
Passing the structure test: Jane McAlevey's vision for higher education workers

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Abstract

This article assesses the utility of Jane McAlevey's organizing model for higher education workers amidst ongoing crises in the sector. While her vocabulary and methods are widely adopted, we argue that building workers' power requires also embracing the theory of power underpinning her framework. This mass-participation "whole worker" model offers a vital corrective to dominant union practice in higher education. Still, the framework faces significant challenges, including resource intensity, bureaucratic inertia, and forging "wall-to-wall" solidarity across a divided workforce. Engaging critically with McAlevey's model remains a necessary strategic intervention for building transformative collective power.

Keywords Jane McAlevey, union organizing, higher education, labour strategy

Réussir le test de structure : la vision de Jane McAlevey pour les travailleuses et travailleurs de l'enseignement supérieur

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Résumé

Cet article évalue l'utilité du modèle d'organisation de Jane McAlevey pour les travailleuses et travailleurs de l'enseignement supérieur dans le contexte des crises actuelles qui secouent le secteur. Si son vocabulaire et ses méthodes sont largement adoptés, nous soutenons que le renforcement du pouvoir des travailleuses et travailleurs passe également par l'adhésion à la théorie du pouvoir qui sous-tend son cadre conceptuel. Ce modèle de participation de masse, axé sur le « travailleur dans sa globalité » (*whole-worker organizing*), apporte un correctif essentiel aux pratiques syndicales dominantes dans l'enseignement supérieur. Pourtant, ce cadre se heurte à des défis de taille, notamment l'intensité en ressources, l'inertie bureaucratique et la nécessité de forger une solidarité « complète » (*wall-to-wall*) au sein d'un effectif divisé. S'approprier de manière déterminante le modèle de McAlevey reste une intervention stratégique nécessaire pour bâtir une force collective transformatrice.

Mots-clés Jane McAlevey, organisation syndicale, éducation supérieure, stratégie syndicale

Introduction

As unions seek coherent strategies in the face of mounting crises, the methods advocated by the late organizer Jane McAlevey have become widespread within the labour movement. McAlevey's influence on Canadian unions, including those in higher education, is clearly evident, marked by organizer training, keynote addresses, and the widespread adoption of her vocabulary — from “big open bargaining” to “whole worker” organizing (CUPE-OUWCC, 2024; OPSEU Local 354, n.d.; Savage, 2022). This raises a critical question: what is the utility of the McAlevey model for higher education labour?

We argue that to be effective, the McAlevey framework must be understood as a coherent, integrated *model*, rather than a menu of tactics. This article seeks to define the model, examine its adaptability, and address its critics in order to clarify its implications for higher education workers. While valid criticisms exist (Banks, 2021; Book, 2022), its core commitment to high-participation unionism remains a vital corrective to the dominant approach to unionism in higher education and beyond.

Calling McAlevey's approach a “model” implies it is a blueprint for building power. McAlevey thinks that organizing is neither intuitive nor spontaneous. It is a tradition with methods that have been tested over time. It requires knowledge, skills, and practice. If workers organize well, it is likely because they were taught how to organize by others. McAlevey (2016) does not claim to have invented this model. Instead, she describes her role as “readopting and modernizing” the techniques developed by organizers in the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) in the 1930s. Like an architectural blueprint, its components are designed to work together as a coherent system. While individual elements can potentially be modified, omitted, or adapted to local conditions without compromising the whole, what cannot be compromised is the theory of power underpinning it — the structural logic that determines whether the finished product actually increases workers' collective capacity to shift power.¹

McAlevey argues that workers exercise power in two related but distinct ways. First, they exercise it economically, through labour's “strongest weapon,” the production-halting strike (McAlevey, 2016, p. 20). Strikes are not only “the key leveraging mechanism of unions” (McAlevey, 2020, p. 9), but also important opportunities for political education since they provide “clarity about the two sides of any issue” (McAlevey, 2020, p. 10). The second is political power in the form of the ballot box, and more importantly, through “community power,” which McAlevey understands as the ability of workers to rally community members of influence (religious, political, and other leaders) to their cause (McAlevey, 2016, p. 59). Both of these

forms are linked by their need for large numbers of people: "Strategically deployed masses" are the main arsenal of ordinary people in their struggles against elites (McAlevey, 2016, p. 9).

