

Siding against Labor in the Last Great American Union Town: Coverage of the 1984 Casino Workers Strike by the *Las Vegas Review-Journal* and *Las Vegas Sun*

Abstract

When Las Vegas casino workers went on strike in 1984, the *Las Vegas Review-Journal* and *Las Vegas Sun* both proved hostile toward the unions in the ways they covered the event. This study places the casino workers strike in the larger context of how the early nineteenth century business model development of generating revenue from advertising based on circulation first complicated newspaper coverage of labor unrest and the press' eventual general abandonment of organized labor causes as part of business reporting. While Las Vegas is a unique city in that it is dominated by a single, heavily unionized industry, in a postindustrial, neo-liberal era, union power did not garner press support for labor activism. Rather, the two newspapers sided with the casino management and those whose economic interests differed from union members, focusing on how the unions hurt the local economy.

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