

Strategy and Structure in a Successful Organising Union: The Transformational Role of Branch Secretaries in the Australian Nursing Federation, Victorian Branch, 1989–2009

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This paper examines the impact of a major Australian professional-industrial trade union's Branch Secretaries on the adoption of the "organising model." The investigation was carried out specifically with regard to the union's organisational strategies and structures that were developed to facilitate mobilisation of workers over the period 1989–2009. The paper draws on the union organising and transformational leadership literatures to develop a theoretical framework. An intensive case study of the Australian Nursing Federation, Victorian Branch, was conducted from October to December 2009. Interview, observation-based and archival data were analysed. The findings demonstrate that, under the executive leadership of two Branch Secretaries, Belinda Morieson and Lisa Fitzpatrick, the union became a member-oriented, decentralised organisation whose main purpose was to support an organising strategy of worker mobilisation. The professional and industrial goals of nurses were aligned. New organisational roles were created and existing roles were adapted to train and support elected job representatives in their key function of encouraging membership and rank-and-file activism. Finally, the entire union became a recruitment and retention machine.

In the last decades of the twentieth century, many trade unions began to employ a union recruitment and retention strategy in which industrial action plays a central part. Union organising – the "organising model" – was developed as a response to worldwide declines in union membership.¹ This model emerged in the United States with the creation of the Organizing Institute in 1989 and was formally adopted by the Australian Council of Trade Unions in 1996. From the early 1990s, the executive – that is, the Council – of the Victorian branch of the Australian Nursing Federation (ANF) consciously developed an organising model. During this time, ANF membership climbed steadily. This rise was in sharp contrast to trends in most unions in Australia and other developed countries where rapid declines were experienced.² The leaders of the executive – the Branch Secretaries³ – of the ANF were women. Their members were overwhelmingly female part-time workers with an average age of around 45 years.⁴ Since 1989, there have been just two Branch Secretaries of the ANF: Belinda Morieson and Lisa Fitzpatrick. At the start of Morieson's tenure in 1989, membership stood at 15,712. By the time she relinquished the position in December 2001, it had doubled to reach 30,464.⁵ Fitzpatrick oversaw a further major expansion to 48,526 by October 2009.⁶

The aim of this investigation is to examine the impact of the Branch Secretaries on the adoption of the organising model. This paper presents an analysis of a case study of the ANF, associated archives – historical and contemporary – and secondary sources to explain how Branch Secretaries developed the union's organisational strategies and structures that facilitated mobilisation of workers over the period 1989–2009. In the light of the findings, the

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1. Jelle Visser, "Union Membership Statistics in 24 Countries," *Monthly Labor Review* (January 2006): 38–49.
 2. *Labour Statistics* (Paris: Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 1975–2009).
 3. *Rules of the Australian Nursing Federation 2009*, s 65.1. The Branch Secretary is the elected leader of the Branch Council, the union's highest policy and decision-making body of the union. The Secretary and Assistant Secretaries are elected for four-year terms. All Council members are elected (except for the President and Vice-President) for two-year terms. While the Branch Secretary has strong influence on Council, all policies are subject to voting processes in Council. Finally, resolutions by job representatives at the Delegates Conference are routinely adopted by Council.
 4. In 1986, 93 per cent of nurses in Australia were women and 40 per cent worked part-time. Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, *Nursing and Midwifery Labour Force 2009*, AIHW *Bulletin*, no. 90 (Canberra: AIHW, 2009), accessed March 2013, <http://www.aihw.gov.au/publication-detail/?id=10737419682>.
 5. Belinda Morieson, interview with author, December 23, 2009.
 6. Lisa Fitzpatrick, interview with author, December 15, 2009.

transformational character of the union's executive leadership is investigated; the categorisation and historical importance of labour women leadership are examined, and the importance of this study within the history of labour is discussed.

As Branch Secretaries, Morieson and Fitzpatrick formulated an organising strategy in which the mobilisation of nurses played a large part. Trade union mobilisation is the engagement by members in industrial action alongside fellow workers.⁷ A trade union that adopts mobilisation as the focus of its organising strategy is an example of a social movement.⁸ Social movements are concerned with visible protest and struggle against injustice.⁹ Struggle transforms individual workers by developing a collective consciousness.¹⁰ Industrial conflict, therefore, lies at the heart of the organising model. The characteristics of the organising model are most unlike those of the conventional servicing model, previously used by most unions, whereby, "using a centralised organisational structure, the union provided experts to negotiate wages and conditions, settle disputes, protect jobs, and provide advice for members."¹¹ In sharp contrast, the organising model lays heavy emphasis on the role of elected job representatives and activists in attracting other workers to the union by involving them in workplace disputes to solve their own problems; union organisational structures become decentralised as the union is transformed into a membership-driven recruitment machine.¹² In his seminal work, Kelly specified the theoretical underpinnings of the consciousness-raising process that arises from involvement in struggle. Elected leaders "promote a sense of grievance" in fellow workers. This brings about worker perception of injustice, attribution of the source of injustice to management (that is, managerial "blame"), social identification of the worker with the union, and the development of collective attitudes.¹³

The inspirational elected leaders envisaged by union organising can be described as transformational leaders. They help transform the "mode of operation of their group from individual-oriented, hedonistic, rational-economic ... to ... collective, moral and value-oriented."¹⁴ The core characteristics of transformational leadership were developed by Weber at the start of the last century, and later by Burns.¹⁵ A stream of organisational literature has built on these classic works.¹⁶ The main themes are as follows: transformational leaders arise from within the group; they are exemplary and exceptional; they elicit trust and commitment;¹⁷ they motivate members to

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7. John E. Kelly, *Rethinking Industrial Relations: Mobilisation, Collectivism and Long Waves* (London: Routledge, 1998), 64.
 8. Sidney Tarrow, *Struggle, Politics and Reform: Collective Action, Social Movements and Cycles of Protest* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991); Bert Klandermans, "Mobilisation and Participation: Social Psychological Explanations of Resource Mobilisation Theory," *American Sociological Review* 49 (1984): 583–600.
 9. Charles Tilly, *From Mobilisation to Revolution* (Reading: Addison-Wesley, 1978); Doug McAdam, "Conceptual Origins, Current Problems, Future Directions," in *Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements: Political Opportunities, Mobilising Structures and Cultural Framings*, ed. Doug McAdam et al. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 22–40.
 10. Kim Voss, and Rachel Sherman, "Breaking the Iron Law of Oligarchy: Union Revitalization in the American Labor Movement," *American Journal of Sociology* 106 (2000): 303–49.
 11. Christina Cregan, "Can Organizing Work? An Inductive Analysis of Individual Attitudes toward Union Membership," *Industrial and Labor Relations Review* 58 (2005): 283.
 12. Bill Fletcher and Richard W. Hurd, "Beyond the Organizing Model: The Transformation Process in Local Unions," in *Organizing to Win*, ed. Kate Bronfenbrenner et al. (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2008), 37–53.
 13. Kelly, *Rethinking Industrial Relations*, 64.
 14. Boase Shamir, Robert J. House and Michael B. Arthur, "The Motivational Effects of Charismatic Leadership: A Self-Concept Based Theory," *Organization Science* 4 (2009): 579.
 15. Max Weber, *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization* (New York: Free Press, 1947), published in Germany in 1920; James M. Burns, *Leadership* (New York: Harper and Row, 1978).
 16. See Bernard M. Bass, "Two Decades of Research and Development in Transformational Leadership," *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology* 8 (1999): 9–32.
 17. Bernard M. Bass and Bruce J. Avolio, "Transformational Leadership and Organizational Culture," *Public Administration Quarterly* 17 (1993): 112–21.