Because workers can only rely on the power of numbers, McAlevey insists on a high participation model in which unions build to the goal of a supermajority of workers (ideally, 90%+) participating in key union activities. This is why she puts such emphasis on "structure tests," a series of escalating actions that test the union in terms of commitment and risk. These tests are passed only if a supermajority of workers participate (McAlevey, 2016, pp. 34-35). Progress is rigorously documented in charts and maps, conveyed physically and hung on the walls of union offices for all to see.

One of the participatory tactics which has most excited union activists is "big open bargaining." McAlevey does not conduct bargaining in the traditional way, with a small group of representatives behind closed doors. Rather, a mass of members attend bargaining. In a planned and disciplined manner, workers are given an opportunity to provide testimony about how bargaining demands personally impact their work and lives. Coordinating this participation in bargaining deepens commitment to the union. Observing firsthand employers' often crass reactions to these demands can heighten workers' class consciousness, while at the same time allowing them to demonstrate their unity, their support for the bargaining demands, and their refusal to be split from their bargaining team. Indeed, a key to big open bargaining is something which McAlevey insists is generally true: workers should never "third party" the union by referring to it as *the* union (McAlevey, 2016, p. 57; see Spronk, this volume). The workers *are* the union.

Critically, McAlevey asserts that workers are not mere economic actors seeking the best price for their labour power. Instead, unions must take a "whole worker" approach that understands workers as embedded in communities and social relations. Indeed, in some cases the most significant issues for workers — like housing — may be outside of the purview of the workplace (McAlevey & Ostertag, 2014, p. 14). It is workers' authentic and organic community connections that allow them to muster community power as described above. Failure to see workers as complete human beings is thus a major strategic error for union leaders — it leaves this power on the table. In order to assess the relative strength of forces in a particular struggle, McAlevey also promotes a participatory "power-structure analysis," a method of assessing the relative strength of the union, the employer, and the community allies from which each side can draw (McAlevey, 2016, p. 4).

McAlevey's organizing approach is also premised on unmediated, face-to-face communication: "no email, no social networking, no tweeting" (McAlevey &

Ostertag, 2014, p. 14). One-on-one conversations are the basic building blocks of an organizing campaign. Mass meetings are necessary to prepare for — and pull off — successful negotiations and strikes. This is the core of *organizing*, as distinguished from mere advocacy or mobilizing. Advocacy models rely on elites and experts lobbying on behalf of a constituency which need not be involved in the process. Mobilizing involves moving activists — those already supportive of the cause — to action. While this is a necessary component of any campaign, strategies premised exclusively on mobilizing limit organizers to 'going to war with the army you have,' rather than bolstering the ranks with new troops. Deep organizing requires deliberation and discussion — it is centrally concerned with the question: "How do you move workers to a project that they believe they don't agree with?" (McAlevey, in Blanc, 2020).

Identifying leaders — workers with influence in the workplace — is key to building the broadest possible support. In McAlevey's model, a worker is an "organic leader" if they have followers among their coworkers (McAlevey & Ostertag, 2014, p. 115). Leaders are distinct from activists, the most committed workers who routinely volunteer for, and participate in, union affairs. Activists are "self-selecting," which is significant, because organizing must reach those who do not typically select themselves. The loudest voice may be the best heard but least listened to. Conversely, the organic leader is more parsimonious, but when they do speak, others listen. If organizers identify worker-leaders, persuade them about the union's goals and activities, and recruit them to organizing, they organize their followers more effectively than activists. These organic leaders are often good workers who, at first, might not support the union. Being liked by management, they may be used to having certain privileges. As McAlevey argues, the key to organizing conversations with such leaders is persuading them of the potential for collective power in the union: they might have enough individual leverage to be able to maintain relatively high salaries, but not enough to secure guaranteed minimum staffing levels or maximum class sizes to reduce their workload (McAlevey, 2016, p. 36).

Although some higher education workers have embraced McAlevey's model, it might seem ill-suited for this sector, especially with respect to her theory of power. Permanent faculty in particular have traditionally identified as professionals represented by associations more than as workers participating in unions (Ross et al., 2020). Furthermore, many typically view university and college administrations as partners in collegial governance rather than as adversarial management. By contrast, McAlevey's model, like that of the radicals in the CIO, is grounded in a theory of inevitable class antagonism and conflict. In her theory of power, workers can only protect old gains and make new ones by engaging in an adversarial relation with their employers. And since workers' gains necessarily come at the

expense of employer control over conditions and resources, employers engage in a “relentless war” to extend their control over workers, especially by undermining their unions (McAlevey & Lawlor, 2023, p. 7).

