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# REVIEWS / COMPTES RENDUS

Julie White, *Sisters of Solidarity* (Toronto: Thompson Educational Publishing 1993)

FOR WOMEN in the labour market and within labour unions so much has changed and yet so much remains the same. Although women have increased their participation in the labour market to constitute 46 per cent of the labour force, they remain stuck in job ghettos characterized by low pay and precarious tenure. When at work, women suffer harassment and discrimination which prevents them moving up the job hierarchy and reinforces the practice of paying women less than men for doing comparable work. Although women work in the paid labour market in increasing numbers, they continue to shoulder a disproportionate amount of the daycare and housecleaning responsibilities (not to mention the emotional nurturing needed for a functional family). Amidst this gloomy scenario, Julie White argues that unions offer a ray of hope as they represent increasing numbers of women and enhance their control over their workplace, reduce the gendered pay gap and collectively bargain provisions for maternity leave, protection against harassment, and so on. Most of the benefits accrued by women from their unions have been wrenched from these labour organizations which are also bedeviled by sexism and organizational barriers to women's equal participation.

According to White, women need unions and unions need women. For women to reap the benefits of unionization Table of Contents for Reviews is on pp. 5 & 6.

tion, the nearly two-thirds of women workers who are non-unionized need to join a union. For their part, unions need women workers to join their ranks if the labour movement is to remain relevant and capture the potential benefits of a fourth wave of unionization in the private service sector. For this to happen, current women's struggles within unions must be successful in transforming the labour movement to make it accessible to service sector workers, whose work and life experience differs markedly from the membership and leadership of malestream unions.

*Sisters and Solidarity* is a long overdue return by White to issues and themes discussed in her previous volume, *Women and Unions*. The latter volume, published in 1980, summarized the place of women in the labour market and labour unions. It quickly became standard reading for students of the labour movement, filling as it did an enormous gap in available literature on Canadian unions. In 1993 *Sisters and Solidarity* enters the fray at a time when the economy and women's place within it are changing swiftly and when studies of women and the labour movement are mounting. Nonetheless, this book has a place in this changing landscape, providing as it does a comprehensive picture of women in the labour market and labour unions.

White's volume addresses two broadly defined sets of questions. First, how does women's role in the labour market shape and in particular erect barriers to their participation in the labour movement? Second, what is the experience of women inside unions? To answer the first

question, White provides an historical and contemporary analysis of women's changing participation in the labour market. White examines the emergence and reproduction over time of a gendered labour market in which women become concentrated in job ghettos — in personal service jobs in 1901, in clerical and administrative jobs in 1981 and in the re-emergent homeworking sector of the 1990s. White argues that there are three key barriers to unionization amongst women. These are 1) the particular character of women's workplaces which are often small, paternalistic environments in which women are isolated in small groups and face especially authoritarian management; 2) women take on a disproportionate share of domestic responsibilities which prevents them from having the time or energy to participate in unions; and 3) legal barriers. The absence of many of these barriers in the public sector opened these environments up to unionization in the 1960s. But women's workplaces of the 1990s such as banks and retail shops are rife with these problems.

White spends the bulk of her book examining the experience of women inside unions. She begins her analysis with an overview of women's growing participation within unions, dispelling in the process the myth that women are uninterested and unwilling to join unions. White then moves on to an analysis of the benefits for women of unionization. Based on a combination of secondary sources and analysis of Statistics Canada and Labour Canada collective bargaining data, White shows how unionized women have improved their pay, their control over the workplace, and have taken advantage of new legislative opportunities provided by pay and employment equity laws. Here one finds a wealth of new and valuable information on unions' progress on issues of pay and employment equity, leave provisions, sexual harassment and so on. Simply put, White's argument is that only through collective organization can women improve their working lives and

take advantage of legislation which, while designed to benefit all women, is either too complex or costly to be used by most working women.

Having early demonstrated the benefits of unionization to women, White then turns to the thorny questions of the problems and obstacles faced by women within unions. For all of us who are committed to unions and to those of us naive enough to believe that unions really are committed to equality and justice of all, it is with despair that many of us observe and experience within unions the problems of sexism, harassment, and dismissal of women's issues. White addresses two crucial themes in her discussion of women in unions. The first concerns the representation of women at various levels of union leadership and the problems confronted by these women. The second concerns women's strategies for mobilizing within unions. On the question of representation White goes beyond the limited information available from CALURA on women in executive union positions by presenting information gathered by her from interviews with unionists from the CLC, the CSN, the ten provincial federations of labour, and thirteen unions. What she gives the reader is a clear picture of women's underrepresentation in most unions and federations at all levels of union activity from delegates to conventions to staff in national offices. Added to this is an overview of unions and federations' affirmative action policies designed to correct this problem. The information provided in a chapter on "Women into Union Leadership" is invaluable and unavailable elsewhere. What is missing from this chapter, however, is a more conceptual discussion of problems of representation which would capture the dilemmas of women in organizations. Representation, as Janine Brodie once wrote, is "more than a matter of numbers." Women have learned that they cannot be assured a voice in government, private organizational, or societal affairs just because women occupy positions of

leadership. Margaret Thatcher certainly taught us this, as did the many years of federal Conservative Party government in Canada! Without such a conceptual discussion, many of the difficult questions of women in union leadership are avoided at the very time when they are surfacing with ever more urgency.

Some of these questions of representation surface in White's examination of women's activities and issues inside unions. Here White examines how women have used women's committees and conferences to organize within unions and advance issues which in most instances had been sidelined. Again, the information on numbers and structures of women's committees and conferences provided by White from her interviews with unionists is new and interesting. Here White also addresses the different ways in which unions have responded to problems unique to women activists, from the issues of daycare to sexual harassment.

The issues raised in this book are large ones which White answers within a political economy framework. Her analysis attaches more explanatory significance to the organization of the capitalist economy and labour market, than to sexism or patriarchy. This is not to say that White dismisses sexism as an important factor in hindering women's full and equal participation in the labour movement. On the contrary, this theme is taken up at various points in the book. White's political economy approach, combined with her conviction that trade unions improve the place of women, however, leads her to take issue with arguments that place too much blame on unions for the plight of women and ignore the role played by employers and governments in "keeping women in their place." For example, in her discussion of the early development of unions, White examines the problem of the use of women as cheap labour. She takes issue with authors who blame male-dominated unions for the ghettoization of women due to unions' lack of support for

equal pay and pursuit of the family wage. White cogently, although briefly, argues that it was employers who largely determined wage structures and that unions were too weak to resist employer strategies using women as cheap labour. White goes on to argue that unionists, most often supported by their wives who were labouring at home to sustain a family on inadequate male wages, supported the "family wage" as the only means possible for raising men's wages to a level sufficient to feed and clothe a family. That this had the unintended consequence of reinforcing pay inequality is not disputed by White, but it was unintended rather than the intentional machinations of sexist male unionists. Overall, White's book explains the problems experienced by women in the labour market and labour unions as a consequence of the interplay between structural economic change, a gendered labour market, and gender-specific intra- and inter-class relations. Compounding these problems are the sexist culture and practices found both within the labour movement and society at large.

White ends her book with a discussion of the experience in unions of minority groups, persons with disabilities, gays, and lesbians. This conclusion picks up on a theme raised in her introductory chapter on racism and the early development of unions. In this final chapter White seeks to draw out the similarities and differences of experience between these groups and women. In so doing, White is building on her political economy framework and her implicit commitment to class solidaristic strategies. Yet, there is something disquieting about this discussion. While White raises questions and points too long ignored in union literature, it is not clear why and how women's issues can shed light on (or have any relevance to) issues concerning racial minorities, people with disabilities, gays, and lesbians. These linkages need to be made more explicit so that this final substantive chapter reads less as an append-

age to and more as part of the main discussion.