“transcend their self-interests for a collective purpose”;¹⁸ their role is to *change* the group by developing a vision for the future. Transformational leaders, therefore, are “the symbol which binds the group”, representing and embodying the characteristics of the rank and file.¹⁹ They establish “a covenantal relationship between the union and its members.”²⁰ Covenants are characterised by the development of partnership and community between the parties.²¹ Members have unquestioning loyalty when the union’s beliefs and actions converge with their ideal.²²

A distinction in the leadership literature is made between transactional and transformational leaders. Transactional leaders are servants of bureaucracy, providing short-term material incentives to followers. They are associated with instrumental, goal-oriented behaviour on the part of individual members.²³ In return for membership fees, transactional leaders of trade unions provide union services to workers.²⁴ The paid officials of the servicing model, therefore, typify transactional trade union leaders.

Transformational leaders may exist at different levels of the union’s organisation. This study investigates the role of the leadership of the executive, in the form of the Branch Secretaries. At the outset, both Morieson and Fitzpatrick had the potential to become transformational leaders. They were nurses who emerged from the rank-and-file as elected job representatives. After joining the union, both rose rapidly and were elected unopposed to the position of Branch Secretary: Morieson in 1989 and Fitzpatrick in 2001.²⁵ Each directed the deliberate application of organising principles in the ANF. There are few academic studies of the leadership of unions that have adopted the organising model.²⁶ “Very little is known about the impact of transformational leadership on collectives ... although virtually every transformational leadership model presumes such effects.”²⁷ A recent Australian study examined the workplace activities of job representatives during a mobilisation campaign in the ANF.²⁸ However, executive union leaders who hope to establish the model must transform the organisational structure of the union so that ongoing effective mobilisation can be conducted: an organisation’s structure consists of the roles of the staff and the relationship between these roles. Yet there has been no major enquiry into the impact of executive

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18. Barbara J. Feinberg, Cheri Ostroff and W. Warner Burke, “The Role of Within-Group Agreement in Understanding Transformational Leadership,” *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology* 78 (2005): 471.
 19. Shamir *et al.*, “Charismatic Leadership,” 584.
 20. Nicholas W. Twigg, Bryan J. Fuller and Kim Hester, “Transformational Leadership in Labor Organizations: The Effect on Union Citizenship Behaviors,” *Journal of Labor Research* 29 (2008): 28.
 21. Daniel J. Elazar, “The Political Theory of Covenant: Bible Origins and Modern Developments,” *Publius* 10 (1980): 3–20.
 22. Lois E. Tetrick, “Developing and Maintaining Union Commitment: A Theoretical Framework,” *Journal of Organizational Behavior* 16 (1995): 583–95.
 23. Christina Cregan, Tim Bartram and Pauline Stanton, “Organising During a Mobilisation Campaign: The Impact of Social Identity and Transformational Leadership on the Collectivist Attitudes of Union Members,” *British Journal of Industrial Relations* 47 (2009): 701–22.
 24. Ed Snape and Tom Redman, “Exchange or Covenant: The Nature of the Member-Union Relationship,” *Industrial Relations* 43 (2004): 855–73.
 25. Morieson was elected as job representative in 1981 at Prince Henry’s Hospital in Melbourne. She joined the ANF as a Professional Officer in 1986. She was elected unopposed as Branch Secretary in 1989. In 1986, Fitzpatrick became a job representative, also at Prince Henry’s. She was elected as a member of Branch Council in 1986. She was Branch President from 1990 to 1996. In 1997, she became a Recruitment Officer then moved on to be an Organiser. After Morieson stepped down, Fitzpatrick was also elected unopposed as Branch Secretary in December 2001.
 26. For example, Bob Carter and Rae Cooper, “The Organising Model and the Management of Change: A Comparative Study of Unions in Australia and Britain,” *Relations Industrielles* 57 (2002): 712–44. There is a series of work on women union leaders, most of which investigates the incidence and/or causation of the low representation of women as activists or union officials; for example, Gill Kirton and Geraldine Healey, “The Early Mobilisation of Women Union Leaders: A Comparative Perspective,” *British Journal of Industrial Relations*, in press, accessed August 17, 2012.
 27. Feinberg *et al.*, “The Role of Within-Group Agreement,” 473.
 28. Cregan, Bartram, and Stanton, “Organising During a Mobilisation Campaign.”

leaders on the development of organisational strategies and structures to support the organising model.

This paper draws on the union organising and transformational leadership literatures to investigate the development of strategies and structures in the union's organisation. An extensive case study was conducted of the ANF during the period October–December 2009. Interviews of staff members, past and present, and observations of organisational procedures were conducted by the primary researcher who spent three months on a full-time basis at union headquarters in Melbourne. An in-depth analysis was also conducted of archival data, and secondary sources.

The Context

This study was confined to the period 1989–2009. From the early 1980s, neo-liberalism began to emerge as a strong ideological force in Australia. A belief in the efficacy of market forces, with a focus on deregulation and the withdrawal of government involvement, was fundamental. Neo-liberalism was embraced to a varying extent by Federal governments of both parties. It grew in influence from the 1980s,²⁹ especially during Keating's Labor governments (1991–96) and the Howard Liberal-National Coalition governments (1996–2007).³⁰ From the early 1990s, legislation was passed that weakened trade union power as the century-old Australian industrial relations system was subject to considerable challenge. Under Keating, the role of the Australian Industrial Relations Commission (AIRC) was downgraded.³¹ Under Howard, further legislation ended the compulsory arbitration and conciliation system.³² Over the period of this study, there was an overall decline in trade union membership and strike activities. Trade union density in Australia fell dramatically from 49 per cent in 1986 to 20 per cent in 2009.

During most of this time, nursing experienced a labour shortage.³³ Over half of Australia's nurses are employed in public hospitals and two-thirds in the public sector generally. While state governments are assigned the responsibility to deliver public hospital services, during the Keating administration, large Federal funding incentives to the states and territories to increase competitive pressures were introduced. This scheme coincided with the Liberal premiership of Kennett in the state of Victoria (1992–99). From the mid-1980s and throughout the 1990s, nursing in Australia grew at half the rate of other occupations.