Higher education workers who are sympathetic to McAlevey's approach might despair of their ability to persuade their colleagues. Although the neoliberal transformation of higher education has seen administrations undermine the institutions of collegial governance and act increasingly like private sector employers, professionalism persists throughout much of the sector. The persistence of professionalism is despite comparatively higher rates of militancy in higher education. Since 1990, and in contrast with national averages, university teachers have seen an upward trend in person-days not worked due to strikes (Ross et al., 2020, pp. 234-237). Speaking specifically to the situation in higher education, McAlevey observed that ‘proletarianization’ and rising precarity have weakened the white-collar/blue-collar divide and undermined the position of high-status professionals. For McAlevey, this explains why, in the U.S., professors are among those groups of white-collar workers who have been “unionizing in record numbers” (McAlevey, 2020, p. 90). Critically, McAlevey continuously stresses that professional workers, such as professors, must form solidarities with less powerful workers. While this unity can be an outcome of a commitment to social justice, it is also necessary to maximize their power: “The more workers, the more leverage, the more power” (McAlevey, 2020, p. 92). There are no shortcuts — persuading coworkers that deep organizing and its theory of power can work in higher education will itself demand deep organizing.

Inspired by the CIO industrial organizing tradition, which was grounded in the power of numbers, McAlevey argues for a “wall-to-wall” union approach. Divisions between workers, whether imposed by employers or the result of forms of social demarcation, undermine workers' power in favour of the bosses (McAlevey & Ostertag, 2014, pp. 211-212). McAlevey urges unity between the “most powerful” high-skilled workers and the “easily replaceable” less-skilled workers (McAlevey, 2014; McAlevey, 2019). Skilled workers fighting alone risk isolation. Uniting all workers leverages maximum power. As such, McAlevey (2016) argues that skilled and unskilled workers “need each other, and must forge solidarity by struggling together” (p. 205). McAlevey's (2019) vision is “one big union,” but where a single organization is impractical, she asserts that unions with a common employer should align their bargaining cycles and then operate on a principle of no one settles till everyone settles.

The McAlevey model: Criticisms and challenges

McAlevey's organizing model is compelling but is not without critics. The key debate is whether it is top-down mobilization or a genuine vehicle for member empowerment. We believe it can empower workers, but that potential itself generates challenges, both from above and below. The model raises expectations for unions, and, indeed, requires their revitalization. This change in orientation might be resisted from above by established union leaders and staff who feel their positions and authority threatened, and from below by members who prefer a service model of unionism in which a professional bureaucracy advocates on behalf of a passive membership that has, in the past, been able to deliver on many of their issues. Even when such resistance is overcome, there is a danger that unions claim to adopt McAlevey's model, but do so only partially or rhetorically.

McAlevey's deep organizing approach is inherently labour- and resource-intensive. In large unions, staff play an indispensable role in training member-organizers, managing vital day-to-day campaign work, and facilitating related tasks, such as the research necessary to produce a power-structure analysis. This reliance on staff constitutes a major financial commitment, and some critics argue that McAlevey downplays the "bargeloads of cash" the organizing model requires (Kamper, 2020). The model's high labour and resource demands require long-term leadership and staff support for sustainable implementation (House & Gray, 2019).

Leaders and staff may not support the model, exactly because it raises expectations and makes significant demands on the union. In some cases, it may mean reduced control for union leaders and increased workloads for staff. As critics note, McAlevey tends to focus on how to organize *after* the leadership and staff already support the model (Swerdlow, 2021). She spends comparatively less time explaining how to organize to win leadership of the union (Friedman, 2020). McAlevey's most substantial account of successful union reform, the Caucus of Rank-and-File Educators (CORE) in the Chicago Teachers Union (CTU), is somewhat shallow in its concern with choosing the right candidates for union elections rather than the substance of their politics or organizing techniques (2016, pp. 108; 116-118). Moody (2020) contends that, in general, McAlevey "addresses institutional arrangements that have decayed without suggesting how to change them."

