016 alone.9 No other union is putting these kind of resources into a multi-year organizing campaign. Viability Fight for Fifteen has won unprecedented victories. Numerous journalists have described the stunning successes of the movement, particularly in city and state minimum wage laws.10 **Fight for Fifteen boasts that ten million workers are now on the path to $15 an hour, which well exceeds the 7.1 million total private-sector union members. Nineteen million low-wage workers have gotten a raise since 2012, including** significant raises such as **hundreds of thousands who will reach $13 an hour in Chicago (by 2019) and Cook County (by 2020).** Fifty-one cities and states have raised the minimum wage since 2012, the greatest success for low-wage workers in U.S. history. Between 2012 and 2016, low-wage workers have won $61.5 billion in annual raises.11 But Fight for Fifteen activists fight for both $15 an hour and a union. The Fight for Fifteen goal is to create such bad publicity that a company such as McDonald’s chooses unionization to end the protests and to gain the positive publicity of the first fast-food chain to treat its workers with respect. There is no doubt that Fight for Fifteen’s goal is challenging to reach, and would likely have the same dramatic impact on labor relations as the victorious 1937 auto sit-down strikes had. Given the huge wage victories that Fight for Fifteen has achieved, it would be a mistake to underestimate the ability of the movement to win unionization. But it is startling that at the same time that many thousands of Fight for Fifteen activists chant “I believe that we will win,” that left-leaning professors are quoted in the press expressing pessimism that this can happen.12 We know that, responding to the movement’s pressure, **in 2016, McDonald’s raised its base wage to at least $10 an hour in all the company-owned (not franchise-owned) restaurants, and began offering one week paid vacation.** McDonald’s chief executive officer (CEO) Steve Easterbrook praised the results of the raises. He said at the company’s May 2016 stockholders’ meeting, “The improvements we made to our compensation and benefits package to employees in U.S.-company operated restaurants . . . have resulted in lower crew turnover and higher customers’ satisfaction scores.”13 At the same meeting, he also countered the idea pushed by the National Restaurant Association that raising wages would result in complete automation of the stores.14 We know that McDonald’s reported in 2017 that it has lost five hundred million customers since 2012—the year Fight for Fifteen began—and reported four straight years of declining guest counts.15 And Fight for Fifteen is exploring alternatives to traditional unionism that could still win workers a voice at work and be a path to full unionization. A bill passed by the New York City Council, for example, allows fast-food employees to use payroll deductions to contribute to a nonprofit of their choice, such as Fight for Fifteen. Employers are required to treat these deductions the same as union payroll deductions and remit the donations to the workers’ association.16 Seattle-based SEIU 775 union president David Rolf, in the conclusion to The Fight for Fifteen: The Right Wage for a Working America, suggests that “we’ll need to invent new forms of powerful, scalable, sustainable worker organizations . . . Now is the time for risk taking and experimentation in search of a new model that can replace traditional union collective bargaining.”17 Of course, there is no substitute for winning union recognition, a collective bargaining agreement, a grievance procedure that ensures workers protections against unfair discipline or firing, and the legal protections provided to union members. But as Fight for Fifteen leaders argue, there are nontraditional ways of getting there, and twenty-first century unions covering entire industries may look somewhat different than traditional twentieth century unions. Indeed, a century ago, there were two models of unionism—the AFL model that later became the norm with the passage of the 1935 National Labor Relations Act, and the Industrial Workers of the World and Knights of Labor model where any worker could join the labor movement, regardless of whether their worksite was organized, by simply signing up and paying dues. The more than two hundred workers centers, although not unions, are again popularizing this approach to membership. Fight for Fifteen compels us to bring an open mind to a discussion of what the twenty-first century American labor movement may look like. Tactics: One Day Strikes and Nonviolent Civil Disobedience The Fight for Fifteen tactics are laudable. In traditional union organizing campaigns, when the workers win a labor board-administered union recognition election, the employer must negotiate with the union over a first contract. But especially in the private sector, the employer’s anti-union campaign seldom stops. About half of all newly recognized unions fail to persuade the employer to agree to a collective bargaining agreement. In a small percentage of cases, the workers decide to strike to win a contract. But striking in America provides little legal protection, unlike in every other wealthy nation.18 As a result, the Fight for Fifteen movement has instead called a series of one-day strikes, as opposed to open-ended strikes. Under the law, employers must allow the striking workers to return to work the next day.19 The number of strikers is relatively small in most cases. Particularly in the first few strikes, often clergy and community activists in “walk backs” went into the restaurant with the returning strikers, to let the boss know that they would be watching to make sure the boss did not illegally fire the workers for exercising their right to engage in a legally protected one-day walkout. This has been very successful in Chicago. Some left critics have derided the one-day strike tactic. Former SEIU organizer Jane McAlevey, for example, writes derisively, The Fight for $15 makes workers symbolic actors in their own liberation. A strike means you’re causing and creating a significant crisis for your employer. It means 90 percent or more of the workers walk off the job . . . A strike where one worker at the fast-food company stands outside for the press conference, surrounded by every liberal clergy member in town and a bunch of great activists who you’ve Facebooked and tweeted . . . is not a strike. It’s what I call “pretend power.”20 The language here is snarky, dismissive, insulting to the workers and their activist supporters, and factually wrong. The Internet allows left critics to write derisive remarks that they would never say in person to a fast-food or other low-wage worker engaged in a one-day strike. There is nothing wrong with the tactic of short strikes. One-day or short strikes send a stronger message to management and to the public that the union members are serious, as compared with organizing only rallies and marches. Labor attorney and prolific author Robert M. Schwartz notes that “a short-term strike sends a powerful message to management, dramatizing workers’ anger and determination.”21 One-day or short strikes are less risky as management cannot hire scabs or permanent replacements for a short strike. Members cannot legally be disciplined or fired for participating. When the union offers, just as the strike begins, an unconditional return to work, management must accept.22 The Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service data show the length of some work stoppages, reporting twenty-nine one- or two-day strikes in 2015 and thirty-three in 2016. 23