The Growth of an Organising Union

In the context of the cost-cutting imperatives of neo-liberal ideology, a weakening of trade unions and continuing nursing shortages, the ANF set out to build a strong professional-industrial union to protect the wages and conditions of its workers. During the early 1980s, prior to the adoption of the organising model, foundations had already been laid.³⁴ The election of Barbara Carson as Branch

29. Joe Collins and Drew Cottle, "Labor Neo-Liberals or Pragmatic Neo-Laborists? The Hawke and Keating Governments in Office, 1983–96," *Labour History*, no. 98 (2010): 25–37.

30. Sources for the following section: Australian Bureau of Statistics, *Australian Labour Market Statistics*, catalogue no. 6105.0 (Canberra: ABS, 1989–2009); Australian Bureau of Statistics, *Employee Earnings, Benefits and Trade Union Membership*, catalogue no. 6310.0 (Canberra: ABS, 1989–2009); Australian Bureau of Statistics, *Labour Force Australia*, catalogue no. 6203.0 (Canberra: ABS, 1997–2009); Australian Bureau of Statistics, *The Labour Force Australia 1978–1995*, catalogue no. 6204.0 (Canberra: ABS, 1996); Mark Bray, Peter Waring, and Rae Cooper, *Employment Relations* (Sydney: McGraw Hill, 2011), 83–91.

31. *Industrial Relations Reform Act 1993 (Cth)*.

32. *Workplace Relations Act 1996 (Cth)*; *Workplace Relations Amendment Act 2005 (Cth)*

33. Sources for this section: Australian Bureau of Statistics, *Australian Social Trends*, catalogue no. 4102.0 (Canberra: ABS, 2005), accessed March 2013, <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/94713ad445ff1425ca25682000192af2/8a87ef112b5bcf8bca25703b0080ccd9!OpenDocument>; Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2011; *Nursing and Midwifery Labour Force 2009*.

34. Suzanne Gordon, John Buchanan and Tanya Bretherton, *Safety in Numbers* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2008).

Secretary in 1980³⁵ had heralded an ideological shift within the ANF, which had traditionally been a conservative organisation: “[Carson] was the first leader to ... make a union of the ANF.”³⁶ A program of college-based training with professional examinations was introduced³⁷ and Carson persuaded Council to allow students to apply for union membership. A policy of concerted industrial action was adopted with bans on non-nursing duties.³⁸ In 1984, Carson lobbied successfully for the removal of the “no-strike clause” from the Branch Rules and, in 1985, led the first nurses’ strike ever carried out in Victoria. When Carson took office, there were 13,000 members. When she resigned in January 1986, membership had risen to 21,148. Under Irene Bolger, who succeeded Carson, an historic, 50-day, nurses’ strike occurred in 1986.³⁹ The strike was a major catalyst in shifting the internal focus of the Branch from servicing to organising: “Job reps came to the fore during the ‘86 strike ... that started the organising character of the Branch.”⁴⁰ While most ANF officials believe that the strike and its outcomes were brought about by the will and efforts of the rank-and-file, they credit Bolger with developing an industrial consciousness amongst members and nurses in general. “Not many people would have been able to pull off what Irene did in terms of ... enabling or facilitating nurses to feel that it was the right thing to do to go on strike. At a psychological level it was an extraordinary thing to have done.”⁴¹ Bolger believed that, during this period, the union “took a sharp turn to the left.”⁴² This change involved making the union far more engaged politically. However, in these early days of professional-industrial unionism in the ANF, the organising model had not been adopted. Therefore, although mobilisation campaigns took place, the Branch’s organisational strategies and structure did not give sufficient support to job representatives. It was not until Morieson became Branch Secretary that the ANF began to develop into a decentralised, member-driven organisation.

In response to continuing state government proposals for financial cutbacks in healthcare and workload expansion for nurses, Morieson and Fitzpatrick set out to transform the union through the principles of the organising model. They implemented industrial action in the form of a strategically-planned long-term series of mobilisation campaigns as a prelude to enterprise bargaining negotiations.⁴³ In order to support this policy, they needed to transform the union’s organisational strategies and structures. The initial problem facing Morieson was that, by the end of the 1980s, there were deep divisions among nurses about the ethics and effectiveness of strike action.⁴⁴ The ANF is a union with a largely professional membership of nurses. It is affiliated with the Australian Council of Trade Unions, but not with the Australian Labor Party. Although the 1986 strike was a major achievement which resulted in wage gains and a clear career structure for nurses,⁴⁵ victory came at a price. The strike was long and striking nurses endured financial and emotional hardship.⁴⁶ The industrial goals of the union were in conflict with the ethical sentiments

35. At the time, the union was the Royal Australian Nursing Federation (Victoria).

36. Morieson, interview.

37. This occurred in 1984. Judith Bessant, “Good Women and Good Nurses: Conflicting Identities in the Victorian Nurses Strikes, 1985–86,” *Labour History*, no. 63 (1992): 165.

38. This occurred in 1982. Heather Gardner and Brigid McCoppin, “The Politicisation of Australian Nurses: Victoria 1984–1986,” *Politics* 22 (1987): 19–34.

39. Isla Colson, *More than Just the Money: 100 Years of the Victorian Nurses Union* (Melbourne: Australian Nursing Federation, 2001); Carol Fox, *Enough is Enough: The 1986 Victorian Nurses’ Strike* (Sydney: University of New South Wales, 1991).

40. Fitzpatrick, interview, December 22, 2009.

41. Quoted in Colson, *More than Just the Money*, 76.

42. Irene Bolger, interview with author, December 23, 2009.

43. Tim Bartram, Pauline Stanton and Lauren Elovarris, “The Role of Job Representatives in an Organising Strategy: The Case of the Australian Nursing Federation,” *Journal of Industrial Relations* 50 (2008): 25–44.

44. For a review of professional-industrial unions in Australia, see Stephen Deery and Janet Walsh, “The Decline of Collectivism: A Comparative Study of White-Collar Workers in Britain and Australia,” *British Journal of Industrial Relations* 37 (1999): 245–69.

45. Fox, *Enough is Enough*, 207; Colson, *More than Just the Money*, 91–92.

46. Colson, *More Than Just the Money*, 86; 90.

of some members who resigned from the union⁴⁷ or chose not to strike.⁴⁸ Mass withdrawal of labour from hospitals split the ANF, the nursing profession, the union movement, and public opinion.⁴⁹ Thus, at the end of the strike, many nurses were reluctant to participate in further industrial action. In consequence, Morieson and her Council set about adapting the organising model to suit the aspirations of its largely middle-aged, professional membership. This strategy was continued and developed by Fitzpatrick and her Council.