McAlevey does suggest, however, that an opposition caucus could win leadership by promising to implement the ambitious organizing model it demonstrated in its campaign. Still, given the model's intensity, this is likely only feasible in the short-term. For volunteer worker-organizers, organizing without paid staff demands immense effort and sacrifice. They must treat organizing like a part-time job on top

of their full-time jobs, as is seen in cases like CORE. That is why long-term, sustainable implementation requires leadership and staff support.

Some critics note that, even if leadership and staff support the model, it is in its implementation where the real problems begin. Despite its ambitious rhetoric of empowering regular workers, the model makes leaders and staff the main agents of change (Moody, 2020). As such, it is a "staff-driven" and "top-down" organizing approach (Swerdlow, 2021; Moody, 2020; Brook, 2022; Burns, 2013). This is the case not only because it is resource-intensive. By framing organizing as a teachable model dependent on professional expertise, McAlevey makes the process reliant on staff — those who know the model — potentially disempowering rank-and-file workers (Banks, 2021; Moody, 2020). Critics argue that this "craft" knowledge creates something akin to a professional guild within the union (Swerdlow, 2021).

McAlevey's critics argue that unions tend to become bureaucratic, elitist, and conservative institutions, distancing their leaders and staff — on whom her model depends — physically and financially from the members (Brook, 2022). The interests and incentives for rank-and-file union members frequently diverge from leaders, especially those who approach representation as a career (Banks, 2021). And union leaders, acting as brokers between employers and employees, can play a disciplinary role over members. For these reasons, the leaders and staff on whom McAlevey's model relies have historically been the greatest internal threat to the industrial unionism underpinning her approach (Moody, 2020). The implication is that the more that rank-and-file workers build high participation unionism, the more likely it is that the bureaucracy will try to put a brake on it.

This is why many of McAlevey's critics ground their organizing methods in a committed minority of left-wing workers (Brook, 2022). This "militant minority" brings together ideologically committed workers who engage in agitation and pursue direct actions to win immediate demands, with the aim of inspiring their coworkers and demonstrating an alternative union approach (Moody, 2020). Banks (2021) and Brook (2022) contend that waiting for a supermajority causes unions to miss critical moments where a committed minority can win victories and build momentum. As Brook (2022) notes, "The supermajority threshold also gives union officials opposed to strike action a powerful excuse to refuse to sanction action, even where there is a majority." McAlevey's critics argue that their own organizing methods can be used whether or not they hold leadership and staff positions. Even when they do, they argue for rank-and-file organizing networks independent of the leadership and staff, which can support leadership when they act well and challenge them when they do not (Banks, 2021).

McAlevey's supporters can persuasively respond to most of these criticisms. Her model originates as a critique of bureaucratic, top-down, staff-driven unionism. Her supermajority "whole worker" approach explicitly rejects the disempowering service model. With organizing knowledge eroding among workers more generally, renewing workers' capacity to effectively organize requires that workers be taught by the few people who still have that knowledge. Spontaneous organizing efforts are insufficient. Moreover, the purpose of training workers is so that they can train other workers in turn. What distinguishes deep organizing from advocacy or mobilization is that a supermajority of the workers not only participate in actions but understand them enough to also partake in strategizing and planning (McAlevey, 2016, pp. 9-10). This is one reason why McAlevey encourages hanging charts and maps on the walls of the union office. It encourages activists to visit other union members to help inform the union's strategies and activities, making the union more transparent (see Spronk, this volume).

While McAlevey shares her critics' skepticism toward union leaders and staff — evident in her critiques of unresponsive bureaucracies and her naming of leaders as "position holders" — they develop a more rigorous theoretical basis for it by systematically identifying the personal, institutional, and structural pressures those leaders face. Furthermore, critics are right to affirm rank-and-file organization independent of leadership and staff. This is largely absent in McAlevey's model, though it does not seem to be inherently incompatible. The core strategic tension, however, lies in McAlevey's warning against "shortcuts": she argues that minority actions by already-committed, self-selecting militants can jeopardize the longer-term project of building power by integrating more workers into a larger campaign. The goal of supermajorities is greater participation, and thus, greater democracy within unions. Achieving these supermajorities through escalating structure tests means that greater democracy brings with it greater power and leverage. This leads to the most significant challenge for deep organizing: resistance from members who feel they have already made acceptable gains under a service model of unionism that asked little of them.

