

# Dynamics of Virtual Work

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Technological change has transformed where people work, when and how. Digitisation of information has altered labour processes out of all recognition whilst telecommunications have enabled jobs to be relocated globally. ICTs have also enabled the creation of entirely new types of 'digital' or 'virtual' labour, both paid and unpaid, shifting the borderline between 'play' and 'work' and creating new types of unpaid labour connected with the consumption and co-creation of goods and services. This affects private life as well as transforming the nature of work and people experience the impacts differently depending on their gender, their age, where they live and what work they do. Aspects of these changes have been studied separately by many different academic experts however up till now a cohesive overarching analytical framework has been lacking. Drawing on a major, high-profile COST Action (European Cooperation in Science and Technology) Dynamics of Virtual Work, this series will bring together leading international experts from a wide range of disciplines including political economy, labour sociology, economic geography, communications studies, technology, gender studies, social psychology, organisation studies, industrial relations and development studies to explore the transformation of work and labour in the Internet Age. The series will allow researchers to speak across disciplinary boundaries, national borders, theoretical and political vocabularies, and different languages to understand and make sense of contemporary transformations in work and social life more broadly. The book series will build on and extend this, offering a new, important and intellectually exciting intervention into debates about work and labour, social theory, digital culture, gender, class, globalisation and economic, social and political change.

Gino Canella  
Editor

# Raising Class Consciousness

Labor Movements and Communication Power  
in the Information Age

palgrave  
macmillan

*Editor*

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*For Jane McAlevey,  
a tireless champion of the working class*

In studying such [social] transformations it is always necessary to distinguish between the material transformation of the economic conditions of production, which can be determined with the precision of natural science, and the legal, political, religious, artistic or philosophic, in short, ideological forms in which men become conscious of this conflict and fight it out.

—Karl Marx, Preface, *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, 1859

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This book, like any endeavor, was a collective effort. Sincere thanks to the authors of this volume. While my work focuses primarily on the US, your contributions expanded our view of labor, fostering a global conversation about trade unions, their communication practices, and technological change. Despite my best efforts, research from Latin America, Africa, and Asia is notably absent from this volume. As economic, political, and information systems are increasingly interconnected across time and space, new forms of nationalism are rising. With this tension in mind, I encourage scholars and activists to explore further the possibilities and challenges of building international solidarity, sharing strategies and coordinating actions across physical and cultural boundaries.

I am grateful to my friends and comrades in the labor movement. Your patience and political education over the years have sharpened my analysis and provide me with hope: Christopher Barnes, Ron Ruggiero, María Corral, David Schildmeier, Dominique Muldoon, Carolyn Moore, Bill Lahey, Carla LeBlanc, Bob Batz, Steve Mellon, Andrew Goldstein, Helen Fallon, Jon Remington, Natalie Duleba, Julie Langevin, and many others.

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Peace and solidarity,

Gino Canella

Boston, Massachusetts, March 2025

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## ABBREVIATIONS

|           |                                                                                       |
|-----------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| AEU       | Arizona Educators United (US)                                                         |
| AFL-CIO   | American Federation of Labor—Congress of Industrial Organizations (US)                |
| DISK      | Confederation of Revolutionary Trade Unions (Turkey)                                  |
| DRUM      | Dodge Revolutionary Union Movement (US)                                               |
| GEW       | Gewerkschaft Erziehung und Wissenschaft (German Education and Science Workers' Union) |
| LO        | Landsorganisationen i Danmark (Danish Confederation of Trade Unions)                  |
| MEAA      | Media Entertainment and Arts Alliance (Australia)                                     |
| NGA       | National Graphical Association (UK)                                                   |
| NHS       | National Health Service (UK)                                                          |
| NLRB      | National Labor Relations Board (US)                                                   |
| OTW       | Oklahoma Teacher Walkout (US)                                                         |
| SAG-AFTRA | Screen Actors Guild—American Federation of Television and Radio Artists               |
| SOGAT     | Society of Graphical and Allied Trades (UK)                                           |
| TEHIS     | Tourism, Entertainment and Service Workers Union (Turkey)                             |
| TNG       | The News Guild                                                                        |
| TUC       | Trade Union Confederation (UK)                                                        |
| TUMTIS    | All Transport Workers' Union (Turkey)                                                 |
| UAW       | United Auto Workers (US)                                                              |
| WGAE      | Writers Guild of America, East (US)                                                   |
| YLC       | Yemeksepeti Labor Committee (Turkey)                                                  |

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