The Development of a Professional-Industrial Union

First, industrial goals were equated with professional goals, in the form of the pursuit of patient welfare: nurses were encouraged to view themselves as defenders of essential public services and the quality of patient care.⁵⁰ A method of industrial action was embraced that did not involve withdrawal of labour. The leadership set out to achieve higher nurse-patient ratios by substituting hospital bed closures and cancellation of elective surgery for strike action.⁵¹ In other words, the goal was to increase hospitals queues rather than withdrawing care from existing patients. Public sympathy was sought⁵² by extensive publicity that linked nursing shortages to a decline in health standards.⁵³ This policy was very effective in mobilising nurses. During negotiations over a new public-sector nurses' enterprise bargaining agreement in 2000, Morieson ensured that nurse-patient ratios were central to the ANF's log of claims.⁵⁴ After a period of concerted industrial action by nurses across the State, including thousands of bed closures, the AIRC issued the "Blair decision", in which the Commission introduced a mandatory nurse-patient ratio of 1:4 in all "A" Hospitals.⁵⁵ Commissioner Blair held that, "where the appropriate ratio is not met, the equivalent numbers of beds are to be temporarily closed until the ratio is achieved."⁵⁶ The implementation of nurse-patient ratios was highly popular with nurses. The results of a 2005 University of Sydney survey of ANF members demonstrated that 96 per cent of the sample believed that ratios were essential⁵⁷ and had contributed to a major improvement in both patient care and the working life of nurses.⁵⁸ Continuing attempts by successive governments to undermine the ratios resulted in an ongoing series of mobilisation campaigns under both leaders, driven by the membership and characterised by social movement rank and file participation, in the form of state-wide mass meetings, stop-work meetings and overwhelming support for bed-closures.⁵⁹

Second, Morieson and Fitzpatrick located the advancement of professional goals of nurses *within* the ANF. This had a dual purpose: to avert the disintegration of the union into two distinct

47. *Ibid.*, 79.

48. Katherine Ellinghaus, "The Radicalisation of Florence Nightingale: The Victorian Nurses' Strike of 1986" (Hons thesis, University of Melbourne, 1995), 39.

49. Ellinghaus, "The Radicalisation of Florence Nightingale," 79, 90–92.

50. Cregan, Bartram and Stanton, "Organising During a Mobilisation Campaign," 702.

51. Gordon, Buchanan and Bretherton, *Safety in Numbers*, 48.

52. Pauline Stanton, "Changing Employment Relationships in Victorian Public Hospitals: The Kennett Years, 1992–1999" (PhD thesis, La Trobe University, 2002).

53. John Buchanan, Tanya Bretherton, Sue Bearfield and Stephen Jackson, *Stable but Critical: The Working Conditions of Victorian Public Sector Nurses* (Sydney: Australian Centre for Industrial Relations Research and Training, 2004).

54. Morieson, interview.

55. *Victorian Hospitals Industrial Association v Australian Nursing Federation (a decision of the Australian Industrial Relations Commission, made by the Commission sitting in Melbourne, Victoria on 31 August 2000, before Commissioner Blair)* S9958 [2000] AIRC 267 (31 August 2000), [174]. This ratio applied in all "A" Hospitals.

56. Ellinghaus, "The Radicalisation of Florence Nightingale," 14; Colson, *More than Just the Money*, 78.

57. John Buchanan, and Gillian Considine, "Combating Work Intensification: Do Nurse-Patient Ratios Reduce Workloads in Australian Public Hospitals?" (paper presented at the 23rd International Labour Process Conference, Glasgow, UK, October 27, 2005), 13.

58. Buchanan and Considine, "Combating Work Intensification," 2.

59. Gordon, Buchanan and Bretherton, *Safety in Numbers*.

bodies (professional and industrial); and to encourage conservative nurses to join the union.⁶⁰ To this end, the ANF became a professional educational body. In 1992, the ANF Education Unit was opened⁶¹ and became a registered training organisation with ongoing education programs for nurses in the private sector. By establishing a registered organisation within the Branch, Morieson introduced and developed professional education and training for nurses, offering opportunities for career progression. Under Fitzpatrick, the unit continued to operate on a not-for-profit basis and offered union members significant course discounts. By 2009, professional training was carried out over two floors of the ANF headquarters' offices. The program included a wide variety of professional and skill-based courses.⁶² This ongoing development allowed nurses to gain practical professional benefit from union membership.

Third, private professional services – available only to members – were introduced to encourage membership. Professional indemnity insurance has been seen as a strong incentive for recruitment and retention.⁶³ The scheme was re-introduced by Morieson in February 1989.⁶⁴ As observed by Fitzpatrick, “Professional indemnity insurance has been a very important factor in relation to our ability to recruit ... it hasn't been used an awful lot but some nurses have benefited from it.”⁶⁵ Legal services offered by unions are also restricted to members. Legal advice is particularly important to nurses in their professional capacity. Through its association with Ryan Carlisle Thomas – a law firm – throughout this period, the union provided advice and representation to any nurse charged with professional misconduct. Under Morieson's direction, in 1995 a branch was established within the ANF headquarters' offices, allowing members easy access.⁶⁶ Finally, through support from the Nurses Board of Victoria and the Nurse Policy Unit in the Department of Health, the ANF developed a private counselling service, available only to members. The Victorian Nurses Health Program was set up in 2006, largely as a result of the lobbying of Fitzpatrick, to treat nurses and nursing students experiencing substance use and mental health issues. Under the program, confidential assessments were conducted, individual management plans were developed and treatment was co-ordinated, including the arrangement of appropriate referrals.⁶⁷ By 2009, the ANF retained an active role in the administration of the program and Morieson was the Chairperson on the Board of Directors.

Reflecting on these strategies, Fitzpatrick explained that in the context of nursing, professional and industrial issues are often inseparable. Matters such as workloads and the way in which nurses are instructed to work are both professional and industrial issues. The ANF actively

60. Morieson, interview. Encouraging the membership of conservative nurses was the reason Morieson chose to employ a Special Interest Group Coordinator (SPIN), and give financial support to the SPIN nurses. During the 1986 strike, the Health Minister, David White, had convinced SPIN nurses to speak out against the strike so Morieson was intent to bring these nurses back into the union.

61. Secretary's Report, *Annual Report 1992–1993*, Australian Nursing Federation, Victorian Branch (ANF Vic), internal publication, 2.

62. These comprised formal courses; accredited courses; courses in first aid, mathematics, management and leadership, violence and aggression prevention and management; legal, ethical, and clinical courses; computer courses; and post registration modules. The centre also offered extensive Occupation Health and Safety Training, including “No Lift Workshops”; see “Education,” Australian Nursing Federation, Victorian Branch, accessed March 2013: <http://www.anfvic.asn.au/education/>.