Confronted with a request to participate more actively, many union members may simply decline, noting: "That's why I pay dues" (Fletcher & Hurd, 1998, p. 42). Furthermore, since many in higher education identify as professionals with a field of expertise, they are more inclined to defer to experts in other fields, including labour relations (Savage & Webber, 2013). This reinforces a small negotiating team operating autonomously in closed-door meetings — contrary to strategies like big open bargaining. It can also mean retaining collegial orientations toward administrations rather than adopting the class-struggle traditions of those who identify as workers.

Faced with such resistance, proponents of the McAlevey model should adopt the same strategy used in organizing conversations with organic leaders (McAlevey, 2016, p. 36). Just as an organizer emphasizes issues that cannot be won by individuals, only collectively, organizers must centre issues that can only be effectively addressed through adversarial and high participation unionism. With deepening neoliberal restructuring and sectoral crisis, service unionism is no longer sufficient to protect the past gains of even the most powerful workers (Rhoades, 2021). Deep organizing is no mere luxury. It is necessary.

Even if resistance is overcome, there is a danger that a union adopts McAlevey's organizing model only rhetorically, using terms like "whole-worker" without substantive change in approach. It can also mean implementing specific tactics, such as open bargaining, without integrating them into a broader high-participation campaign. As Banks (2021, para. 18) warns, for example, the "task (and art) of workplace mapping and identifying 'organic leaders' is stripped down to a passive, administrative exercise of filling in spreadsheets rather than actually building union relationships with and between members on the ground." At its worst, the model is subverted by adopting its basic elements while stymying genuine worker leadership. This allows leaders to channel activist energies into performative pressure release valves that derail real union renewal.

This is why we argue that what is required is McAlevey's theory of power — premised on the fundamentally conflictual nature of class relations and the need for mass participation of workers — not merely the adoption of certain rhetoric or even certain organizing practices. As Gindin (2022) observes, the problem is not that the model has failed, "but that it has so rarely been tried. And the reason it has been so selectively attempted is that to truly carry it requires transforming our unions." The implications for higher education are stark. The ambitiousness of this model, the need to transform unions, and the challenges this can pose to the prevailing union leaders and staff will become even more evident when considering what would be required to implement the model in higher education.

The McAlevey model in the academy

McAlevey asserts that her model is broadly applicable, not only to workplaces, but also to organizing by tenants, racial justice activists, environmentalists, and "anyone seeking to use the immense power of ordinary people to shift the scales toward justice" (McAlevey & Lawlor, 2023, p. 8). Still, McAlevey argues that some sectors and workplaces hold greater strategic importance, and places considerable emphasis on public sector workers, including education workers. Critically, McAlevey troubles a simple public/private division, arguing that struggles in the public sector are inherently linked to those in the private sector and vice versa.

Private sector rollbacks put pressure on public sector managers to follow suit. On the other side, public sector workers, through collective bargaining and resistance, determine the “quality and quantity” of the public services available to the working class as a whole (McAlevey & Lawlor, 2023, p. 11).

Education workers, like others in the public sector, are generally harder to replace than their private sector counterparts. While automation, privatization, and globalization remain serious threats, for the time being, schools, including colleges and universities, are relatively insulated from the “exit threat” (McAlevey, 2016, p. 203). They also enjoy strong and organic links to the broader public. Educational institutions are socially and geographically centred in communities. Since education workers provide services that are utilized directly by the community, “the consumer immediately feels the repercussions of their collective action” (McAlevey, 2016, p. 29). McAlevey contends that education workers “are *more* structurally powerful when it comes to engaging their community in a fight” (McAlevey, 2016, p. 29).

