

# **Apprentice training, youth organisation and trade unionism**

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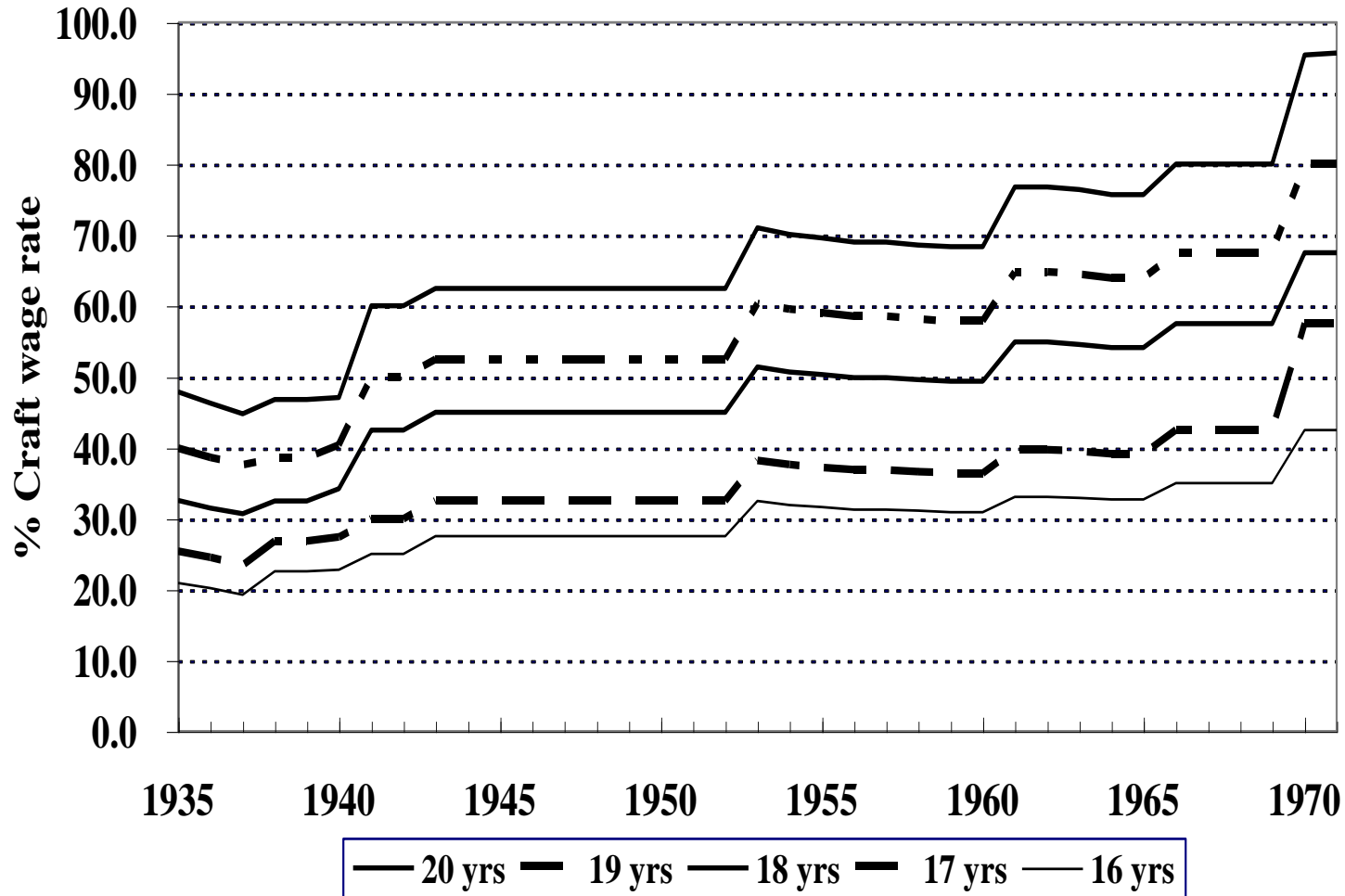
# Outline

1. Context
2. Apprentice strike movements
3. Organisational status of movements
4. Interpretation: effects of movements
5. Interpretation: sources of movements
6. Comparable situations, different outcomes?