63. HR Manager, interview with author, December 4, 2009.

64. ANF Vic, *Council Minutes*, 4 February 1989, 1, ANF Vic Archives, 540 Elizabeth Street, Melbourne, Vic., 3000. It had been introduced under Carson in 1982 but discontinued in 1987 under Bolger; see ANF Vic, *Council Minutes*, 24 March 1987, ANF Vic Archives. The nature of liability apportionment legislation in Victoria means that individual nurses may not be covered by vicarious liability provisions. In 2009, although the Royal College of Nursing (RCN) offered professional indemnity insurance, it cost RCN members an additional \$586 a year while it was included as part of the ANF membership fee. This insurance became even more valuable under the National Registration Scheme that commenced on 1 July 2010, which required nurses to have indemnity insurance. See *Health Practitioner Regulation National Law (Victoria) Act 2009*, s 129(1).

65. Fitzpatrick, interview, December 22, 2009.

66. *Ibid.*

67. Victorian Nurses Health Program, brochure, accessed March 2013, <http://www.anfvic.asn.au/multiversions/2715/FileName/VNHPbrochure.pdf>.

sought to recruit nurses into the union because Fitzpatrick believed that industrial issues in the ANF are best understood by people who have worked in the profession: nearly all staff members in the ANF had significant nursing experience. The inter-relationship between professional and industrial concerns for nurses was also the reason that increasing industrial consciousness had led to significant improvements in professional standards within nursing in Victoria, as demonstrated by the implementation of nurse-patient ratios. Fitzpatrick stated that “we have achieved through industrial means professional outcomes on nurses’ clinical workloads, and therefore on patient outcomes.”⁶⁸

In summary, the leadership of the ANF adopted strategies whereby the professional and industrial goals of nurses were aligned through union membership: industrial action was equated with patient care; an educational unit was established, offering professional qualifications and advancement; and professional union services available only to members were developed.

The Central Role of Job Representatives

In 1986, prior to the development of the organising model, non-executive union roles comprised Industrial Officers and Organisers (paid union officials), and unpaid elected job representatives (see Figure 1). Under the servicing model that characterised most unions before the end of the 1980s, wage gains and services (such as the settlement of disputes) were provided to workers in return for the payment of fees. Therefore, the role of paid officials was central: in particular, that of Industrial Officers. An ANF Industrial Officer’s primary task within the former enterprise bargaining system was to argue cases and negotiate disputes at AIRC tribunals around the country. Cases were referred by Organisers and job representatives.⁶⁹ In the organising model, however, elected job representatives (or delegates) – not paid officials – take centre stage. Their fundamental role lies in persuading workers to “transcend their self-interests for a collective purpose.”⁷⁰ The role of job representatives is to encourage workers to take industrial action and solve their own problems. Shaping, developing and supporting the changing role of job representatives, therefore, became a key part of the ANF Branch Secretaries’ organising strategy. In consequence, the recruitment, training and support of job representatives to undertake their workplace recruitment and activist roles were seen to be fundamental issues. To this end, the several strategies were developed.

First, from the early 1990s, the ANF devoted considerable resources to job representative training. By 2009, there were two full-time training officers within the Branch, who conducted training seminars with each job representative at least once a year. At these seminars, the importance and effectiveness of collective power was emphasised: recruitment builds collective bargaining strength, which “is vital in your ability to improve and maintain your entitlements and conditions of employment”; “the source of power and strength for workers is in their combined strength and ability to organise and act collectively.”⁷¹ Further, the importance of encouraging workers to take action to solve their own grievances was stressed: one seminar slide stated the “Iron Law of Organising: Never do for others what they can do for themselves.”⁷² The training programs demonstrated “sales” techniques that were characteristic of the organising model’s method of recruiting fellow workers by means of consciousness-raising: for example, “the one-on-one approach works best.”⁷³ Job representatives were required to develop and enhance workplace

68. Fitzpatrick, interview, December 22, 2009.

69. Analysis of the Industrial Officer’s role developed from interviews with Lisa Fitzpatrick and senior industrial staff.

70. Feinberg *et al.*, “The Role of Within-Group Agreement,” 471.

71. Training Officer, interview with author, December 15, 2009. One Training Officer noted that the two “P” words, politics and power, are best avoided as they frighten new job representatives.

72. ANF Vic, “Job Rep Training Material 2007: ANF Delegates Winning Session,” 32, ANF Vic Archives.

73. In the programs, Training Officers highlighted five “Keys to Recruitment”; “it needs to be easy for non-members to join”; “a person is more likely to join when asked by someone they know”; “we need to make our approach non-threatening”; “you need to know what services and benefits the ANF provides”; and “a ‘hard sell’ rarely works.”

activism and taught how to identify genuine ANF activists within their membership groups. The “clues” included involvement in workplace safety or community issues, and in the possession of natural workplace leadership qualities.⁷⁴ The identification of workplace activists also required “tapping into the natural social groups within the workplace.” When a potential activist was identified, job representatives were advised on the best methods to encourage their participation, such as “ask the worker directly.” New activists were assured that “they will have the backup and support they need.”⁷⁵ Over time, these training programs were held in regional Victoria. Fitzpatrick stated that, “there are now a lot more regional training programs and extra funding from the ACTU for a comprehensive training day in regional facilities.”⁷⁶

Second, the leadership adopted two specialist-training programs aimed at identifying “passionate” job representatives. The Anna Stewart Program⁷⁷ gave female delegates the opportunity to experience the union working environment. The Belinda Morieson Program, implemented by Fitzpatrick, was another program open to men and women, which allowed committed job representatives to work “in house” within the ANF Branch. Fitzpatrick stated that the purpose of that program was to “give priority to people that we think have got potential or have expressed an interest in coming to work for the Federation.”⁷⁸ By 2009, the main function was to identify and provide the skills for job representatives to effectively carry out their organising role. These programs allowed eight job representatives annually to work at the ANF for two weeks. Representatives who attended reported they were told that they were not expected to know everything, and that the lessons they would be taught were valuable life-lessons regardless of whether or not they stayed involved in the ANF.

Third, as job representatives are the key to successful organising, the Branch Secretaries directed the adjustment of the roles of existing paid officials to focus on the recruitment and support of the representatives.⁷⁹ Morieson explained: “Organisers must actively seek out new representatives as part of a “numbers game”: “if an Organiser could get 12 reps, three wouldn’t care, three would be active, and six would ‘get the disease.’”⁸⁰ The dangers of an overbearing Organiser discouraging member activism was emphasised in job representative training.⁸¹ Although by 2009 advocacy still formed a major part of the job, Industrial Officers also developed strategic forms of industrial negotiation. They took on supervision and co-ordination of a team of Organisers – checking they were “fixing the problem” – and the establishment of effective organising campaigns.

