



University  
of Victoria

Graduate Studies

Notice of the Final Oral Examination  
for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

of

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MA (Simon Fraser University, 2006)

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**“The International Trade Union Confederation and Global Civil Society: ITUC  
Collaborations and their Impact on Transnational Class Formation”**

Department of Sociology

Tuesday, December 13, 2016

9:00AM

David Turpin Building

Room A136

Supervisory Committee:

Dr. William Carroll, Department of Sociology, University of Victoria (Supervisor)

Dr. Helga Hallgrimsdottir, Department of Sociology, UVic (Member)

Dr. Supriya Routh, Faculty of Law, UVic (Outside Member)

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Dr. Simon Springer, Department of Geography, UVic

## **Abstract**

This dissertation examines collaborations between the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) and non-union elements of global civil society (GCS). GCS is presented as a crucial emergent site of transnational class formation, and ITUC collaborations within this field are treated as potentially important moments in transnational class formation. The goal of the dissertation is threefold. It seeks to 1) address the lacuna in GCS studies around the involvement of organized labour; 2) provide an analysis of what ITUC GCS collaborations mean for the remit and repertoire of action of the ITUC; and 3) provide an analysis of the impact of ITUC collaborations on transnational class formation.

What the findings show is that the ITUC is heavily engaged in GCS through numerous collaborations with non-union organizations concerned with environmental degradation, human rights, global economic inequality, and women workers. Most significantly, collaboration within GCS has provided the ITUC an avenue to incorporate the needs of marginalized women workers whose work does not “fit” into the traditional model of trade union organizing. These findings lead to the conclusion that these collaborations have allowed the ITUC to expand the remit of its activities beyond “bread-and-butter” unionism, and expand its repertoire of action beyond interstate diplomacy. However, the findings did not support the idea that the ITUC has adopted a social movement framework, although it is clear that the ethos of social movement unionism has had an impact on the organization. Nonetheless, the dissertation concludes that the incorporation of marginalized women workers, and the active engagement of the ITUC in global environmental policy debates, signifies a new moment in transnational class formation.