Despite this book's theoretical limits, White has made another major contribution to the study of women and unions. *Sister and Solidarity* is a comprehensive study of women in unions. White's clear writing style makes this work accessible to both university students and trade union activists. Meanwhile, her research efforts have produced much new information invaluable to those interested in studying women in the labour market as well as to those committed to improving women's place in the economy.

Charlotte Yates  
University of Melbourne

Eric Sager with Gerald Panting, *Maritime Capital: The Shipping Industry in Atlantic Canada, 1820-1914* (Kingston and Montréal: McGill-Queen's University Press 1990).

THIS BOOK marks a turning point in two important literatures. Study of North Atlantic shipping saw a remarkable series of articles during the 1970s and 1980s from scholars associated with the Atlantic Canada Shipping Project at Memorial University. Sager's and Panting's text builds on, extends, and summarizes this distinguished research. The study also contributes to the analysis of regional (under)development. Apart from the literature of agrarian settlement patterns, *Maritime Capital* is the first industrial study to argue for a link between the characteristics of a Canadian-based business and the nature of regional development. (Rosemary Ommer's examination of the Gaspé fishery appeared soon after this volume.) We can only hope that more authors will follow these authors in bringing traditional business and economic history to bear on the complex problems of regional and social history.

The structure of the book reflects the two literatures to which it contributes.

The authors begin and end with an ambitious discussion of theory, comparative history, and the larger controversies of social and economic change. The middle chapters contain a descriptive overview, a detailed examination of particular aspects of shipping, and clearly argued positions on a series of difficult interpretative points. The packaging is itself noteworthy; the graphs, maps, and diagrams give a stunning reminder that attractive presentation and solid intellectual content, even if based on quantitative sources, are not incompatible.

The authors characterize shipping in British North America (BNA) as a 'transplanted enclave' dependent on British inputs and British markets in the early 19th century. During the following decades the industry expanded and changed into a locally-owned and managed business of extensive proportions. The transition to industrial capitalism, elaborated at greater length in Sager's companion volume, *Seafaring Labour*, began in the final decades of the century.

The owners of sailing ships are the subject of a fascinating profile built from the registry books of eight regional ports, the R.G. Dun credit ledgers, private acts of incorporation, directories, newspapers, and miscellaneous archival collections. The authors argue that ownership patterns reflect the risks inherent in shipping and other activities on the North Atlantic rim. Smaller owners, including many masters, held shares in vessels as part of a diversified family economy of outport villages. The large owners, merchants first and shipowners second, held maritime assets as part of a risk-spreading diversified portfolio of investments. Ownership patterns in individual ports varied enormously but everywhere the share held by small owners tended to diminish while there was an increase in the share held by merchants and specialized shipowners.

The tendency of shipowners to own part of their cargo also diminished although, of course, the cargoes changed as well. The carriage of forest products stag-



nated during the second half of the century while business into and out of US ports increased considerably. The arrival of telegraph services in Atlantic Canadian cities and towns provided owners in the second half of the century with opportunities unavailable earlier. Regrettably, the authors do not address Ommer's argument about the centralizing effects of information/transaction costs in a London-based international shipping market.

In the core chapters five and six the authors use quantitative sources, especially the machine-readable vessel registries and crew agreements at Memorial University, to document tonnage growth until the 1870s and decline thereafter. Vessels larger than 250 tons account for the entire increase; coastal shipping did not expand although, conversely, it declined much more slowly after 1880. The increase in tonnage was the result of some new construction but, more importantly, increased durability and longer time to (re)sale. As in earlier accounts, the increase of tonnage during the 'golden age' of sail reflects, at least in part, the diminished willingness of British shippers to acquire colonial wooden vessels. The authors provide important documentation of productivity growth in sailing times, (un)loading times and vessel staffing.

Another revelation is the success of Canadian ships in winning American cargoes during reciprocity and in the carriage of foreign trade. The authors do not explain this success; more information about the American industry would be useful, since the authors argue that Canada erred by not following the American exclusion of foreign vessels from coastal trade. The authors appear to argue that the Canadian performance was somehow disappointing, even though the BNA share of world sail tonnage remained constant from 1850 to 1910. (90, 127)

Toward the end of the century Canadian ships moved into increasingly distant trade, which partially disengaged the industry from its regional origins. This is the first argument in a larger theme that

the wooden shipping industry was quantitatively significant (pace McClelland), but nevertheless contributed less to regional development than might have been hoped. Less than what alternative? The authors do not say, but we are told that the decentralized organization of the industry inhibited market concentration and that the dispersal of income among rural small-holders in isolated outports strengthened a 'pre-capitalist' coastal economy. A second and more familiar villain is excess importation of metal, a significant cost in building wood ships. It is further alleged that wood shipbuilders failed to substitute capital for labour just as regional interests failed to undertake the construction of steel-hulled ships. The authors also cite economic indicators implying that the coastal colonies were at a higher level of capitalist development in 1812 than the interior colony of Upper Canada, roughly the same level in 1850 and that the coastal regions subsequently fell behind during the 'golden age' of sail.

In connecting maritime activity with the lagging landward economy the authors are exploring new terrain; not surprisingly, a number of questions arise. Are the indicators of pre-1870 economic activity sufficiently reliable to support the authors' comparison of colonial developments? What do the authors mean by capitalism if it is not simply the growth of manufacturing or occupational specialization? How do we reconcile the pre-capitalist economy with significant evidence of wage labour and market-oriented activity? Have the authors properly represented the role of uncertainty in neoclassical economic theory? Is the authors' splendid documentation of a declining rate of return consistent with themes advanced by Knick Harley and, if so, why is his work ignored? Do the authors do justice to their own evidence in arguing that the technologically-driven decline in freight rates was not responsible for the falling rate of return and that the latter was not responsible for declining investment? Are not demand linkages inevit-

ably weak if income accruing to owners is ignored and if late century success rested on improvements in vessel durability, longer-distance voyages and input-saving productivity growth? Could not more be learned from the example of Canadian interests (Allen, Cunard, Thomson, the railway lines, and no doubt others), which did acquire steel-hulled steamships?

The material on shipbuilding raises another set of questions. Is the implicit counterfactual about imported inputs convincing in the absence of an examination of the relevant metal and metal goods markets? What exactly is the relevance of data describing the entire manufacturing sector or of evidence which ignores Upper Canada's transit trade through Montréal? Is there any evidence for the impact of allegedly negative effective protection to shipbuilders? How strong is the evidence that capital-labour substitution was particularly limited in shipbuilding? Why do the authors use entirely different rate of return measures for shipping and shipbuilding? Are promotional claims by contemporary vested interests sufficient evidence that steel shipbuilding was a likely field for regional investment. Are there not other explanations, rooted in steel quality and captive markets, for the decision by regional steelmakers to produce rails rather than ship plates?

Such questions inevitably arise during the course of a full, rich, and ambitious treatment of important issues. This wonderfully provocative book may be the closest we will ever see to a definitive study of the 19th-century shipping industry of Atlantic Canada. The authors give us a tightly argued and heavily documented study of shipping, an uneven but still useful treatment of shipbuilding, and fascinating speculation about the link between regional development and the practice of a particular industry. The pioneering attempt to enlist technological, business and economic history in the service of social and regional analysis is more heroic than successful, but as with

any pioneering study its impact will be seen in further work which, hopefully, will follow.

Kris Inwood  
University of Guelph

John F. Conway, *Debts to Pay. English Canada and Quebec from the Conquest to the Referendum* (Toronto: James Lorimer 1992).

