

# Volume 11 Issue 1: Editorial

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There has been a gap between issues of this Journal – in 2025 we were only able to produce one issue due to the demands of our jobs and the ongoing impact of a large restructure at our institution. Supporting colleagues facing redundancy, and campaigning against jobs cuts took up much of our time. On a more positive note, we also hosted the Working-Class Studies Association annual conference in Sydney in 2025, which was a delight. We were very excited to greet fellow working-class studies scholars from many parts of the world. The international reach of the WCSA and this Journal continues to grow – the 2027 conference will be in Manila in the Philippines. This extra activity meant that we were unable to produce our usual December issue in 2025, and once again we thank all authors who submitted and waited a long time for reviews and decisions about their submissions. We are (hopefully!) back on track now with this June issue, which has a large crop of articles, commentary pieces, creative non-fiction and book reviews.

In our previous editorial we commented on the tumultuous times – in the middle of last year things around the world were bad and we wondered whether things would get better or worse. Our concerns regarding the Trump presidency have been realised, with his war on Iran and the global consequences of that decision. While we write this, the football men's World Cup is happening, and while it is nice to see players from all over the world showing their skills and entertaining their fans, it comes with the discomfort of knowing that many of those fans (and even some teams) were not welcome in the US – Trump has created a hostile and dangerous environment for many and it will take some time for this to be repaired. We refuse to give up hope though, and once again, send solidarity to everyone in their struggles.

This issue begins with stories of resistance, starting with an account by Bjarke Refslund and Andrea Borello in “The Large Migrant Workers’ Strike at Femern: Class Coherence and Intra-worker Fragility in Collective Action” of a migrant workers’ strike in Denmark, followed by “The Feminist Awakening of the St.Louis Teamsters” by Amanada L. Izzo which outlines the alignment of feminism and worker solidarity in 1970s Missouri. Aurélia Gervasoni then presents a poetic analysis of the 1912 Massachusetts Bread and Roses strike in “The Poetic Claim of Labor Law: *Bread and Roses* as a Living Symbol of Workers’ Struggles”.

Two articles on literature are next, with Julia Obert and Scott Henkel’s ““Collective Human Substance”: Power and Community in George Lamming’s *In the Castle of My Skin*” which explores the themes of worker power in the fiction of Barbadian author George Lamming. Rebecca Shipp follows with her analysis of tramping practices in British author Jack Hilton’s writing, arguing in ““The Sky Above and the Earth Below”: The Tramping Narratives of Jack Hilton”, that his working-class perspectives reveal a sense of agency in what is often seen as a deficit (vagrancy).

From here we move to a study of the potential benefits of universal basic income schemes for working-class people. In “How Universal Basic Income (UBI) Can Empower the Working Class Through Improved Wage Negotiation and Poverty Alleviation”, Hefin Gwilym, David Beck and Nghiễm Phững Anh discuss these possible benefits while acknowledging the

structural issues of class that cannot be fixed by income schemes alone. Simon Winlow then turns us to nostalgia in northern UK working-class communities in “Living in the Ruins: Melancholic Nostalgia and the Decomposition of England's Traditional Working Class” and asks why some communities hold onto images of the past. We then move away from the UK and to a global and historical exploration of the role played by workers in the formation of western civilizations in Kenneth Atkinson’s “The Historical Persistence of Working-Class Culture: How Laborers Created the Ethical Foundation of Western Civilization”.

The final paper in this section from James Beaufile is an interrogation of research practices in academia via a First Nations lens. “The Academic Echelon: Working-Class Research, First Nations Cultural Load and Relational Ethics in the Settler-Colonial University” explores research ethics in First Nations and working-class contexts.

From here we move to a mixture of commentary and creative non-fiction, starting with William Matthew McCarter’s “Beyond the Knapsack: Rethinking Whiteness, Privilege, and Class in Rural America” which delves into the issue of white privilege, which is followed by a very practical and useful piece on how to achieve clarity in academic writing in Kristian William’s “Academic Difficulties: The Enemies of Clarity”. Two creative non-fiction pieces complete this section with Wayne Mason’s “Factory Existentialism: The Machinery Of Meaning” which takes us into factory life, and Erin Vincent’s “Working-Class Wheel of Fortune” which reminds us that we can never be sure of the outcome of choices we make (and how they are informed by our class status).

As ever, our wonderful reviews editor, Christie Launius has collated a selection of engaging reviews, beginning with a review of the 2024 film *Adjunct*, and followed by reviews of books on topics such as the author T-Bone Slim, the impact of disability on workers, the racialised effects of incarceration and child welfare systems in the US, the use of coal country currency in 1930s Appalachia, A peasant revolt in 1550s Germany, an autobiography that analyses whiteness, a study of white people’s attitudes towards racism and sexism in the US, social diversity in US colleges, and working-class writers’ communities. Books and works abound that centre issues relevant to working-class studies!

We hope you enjoy reading this issue and we thank our authors and readers for continued interest in the Journal and in the field of working-class studies.