

LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT RESEARCH FUND 2006

FUNDED FACULTY GRANTS AND ABSTRACTS

Eileen Boris

Professor, Women's Studies, UC Santa Barbara

Workshop/Planning/Conference Grants

Intimate Labors

We propose a two-day interdisciplinary conference on the theme of intimate labor—work that entails bodily or emotional closeness or personal familiarity, like sexual intercourse and washing genitalia, or intimate observation and knowledge of personal information, such as child care or housekeeping. Such work occurs in homes, institutions, urban spaces, and other locations. It exists along a continuum of service and caring labor, from high end nursing and low end housekeepers, and includes sex, domestic, and personal care work. Against a scholarship that considers nurses, nannies, home aides, cleaners, prostitutes, masseuses, therapists, and hostesses apart from each other, we seek to explore intimate labor as a useful category of analysis to look at current economic transformations. Through historical, ethnographical, cultural, policy, and labor force methodologies, the gathered scholars will address four interrelated themes: The Political Economy of Intimate Labor: States, Markets, and Families; Examining Globalization “From Below” through Intimate Labor Practices; Work Process and the Cultures of Intimacy: Beyond the Binary of Paid and Unpaid Labor; and The Politics of Space and Labor Organizing.

Unlike the 2002 collection *Global Woman*, we are concerned not merely with cross-talk among researchers, but with implications for worker empowerment and unionization in California and beyond. Participants will define intimate labor; interrogate its significance vis-à-vis market participation and global economic processes; evaluate relations of race, class, gender, sexuality, and citizenship; and analyze challenges and struggles in organizing workers. Invited specialists will present their own research as well as comment on work of graduate students and beginning faculty, identified through a call for papers. There will be two keynotes: Rose Ann DeMoro (California Nurses' Association) and Viviana Zelizer (Princeton), author of *The Purchase of Intimacy*. We plan an edited collection of original essays and encourage scholars to think about the implications of their research for organizing.

Linda Delp

Institute of Industrial Relations, UC Los Angeles

Workshop/Planning/Conference Grants

California's Consumer-Directed Long Term Care Workforce: A Proposal to Disseminate Multi-Disciplinary Research Results

The impending shortage of workers to meet growing long-term care needs is of increasing concern in U.S. society. California's consumer directed model of homecare – the In-Home Supportive Services program – is the largest such program in the country

and one of the few in which workers are represented by a union. This model presents challenges that result from its unique employment structure and successes that can inform policies, union organizing, and representation efforts in the long-term care arena in California and beyond.

Policies that affect consumer-directed long term care must consider the complex nature of the employment relationship – whereby government funds pay workers, consumers hire and direct the work, and the workplace is the home – as well as the importance of race, class, gender and immigration issues in this ethnically diverse, primarily female workforce. Perspectives from diverse fields of research - such as those from public health, women’s studies, ethnic, labor and employment studies, economics and urban planning - are required to inform policy decisions. This project encompasses the variety of multidisciplinary perspectives critical to decisions that will enable us as a society to meet long-term care needs while allowing for union representation and an improved standard of living for a critical segment of the workforce often trapped in low-wage, non-union jobs.

We propose a colloquium in January 2007 at which researchers from a variety of disciplines will convene to discuss research findings and policy implications with key labor, employer, consumer, and government agency stakeholders. Research results will be compiled, a policy brief developed, and briefings held in April to inform legislative initiatives and budgetary decisions. Results will also be disseminated via the website of the UC Berkeley Center for Labor Research and Education and through publication of the policy brief.