WHAT IS ENGLISH Canada's responsibility in the crisis facing the Canadian federation? This is the basic question sociologist John Conway tries to answer in this essay on the political and constitutional impasse that now confronts the nation. Despite the wide-ranging aim of the title, the contents deal essentially with developments in the past 30 years and focus in some detail on the events between Meech and the defeat of the 1992 referendum. The perspective is that of a Western socialist sympathetic with the social-democratic aspirations of Québec nationalists and hoping that accommodation can still be found to keep the country together. According to the author this depends on English Canada recognizing two centuries of national oppression and redressing Québec's legitimate grievances.

After presenting the thesis, Conway deals with two centuries of history in 40 pages. The interpretation is a simplistic version of Michel Brunet and Maurice Séguin, much akin to that found in the Québec government's presentation of the 1980 referendum question on sovereignty-association. Québec society after the Conquest is depicted as "homogeneous and rural, rooted in a subsistence economy" — a trait that persisted until World War II. The suppression of the 1837-38 Rebellions is seen as a second Conquest which broke a progressive middle-class leadership and reinforced national oppression. Confederation was a scheme hatched by the British Colonial Office to reinforce colonial elites and to

insure that the Québec nation would always be a minority. Riel, the school crises in Manitoba and Ontario, and conscription are all evoked to prove bad faith on the part of English Canada.

The 1960s are examined as a watershed in Québec nationalism with separatism emerging as a major option in the 1966 election. The focus is on politics and the main political personalities rather than on social change which was probably more important than Trudeau, Lévesque, or Johnson. The Quiet Revolution is seen coming to a close as tanks rolled into Montréal in October 1970 to suppress Québec nationalism by armed force once again.

The second part of the book deals with the most important constitutional events of the past 20 years: the election of a Parti Québécois government; the Québec referendum and patriation of the constitution; Meech Lake; the Charlottetown agreement; the 1992 referendum. Each issue is presented in a very personal way with comments on what might have been done to resolve the issues. Lévesque is seen as a reluctant separatist who could have struck a good deal with the rest of Canada had he been given the chance. Mulroney is criticized as a weak leader willing to sacrifice the federal government to the provinces. He is seen as responsible for the failure of Meech and more importantly for the fiasco of the 1992 referendum which divided the country as never before. Trudeau is also held responsible for imposing a series of myths — rejection of the two nations theory, multiculturalism, the equality of provinces — that prevent English Canada from dealing with Québec grievances. Despite these failures, Conway still has hope for an eventual reconciliation but only if English Canada admits the injustices done to the Québécois nation.

Historians will find much to criticize in this book and even nationalist Québec historians are unlikely to agree with the stereotyped presentation of Québec society. Statements such as: "As victor,

English Canada wrote the official history" while Québécois "clung to truths they had learned at their parents' knees" (221) give pause to reflect on the state of interdisciplinary studies in this country! Such criticism is unfair, however, since this is not a work of history, but a polemical essay designed to shake English Canadians out of their apathy and to encourage them to reappraise the issues. From a Québec perspective, Conway has succeeded in translating the perception of the average person, although the emphasis on Charlottetown and the 1992 referendum seem misplaced. The death of Meech was the end of the constitutional road in Québec, the final humiliation that convinced most moderates that English Canada could never be trusted to find a reasonable remedy.

Given the presence of the Bloc Québécois as the official opposition and, perhaps more alarming for those who still hope that Canada might be saved, of a strong Reform Party in the House of Commons, it is probably significant that Radio-Canada FM broadcast Mozart's *Requiem* on the evening of October 25th.

John A. Dickinson  
Université de Montréal

Nicholas Fillmore, *Maritime Radical. The Life and Times of Roscoe Fillmore* (Toronto: Between the Lines 1992).

ROSCOE FILLMORE was a lifelong socialist and for many years a member of the Communist Party. He was also a small businessman, a market gardener, and nurseryman, and became the successful author of a number of books on flower gardening. Except for a few brief periods in his youth, and the year he spent in the Soviet Union, he lived in rural areas, first in Albert County, New Brunswick, and later in Nova Scotia's Annapolis Valley. These areas are bastions of Baptist piety and of political and social conservatism, yet Fillmore became a well-known radi-

cal, whose birthday is still celebrated by an annual gathering of Maritime socialists.

These unusual, even contradictory, features of Roscoe Fillmore's life are well recounted in this biography written by his grandson, Nicholas Fillmore. The book may have been inspired by family pride, but it is not limited by this. Nicholas Fillmore obviously intends the reader to think well of his subject, but seems as willing as most biographers to reveal some unflattering points, such as Roscoe's rather domineering behaviour towards his wife. The work displays meticulous research, both on the details of Roscoe's own life, and on the background events. The beginning chapters concern Roscoe's boyhood life of backwoods poverty and recount such experiences as his trips out West in the big harvest excursions. The book then describes Fillmore's activities as a young man in the socialist movement prior to World War I and in the labour upheaval which followed the war. Fillmore, in his twenties, was one of the principal organizers for the Socialist Party of Canada (SPC) in the Maritimes, speaking frequently himself, and arranging meetings for such visiting speakers as "Big Bill" Haywood and Wilfred Gribble. Although he appears to have shared the SPC's view that trade unions were a waste of time, he was active in such events as the long and bitter coal miners' strike in Springhill, NS in 1909-11, and later in the 1919 General Strike in nearby Amherst. In the post-war period he became a strong supporter of the Bolshevik revolution, and was part of the SPC faction which favoured joining a party affiliated with the Moscow-led Communist International. In his devotion to the Soviet Union as the new homeland of socialism he travelled there in 1923 to become part of an experimental colony of Western industrial workers in Siberia. There Fillmore used his gardening expertise, setting up and managing a large vegetable farm for a number of months, before family responsibilities forced him to return to Canada. In the period from the 1920s until the early 1950s, Fillmore

combined membership in the Communist Party of Canada with his struggle to maintain his family through his nursery business in rural Nova Scotia. During part of this period he was a member of the party's central committee, but his activity mainly consisted of writing articles for radical periodicals, mainly on international affairs. In the federal election of 1945 he ran as a farmer-labour candidate in his local riding, getting only a few votes. He became disillusioned with the Communist Party in the early 1950s, but he remained convinced of the ideas of socialism all his life, although achieving modest success as a gardening expert and businessman in his later years. All of these aspects of Fillmore's life are well described in this biography.

In attempting to explain the seeming contradictions in Roscoe Fillmore's life story the book is slightly less successful. Fillmore spent only a brief time as an industrial worker, does not appear to have ever been a member of a trade union, and was not brought up in circumstances which would bring him into contact with leftist intellectuals, so his irrevocable conversion to socialism as a teen-age boy seems extraordinary. However, it is perhaps always impossible adequately to explain why any individual should adopt a radical outlook so different from the people among whom he or she lives. In Fillmore's case, after a brief period of intense socialist activity as a young man, his life was divided into two widely separated parts — his work as a gardener and businessman, and his Marxist activities. His move to Siberia can be seen as an attempt to bring his love for horticulture into the service of the struggle for socialism. On the intellectual level, an effort to bring together his interests in plant propagation and in Marxism is revealed in his attitude to science and evolution. (155) His biographer seems here, however, to miss the point that Roscoe was a Lysenkoist, believing in the inheritance of acquired characteristics, the prevailing theory in the Soviet Union. This was de-

nounced by all Western geneticists as unfounded, and Stalin's pronouncements on this were regarded as an outrageous example of state interference in science. Yet Fillmore is quoted as writing that "only communists could be truly objective scientists." It would be interesting to know if he ever changed his views on these issues.