**Contention 2: Marginalized groups**

#### **Unions disproportionately help those most in need, and therefore are a tool to help close the racial wealth gap.**

**Weller & Madland, ‘18 [Christian E Weller is a senior fellow at the Center for American Progress and a Professor of Public Policy at the University of Massachusetts, David Madland is a senior fellow at the Center for American Progress, Published: 9/4/18, “Union Membership Narrows the Racial Wealth Gap for Families of Color”, Center for American Progress,** [**https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/economy/reports/2018/09/04/454781/union-membership-narrows-racial-wealth-gap-families-color/**](https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/economy/reports/2018/09/04/454781/union-membership-narrows-racial-wealth-gap-families-color/) **] /Triumph Debate**

Being a union member creates a number of venues for workers to build more wealth than would be available for nonunion members.[**4**](https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/economy/reports/2018/09/04/454781/union-membership-narrows-racial-wealth-gap-families-color/#fn-454781-4) Union members bargain collectively for wages, benefits, and procedures that affect their employment, such as when and how an employer can fire an employee. As a result of being covered by a collective bargaining agreement—the contract that employers and unions regularly sign and that governs these employment-related issues—**union members have higher wages, on average; more benefits; and more stable employment than is the case for nonunion members.** Higher wages then translate into more savings in absolute terms, as well as more tax incentives to save.[**5**](https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/economy/reports/2018/09/04/454781/union-membership-narrows-racial-wealth-gap-families-color/#fn-454781-5) Furthermore, more job-related benefits—such as health insurance, defined benefit plans, and life insurance—mean that union members need to spend less money than do nonunion members to protect their families against future income losses. Therefore, they can save more money to pursue their own goals, such as paying for their children’s college education.[**6**](https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/economy/reports/2018/09/04/454781/union-membership-narrows-racial-wealth-gap-families-color/#fn-454781-6) Lastly, **union membership leads to greater employment stability and job protections that translate into longer tenures with one employer**.[**7**](https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/economy/reports/2018/09/04/454781/union-membership-narrows-racial-wealth-gap-families-color/#fn-454781-7) This employment stability translates into more savings, as union members are more likely to be eligible for key benefits such as retirement savings and can better plan for their futures.[**8**](https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/economy/reports/2018/09/04/454781/union-membership-narrows-racial-wealth-gap-families-color/#fn-454781-8) This issue brief considers the relevant data broken down by union membership separately for whites and nonwhites. The data show that: Union members have greater wealth than nonmembers, **and the difference is much larger for nonwhites than whites. From 2010 to 2016, nonwhite families who were also union members had a median wealth that was almost five times**—485.1 percent, to be exact—**as large as the median wealth of nonunion nonwhite families**.[**9**](https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/economy/reports/2018/09/04/454781/union-membership-narrows-racial-wealth-gap-families-color/#fn-454781-9) The difference between union and nonunion white families was much smaller, with the former having a median wealth that was only 139 percent that of the latter during that period. (see Table 1) Union members have higher earnings, more benefits, and more employment stability than nonunion members. Union members’ total annual earnings are between 20 percent and 50 percent greater than those of nonunion members. (see Table 2) The gap in income, benefits, and employment stability by union membership is larger for nonwhite families than for white families. The chance of having a 401(k) plan, for instance, is about 50 percent greater for nonwhite union members compared with their nonunion counterparts, but the gap among whites is only 21.7 percent. (see Table 1) The data suggest that nonwhite union members receive a particular boost in their wealth because they see larger increases in pay, benefits, and employment stability than white union members. This is primarily a result of the fact that nonwhite workers work more frequently than whites in low-paying jobs with few benefits, so they often have much more to gain.[**10**](https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/economy/reports/2018/09/04/454781/union-membership-narrows-racial-wealth-gap-families-color/#fn-454781-10) This disparity in working conditions is due to a wide array of factors, including but not limited to unequal access to education, occupational segregation, and discrimination.[**11**](https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/economy/reports/2018/09/04/454781/union-membership-narrows-racial-wealth-gap-families-color/#fn-454781-11) **Unions help all workers, and they do the most for those with less advantages. As a result, union membership can help shrink that racial gap in labor market outcomes**. And this partial equalization translates into a boost in median wealth for nonwhite union families.