# 1. Context

- Craft training in engineering and shipbuilding through 1930s
- Setting of apprentices' terms and conditions
- Pay rates
- Content of training
- Apprentice numbers

# Age-Wage Scale Rates for Apprentices, Federated Engineering Firms, 1935-71



## 2. Apprentices' strike movements

- Scope
- Timing
- Scale
- Location
- Demands
- Outcomes

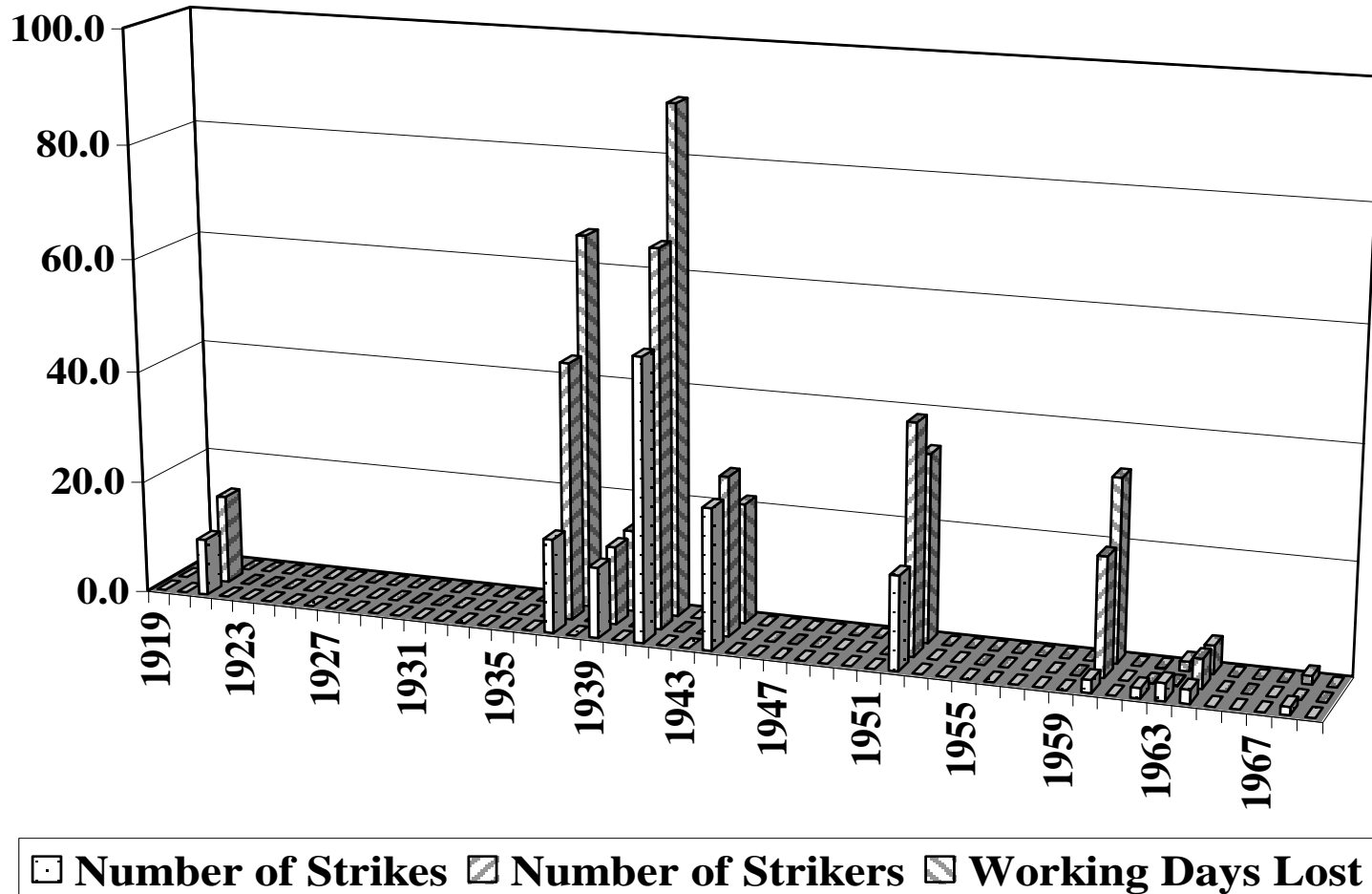
# Apprentice Strikers, Taylor Bros. Ltd., Manchester, 1960