Fillmore appears to have been in a special category as a Communist Party member — rarely active other than in writing general articles for periodicals, but a man whose early socialist activities gave him prestige of value to the party. He was at times in the central committee, but clearly never in the real inner circle which ran the party. Roscoe's relationship with the party could perhaps be explained more fully than it is in this book. His positions on internal party issues and policy changes at various times are not made very clear, nor are the reasons for his leaving the party in the 1950s. A tantalizing hint is given that he did not accept the condemnation of American party leader Earl Browder in the late 1940s, which would put Fillmore to the right of the party in this period, but this is never fully developed or explained.

Such critical points, however, are not meant to detract from an overall assessment of this as a fine account of the life of a very interesting individual. This biography is a valuable addition to the literature on political radicalism in Canada, and on Maritime regional history, and will provide fascinating reading for anyone interested in these subjects.

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Dianne Newell, *Tangled Webs of History: Indians and the Law in Canada's Pacific Coast Fisheries* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1993).

DIANNE NEWELL begins her book by locating both it and herself in a number of

historical contexts and contingencies. *Tangled Webs of History* had its beginnings in Newell's scholarly interest in the history of technology, resource development, and labour. These interests involved her in a number of land claims and fisheries trials in British Columbia, an experience which influenced her subsequent research, leading her to examine Native peoples' participation in the fisheries and the central role the law played in shaping the terms and conditions of their involvement. In addition to influencing the object of her research, Newell's experience in court also led her to rethink her academic project and its relationship to contemporary politics. "Without doubt," she writes, "the courtroom is an inadequate, even hostile, environment for exploring the tangled webs of history." That exploration could, she believed, be more fruitfully undertaken within the expansive spaces of a book, and given the contemporary importance of the subject matter, a book that was aimed at "informing public opinion" as well as lawyers and academics. [xi]

Recognizing both the audience and the intent of Newell's book is crucially important in understanding its argument as well as its strengths and weaknesses. She charts the history of fisheries regulation (which almost entirely dealt with the salmon fishery) on the Pacific coast from British Columbia's entry into Confederation in 1871 to the present. Though important itself, this study serves as a framework in which to understand another one: the history of aboriginal participation in the fisheries after contact. Newell demonstrates the ongoing and central importance of the salmon fishery to many coastal Natives' economy, and, indeed, to their culture. Despite the fact they continually asserted their right to fish, Native participation in the fisheries was progressively eroded by the federal and provincial states through a welter of regulations. Though the state justified its intervention in terms of conservation and the need to balance the interests of a variety

of user groups, Newell argues that conservation was not the primary aim of regulatory policy. Instead, regulation helped foster economic development. Thus, the rhetoric of conservation masked a set of initiatives that favoured British Columbia's salmon processors over its fishers, and particularly its aboriginal fishers.

The first 20 years after confederation witnessed very little in the way of active regulation as both federal and provincial states considered a *laissez-faire* approach the surest way to establish the nascent industry on a firm footing. Because the state recognized the role Native men and women played in both commercial fishing and processing, they too benefitted from minimal intervention. Indeed, what regulations existed recognized that Indians had the right to carry on their traditional fisheries. However, the distinction the state drew between their traditional, or food, fisheries, and the industrial, or commercial, fisheries would in later years be used to undermine Native peoples' participation.

By the end of the 19th century the industrial fisheries were established and the state took a more activist stance, effecting regulation through licensing, restrictions on gear, and by designating different opening and closing times. Though aimed at the industry as a whole, these regulations had an uneven impact, affecting Native peoples more negatively than other groups because of their greater economic dependence on the fisheries and because their lack of purchasing power relative to other fishers (something that was itself structured by their legal status as Indians) made acquiring increasingly expensive gear difficult. If these regulations worked to "capture" Indian labour for the processing sector, that labour was further contained by growing restrictions on the food fishery. Less able to provide for their own families and communities, Indian fishers and shoreworkers became even more reliant on selling their labour to make ends meet.

There were, of course, exceptions to the overall pattern of decline and fall. Fisheries law may have affected various groups differently, but it also had an uneven impact on the members of a single one. Aboriginal peoples were not all affected similarly or to the same extent. Some Native fishers grew quite prosperous despite the regulatory net that was cast over them. In addition, Natives who worked in the Fraser fishery were marginalized far more quickly and profoundly than those who worked in the more remote Skeena system. If the impact of regulation was mediated by space, it was also modified by historical circumstance and gender: many Native men and women benefitted from the racism that drove the Japanese out of the fisheries and into internment camps during World War II. However, over time, aboriginal women, who comprised the majority of the cannery labour force, found their opportunities more severely limited than did their male counterparts. When the men were pushed to the margins of the fishery, they took up jobs in the canneries. Unfortunately, the displaced women had no such options.

In general, however, by regulating the commercial and the food fisheries, the state prevented Indians from competing in the industry while retaining their labour for the processing sector. Fisheries law managed to alienate work from ownership of the means of production, and thus served the interests of capital.

This book thus draws together a large body of economic, legal, and technical information about the history of a very important resource industry over more than a century and makes sense of it within the confines of a single monograph. Equally important, it is also the first study which explores the history of Indian labour in British Columbia systematically, and with a sensitivity to how race, gender, technology, and geography — as well as the law — position aboriginal peoples in the province's economy. Simply in terms of laying out these two parallel and inter-

locking stories, then, Newell's book is an important and useful contribution.

But extricating Newell's main arguments from the tangled web of facts that surround them is not always easy, and even after doing so the reader is left strangely unsatisfied. The main conclusions of the book — that state management of the fisheries consisted of assisting the processing sector rather than conserving fish stocks for all users, and that state regulation was uneven, affecting some groups more severely than others — are not themselves surprising or particularly new in the context of the historical literature on the state and economic development in Canada. Yet there are almost no references to this literature or the debates in it. In fact, Newell does not really engage any of the questions that animate the many histories her book touches on, and as a result, she has limited both her audience and her contribution unnecessarily, leaving some important questions unasked and unanswered.

One example should suffice to illustrate my point. *Tangled Webs of History* is about Indians and the law, yet it seems uninformed by the growing body of legal scholarship, some of which is directly relevant. For instance, Douglas Hay, Peter Linebaugh, and E.P. Thompson have had much to say about the socially constructed nature of crime, arguing that the criminalization of customary practices like poaching and gleaning in 18th-century England accompanied the rise of commercial capitalism and the parallel emergence of liberalism. The struggle between Natives and non-Natives over the food fishery would seem to be a clash of "customary" rights and formal law similar to the kind discussed by these legal historians.

Moreover, scholars interested in regulation have, in recent years, come to a more complex understanding of it, making two points that Newell might have taken up. First, they argue that liberal democratic states face particular difficulties in regulating the economic sphere be-

cause doing so appears to be at odds with the liberal idea of freedom, which is defined as non-interference. Legitimizing their actions thus requires defining them as being in the public interest. Though Newell never asks why the state rationalized its fisheries regulation as "conservation," surely these problems of liberal democratic governance provide an answer: few people would take issue with the fact that conserving fish stocks was in the public interest. In any case, given that conflating private interest with the public good is a hallmark of modern liberal societies, the actions of the Canadian state in regulating the fisheries should come as no surprise.

Second, these scholars argue regulation should be understood as encompassing a variety of social, economic, and political practices carried out by many actors, including, but not limited to, the state. Indeed, the state neither possesses a monopoly over regulation, nor is it always the most important regulation. The fisheries appear to be a case in point: though Newell gives the law pride of place in structuring the terms and conditions under which aboriginal fishers laboured on the Pacific coast, its importance seems to be more asserted than proven. Because of her reliance on reported cases, the reader never gets a sense of the actual scale of the state's interventions: how many aboriginal fishers were prosecuted for violations of the Fisheries Act? How many boats and catches were confiscated? As Newell herself recognizes, a number of factors worked to position Native peoples in the fisheries, and it is not always clear that the hand of the state was as significant, say, as changes in economies of scale, racism, or simply the structurally-based inequities in the distribution of wealth, which, though they could be embedded in the law, had their origins outside of it.

