

Critical Labour Studies: 9th Symposium 2013

Venue: Ruskin College, Oxford - Date: 2-3 March 2013

Call for papers and sessions

In 2013 CLS celebrates its 10-year anniversary. This coincides with the major historic move for Ruskin College from its historical base in central Oxford to a single-site at its Headington campus. So, CLS 2013 will be held at Ruskin to celebrate the achievements of two organisations pivotal to stimulating debate and discussion amongst peers across labour movements in the UK and globally. In further recognition of the location of CLS next year we seek to encourage contributions/participants who can bring a labour education dimension.

It is clear to researchers and activists, both in the trade union movement and universities, that global capitalism is increasingly shaping the worlds of work and employment. The imposition of this neo-liberal orthodoxy has many profound implications, not least that states seek to both delegitimise workers' opposition and marginalise their organisations. However, just as capitalism has embraced neo-liberal strategies, there has emerged a new politics of resistance that is varied and diverse, embracing: trade union and socialist organisations, green and ecological protest movements, anti-war activists, feminists, human rights campaigners and NGOs. It is against this background that the Critical Labour Studies (CLS) symposium has aimed to bring together researchers and activists to discuss key features of work and employment from a radical and labour-focused perspective. We recognise that while left academic researchers participate in the usual round of mainstream conferences, the scope for focused radical debate around these themes is actually quite limited. **Through CLS we have developed an open working group and discussion forum that engages with many of the challenges facing researchers and trade unionists within the current environment of work and employment.** By 'labour', we anticipate, in the traditions of radical researchers over the ages, a broad understanding of social, economic and political agendas. To date, themes have included: race, identity and organising migrant workers, global unionism and organising internationally, the new politics of production, privatisation, outsourcing and offshoring, restructuring and alternative/inclusive research methodologies. The list of themes and questions that concern us continues to develop over time, and the intention will be to reflect this evolving agenda at this year's symposium. An ancillary objective is to engage in genuinely critical debate, rescuing this term from its co-option by mainstream agendas.

Building on the successes of the past six years, the forthcoming symposium will be structured as a series of plenary sessions. Each will be organised around a particular theme with speakers and discussants, followed by a broad discussion. It has been an important principle of CLS that the conference is not based on the convention of academic conferences with specific papers being presented in separate streams. **Rather our intention has been to deepen discussion and debate, and to bring together researchers and labour/ union movement activists (where possible) in joint sessions.** All sessions are genuinely open and inclusive and involve a broad range of participants, from established academics to early-career researchers, and from established trade union officials to shop-floor representatives and grass-roots activists. The distinctive organising principles of CLS are, therefore, to assist unions and workers in dealing with the challenges faced in the neo-liberal world of work and employment. Ultimately, discussion of strategies and tactics are related to the broader aim of creating a socialist society.

Send proposals for presentations/sessions/papers: cls2013@ruskin.ac.uk

Closing Date September 30th - The Cost of Attending is £80 waged £40 unwaged

Join the Critical Labour Studies Email List: <http://criticallabourstudies.org.uk/site/>

Details of how to get to Ruskin: [/www.ruskin.ac.uk/about/location/stoke_house](http://www.ruskin.ac.uk/about/location/stoke_house)

Oxford accommodation: <http://tinyurl.com/yasyewa>, <http://tinyurl.com/ygoan8n>

Further detail on venue, travel directions and local accommodation will be available later in the year