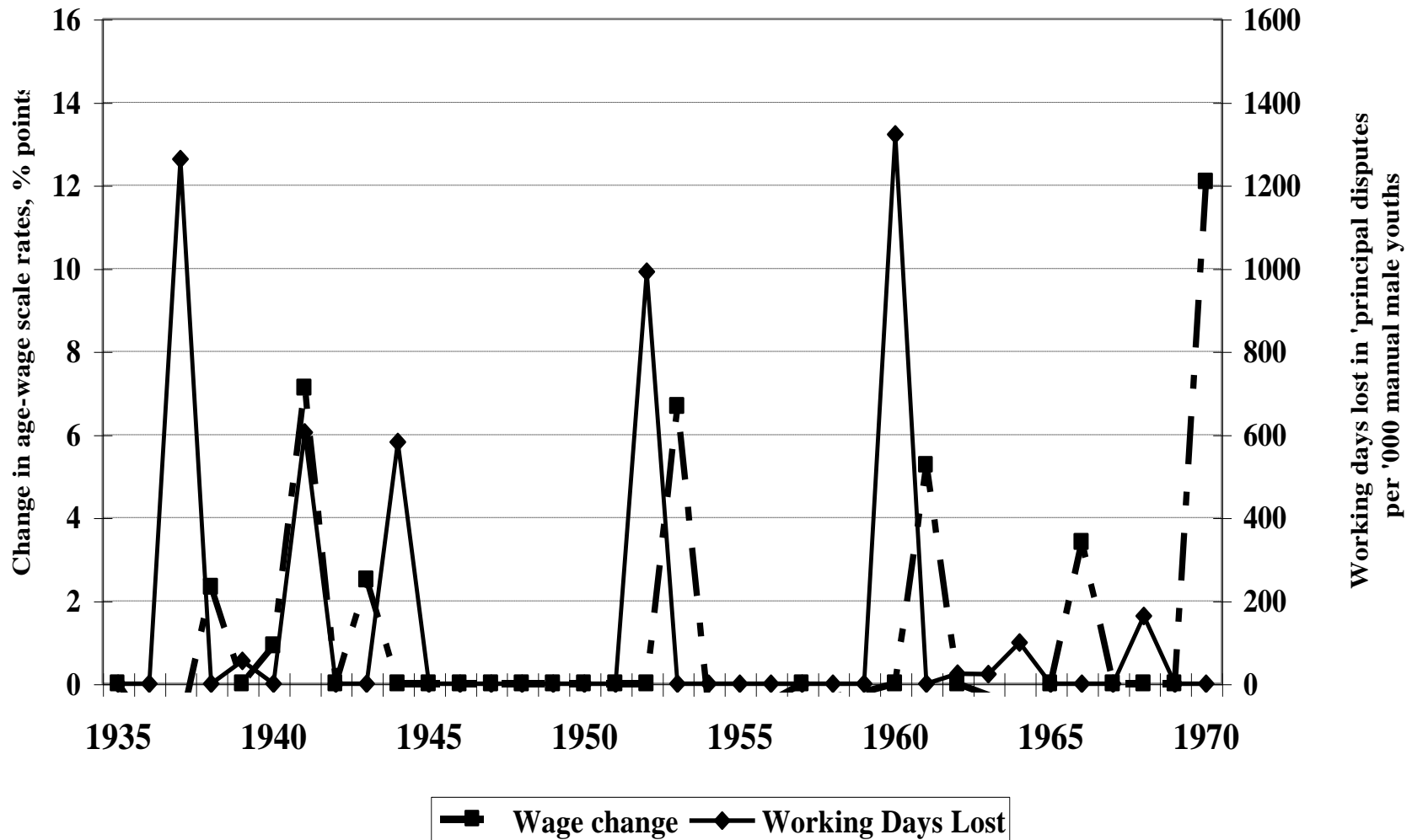
# Manual Male Youth Strike Movements: Timing and Scale

Strike	Strikers	Days Lost	Rank (DL)
1912	14,600	n.a.	n.a.
1921	6,500	n.a.	n.a.
1937	32,500	406,000	3
1939	2,200	19,000	7
1941	25,100	220,000	1
1944	17,000	150,000	4
1952	16,400	194,000	1
1960	36,900	347,000	1
1964	6,000	26,000	9
<i>Mean</i>	<i>17,500</i>	<i>187,000</i>	<i>n.a.</i>