Philip Martin

Agriculture and Resource Economics

Workshop/Planning/Conference Grants

Farm Workers and Unions in California Agriculture

This proposal requests partial support for the preparation of research papers and a conference that evaluates the effects of California’s unique farm labor relations law on workers, employers, and labor markets. Most farm workers are immigrants, most fill low-wage jobs, and many are hired through labor market intermediaries, so this project includes the three LERF priority areas. We successfully collaborated with the ALRB on an “ALRA at 25” conference that drew 125 participants

(<http://migration.ucdavis.edu/cf/archives1.php?id=A2000102>). The 1975 Agricultural Labor Relations Act (ALRA) granted organizing and bargaining rights to farm workers. The ALRA was modeled on the NLRA, but included three unique features: expedited elections, a make-whole remedy for employer bad-faith bargaining, and additional power for unions to achieve solidarity. In 2002, the ALRA was amended to include mandatory mediation to guarantee a first contract within eight months of a union being certified to represent workers; its constitutionality was upheld by an appeals court in July 2006. Despite the nation’s most pro-worker labor relations law, less than five percent of the state’s farm workers are employed under union contracts. This research and policy conference assesses changes in the farm labor market and other factors that make it difficult to forge stable bargaining relationships in California agriculture. Papers will

examine the changing structure of farm employment, worker characteristics, and labor market operations, highlighting the rise of intermediaries such as labor contractors and the decline of collective bargaining in matching seasonal workers and jobs. Legal experts will prepare papers on the implementation of the law, and state officials and union and employer representatives will comment for an inclusive conference highlighting key policy issues. The conference papers will be published by the Giannini Foundation, and the results summarized in Rural Migration News (<http://migration.ucdavis.edu/rmn/index.php>) and policy briefs.

William Dow

Professor, Institute of Industrial Relations, UC Berkeley

Research And Data Generation Grant

Employer-Level Effects of an Employer Health Spending Mandate

San Francisco's newly passed Health Care Security Ordinance (SF-HCSO) has received national attention as the most far-reaching local health reform in the country, consisting of a health spending mandate on employers and the creation of a low-cost health access plan by the county. While several states have passed "pay-or-play" proposals in the last several decades, none has actually been implemented. The San Francisco policy offers an important opportunity to study the impact of a broad-based health spending requirement across a variety of metrics, including employer health benefit decisions and employee take-up. The specific aims of this project are to: • Document how employers adjust health benefit offerings in response to a pay-or-play mandate, and analyze the determinants of differential responses. • Document changing employee health insurance benefits coverage uptake across firms with varying work-force composition. • Estimate effects of the mandate on wage and employment patterns in affected firms. This project is the first stage of a larger research agenda on the effects of the SF-HCSO. This grant will enable a baseline panel survey of employers prior to the July 2007 implementation date, in order to establish data on benefits currently offered and expected responses to the ordinance. The survey will be conducted through written and telephone interviews with individuals responsible for employer benefit decisions. Several control groups will be identified, including employers in cities outside San Francisco, as well as employers in San Francisco who are either unaffected by the mandate or who are affected in a variety of ways. We will seek separate funds for longitudinal follow-ups of the baseline survey. This research will be published in peer-reviewed, academic journals and in policy briefs to be distributed to media and policy makers in San Francisco and California and other cities and states considering similar health care reforms.

Clair Brown

Professor, Economics, UC Berkeley

Research And Data Generation Grant

How Are California's High-Tech Engineers Affected by Immigration?

Large numbers of high-skilled immigrant workers have been introduced into the California and national labor pool under policies that affect higher education and temporary worker visas. The impact of these temporary workers on the labor market for

their domestic counterparts is controversial and not well understood because of data limitations and the complex heterogeneity of the high-tech job landscape. Using data from the American Community Survey and field interviews, this study will identify and analyze key sub-groups within the high-skilled workforce by industry, occupation, qualification, and region. This study will result in new understanding of issues such as the comparative returns to higher education for domestic versus immigrant students and the vulnerability of the high-tech sector to political and economic fluctuations. The study will provide valuable input to the ongoing debate over the costs and benefits of the openness of U.S. higher education and workplaces to foreign students and specialized workers.