Fourth, support and encouragement for job representatives, allowing their voices to be heard, was achieved through the creation of the ANF Delegates Conference by Morieson and Branch Council. Morieson wanted to make job representatives feel important, and allow them to meet one another. She stated that the Conference was designed to “develop a momentum” – getting enough job representatives involved and active “such that the reps will recruit for you.”⁸² The first conference took place in a small meeting room at Dallas Brooks Hall in Melbourne in 1993 and was attended by 40 job representatives. The 2009 conference was attended by 459 delegates. One of the Conference’s main purposes was to reinforce democratic processes and enhance the ANF’s reputation as a membership-oriented union.⁸³ Job representatives could pass resolutions at the

74. ANF Vic, “Job Rep Training Material 2007,” 29.

75. *Ibid.*, 35.

76. Fitzpatrick, interview, December 15, 2009.

77. Developed by the Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU).

78. Fitzpatrick, interview, December 15, 2009.

79. The process had been started under Bolger. The number of industrial staff grew and Organisers were taught industrial strategy and how to “whip up” support for industrial action.

80. Morieson, interview.

81. ANF Vic, “2006 Job Rep Training, Recruitment Session,” 2, ANF Vic Archives.

82. Morieson, interview.

83. Fitzpatrick, interview, December 22, 2009.

conference by pure majority.⁸⁴ Although these decisions were not binding, as of 2009 the Council had endorsed every resolution that had been passed by the Delegates Conference. While Council ultimately voted on any proposals, they often had little role in the formulation of these policies. As Fitzpatrick described, “Branch Council tweak, rather than absolutely overhaul new proposals.”⁸⁵

In summary, formal training programs for job representatives were established, the tasks of Organisers and Industrial Officers were developed to facilitate the union’s core function of job representative mobilisation of the rank-and-file, and the Delegates Conference was established to help ensure that the “voice” of job representatives was heard.

The Union as a Recruitment/Retention Machine

Following organising principles, Morieson and Fitzpatrick turned the union itself into a recruitment and retention machine. The entire union organisation became involved in membership recruitment/retention in a number of ways.⁸⁶

First, communication with existing members became a priority. “Constant contact is fundamental.”⁸⁷ An information service, “InfoLine”, was expanded.⁸⁸ Its function was to respond directly to queries and complaints from members. Typically, when they had a problem, members called their Organisers, but where members did not know their Organiser, they called InfoLine. The union also communicated with its members on a proactive basis. Members were kept informed about union activities through *On the Record*, a monthly ANF journal. In 2005, the union began to regularly survey its members about nursing and employment issues and the results gave the union information about member attitudes. Email updates provided members with professional information as well as indicating what the ANF was doing for them. By 2009, the union called each new member, and addressed any concerns regarding membership entitlements. Every “un-financial member” was also contacted to inquire why fees had not been paid. Advertising campaigns were an ongoing part of the ANF activities, targeting current issues such as the right to claim overtime

Second, a series of visits was instituted. Morieson implemented a practice whereby all ANF officers visited every ward in every hospital annually. Prior to this, wards would only be visited if a job representative or member raised an issue. She also introduced mandatory twice-yearly visits by Organisers to every workplace within their purview.

This (policy) ensures there is a job representative at every site, creates a strong union presence, and gives nurses the chance to express workplace concerns informally ... These visits raise the profile of the ANF in the workplace, and are great recruitment opportunities ... (they) let nurses know that we’re out there. During the 80s ... you never saw anybody from the Branch in your workplace at all. It was very much a matter of you going to them if you had a problem ... For us to be out there organising and identifying activists, and educating and training these people in organising strategy – it’s a much better way of operating.⁸⁹

84. The resolutions mostly concern the enterprise bargaining log of claims but other resolutions concern, for example, occupational health and safety issues.

85. Fitzpatrick, interview, December 22, 2009.

86. ANF Vic, “Recruitment Strategies,” ANF Vic Archives.

87. HR Manager, interview, December 4, 2009.

88. InfoLine was set up by Bolger, on the recommendation of consultants. It responds to any member concerns relating to employee entitlements, enterprise bargaining agreements and their employer’s organisational policy. Any issues relating to possible legal disputes, coronial inquests or matters concerning industrial action are referred to an Organiser or Industrial Officer. Only a serious matter will be referred to an Industrial Officer directly from InfoLine. There have been no significant strategic changes to the InfoLine since its inception, aside from the advent of an electronic logging system for registering calls, Unison. The Membership Services Information Line deals solely with payment related matters raised by individual members.

89. Fitzpatrick, interview, December 22, 2009.

Fitzpatrick also instituted a policy whereby Organisers visited workplaces in targeted roadshows to promote the ANF and advise nurses of the range of benefits available; organisations that had a relationship with the ANF⁹⁰ were invited to take part and outline the specific benefits they offer members. Officials also visited universities and Technical and Further Education colleges to deliver information regarding both professional and industrial issues. Public and private medical facilities often ran orientation programs for new staff.⁹¹

Third, the union started to collect, analyse and publicise membership records. Workplace visits provided an opportunity to gather accurate workplace membership statistics. A computerised system was established in 1999. During Morieson's leadership, the Branch began to present figures for membership levels and trends at every staff meeting. This practice continued under the leadership of Fitzpatrick. Copies of the Membership Statistical Report were distributed at the meeting. The membership numbers were presented for each Health Service Provider, and also for each hospital.⁹² By 2009, membership numbers per month were tallied in each case. Figures were also presented for the regions for which each Organiser was responsible. The Organisers and Industrial Officers discussed membership fluctuations. Any major increase in membership resulted in applause – communal recognition of achievement – for the relevant Organiser. Job representatives who achieved 100 per cent membership in their ward or unit received \$10 per member to spend on rewarding the staff.

Both Morieson and Fitzpatrick explained their position. Morieson saw recruitment and retention of members as an issue for everybody in the Branch.⁹³ She joked that any ANF staff member who entered a workplace without membership forms would be subject to instant dismissal. Each member, from the Secretary down, was expected to actively recruit and promote support for the ANF.⁹⁴

During the case study, the primary researcher observed job interviews for a position in the recruitment department. In staff recruitment, ideology and industrial consciousness informed the process of selection. Fitzpatrick stated that the importance of ideology in selection procedures was not really a conscious policy, but a result of the fact that working for a trade union is inevitably a political choice: "Not many people would apply if they didn't believe in what the Branch was doing." Fitzpatrick asserted that when assessing candidates for any position at the ANF, previous union involvement was vital. Before commencing the interviews, she called either the referees or acquaintances in organisation(s) that had employed the applicant and asked how involved the applicant had been in union activity. One applicant was criticised for being a "fence-sitter" who had on occasion "sided with management." Fitzpatrick also called the candidates' Organisers to check if the applicant had been active in campaigns or had at least "rallied." Her opinion was that CVs were not very important for a recruitment position. Far more valuable was the applicant's interest and knowledge of the union movement. Fitzpatrick was critical of Organisers and Industrial Officers in the ANF because there were no applications from job representatives:

I have a view that we should be trying to fill the (ANF) role with existing job representatives ... if you've been a committed job rep, and you want to come to work for the ANF, I think that is a very important career path that we've created. A committed job rep is likely to be a good staff member.⁹⁵

In summary, the entire union became a recruitment and retention machine. Ongoing direct contact with members took place, especially through InfoLine; all union staff members were involved in

90. For example, Members Equity; Ryan Carlisle Thomas.

91. ANF Vic, *Annual Report 2008–2009*, 10, ANF Vic Archives.

92. ANF Vic, "Membership Statistical Report," September 2009, ANF Vic Archives.

93. Secretary's Report, ANF Vic, *Annual Report 1992–1993*, 2, ANF Vic Archives.

94. Morieson, interview; Bobby Kuriakose, interview with author, December 4, 2009.

95. Fitzpatrick, interview, December 15, 2009.

recruitment/retention, often by workplace visits; membership figures were accurately recorded and reported on a continual, formal basis.