#### **Unions help to raise wages, increase the chance of health insurance and retirement plans, and aid in the development of long term wealth.**

Spievack, ‘19 [Natalie Spievack is a research analyst in the Income and Benefits Policy Center at the Urban Institute, Published: 2/1/2019, “Can labor unions help close the black-white wage gap?”, Urban Institute,<https://www.urban.org/urban-wire/can-labor-unions-help-close-black-white-wage-gap> ] /Triumph Debate

**The steep decline in unionization rates among workers of all racial and ethnic groups over the past four decades has occurred in tandem with rising racial wage inequality.** *In 1983,* [*31.7 percent of black workers and 23.3 percent of the entire workforce*](http://cepr.net/publications/reports/black-workers-unions-and-inequality) *were unionized. In 2017, those numbers had fallen to* [*12.6 percent and 10.7 percent*](https://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/union2.pdf)*, respectively* (largely because of global competition, deindustrialization, and the passage of right-to-work laws in several states). *Meanwhile,* **from 1979 to 2016,**[*average hourly earnings of black men*](https://www.frbsf.org/economic-research/publications/economic-letter/2017/september/disappointing-facts-about-black-white-wage-gap/) **in the US fell from 80 percent of white male earnings to 70 percent of white male earnings***. For black women, average earnings fell from near parity with white women to 82 percent of white female earnings. Strong unions play a role in the racial wage gap largely because of* [*black workers’ overrepresentation*](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4300995/#R46) *in labor market sectors that have higher rates of union membership.* **Union jobs pay, on average,**[*16.4 percent higher wages*](http://cepr.net/publications/reports/black-workers-unions-and-inequality) *than do nonunion jobs* **because of workers’ ability to bargain collectively for higher pay, more transparent hiring and promotion policies, and heavier regulation of grievance procedures.** [*Recent research*](https://www.epi.org/publication/how-todays-unions-help-working-people-giving-workers-the-power-to-improve-their-jobs-and-unrig-the-economy/#epi-toc-10) *also finds that union membership delivers a larger wage premium to black workers than to white workers.* Hourly wages for black union workers are 14.7 percent higher than those of their nonunion counterparts, while white unionized workers make 9.6 percent higher hourly wages than do nonunionized white workers. *The impact of increased unionization on racial equality could extend beyond hourly wage increases.* [*A 2016 study*](http://cepr.net/publications/reports/black-workers-unions-and-inequality) **found that black union workers are 17.4 percentage points more likely than nonunion workers to have employer-provided health insurance and 18.3 percentage points more likely to have an employer-sponsored retirement plan, advantages that are even greater among workers with no high school degree***.* Higher union membership also narrows the racial wealth gap by supplying a [larger wealth dividend](https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/economy/reports/2018/09/04/454781/union-membership-narrows-racial-wealth-gap-families-color/)to nonwhite workers than to white workers. The increase in earnings, benefits, and employment stability afforded by union membership [translates to](https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/economy/reports/2018/09/04/454781/union-membership-narrows-racial-wealth-gap-families-color/) a higher likelihood of homeownership and larger contributions to 401(k) plans. **Between 2010 and 2016, the median wealth of nonwhite union members was nearly**[*five times greater*](https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/economy/reports/2018/09/04/454781/union-membership-narrows-racial-wealth-gap-families-color/) **than that of their nonunion counterparts, while the median wealth of white union members was only 39 percent greater than that of white nonunion workers.** *Research and history provide a compelling case for the role of strong unions in furthering economic progress for African Americans and in reducing* [*economic inequality among all Americans*](http://apps.urban.org/features/wealth-inequality-charts/)*.* That’s why conversations about the importance of unions should be not only class based but racially conscious.