Dana Frank

Professor, History, UC Santa Cruz

Research and Data Generation Grant

U.S. Labor and the Challenge of International Solidarity

This project examines the history and contemporary dynamics of the U.S. labor movement and international solidarity, 1870-2006, with a particular emphasis on U.S.-Latin American relations. It explores, on the one hand, the history of successful efforts to construct cross-border solidarity, both through formal and informal activities of the labor movement. Which transnational ties have been most effective? Stable? On the other hand, it explores historical and contemporary barriers to such solidarity, especially AFL-CIO interventions into Latin American labor as part of the Cold War. The book project begins with two overview articles on the history of U.S. labor internationalism: Part I, "A Moveable Feast," on the period 1870-1939; and Part II, "Containment," on the Cold War and more recent period. The third chapter zeroes in on Honduras to construct an in-depth analysis of AFL-CIO activities in Honduras, 1950-1980, using newly released AFL-CIO documents, U.S. embassy records, and extensive interviews with Honduran labor activists. Chapter 4 offers a more positive model, examining the solidarity relationships between the U.S., Europe, and the Coalition of Labor American Banana Unions. The final chapter examines the history and contemporary dynamics of consumer-labor alliances in order to explore power dynamics within solidarity movements today. This will be the first overview book on U.S. labor and international solidarity published in almost forty years. It directly addresses the challenge to California's labor movement posed by economic globalization and the need for new ties of transnational solidarity. In its emphasis on Central America, in particular, it helps explore models for ties between the large and rapidly growing Central American immigrant presence in the California labor market and labor movement, and labor history and activism in the immigrants' countries of origin.

Terry Huwe

Institute of Industrial Relations, UC Berkeley

Research and Data Generation Grant

Digitization of the California Labor Federation, AFL-CIO, Proceedings and Papers, Phase I

This proposed research will enable the first phase of the creation of a digital repository of twentieth century labor resources, which fan outward from the proceedings of the California Labor Federation, AFL-CIO (CalFed). The project would enable the digitization of CalFed's full run of proceedings, constitutions, legislative voting records and other internal documents. These in turn will be matched with digitized files from the Institute of Industrial Relations Library's (IIRL's) Non-Book Collection—which is a well-indexed, high quality collection of reports, theses, government documents and union publications, all of which are organized by industry and topic. The resulting archive will be accessible to all researchers with Internet access. The second phase, to be pursued in future funding cycles, would expand the scope of the archive, drawing more deeply on IIRL's Non Book Collection and other resources.

The proceedings of the CalFed will be an anchor around which related materials, many of them primary in nature, will fall into order. CalFed's will be scanned, with any gaps in coverage to be filled from the Institute of Industrial Relations Library's collection. At the same time, IIRL's Non Book Collection will be analyzed and cross-referenced with the chronological record as recorded in the proceedings, and materials will be selected for scanning. A Web archive will be created, which will reside within the UC digital sphere. A Finding Aid will reside in the Online Archive of California (OAC) and point directly at each item with the collection. The Finding Aid will enable broad searching of the collection, providing a high quality user experience. The phase one digital archive will present an overview of California labor history for the entire twentieth century, and will be preserved under the guidelines of the California Digital Library's Digital Preservation Repository.

Lori Kletzer

Professor, Economics, UC Santa Cruz

Research and Data Generation Grant

The Scope of Tradable Services and the Task Content of Offshorable Services Jobs

Services offshoring, the migration of jobs (but not the people performing them) across national borders (mostly from rich countries to poor ones), has received considerable attention since 2000. Building from an ongoing project that has identified occupations that are potentially tradable (and therefore potentially offshorable), this project focuses on the content of jobs, to develop measures of the occupational job tasks, activities and characteristics associated with potential offshoring. The literature on offshoring notes that movable jobs are those with: little face-to-face customer contact; high information content, work process is internet enabled and/or telecommutable. One ultimate goal is an estimate of the size and scope of potential services offshoring, developed from an understanding of the type of work that is movable. This project is an attempt to bring these basic principles of the characteristics of potentially offshorable jobs to detailed microdata on occupational employment and wages. Detailed information on the content and context of jobs (occupations) is available from O*Net, a U.S. Department of Labor database of 450 occupations. O*Net contains detailed qualitative information on job tasks, work activities (interacting with computers, processing information), and work context (face-to-face discussions, work with others, work outdoors). The descriptive categories of O*Net (tasks, tools and technology, work activities, work context) must be