The Emergence of an Organising Structure

The adoption and development of strategies to transform the organisation into an organising union led to the emergence of a more complex and decentralised organisational structure (see Figure 2) as pre-existing roles were changed and new roles were introduced. The ANF bureaucracy grew considerably, reflecting the rise in membership and the growth in the diversity of roles and functions. At the end of this study (2009) the union employed 97 full-time staff to deal with issues concerning 1,990 job representatives and 3,000 workplaces. In almost all instances, Fitzpatrick followed and developed Morieson's policies. However, the growing numbers in the union began to pose administrative problems for the leadership and, in two instances, Fitzpatrick adopted an innovative approach. In 2009 a Marketing Manager was appointed. The office-holder was not a nurse and previously worked in the corporate world of private enterprise as a marketing director for a major airline and also a racing magazine. He explained that he was appointed because the union required an experienced marketing officer; further, all his staff were drawn from a spectra of specialist nursing roles.⁹⁶ All staff, therefore, had a high level of credibility when communicating with nurses and relating to their concerns.

In the same year, a Human Resource (HR) Manager was also employed. Following business practices, the brief was to implement and refine the Federal ANF's newly formulated "benchmarks" which specified performance indicators for each role within the union's organisation. The HR Manager planned to use the benchmarks as a framework to develop and administer performance appraisals of union staff – initially on a voluntary basis. He was also creating an electronic HR Information system, with the intention of reducing the current paper-intensive record-keeping system, and eventually recording performance appraisals with reference to the benchmarks. Other HR practices were also in development: a strategic plan and a mission statement. These were to be used to help formulate and measure staff during the performance appraisals.⁹⁷

Clearly, roles and functions routinely applied in business organisations have political implications regarding the character of the leadership of a trade union. The response to a 2007 staff survey carried out by the Research Office elicited staff views on the HR Manager position and performance appraisals. The low response rate (42 per cent) – only 38 completed surveys out of 90 were returned – represented a major limitation on interpretation of the findings. Nevertheless, while those who did respond indicated strong support for the introduction of an HR Manager, there was marginal support for performance appraisals at the ANF.⁹⁸ A Senior Industrial Officer provided an explanation about staff ambivalence towards performance appraisals: "There is a divide within unions between having a member-based not-for-profit organisation and being a professional operation. Human Resources people may not fit the organisation's model or philosophy." But he also stated that, "While there is understandably some trepidation amongst staff to introducing ostensibly corporate organisational practices, there is a need for proper organisational processes – every union should have these processes. These policies make perfect sense, as long as the organisation still has the feel of a non-profit organisation."⁹⁹

Fitzpatrick explained her decision to implement some HR management and practices in the ANF. First, the vast increase in staff numbers had made it impossible for the Secretary to oversee the performance of individual staff members on an informal basis. She had appointed two Assistant Secretaries specifically to help with her workload, but now felt they were all spending too much time responding to staffing concerns, dealing with internal pay concerns and other employee issues. Second, clarifying the roles and expectations of individual staff members in performance appraisals

96. Staff comprised a former paediatric nurse, a former psychiatric nurse, and an Emergency Department nurse.

97. Fitzpatrick, interview, December 15, 2009.

98. ANF Vic, "Staff Survey 2007," 7, ANF Vic Archives.

99. Senior Industrial Officer, interview with author, December 14, 2009.

would make it easier for the Branch to develop career pathways for individual staff. She stressed that the purpose of appraisals was *not* to “manage our staff through severe appraisals, but to clarify each officer’s role and the expectations that the Branch has of them in this role.” An outside company was to be engaged to conduct the appraisals. Moreover, in the union, unlike most business organisations, it was not intended that performance appraisals would lead to performance-related payments for staff members. Fitzpatrick had great concerns about the principle of performance based pay: There are clear indications that “nurses on almost a daily basis through a personality clash or some unfair means don’t get promoted or are unfairly disciplined. When you have performance-based employment, there will be an increasing disputation around what nurses’ pay will be.”¹⁰⁰

In summary, strategic changes in the roles of ANF staff members, reflecting the member-oriented focus of union organizing, brought about the emergence of a decentralised structure, characteristic of the organising model. The growing bureaucracy, however, led to the adoption of some corporate roles and functions under Fitzpatrick. There was awareness, however, on the part of the leader and staff that these roles should be carried out in the spirit of a trade union and not a business organisation.

The functions of pre-existing roles in the “transformed” organisation in 2009 and the new roles that were created, 1989–2009, are presented in the Appendix.

Discussion

From 1989 onwards, the Branch Secretaries of the ANF – Morieson and Fitzpatrick – adopted the organising model of recruitment and retention whereby members are encouraged by job representatives to take ownership of their workplace by encouraging workers to participate in industrial action to solve their grievances. The organisational strategies and structure of the ANF were adapted to support the model. Although the foundations of strong professional-industrial unionism had been constructed by Carson and Bolger, Morieson and Fitzpatrick directed the transformation of the ANF’s organisation by adopting the principles of the organising model. Professional goals – the quality of patient care – were allied with industrial goals to heal existing rifts and gain public support. New organisational roles were created; existing roles were adapted and realigned. The entire union was turned into a recruitment and retention machine through the development of an organisational structure in which the capacity for mobilisation was embedded. Growth in numbers and complexity of organisational roles led to the emergence of a decentralised organisational structure. A shift in focus occurred with the establishment of democratic, membership-based decision-making at all levels. The findings of this study, therefore, support Chandler’s well-known observation that organisational strategy and structure are inextricably linked.¹⁰¹

Transformational leadership qualities in an organising union are usually attributed to workplace leaders (in the form of job representatives) in their role of changing worker attitudes.¹⁰² However, this study demonstrated that the executive leadership in the ANF used its power to change the union’s organisational strategies and structure. Morieson and Fitzpatrick transformed the union’s bureaucracy so that, in turn, workplace leaders could transform the union. Drawing their power from the rank-and-file – as elected leaders, through resolutions of the Delegates Conference and mass meetings of nurses – they used their personal executive and administrative leadership qualities to persuade Council to develop an organisation that would allow the aspirations of a social movement to be operationalised. With regard to this achievement, both leaders satisfied the criteria outlined in the extensive literature: they were exceptional, elicited commitment, motivated the growth of collectivism in nurses, and changed the union by developing a vision for the future. This

100. Fitzpatrick, interview, December 15, 2009.

101. Alfred D. Chandler, *Strategy and Structure: Chapters in the History of the American Industrial Enterprise* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1962), 15.

