

# ***The Challenges of Bargaining Equity:***

***Competing Pressures***

# ***Pay Equity Panel Questions***

- **What are the lessons learned from the last twenty years of pay equity experience?**
- **What are the challenges of bargaining equity in a unionized environment?**
- **How can unions integrate pay equity principles into their culture, their bargaining strategies and how can/do unions reconcile the potential conflict in promoting pay equity in male dominated bargaining units, while facing possible reductions in other financial benefits or job losses?**

# Limitations to bargaining

- **“To simply replicate the bargaining unit as the basic constituency for considering issues of pay equity carries with it the risk of replicating, as well the occupational segregation *and obliviousness to the gendered nature of work* which is at the heart of the problem of wage discrimination.” [my emphasis]**

*Pay Equity Task Force (2004: 462)*

# Broadening equity

- ...‘equity bargaining refers to the process of bargaining, bargaining strategy ... ‘Bargaining equity’, on the other hand, refers to the issues on an equity agenda....unions need to link the struggles around diversity, equity and representation *inside* unions to the collective bargaining process and agenda.

From Linda Briskin. Equity Bargaining/Bargaining Equity Series Paper #1 Restructuring Work and Labour in the New Economy, July 2006:1-2.

# Gender/equity lens

- Concept of the universal/generic worker uncovered implicit masculine construct upon which work norms are built.

Pay equity movement (job evaluation) visibly demonstrated unfair value system.

(assumptions about: commitment to work; definition and value placed on “responsibility”)

# Conceptual shift

- Equity issues expanded to incorporate needs of diverse equity constituencies
- Bargaining issues
- e.g. aboriginal employment leave (hunting rights); workplace harassment (women, racialised; gay/lesbian/trans); transitional leave for transgendered, etc.

# Bargaining wage equity

- Sensitivity to equity groups
- Strategies to improve wages of the lowest paid workers in feminized, flexible work:
- CUPE 'up with women's wages'
- York/Toronto District Labour Council, 'Million Reasons Campaign' UNITE-HERE hotel workers
- 1 in 4 workers poor (1 in 5 men; 1 in 3 women)