searched, individually, for parallels with offshorability characteristics. In ongoing preliminary work metrics and concordances are being developed across a number of “test” occupations. These test occupations are both tradable (telemarketers, computer programmers) and nontradable (survey and mapping technicians, social workers). Ultimately, a categorization of occupational offshorability can be mapped into Bureau of Labor Statistics occupational employment data to determine an estimate of the number of jobs at risk of offshoring. In addition, the job task content predictions of offshorability will be compared to the estimates derived from my method of geographical concentration.

John Rogers

Professor, Education, UC Los Angeles
Research and Data Generation Grant

Building Power by Improving Schools: Engaging Organized Labor in Educational Reform

This study explores efforts by SEIU Local 1877 in Los Angeles to engage in educational reform as a strategy for (1) building power and capacity of both the union and its members and (2) expanding educational opportunity for the children of union members. The great majority of 1877 members are parents of children concentrated in a small number of Los Angeles County public schools that provide fewer resources than most other schools in California. Over the last two years, a partnership has emerged between 1877 and UCLA researchers aimed at positioning the union and its members as agents in improving their children’s schools. In the next phase of our work, we plan to: a) develop a profile of 1877 members and the schools their children attend; b) examine 1877 members’ involvement in their children’s schools and their interest in school reform; c) document the emerging engagement of 1877 members in school reform; d) explore how this engagement influences the beliefs and actions of various sectors of labor and community groups. This study draws on a random sample survey of 1877 membership in Los Angeles County, publicly available data on the schools attended by 1877 member children, and an array of qualitative data. In addition to the survey, we will conduct periodic interviews and focus groups with 1877 members, organizers, and leaders and representatives from other unions and community groups interested in educational reform. We will also gather data through participant observations at a variety of educational reform meetings. The findings from this project will be disseminated to researchers, union representatives, and community and advocacy groups engaged in educational reform. We plan to produce ‘translations’—pamphlets, booklets, reports—of this research to make it accessible to a wide and diverse audience of readers.

Sean Farhang

Professor, Public Policy, UC Berkeley
Research and Data Generation Grant

Private Litigation, Public Regulation, and Equal Employment Opportunity

Equal employment opportunity laws are substantially implemented in the United States through the statutory creation of opportunities and incentives for private enforcement

litigation by aggrieved employees, while formal administrative powers to implement these laws are relatively weak, and, by and large, quite modestly funded. My project is comprised of two linked questions. First, is this approach to regulating discrimination in the workplace effective in mobilizing private enforcement litigation, and if so are different categories of workers (such as highly compensated workers versus low wage workers) differentially affected under this approach to implementation? To answer this question, I seek grant assistance to support construction of a dataset that will reflect patterns of litigation across all types of employment discrimination claims (race, gender, disability, etc.), including, but not limited to: (1) the type of position held by the plaintiff (service sector laborer, public sector clerical, executive, etc.), (2) the nature of the claims asserted (termination, harassment, or wage claims, etc.); (3) whether the plaintiff was below the minimum wealth threshold for waiver of the filing fee, (4) whether the plaintiff was represented by counsel or proceeded without counsel, and (5) how extensively the case was actually prosecuted. Second, is enforcement litigation effective in driving efforts by employers to improve compliance with antidiscrimination laws? I have designed an organizational survey which collects information on what anti-discrimination policies organizations have and when they were adopted, including measures of resources actually expended on compliance efforts. I seek grant assistance to help fund the administering of this extensive survey to a large random sample of organizations in the United States. Paired with data on employment discrimination litigation rates, the survey data will allow testing of the efficacy of private litigation in driving policy change in the American workplace intended to promote equal employment opportunity.