The lack of engagement with the legal, as well as other, literature reflects the author's intent and a particular understanding of what the scholarly project is.

Newell does not engage with their questions and literature, I suspect, not because she is unaware of them, but because academics are not her primary audience. She has told a story which begins with government policy and ends with an assessment of its harm. It is the sort of rhetoric (in the formal sense of the word) that can leave historians feeling unconvinced and unsatisfied — mainly because it overlooks the complex and contradictory process of producing policy as well as underplaying the difficulties of implementing it — but it makes sense if we recognize the book's origin and purpose. *Tangled Webs of History* comes out of her courtroom experience and represents the legal research she did for a Native fisheries case. Its rhetoric may not resonate with historians, but it would among the public and in a courtroom, where the culture of argument centres more on consequences of actions rather than their causes. By demonstrating the harms inflicted on aboriginal peoples at the hands of the federal and provincial governments, Newell reinforces their claim for compensation.

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Cynthia R. Comacchio, *'Nations Are Built of Babies': Saving Ontario Mothers and Children 1900-1940* (Montréal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press 1993).

THIS IS THE STORY of how four decades of child welfare "campaigns" created a new set of social relationships around child rearing in Ontario. At the centre are doctors, eager to enhance their influence on society, crafting a whole "science of modern motherhood," conveying it through educational drives, using a legitimacy gained by real successes in saving lives and a monopoly gained by decades of professional struggle. Beside them stand the politicians, most of them obliging, thanks to an unflinching economic

and political individualism; reformist women, only able to pursue the parts of their agenda which suited the doctors and a whole world of magazines and advertising, increasing their sales by propagating the values of "modern parenting." Below the doctors we see public health nurses, working in the narrow confines of prevention and demonstration and, at the receiving end of the campaign, parents of various socio-economic backgrounds with an equally varied enthusiasm for the new credo.

Cynthia Comacchio's exhaustive enquiry travels from medical journals, from the bureaucratic records of public child and family welfare agencies at all levels of government, to the testimonies of parents gathered by the media and medical investigations, via the literature of reformists and the opinions of labour and farm representatives. She skilfully follows many agents in a chronological account, underlines the transformation of beliefs and practices with an exceptional clarity, and links them convincingly to their larger historical context.

She has attempted to isolate a distinctive period of advice to mothers, an age which witnessed the triumph of "childhood management" and "habit training." This was a time when government and government-sponsored agencies questioned "traditional" child rearing practices and began to propagate "modern" methods at an extraordinary scale, through mail, radio, public displays, and conferences, all of this being undertaken when the public commitment to children's "rights" to a minimum of welfare did not yet exist. In the name of national solidarity and fast economic progress, riding on the general faith in the promises of science, experts were at once ready to propose radical modifications in family life and eager to preserve important aspects of it, especially the distribution of sexual and generational roles. Ideas about regularity in feeding, sleeping, toilet training, and other measurable practices may seem familiar to a reader of 1994, but



they were not yet complemented by ideas about attention to the child's own needs, which only entered the mother's literature in the 1940s.

The campaign was never as successful as its leaders hoped, but its evolution explains many aspects of the subsequent history of parenthood and childhood. Comacchio shows that by teaching mothers how to recognize early symptoms of dangerous diseases and showing parents who could afford a visit to the doctor a few basic hygienic practices, the educational drive may have contributed to better chances of survival and good health for mothers and children over the four early decades of this century. On the whole, however, these improvements were mostly due to factors that were not part of the campaign, including scientific discoveries and the general increase in incomes and better availability of health services. The campaign had its most direct impact in the fact that doctors were able to gain a place at the centre of pre- and post-natal care for decades to come. Their leadership resulted in slowing down significantly the availability of services to the poor, because they directed the efforts of nurses, public servants, and volunteers toward the aspects of maternity and pregnancy which they could influence without jeopardizing their status. Here, Comacchio judiciously uses the forgotten histories of alternative endeavours in Ontario to show that as soon as professionals took poverty seriously as a cause of illness and abandoned the narrowly individualistic and biological modes of explanation prevalent in medicine, the improvements were undeniable. Compared to most of their Western colleagues, Ontario doctors appear to have enjoyed an especially high level of power in the realm of maternity care — their long monopoly on prescription of milk formula may be the most telling example — and the larger causes of this distinction would be worth further investigation.

When it comes to the campaigners' influence on the social history of poor

parents and children, the author, using scarce but invaluable documents with a welcomed restraint, brings to light instances of criticism, protest, and resistance, both individual and collective, to paint a general picture of commitment to health and eagerness to learn which contrasts strikingly with the doctors' image of the "ignorant" mother. She complements these fragments with partial theories of the history of culture to postulate that innovations in child-rearing did not happen as quickly as the doctors would have liked, largely because practices had to be mediated by tradition and by the perception which parents had of their usefulness.

Comacchio's last pages attempt to bridge her period of study with the following era of "health as a right of citizenship." She attributes the change to an enhancement of the power of the labour movement and, to a lesser extent, of the women's movement. To this, she adds that the education solution, which was already showing signs of defeat on its own terms, may have had already received an artificial blow during the Depression, the scarcity of public funds making for a blind willingness to find cheap solutions.

It may also be that one of the reasons doctors could dream so easily of children as "little machines," is that they were only marginally involved in the raising of their own children, not only because they were men, as Comacchio points out, but also because their wives had domestic servants to help them with the children, and many could count on their older daughters. This distance from their children was no longer possible after the war, the "modern economy" finally providing poorer women with more attractive jobs and the state insisting that daughters remain at school for a longer period. In the end, there could also be a link between the campaigners' promotion of health and the general support for the welfare state which no mainstream politician could dismiss after the war. Indirectly, inadvertently, and slowly, doctors may have con-

tributed to the increase of the availability of services they had so jealously hampered.

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Katherine Arnup, *Education for Motherhood: Advice for Mothers in Twentieth-Century Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1994).

KATHERINE ARNUP sets herself a two-fold task in this book — to examine the social construction of the institution of mothering and “to assess women’s response to the child-rearing advice they received.” (221) The book is limited to a study of the advice on the raising of infants and pre-school children, on the grounds that these early years were viewed at the time as the critical ones in child-rearing (and thus, presumably in mothering).

To carry out the first task Arnup employs a traditional and effective methodology. There was a rich following of child-advice literature in Canada in the first six decades of the 20th century. Not only did much American literature flood the country, but Canadian ‘experts’ — such as Helen MacMurchy, Alan Brown, and William Blatz — gained new prominence through their widely available writings. Arnup examines this material exhaustively, providing readers with detailed, largely descriptive accounts of a series of themes. Women were first ‘educated for motherhood,’ that is, persuaded that they needed to be trained in proper mothering behaviour. Having persuaded women in their child-bearing years that they needed to be educated as mothers, doctors presented themselves as the experts who could best provide that education.

These two themes are then followed by an account of the advice given over the six decades under study. This material is presented in rather traditional fashion, describing the evolving advice given to mothers in the raising of young children.

Arnup’s prosecution of this first task is competent, but raises a number of questions. The first are methodological. Almost all of her evidence comes from the Toronto area or from publications emanating from the Toronto-Ottawa axis. Why should we believe that the advice circulating in Newfoundland or Saskatchewan or elsewhere was the same? One or two case studies of the local scene would have done much to establish the allegedly pervasive character of the southern Ontario advice. Similarly Arnup makes no allowance for non-English-speaking women. What was happening in Francophone areas or among various ethnic communities? The advice emanated from urban Canada, and most of the examples of the application of the advice come from cities as well. What was happening in rural areas? In short, Arnup tends to treat the society and the women as monolithic; the result is simpler and less complex than what was really happening, I suspect.