The McAlevey model comes out of the tradition of industrial unionism, which insists, on principle, that every worker in a workplace be organized. But this wall-to-wall organizing in higher education is no simple task. Campuses are large, complex workplaces featuring significant divisions of labour and diverse forms of work (Gray & House, 2025).² Universities are also host to important material and status inequalities between workers, ranging from tenured professors to food service workers and part-time student workers. Persisting professionalism among academics often means that many do not think of themselves primarily as workers with the same interests as, say, custodial or maintenance workers (Ross et al., 2020). Universities often have high union density, and yet, in this highly decentralized sector, unions rarely meaningfully collaborate (see Savage, this volume). Indeed, there can be tensions or outright conflict between unions if they are competing for resources or work, or if some workers have supervisory roles over other workers. The presence of multiple employers, especially if there is significant contracting and subcontracting, can further fragment workers’ identities and unities. In a context where narrow state-defined bargaining units make ‘one big union’ legally impossible, wall-to-wall organizing may require new forms of worker representation. Workplace-based union coalitions can bring together groups of workers who, though they work alongside each other, rarely strategize together (Gray & House, 2025; House & Gray, 2019). While cross-campus labour alliances have a long history in Canada, they tend to be unstable — rising and falling with crises, bargaining rounds, and leadership turnover. Other factors also explain the reluctance by some groups of workers to engage in coalitional work. Unions with greater structural power and leverage have not needed coalitional partners as much to make gains for their own members, at least during “normal” times.

Attempts to form cross-campus union coalitions must confront widely disparate union cultures, particularly the divisions between “social unionism,” high participation unions that take part in broader social justice struggles, and “business unionism,” which views unionism as a transactional service and focuses narrowly on their own members’ wages and working conditions. Our research has found that leaders of unions which tend toward business unionism may initially join such coalitions, because the greater collective strength benefits the sectional interests of their own members (Gray & House, 2025; House & Gray, 2019). Such leaders often provide only token support to workplace-based coalitions, or eventually withdraw their unions entirely. This tepid support is because the example of supermajority participation in coalition activities can inspire their members to transform their unions, threatening the incumbent leaders’ power. Success also hinges on defending collaborative efforts against potential interference from unsupportive parent union leadership.

Workplace-based union coalitions in higher education must navigate these challenges to bring diverse workers together around common causes. Crises like the COVID-19 pandemic, for example, produce shared health and safety concerns that unite disparate workforces (Gray & House, 2025). Similarly, the Unity Council at Queen’s University, formed in 2024 in response to the university’s declared budget crisis, brought together union representatives from across campus — including staff, graduate, healthcare, and contracted food service workers — to discuss common concerns regarding policies, health and safety, and bargaining (Unity Council, n.d.). Our research into union coalitions, exemplified by the Coalition of Rutgers Unions (CRU) at Rutgers University in New Jersey (Gray & House, 2025), identifies exciting successes as well as persistent internal challenges for wall-to-wall organizing in higher education. CRU has united campus workers by identifying university-wide issues, coordinating bargaining timelines, and demanding joint bargaining tables.

Activists must build flexible yet clear democratic structures to bridge divides between social movement and bureaucratic union cultures, and manage imbalances in resources that often reflect campus hierarchies — such as those between tenured faculty and service staff. A core challenge is cultivating pre-emptive solidarity, where more secure groups actively recruit more precarious colleagues into the coalition by prioritizing solidarity over narrow self-interest. For example, at Rutgers, during the COVID-19 shutdowns, full-time faculty agreed to a work-sharing plan that prevented layoffs for contract faculty and food service workers (Gray & House, 2025). Crucially, these workplace-based union coalitions also require robust strategic alliances with students and community partners to cultivate and wield transformative power.

While not without its challenges and limitations, McAlevey's organizing model offers a vital blueprint for building the kind of powerful, inclusive labour formations necessary to meet contemporary challenges.

Conclusion: The promise of the McAlevey model

For higher education workers in an era of seemingly permanent crisis, the central questions about McAlevey's model are not abstract but existential. However labour- and resource-intensive it may be, the costs of the alternative — a servicing model and fragmented bargaining — are demonstrably higher, amounting to managed decline. Crucially, the model should not be treated as a rigid doctrine but as a living, evolving practice, refined through experimentation and the concrete experience of organizers on the ground. Its core framework — the conflict-based "power analysis," the anti-economistic "whole worker" approach, and the foundational commitment to "deep organizing" — provides an indispensable compass for confronting neoliberal restructuring. For unions facing an existential threat, critically engaging with McAlevey's framework is a necessary path to forging the collective capacity to win.

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Endnotes

¹ According to McAlevey's own research, in actual practice, only rarely are all elements of her model fully implemented. Still, McAlevey emphasizes that striving to bring "these power-building elements together into one comprehensive approach" allows organizers to "turn routine activities into opportunities to build maximal power for the workers' side" (McAlevey & Lawlor, 2023, p. 32).

² McAlevey (2014) discusses union coalitions in another large and complex workplace, hospitals.