Enrico Moretti

Professor, Economics, UC Berkeley
Research and Data Generation Grant

Social Interactions, Peer Effects and Optimal Workplace Diversity: Evidence from California Supermarket Workers

We will empirically investigate how workers influence each other. We will explore how and why the productivity of a worker varies as a function of the productivity of her co-workers. In particular, we will study the productivity of cashiers in a California supermarket chain. We use scanner data to develop a high-quality measure of productivity. Over a two year period, we observe the number of items scanned by each worker in each transaction, and the exact length of the transaction. We define individual productivity as the number of items scanned per second. Our analysis will center on three questions. First, how does the introduction of a high productivity worker affect the productivity of her co-workers? We have found preliminary evidence of positive productivity spillovers. Our preliminary findings indicate that the spillover is large for workers with below average productivity, and is small for workers with above average productivity. Second, we will investigate the consequences of such spillovers for workplace diversity. If the magnitude of the spillover effect varies depending on the skill level of the relevant worker---as it suggested by our preliminary findings---then there are significant consequences for the optimal workplace diversity. In particular, if the spillover is large for workers with below average productivity, and is small for workers with above average productivity, it implies that the optimal mix of workers in a given

shift is the one that maximizes skill diversity. Overall productivity is higher when high skill and low skill employees work together in the same shift, compared to the case where they work in separate shifts. Finally, we will try to identify the mechanisms that lead to such spillovers. We seek to distinguish between specific forms of peer effects that could be at work, including “social pressure”, “mutual monitoring”, and “contagious enthusiasm.”

David Fitzgerald

Professor, Sociology, UC San Diego

Research and Data Generation Grant

Race, Capital, and Immigrant Labor in the Americas

What explains patterns of racial and national origin preferences in immigration and citizenship policy in the Americas over the last 150 years? “Domestic” perspectives point to struggles between capital and organized labor, ideologies of immigration, or economic conditions within a country. “World economy” perspectives locate the source of policy change outside the nation-state in the dynamics of global capitalism. “Diffusionists” argue that international norms and the policy models of other countries drive change. This study will systematically test those propositions by creating an original database of racial and national origin preferences in the immigration and citizenship laws since 1850 of the 22 major countries of the Americas. A statistical analysis of the time series data will test the extent to which specific domestic or international conditions explain levels of racialization in those policies. The quantitative analysis will be complemented by case studies (based on archival materials and the secondary literature) of the five primary countries of immigration—the United States, Canada, Argentina, Brazil, Cuba—and Mexico as a negative instance of a country that sought, but failed to attract, mass immigration. We hypothesize that the diffusion of the U.S. model explains the early racialization of policies better than domestic conditions. Against prevailing theories arguing that deracialization is an inherent feature of liberal states, the deracialization of policies in the Americas was primarily caused by anti-racist ideologies that took root in authoritarian Latin American regimes a generation before the United States and Canada. The long time frame and cross-country comparisons will suggest several lessons for understanding contemporary immigration policy, including whether the contemporary stance against racist exclusion is historically contingent, how policies that do not overtly discriminate by race are used to achieve the same goals, and alternative policy models for incorporating immigrant labor in the United States.

John Quigley

Professor, Public Policy, UC Berkeley

Research and Data Generation Grant

Housing, Commuting and Working Families: Affordability Conditions in Metropolitan Areas

We propose to examine the housing and transport tradeoffs experienced by worker households of varying socioeconomic characteristics. We seek to identify linkages between housing expenditures, employment, transportation choice, and a variety of

measures of the quality of life of American working families. The analysis will first utilize a coordinated dataset on housing and transport tradeoffs, covering 287 Primary Metropolitan Statistical Areas (PMSAs), generated from the Public Use Micro Sample (PUMS) across the 1990 and 2000 decennial census surveys. This baseline data will be enhanced by matched observations at the metro level drawn from varied sources, such as the US Office of Federal Housing Enterprise Oversight (OFHEO) [housing prices], the Department of Transportation Section 15 reports [transit availability], the Census Transportation Planning Package [commute flows], and indices from the labor and employment and public policy literatures [e.g., wage growth indicators, sprawl measures, urban density indexes]. The resulting analysis will address the following key questions, among others: 1) How do housing/commute expenditure tradeoffs vary regionally with the US? 2) How do such tradeoffs compare in cities with high and growing housing prices? 3) How do housing and commute choices relate to congestion conditions on highways and transit? 4) Do these regional conditions correspond to observed federal, state, and local policy choices and their intended effects on working families? The proposed research intends to innovate methodologies to analyze these and other questions, and to generate findings which will help inform policy design at various jurisdictional levels.