At the same time, the author does not pursue some of her themes as effectively as she might and avoids other issues almost entirely. The evidence is overwhelming that the medical profession extended its expertise to the construction of mothering. Having established this, I would like to have seen a discussion of some of the ideas on the medical construction of womanhood that are so interestingly exposed in Wendy Mitchinson’s *The Nature of Their Bodies* (1991).

Early in the book, Arnup concentrates on the campaigns against infant and maternal mortality as the basic justifications for the rise of advice literature. While the role of these campaigns is undeniable, it is surely arguable that at least as fundamental were the increasing idealization of motherhood and the aggressively pro-natal culture. Some evidence can be teased out of the book regarding these latter two factors, but there is no discussion of them. Arnup’s focus on the child-advice literature limits her perspective somewhat.

Similarly, many works on gender issues are now being enriched by a discussion of masculinity as well as femininity. Fathers are seldom discussed by Arnup, presumably because the literature focused so narrowly on mothers. But the treatment of fathers could have been employed more explicitly as an effective counterpoint to the construction of motherhood.

Finally, I would like to have seen a more explicit discussion of the subordination of the mother in this child-rearing literature. The emphasis on breast-feeding ignored the reality of the diverse demands of women's time. The behaviourist prescriptions for toilet training in reality trained the mother rather than the infant. What can we make of this?

The book's second task, that of examining the response of the mothers themselves, is much more problematic, and Arnup fully realizes this. She devotes considerable space to discussing the methodological problems involved. Arnup follows Jay Mechling in his classic article by arguing that the advice tells us little about the actual mothering behaviour, but can tell us much about the construction of mothering. And yet, like many other family historians dependent on advice literature, Arnup cannot avoid the temptation to argue as well that mothering behaviour itself is revealed in this material. Many women did seek out the literature; distribution of the books and pamphlets was widespread.

To substantiate some of her claims that young women did follow the broad patterns of this advice literature, Arnup constructed an oral history sample of twelve women. Half were active child-rearers before 1940 and half after that date; half were working-class and half were middle-class (the operational definition of class is not revealed, except for the statement that occupation was employed as the stand-in for class). All but one of the interviewees was from urban southern Ontario, replicating the methodological problems of the advice literature itself. The interview schedule is included in an

appendix. But the problem here lies not with the questions posed, but rather with the construction and size of the sample.

What struck me most in the analysis of mothers' behaviour was the failure to distinguish adequately among the various categories of young women: first-time mothers versus experienced mothers, rural versus urban, working-class versus middle-class, native-born versus immigrants.

*Education for Motherhood* is a useful book on an important topic. But it could have been more useful if the author had taken more time to expand her research beyond her doctoral dissertation and to probe more extensively some of the issues involved.

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Edward Bell, *Social Classes and Social Credit in Alberta* (Montréal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press 1993).

EDWARD BELL's objective is to provide a new theoretical interpretation of the Social Credit movement "by examining three interrelated elements: the Social Credit ideology, the class basis of its mass support, and the actions taken by the first Social Credit government." (4) He succeeds only partly. There is little new factual information in this volume and the explanation of Social Credit's rise to power in Alberta and its performance during its first five years in office diverges only slightly from my own in *The Social Credit Phenomenon in Alberta* (1989). Bell, however, goes further than earlier authors in suggesting that it is misleading to regard the early Social Credit movement as a defender of capitalist values. He demonstrates the contradictory impulses of this movement and its opposition to traditional marketplace operations. Bell also provides the best empirical information to date regarding the degree of elec-

toral support for Social Credit in Alberta in 1935 and 1940 on the basis of social class.

What is interesting about *Social Classes and Social Credit in Alberta* is its sustained debate with C.B. Macpherson's *Democracy in Alberta*. Several authors, including myself, have accused Macpherson of having his facts wrong or reading history backwards. But Bell goes much further, attempting to demonstrate that ultimately Macpherson is trapped within orthodox Marxist assumptions about the relationship between social classes and social values. Macpherson, according to Bell, assumed that workers were potentially revolutionary and therefore not a potential base for a movement whose ideology was as confused as Social Credit. For Macpherson only the petit-bourgeois could fall for this irrational and reactionary theory.

Bell, by contrast, seeks to demonstrate that Social Credit theory did have a core of logical arguments within its arsenal even if, on the whole, the view of how finance capital operates was shallow. Through detailed analysis of voting patterns in 1935 and 1940 he suggests that proportionate to their weight in the population, workers were as likely to support Social Credit as members of the petit-bourgeois. Conversely, members of the latter class were as likely to be in the ranks of opponents of Social Credit as workers.

The empirical evidence is important for the historical record. Yet, on both empirical and theoretical grounds, I would argue that Macpherson rather than Bell sees the forest for the Social Credit trees. Bell's efforts to demonstrate that it is unhelpful to analyze Social Credit as a petit-bourgeois political formation are finally unconvincing. It is clear from the larger canon of Macpherson's work on possessive individualism that *Democracy in Alberta* deals with an "ideal type" of the petit-bourgeois who at once embraces the anti-communitarian objectives of capitalism while calling for community inter-

vention to defend him or her from the system's unpleasant social consequences for the individual. Though it is a failing of the book that Macpherson ignores the Alberta working class, his work generally demonstrates his knowledge of the attractiveness of "petit-bourgeois ideology" for a large section of the working class. He does not believe there is a one-to-one correspondence between class and ideology though a reader of *Democracy in Alberta* can be excused for thinking he does.

Bell throws out the baby with the bathwater when he suggests that the voting behaviour of workers in an election or two can be used to demonstrate an essential commonality of class interests and class viewpoints between workers and farmers in Alberta. There was mass participation by workers within the Social Credit League in the 1930s but by the 1940s it had evaporated and the party membership at the time Macpherson wrote was largely composed of petit-bourgeois. Bell argues lamely that he ends his study in 1940 because by then "Social Credit was well on its way to institutionalization, resembling a conventional political party more than a popular movement." (7) But this begs the question of what had happened before 1940 to disillusion significant sections of the popular movement, including most of its working-class elements. The reality is that Social Credit in office, though it passed some legislation that appealed to workers, took the side of the petit-bourgeois over the workers where the interests of the two classes clashed. Social Credit's mean-spirited treatment of the unemployed, and particularly its insistence that the single urban unemployed work for farmers for a pittance or be cut off relief, drew a very different reaction from its petit-bourgeois members and its working-class members. Similarly the Aberhart government's unwillingness to reform workmen's compensation meant taking sides with small employers against the wishes of all workers' organizations including Social Credit workers' clubs. True, none of this

caused workers within the Social Credit party to become revolutionaries, but it did cause them to leave the organization, abandoning the organization that Macpherson describes well.

Nonetheless, Bell's engagement of Macpherson's ideas and facts — and this review touches on only a few of the areas where he puts *Democracy in Alberta* in doubt as a source of credible information about the early Social Credit party — is a useful addition to the literature on Social Credit. The last word on what working-class support for Social Credit tells us about workers' thinking has nevertheless not been written.

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Charlotte Yates, *From Plant to Politics: The Autoworkers Union in Postwar Canada* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press 1993).

OVER THE DECADE of the 1980s the Canadian autoworkers union (hereafter CAW) has established itself as the most dynamic and progressive Canadian union and a major reason for the continuing (relative) vitality of the Canadian labour movement not just compared to its American counterpart, but to those of Europe as well. While the union, and especially its previous leader Bob White, have been much in the media during this time, there has been no major study of its development in Canada. Yates examines the CAW from its turbulent origins in the 1930s to the end of the 1980s, providing a substantial contribution to filling this silence.