102. Cregan, Bartram, and Stanton, “Organising During a Mobilisation Campaign,” 702.

study clearly demonstrated that Morieson and Fitzpatrick used their transformational leadership qualities to develop organisational strategies and structures that facilitated the operationalisation of the organising model.¹⁰³

There were some differences between Morieson and Fitzpatrick, but these may have been due to changing organisational imperatives rather than personal inclination. In his “iron law of oligarchy” thesis, Michels¹⁰⁴ argued that all organisations have a natural tendency to develop oligarchical leadership and pursue conservative goals: over time, despite formal democratic practices, the organisation hires increasing numbers of staff; a growing distance develops between staff and, in this case, union members.¹⁰⁵ Fitzpatrick’s introduction of roles usually associated with business corporations – Marketing and HR Managers – were a direct response to the effectiveness of the organising strategy, in terms of growing numbers. However, unlike business organisations, the union’s membership-driven structure seemed to provide a check on oligarchical tendencies.

This study also helps illuminate the characteristics of labour women leaders. Women trade union leaders form a distinct category when they direct the struggle to overcome the labour market disadvantage brought about by gender-based roles whereby females in general undertake responsibilities in both the home and the workplace. Most studies of women in trade unions investigate mixed-gender unions that are often male-dominated and represent occupations and/or industries where women are in the lower-paid echelons. One of the roles of trade union leaders in such a situation is to help overcome the particular disadvantage for women brought about by vertical labour market segregation. The main contribution of this case study, however, was to examine women leaders in a situation of horizontal segregation where females formed the large majority of workers and where stereotypical “caring” characteristics are associated with the domestic role of females. The findings demonstrated that the leadership of the ANF emerged from – and was continually informed by – the rank and file of nursing and, in consequence, understood the labour market problems faced by nurses that originated in their gender-based roles. The ground had not been sufficiently prepared in 1986 for sustained industrial conflict. During the leadership of Morieson and Fitzpatrick, however, organisational strategies and structures allowed for the development of a collective consciousness whereby nurses perceived the class-based injustice of unfair exchange. Collectivism overcame the constraints associated with the gender-based stereotype that had previously rendered many nurses passive or uncertain with regard to participation in struggle.

Like the “Justice for Janitors” movement in the United States,¹⁰⁶ the ANF mobilisation campaigns are an important series of events in labour history, offering a strategic blueprint to other unions. At a time when labour scholars are concerned about the survival of trade unions, Morieson and Fitzpatrick’s direction of the Victorian branch of the Australian Nursing Federation provided a new form of representation. It institutionalised the capacity of a female-dominated union of largely part-time workers in a “caring” profession to undertake unusually effective ongoing rank-and-file mobilisation that brought about continuing gains for nurses and patients alike.

103. Transformational leadership was also manifest in the concurrent development of major trends that raised the confidence and bargaining power of nurses but which lie outside the scope of this study, in particular, the growing status and skill-base of the nursing profession and the industrial strength and success of the mobilisation campaigns.

104. Robert Michels, *Political Parties* (New York: Collier Books, 1962).

105. Voss and Sherman, “Breaking the Iron Law of Oligarchy,” 303–49.

106. Christopher L. Erickson, Catherine Fisk, Ruth Milkman, Daniel J.B. Mitchell, and Kent Wong, “Justice for Janitors in Los Angeles and Beyond,” in *The Changing Roles of Unions: New Forms of Representation*, ed. Phanindra Wunnava (New York: M. E. Sharpe, 2004), 22–60.

Appendix: Union Officers in 2009

Existing Roles

- *Professional Officers* are qualified nurses. They support member concerns in relation to all matters of a professional nature, including the improvement of standards of nursing care and education. All Professional Officers have specialised portfolios, for example, aged care, drugs/poisons, and midwifery. They also advise on industrial matters. They assist Organisers with member issues. Their knowledge of the Nursing Board of Victoria (NBV – since replaced by the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia: NMBA on 1 July 2010) scopes of practice is particularly important with regard to industrial issues. It allows them to advise members, help members in negotiations with management, and convince management to develop more efficient and appropriate policies. They attend bargaining negotiations and members' meetings with Industrial Officers and Organisers, acting as an advisory resource on standards of care and legislation. They visit workplaces in a recruitment capacity.
- *Industrial Officers* are responsible for negotiating enterprise bargaining agreements. Advocacy forms a major part of their role. Industrial Officers do not need to seek Secretarial or Branch Council approval before taking industrial action, but usually inform Branch Council. They supervise and co-ordinate a team of Organisers and advise Organisers on how to deal with member complaints, referring matters to Fair Work Australia, and meeting with senior hospital officials where necessary.
- *Organisers* are responsible for specific hospitals and other care facilities, and therefore, for groupings of job representatives. The Organiser's main role is to implement Branch policies and enforce compliance with negotiated conditions within the workplace, contained in the Enterprise Bargaining Agreement (EBA). Organisers are also required to respond to and resolve complaints and concerns brought to them by their job representatives and members. If an individual member concern is likely to reflect a common concern (for example, where a term of the EBA is being breached), the Organiser will liaise with their Industrial officer and seek to formulate a collective response. Organisers can call and conduct members' meetings if industrial action is required. But, following the member-oriented character of union organising, Organisers may not implement industrial action themselves but only initiate members' meetings about such action. They are required to maintain an active presence in the workplace, engage in recruitment and retention of representatives and members, and be responsive to rank-and-file concerns and views.
- *Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S) Officers* advocate and support members, representatives and other Branch officials in the specialist areas of OH&S, workers' compensation and return-to-work issues. They provide professional advice to other parties on the current practices relating to OH&S, nursing and midwifery. They provide approved OH&S training to ensure that Health and Safety representatives to guide them in their voluntary capacity. They develop and deliver seminars and conferences on contemporary issues faced by members in the workplace. They campaign for nurses and midwives to have improved workplace health and safety and compensation in external forums such as WorkSafe Victoria, Department of Health and other stakeholder organisations.

New Roles

- The new roles are: *Recruitment Officer* (1992), responsible for the development and co-ordination of recruitment policy and practice throughout the ANF and, by 2009, each officer specialising in recruitment, retention or graduate/financial support; *Education and Training Manager and Officers* (1992); *Media/Public Relations Manager* (1997); *Research Officer* (2005); *Marketing Services and Events Manager* (2009) – to manage the recruitment team; *Human Resource Manager* (2009) and an additional *Assistant Secretary* (2009).

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