Emmanuel Saez

Professor, Economics, UC Berkeley
Research and Data Generation Grant

The Effects of Tax and Transfer Information on Labor Supply Behavior: Evidence from a Field Experiment with H&R Block

Some empirical studies suggest that the labor supply of lower-income taxpayers is quite sensitive to tax/transfer programs, while others find very small behavioral responses. Since the efficiency cost of redistribution to lower-income households through existing programs depends centrally on these parameters, understanding the source of the discrepancies in estimates is an important academic and public policy issue. An intriguing explanation for the discrepancy among estimates is that individuals might not always be fully aware or informed about tax and transfer programs. As a result, the size of the response might depend on how well informed individuals are. We propose an experiment to test whether increasing information about specific credits such as the Earned Income Tax Credit can affect labor supply and earnings. If information is shown to matter for labor supply, our finding could help reconcile the discrepancy across existing estimates. It will also imply that how much information individuals have about their budget set is a central aspect of the labor supply decision. This could change radically how labor supply studies will be done in the future and start a new field of behavioral studies analyzing how information affects labor supply. The results could also have major implications for policy design because they would imply that policy makers need to think hard about how features of the tax and transfer system are communicated, in addition to the structure of tax rates.

Francesca Mazzolari

Professor, Economics, UC Irvine

Research and Data Generation Grant

Increasing Top Wages and the Growth of Low-Quality Jobs: An Analysis at the Local Labor Market Level

The fact that in the 1980s hourly wages grew more for the middle- and most-skilled workers than for the least-skilled has been extensively documented. In the past 15 years the highest wage growth still took place at the top end of the distribution, but recently available evidence shows that hourly wages grew more on average at the bottom of the distribution than in the middle. In this project, we uncover an explanation for the recent relative dynamics of low-skill wages.

We argue that low-skill labor outcomes have become more dependent on the physical proximity of high-skilled workers and the evolution of their wages. The intuition is that, in response to rises in their hourly wages, high-wage earners should increase their hours of work in the market. This should in turn lead to a rise in their demand for labor intensive services that are increasingly performed by low-skill workers. The appropriate level of analysis of these effects is a local labor market. The project will include a model that develops this idea, and extensive tests for its empirical implications. We have already found evidence that hours worked have disproportionately increased for high-skill workers, and that employment of the least skilled is increasingly concentrated in the non-tradeable sector. We will use data from the decennial censuses to study whether, as expected, employment and wage growth of the least-skilled workers has been higher in those cities where the wage and labor supply growth of the most-skilled has been higher. The wage dynamics will depend on supplyside and institutional factors as well (e.g., immigrant influxes and state minimum wage laws).

The study will help policymakers understand which factors affect the relative labor outcomes of low-skill workers. For instance, unveiling that low-skill employment is increasingly dependent on physical proximity to high-wage earners would call for the need of government interventions aimed at boosting the socio-economic diversity of local communities.

Sylvia Guendelman

Professor, Public Health, UC Berkeley

Research and Data Generation Grant

Balancing Work and Family: The Relationship between Pre and Postpartum Maternity Leave Arrangements and Breastfeeding

Among mothers with a child under one year, over half are employed. Breast milk is considered the best nutrition for babies, but balancing breastfeeding and employment is a challenge for working women. California has been at the forefront of legislation that encourages employers to facilitate breastfeeding. Far less attention has been given to the potential contribution of maternity leave policies and the role of taking time off prior to and after delivery in enhancing breastfeeding-compatible lifestyles and increasing milk supply.