Yates approaches her subject as a political economist of the 'regulation' school, which understands the post World War II era of growth and stability in terms of the emergence of a Fordist regime of accumulation which linked mass production to mass consumption, securing the acquiescence of workers to a Taylorist division of labour in the workplace in

exchange for rising wages tied to productivity growth. Her objective is to understand how trade union struggles have shaped the development of Fordism in countries like Canada, using the CAW and the auto industry as a case in point. To this end Yates draws on the notion of unions as strategic actors, arguing that their capacity to struggle is closely connected to the nature of their 'collective identities' and organizational structures.

These considerations frame the study of the CAW, which is broadly divided into three parts. The first examines the union up to the establishment of Fordist bargaining relations in the auto industry. The second covers the years 1950-68, the height of Fordism, focusing on developments in collective bargaining and in the union's relations with the state. The final part explores the impact of the increased militancy and nationalism of the early 1970s on the union, the struggles against wage controls and corporate demands for concessions, and the separation of Canadian autoworkers from the UAW. The concluding chapter assesses the union's future prospects in light of recent changes in the union and the Canadian political economy.

Yates' analysis gives particular prominence to the part played by the Communist Party (CP) in the formation of the union. She argues that the union's early years of relatively successful struggle with employers under the leadership of the CP-dominated Unity/Left caucus, together with the political weakness of the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation, gave rise to a quasi-syndicalist collective identity stressing union-centred strategies and militant workplace action, which became dominant within the union at the end of the war. As regards the union's organization, she emphasises the important role of the union's unique (both within the broader UAW as well as the whole Canadian labour movement) District Council established in the late 1930s. Formally independent, including financially, of the Regional Director and staff,

the Council was comprised of locally elected delegates who initially met six times a year. Although the Council had only a limited policy-making function, and lacked any executive role, Yates argues that it served to mitigate the development of bureaucratic tendencies in the union, enhancing its mobilizing capacity.

Yates links these characteristics of the CAW to the relatively delayed and specific form Fordist regulation took in the auto industry, and the limited demobilization of the union even after its consolidation. Together with the unions' bargaining gains, they enabled the left to survive the Cold War and Reuther's consolidation of power in the union as a whole, albeit in a weakened state. Moreover, the existence of the Council precluded the possibility of isolating this left from subsequent expressions of rank-and-file discontent. This is used to explain why, notwithstanding the election of Dennis McDermott, "a known rightwinger ... and supporter of the International" as Regional director in 1968, the union's response to the upsurge in rank-and-file militancy that began in the late 1960s was much more accommodating than in the US. This response, in effect, set the union on a trajectory leading to the election of Bob White, whose roots were in the union's syndicalist wing, as Canadian Director, to the struggles against concessions, and finally to the historic decision to leave the UAW.

Yates' study is an informative and often insightful account of the evolution of the CAW. In particular, her account of the role played by the CP in shaping the union is an important exercise (politically as well as analytically) in historical retrieval. At the same time the book is not without a number of shortcomings. Yates' analysis of the structure of the CAW, which focuses almost exclusively on the role of the council as a channel for member influence on national leaders, is surely incomplete. Virtually no attention is given to the locals from which Council delegates came. In this respect the CAW

is also quite distinct; its longstanding penchant for amalgamating bargaining units has resulted in a preponderance of large, powerful (and geographically concentrated) locals, often with several full-time officers. It is unlikely that the dynamics of the Council, let alone the CAW generally, can be grasped without considering this aspect of the union.

'Openness' to member influence, moreover, is only one side of the relationship between structure and struggle. The other side, as several theorists, including some of those cited, have argued, has to do with the capacity of leaders to undertake mobilization, capacity loosely encompassing will, personal abilities, as well as structural linkages to members. Yet this aspect of the relationship is absent from Yates' analytical framework. One result is that the study offers a rather misleading view of the union's structure, with full-time staff, for example, virtually disappearing from view. Another is that, although Yates frequently refers to the union's leadership, she fails to clearly come to grips with it analytically.

While Yates' emphasis on the importance of a union's 'collective identity' (or more generally, its culture) to understanding its preparedness to engage in struggle is surely appropriate, this concept floats around her analysis without ever landing. Autoworkers are first given a quasi-syndicalist collective identity, which evolved through the 1960s into what is called 'social unionism.' Besides the fact that these are only loosely defined, the reader is offered no evidence of their existence in the CAW, let alone that these collective identities are in any way unique to the CAW. Indeed, as the above quoted reference to McDermott suggests, the text at times seemingly calls into question the very notion of a 'collective' identity.

Finally, while peering into the future is never easy, Yates' discussion of the CAW's (and the labour movement's) prospects in 'post-Fordist Canada' is particularly disappointing. The profound econ-

omic restructuring within capitalist countries — alluded to here by the term 'post-Fordist' — has generated intense debate over the future direction of the labour movement, with the CAW held to be the leading exponent of 'social unionism.' But, what, precisely, is meant by this term? What sort of political project does it signify? How does this project address the various challenges posed by the current economic changes to the interests and aspirations of working people? How adequate are existing union structures, practices and consciousness to the task of undertaking this project?

Insofar as Yates actually addresses these questions, the discussion is not only vague, but frequently contradictory. For example, assertions that the CAW has "abandoned the postwar politics of responsible unions," and possesses "an alternative vision for an industrialized Canada," are thrown out without any elaboration, only to be shortly followed by reference to the union's "determination to protect Fordist collective bargaining structures" and to its alternative 'vision' having been "stalled by global competition and by the federal government." These difficulties reflect the limits of formalistic analyses of unions as 'strategic actors' and the weaknesses of Regulation theory given its focus on periods of relative capitalist stability, the emergence of which, moreover, is a 'chance occurrence.' Indeed, Yates' approach arguably has blinded her to perhaps her major insight: the extent to which the working-class struggles that produced 'Fordism' were inspired and sustained by people committed to a socialist project, namely to transcending the barriers to democracy posed by a capitalist economy. Is it likely that the working-class mobilization necessary actually to challenge 'globalism' could emerge apart from the revitalization of that project?

Donald Swartz  
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Franca Iacovetta, *Such Hardworking People: Italian Immigrants in Postwar Toronto* (Montréal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press 1992).

POST-WORLD WAR immigration transformed Canadian society from its historic Anglo-French dualism to a rich diversity of ethnicities and races. While these "new Canadians" have been subjected to minute scrutiny by sociologists, demographers, and economists, for the most part they have yet to attract their historians. With almost a half century of North American experience behind them, the postwar immigrants deserve and need to have their stories told. Fortunately a new generation of scholars, often children of immigrants, is beginning to address this task. Influenced by the vision and zest of Robert F. Harney for an inclusive immigration history, some, such as John E. Zucchi and Franc Sturino, have studied the earlier history of Italians in Canada. However, this work by Franca Iacovetta is the first monograph-length work to focus upon the Italian immigrants in postwar Toronto. (If I may be permitted a personal note, Bob Harney, to whom Franca acknowledges a debt of inspiration would have been proud and elated on reading this book.)

Iacovetta has written one of the best community studies of an immigrant group in North America. Her analysis is informed by perspectives from women's, working-class, and urban history, as well as immigration and ethnic studies, and by extensive and critical reading of their literatures. Further, *Such Hardworking People* is based on an impressive array of sources, ranging from public and church archives to newspapers and social work records. Her deft use of interviews (over 70 of them) lends a particular authenticity and humanity to the text. As a daughter of immigrants, who grew up in Toronto, the author brings empathy to her study of working-class southern Italians. While investing her narrative with passion and

insight, Iacovetta avoids special pleading and sentimentality.