# Manual Male Youth Share of Principal Disputes, Engineering and Shipbuilding (%)



# Strike Movements and Change in Age-Wage Scale Rates, Manual Male Youth, Engineering, 1935-70



# 3. Organisational status

- Unofficial bodies, unconstitutional methods?
- Apprentice strikers' stance towards trade unions
- Trade unions' stance towards apprentice strikers
  - By level in union hierarchy
  - By motive

# 4. Effects of collective action

- Real industrial disputes?
- Employers' motives for work-based learning
  1. Investment-oriented training
  2. Production-oriented training
- Evidence from the strike movements

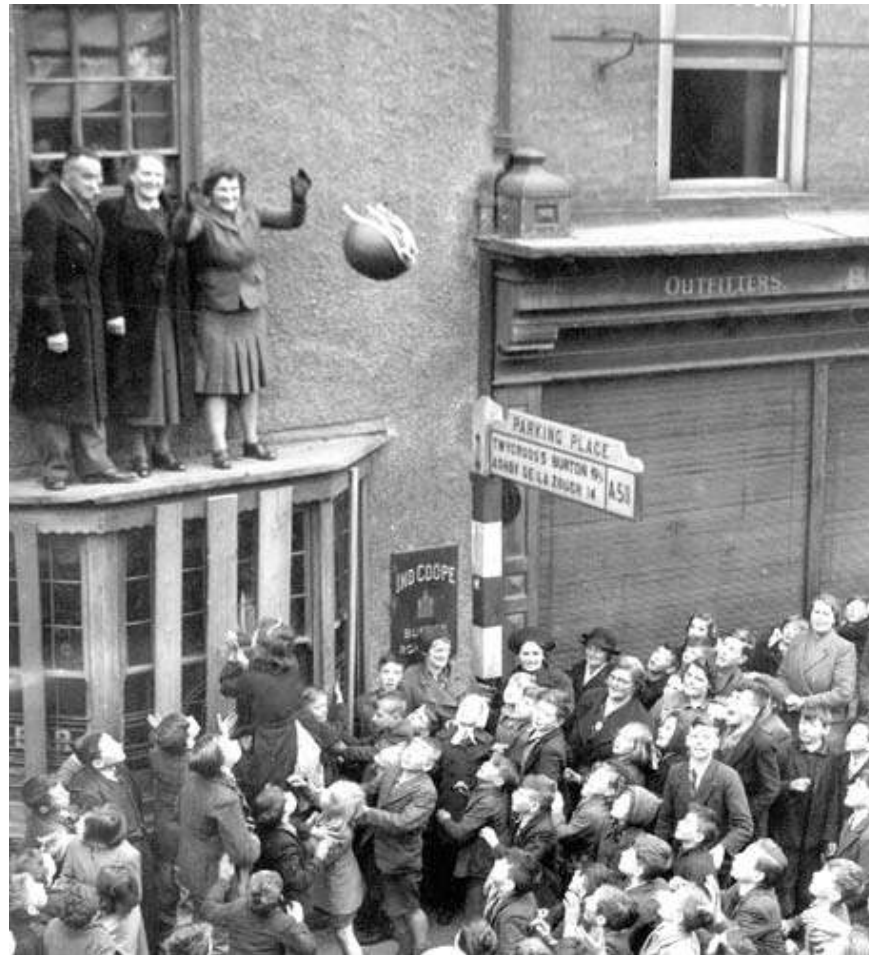
# Strike by Adults at Roberts Arundel, Stockport, 1966-68



# Student Demonstration, US, 1970s



# Fun: Shrove Tuesday street ball game, Atherstone, 1930s



# Politics



# Motives for employer training

## 1. Investment-oriented

Goal: ensure future skill supply

Method: training is expensive for employer  
high retention after training

## 2. Production-oriented

Goal: reduce cost of current production

Method: cheap labour  
training is immediately profitable  
low retention after training

## 3. Mixed cases and subsidies

# 5. Sources of collective action

- Discontent
  - Pay during training
  - Content of training
  - Career prospects
- Methods
  - Individual
  - Collective

## 6. Comparable situations, different outcomes?

1. Apprenticeship in Germany and Switzerland
2. Teaching Assistants, US universities
3. Trainees and Apprentices in modern Britain

