



# Poor Workers' Unions: Rebuilding Labor from Below

*Vanessa Tait*

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## **Poor Workers' Unions: Rebuilding Labor from Below** Vanessa Tait

"Finally, the book we've all been waiting for! With gripping tales of grassroots experiments in social justice unionism from the 1960s to the present, Vanessa Tait cracks wide open our concept of what a labor movement looks like, and shows how it can be part and parcel of movements for racial and gender justice. In the process, she does a stunning job of helping us imagine workers' movements that are creative, democratic, and, above all, build power from below--pointing the way to a vibrant future for labor."--**Dana Frank, UC-Santa Cruz; author of *Buy American: The Untold Story of Economic Nationalism***

"A critical contribution to broadening our understanding of who and what is the labor movement in the USA. . . . Tait captures the dynamism of alternative forms of working class organization that have long been ignored. In formulating a new direction for organized labor in the USA, the history Tait addresses must become a recognized part of our foundation."--**Bill Fletcher, Jr., President, TransAfrica Forum and former assistant to AFL-CIO President John Sweeney**

"While the AFL-CIO and its affiliated unions desperately try to figure out how to rebuild and energize the labor movement, this exceptional book reveals that poor workers have been showing the way for the past forty years. Utilizing original documents, Tait examines . . . a wide range of movements organized by poor workers to improve their circumstances and build a more just society, including the Revolutionary Union Movement, the National Welfare Rights Organization, ACORN's United Labor Unions, workfare unions, and independent workers' centers. She demonstrates that these movements were founded and developed upon principles of rank-and-file control, democracy, community involvement, and solidarity and aimed to improve all aspects of workers' lives. . . . Both labor activists and labor historians will learn much from this book."--**Michael Yates, author of *Why Unions Matter***

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