This proposal seeks to examine the relationship between maternity leave arrangements, workplace characteristics and breastfeeding initiation and duration among working women in Southern California. Data will be obtained from *Juggling Life and Work*

During Pregnancy, a case-control study conducted in Orange, Imperial and San Diego counties between 2002-03, and weighted to account for study design. Approximately 1,200 women who had worked ≥ 20 hours per week during the first two trimesters of pregnancy and delivered singletons, agreed to participate in a 45-minute postpartum telephone interview. The interview, conducted one to 6.5 months postpartum, queried participants about breastfeeding initiation and duration; occupational characteristics; work and family stressors and other stressful life events; socio-demographic characteristics; obstetric risks and birth outcomes.

This project will enhance our understanding of how maternity leave arrangements may contribute to balancing work and family by empowering mothers to succeed at breastfeeding, increasing duration of lactation, and helping infants get a healthy start in life. It will also identify those vulnerable groups more likely to benefit from existing leave policies available in California. Since California leads the nation in its efforts to provide paid maternity leave, findings from our study may inform policymakers and stakeholders on the opportunities that maternity leave can provide to pregnant working women who plan to breastfeed their infants both here and in other states.

Katherine Stone

Law School, UC Los Angeles

Research and Data Generation Grant

Globalization and Flexibilization: A Comparative Study of the Impact of the Changing Nature of Work on Employment Regulation

I propose to write a book about the relationship between globalization of production and changes in the nature of work in several developed countries, and compare each country's domestic regulatory responses. The book, tentatively titled *Globalization and Flexibilization: How the Changing Nature of Work is Reshaping Employment Regulation*, will describe the drive for flexibility in employment relations in Japan, Australia, and the European Union, (with particular attention to France, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom), and show how the pressure for flexibilization is undermining domestic systems of employment protection. Each of the countries to be studied has developed its own distinctive labor relations system over the past century, yet all are facing similar pressures to revise their labor relations systems. I will show how each country is addressing similar problems caused by the changing nature of work, yet is doing so in different ways. My thesis is that while flexibility has different manifestations in each context, it has several common features. First, the drive for flexibility in labor relations is a response to the pressures generated by the new-liberal institutions of world trade that fostered and defined the globalization in production in the late twentieth century. Second, the impact of flexibilization at the domestic level is a shifting of employment-related risks from firms to individuals. Third, flexibilization has led to the deterioration of the bargaining power of workers both individually and collectively. And finally, flexibilization has led to a widening of income disparities. My study will demonstrate the connection between flexibilization and globalization, and argue that the particular global trading regimes that have been instituted in recent years have fostered the spread of a form of flexibilization that has generated inequality and hastened the

demise of national systems for worker protection. I will compare and evaluate the differing policy responses.

Ellen Reese

Professor, Sociology, UC Riverside
Research and Data Generation Grant

Can Social Forum Participation Help to Revitalize the U.S. Labor Movement?

Initially organized by the Brazilian labor movement and the landless peasant movement in 2001, the World Social Forum (WSF) has quickly become the largest international gathering of participants in, and supporters of, grassroots social movements. Social Forums are an “open space” where a variety of social actors--activists, policy experts, students, intellectuals, journalists, and artists—from around the world, or particular regions, can meet, exchange ideas, and coordinate actions. The 2005 meeting of the WSF drew 155,000 registered participants from 135 countries. Meanwhile, hundreds of regional, thematic, and local Social Forums have spread, particularly within Latin America and Western Europe. Social Forums are slower to develop within the U.S., but have been held in Boston, Milwaukee, Dallas, and Raleigh. In June 2007, Atlanta will host the first U.S. Social Forum and plans are currently underway for a Los Angeles Social Forum.