# Teaching Assistants' Association strike, University of Wisconsin 2004



# TAs and unions: Univ. of California



## UAW Local 2865

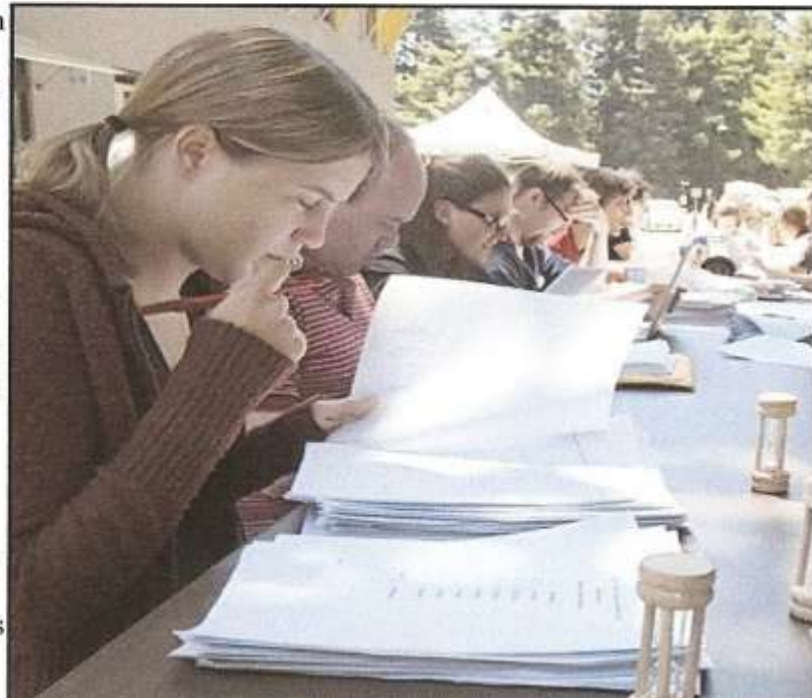
*Representing Over 12,000 Academic Student Employees at UC*

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### Welcome!

UAW Local 2865 is the Union representing over 12,000 Academic Student Employees (ASEs) -- Readers, Tutors, TAs, and others -- at the 9 teaching campuses of the University of California.

As they are for all employees, wages, benefits, workload, grievance procedures, and fair hiring processes are important issues of concern. The Union gives us the ability to bargain with UC on these and other issues, allowing us to have a real say in our lives as student employees. Read more about [our current contract](#) which was ratified in October 2007.



# Trainee organisation: Teaching Assistants, selected US universities, 2002

University		Bargaining Agent	Collective agreement
Public	U. California	UAW	Yes
	U. Mass	UAW	Yes
	U. Michigan	AFT	Yes
	U. Wisconsin	AFT	Yes
Private	New York (NYU)	UAW	Yes (to 2004)
	Brown	UAW	No
	Columbia	UAW	No
	Yale	HERE	No

Julius, D. and P. Gumport (2002), 'Graduate student unionisation ...', *Review of Higher Education*, 26(2), Table 1

# Trainee discontent and activism in modern Britain

- Engineering apprentices, YTS trainees, Modern Apprentices
- Factors affecting collective action
  - Training standards and strike threat
  - Trainee pay
  - Decline of collective regulation and ‘national’ bargaining
  - Unemployment
  - Government policy

# Union policies towards YTS, 1983-88

Content	Share of all members (%)	Larger unions in category
Oppose with strikes	2.3	CPSA
Oppose with boycott	15.2	UCW, COHSE
Oppose without action	25.5	GMBATU, NATFHE
Refer to executive	18.7	TASS, ASTMS
Accept with employee status	23.1	AUEW, NALGO, NUPE
Accept with other restrictions	13.0	APEX, USDAW, BIFU
Accept unconditionally	2.2	IPCS, ISTC, NAS/UWT

# In conclusion

- Where trainees are exploited, unions may be able to organise discontent and improve outcomes
- Relations between unions and discontented young people can be complex
- In the UK, unions have changed from critics (YTS) to cheerleaders (Apprenticeship)
- Why?
  - Training quality and terms and conditions have improved
  - National politics have changed
  - Narrow view of training quality?
  - Forgetful of own past?

# References

- Ryan, P. (2010) 'Apprentice strikes, pay structure, and training in twentieth century UK metalworking industry', in C. Brown, B. Eichengreen, and M. Reich (eds), *The Great Unraveling: New Labor Market Institutions and Public Policy Response*. Oxford: OUP.
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