Many labor scholars and activists view transnational and labor-community coalitions as crucial to the revitalization of the U.S. labor movement and its capacity to overcome the challenges it currently faces. Our research examines whether, and under what conditions, U.S. labor activists’ participation in the 2007 WSF in Nairobi, Kenya and the 2007 USSF in Atlanta, Georgia contribute to the development of these kinds of coalitions using in-depth interviews with labor activists participating in these events and field observations of WSF and USSF workshops led by labor activists. In addition, we plan to conduct surveys with over 600 participants of the 2007 WSF and over 600 participants of the 2007 USSF meetings. Using quantitative methods, we will use this survey data to explore how participants involved in the labor movement differ in terms of their social characteristics and political views from participants involved in other kinds of social movements. We will also examine differences in the views and characteristics of self-identified working class participants and those who are middle-class or upper-class. Combining information from our survey results from the 2007 WSF (which will mainly involve Africans), the 2007 USSF (which will mainly attract U.S. residents), and our prior survey results of 639 participants of the 2005 WSF meeting in Porto Alegre, Brazil (most of whom were South American), we will explore regional differences among labor activists and among working class participants of these meetings. Our findings will have important implications in terms of understanding the challenges of, and opportunities for, building international solidarity among workers and strengthening labor-community alliances as well as how to make Social Forums more inclusive of, and beneficial to, organized labor and working class communities.

Peter Evans

Professor, Sociology, UC Berkeley
Research and Data Generation Grant

Building Public Data on Global Corporations and Labor Rights Campaigns

Researchers trying to better understand the effects of global corporate strategies on workers rights and bargaining abilities need accessible, systematic data on global corporate structures and strategies. Despite widespread interest among both researchers and activists, there is no publicly accessible, general repository of data which can provide non-corporate stakeholders with the kind of strategic information that they need in order to strengthen rights at work and to help build alliances of workers and communities affected by transnational practices. Given current technologies and the range of primary data sources available it is clearly possible to move beyond the current patchwork of information available to researchers and advocates. Working together with a variety of NGO's and labor organizations, we propose to move the process of systematizing access to diverse sources of relevant corporate data forward by initiating a prototype, moderated "wiki" site, designed to be useful and user-friendly, for researchers, labor organizations and NGO's alike. This database will be of value to researchers around the world studying global supply chains, out-sourced production and management, and innovative responses and strategies to advance labor rights. The proposed project is the product of over two years of on-going discussions with various interested groups, a number of which have already generated substantial sets of relevant data. The project will directly support research initiatives related to advancing worker rights in California. The great advantage of a "wiki" model is that once launched it is capable of self-sustained growth, creating a potential for disproportionate impact on the larger collective enterprise of generating publicly accessible, strategically useful data.

Christopher Carpenter

Professor, Business, UC Irvine

Research and Data Generation Grant

Disparities in Health Insurance Coverage of Gay and Lesbian Adults in California: Early Evidence on California's Domestic Partner Law AB205

Disparities in access to health care and health outcomes related to sexual orientation are well documented, and elimination of these disparities has been identified as a major public health goal by Healthy People 2010 – the nation's health promotion and disease prevention initiative. However, the causes of these disparities are not well understood. A low rate of insurance coverage among sexual minorities is commonly cited as a primary reason for their reduced access, though there is very little empirical evidence on this issue. AB205, which went into effect in January 2005, grants same-sex domestic partners in California many of the same rights and responsibilities as heterosexual married couples. An important component of the law is that it requires employers to extend health benefits to their employees' same-sex domestic partners in the same way that they provide such benefits to legally married spouses. This study will use the 2001-2005 California Health Interview Surveys (CHIS) and the 1997-2005 Los Angeles County Health Surveys (LACHS) to examine the extent and nature of sexual-orientation based disparities in health insurance coverage among adults in California. Both of these data sets are unique in that they contain information on health insurance coverage, partnership status, and self-reported sexual orientation for a large sample of individuals. We will also

provide the first preliminary evidence on the effects of AB205 on partnership rates, labor supply, health insurance coverage, and health outcomes using a standard differences in differences approach. Our results will have important implications for the effectiveness of “civil union” type policies considered by several states to reduce disparities in health associated with sexual orientation.