The theme of the book is the transition of the immigrants from peasants to industrial workers. Neither uprooted nor transplanted, Iacovetta portrays the process of adjustment as a dialectical interplay between Old World culture and New World experience. Although subject to exploitation and discrimination, her people were not victims. Rather, both men and women are portrayed as drawing upon traditional values and relationships to cope with harsh circumstances. The family continued to be the central institution in Canada as it was in southern Italy. Kinship networks provided sponsorship and succour during migration and following settlement. The ethos of a "family-oriented work culture" was the source of coherence and strength. Home ownership became the symbol and reality of success to which the efforts of all family members were devoted.

One of the distinctive strengths of this study is the feminist analysis Iacovetta brings to bear on gender and gender relations. Insisting on the differential experiences of male and female immigrants, she stresses the critical role played by women in migration and adjustment. Within the constraints of the patriarchal southern Italian family, wives exercised significant influence in the household and upon entering the paid labour force gained new autonomy. While Iacovetta argues for continuity of familialist values in regulating gender roles, she describes women's working for wages as empowering and a threat to husbands' masculinity. "Masculinity" in Iacovetta's scenario, it should be noted, was not necessarily negative; rather it defined male roles as breadwinners and defenders of the family.

Iacovetta complements her internal ethnography of immigrant life with an external view of the Italians as seen by the "host society." She reminds us that southern Italians were at the time Toronto's "visible minority," their neighbourhoods decried as ethnic ghettos, and their repu-

tation tainted with criminality. A review of Canadian immigration policy provides abundant evidence of the prejudice and discrimination against southern Italians. Once in the country, they were subject to "Canadianization," and criticized for clinging to their traditional ways. Italians were faulted, for example, for failing to take advantage of social services (agencies of Canadianization), preferring to rely on their kin. But at the same time, Iacovetta notes that the welfare state obviated the need for the mutual aid societies which had characterized earlier immigration. Her discussion of the relationship between the immigrants and the Roman Catholic Church (a "vehicle for Canadianization"), replete with conflict between Irish and Italians and the condemnation of folk religion (*festas*), gives one who has studied the subject in the United States a sense of *déjà vu*.

Intent upon demonstrating the immigrants' capacity for resistance and protest, Iacovetta devotes considerable attention to the labour activities of Italian workers, particularly to their hard fought and violent strikes in the building industry. She attributes their militancy to the values of familialism, masculinity, and ethnic solidarity, not to radical ideology. (Although she downplays the influence of Italian radicals, one wonders how the change in the political climate of Italy — including the South — following World War II affected the propensity of these new immigrants for class-based action.) Support networks of relatives and *paesani* in which women played important roles sustained the families of strikers. Despite a nativist backlash which branded the Italians as revolutionaries, for Iacovetta, the strikes were a major advance towards "full Canadian citizenship" and emblematic of their transition from peasants to proletarians.

*Such Hardworking People* is such a fully realized work that to fault it for not addressing other issues appears niggardly. Let this serve then more as an agenda for future work than an indictment of this



study. Given significant differences from one region (and even one *paese*) to another, I would have liked to have known more about the specific backgrounds of the immigrants rather than generalizations about southern Italian peasants. Although we are told the immigrants changed, how these changes manifested themselves in specific spheres, such as patterns of consumption and leisure, is not elaborated. Related to this is the subject, also neglected, of a second generation and the relationships among generations. Although implicit, a more articulated discussion of how an Italian-Canadian identity (ethnicity?) evolved would have enhanced the study. The endnotes are voluminous (48 pages) and loaded with bibliographical citations. A separate and critical bibliography would have been of more value to the reader.

Rudolph J. Vecoli  
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June Corman, Meg Luxton, D.W. Livingstone, Wally Seccombe, *Recasting Steel Labour: The Stelco Story* (Halifax: Fernwood Publishing 1993).

STELCO'S HILTON works in Hamilton, Ontario suffered the full impact of the global restructuring of the steel industry during the 1980s. In response to the global excess of steel making capacity, which primarily resulted from economic stagnation, Canada's steel industry furiously reduced production costs, cutting capacity while boosting productivity. Employment levels at the Hilton Works dropped from 15,076 in 1980 to 9,022 in 1989, while steel shipped per employee increased by 31 per cent.

Following a useful introduction to the concept of global restructuring, three chapters of this book explore the impact of the restructuring of Hamilton's steel industry on the work process, as well as on those who were employed as steelworkers at the beginning of the downsizing

process. A fourth chapter portrays the world of women who entered the steel industry as a result of political efforts to challenge its gender discrimination policies only to find that global restructuring left no room for them.

The first chapter, "'Re-Tayloring' Production Relations," argues that while management amalgamated production jobs and created supercraft positions for skilled workers, the net effect was not to upgrade the skill level of the workforce but to intensify labour instead. While management adopted the rhetoric of giving workers added responsibility, the reality was a continuation of top-down rule.

Although the strong and well-led union was able to protect workers from the worse kinds of arbitrary management, the company's ability to divide the workforce through its layoff and recall policies made it difficult for the union to mount effective resistance or create viable alternatives. Management created a core of workers who enjoyed not only continuous employment but plentiful overtime, while at the same time organizing a surplus pool of workers available for unpredictable re-employment during periods of peak demand and during summers, and available on a subcontract basis as well. (We might contrast these policies to those of Ford in the US, which permanently severed a large proportion of its labour force in one fell swoop in the early 1980s.) Stelco's layoff-and-recall policies meant that the interests of workers in the core, in the surplus pool, and on permanent discharge diverged sharply; the interests of those on separate seniority lists were at odds as well.

The authors make a convincing case that management employment practices kept many workers attached to the company well past the time when separation might have been more in their interest; an interesting section shows how the employment status of the steelworkers' spouse often decided whether the steelworker would remain on the recall list or make a permanent break; regardless of

which path was chosen, family living standards declined substantially. The objectivity of the authors' analysis does not obscure the cruelty of management's strategy.

Management's ability to create the surplus labour pool was facilitated by governmental policies which are not sufficiently explored, and here is the chief limitation of the study. While the global economy, and management and labour strategies are analyzed in depth, the national and provincial political and social context is taken as a given; this detracts from the reader's ability to compare what happened in Hamilton to what has happened in other current and former steel making centres, like Pittsburgh, the Calumet region, or the Ruhr Valley.

Towards the end of the book, the authors detail recent efforts on the part of the union to explore worker ownership as well as worker participation in management, but the absence of detailed analysis of the socio-political context weakens the discussion. In Pittsburgh, the restructuring of the steel industry provoked a community-based movement to recreate the region's industrial economy and in the Calumet region, community and union activists have created early-warning networks, worker and community ownership support groups, and programs to train potential successors to aging owners. These organizing efforts matured within a political environment seemingly far less supportive of grassroots activism than that which exists in Canada. And indeed, on the basis of Steven Hertenberg's comparative analysis of the US and Canadian autoworkers' response to the restructuring of their industries, one might have expected more effective resistance to management policies in Hamilton than in the US. Why this was not the case is puzzling, and points out the need for a broader analysis of the restructuring of the steel industry.

A second drawback of the book's analysis is that it views the actions of workers and their unions primarily as reactive to

management decisions and economic changes. Except for the fourth chapter about women entering Stelco, the book pays little heed to workers' culture, union political dynamics, the role of left-wing parties, quality of leadership, community activism, the role of local politicians, church leaders, parish committees, and other such phenomena. As a result of these omissions, steelworkers appear human only in their role as family members; the other aspects of their social being, which surely help to illuminate their choices and strategies, remain submerged. At bottom, this is to say that the uneasy combination of economic determinism and feminism which underlie *Recasting Steel Labour* is not a fully adequate framework for interpreting what happened at Stelco and why.

Nevertheless, to those studying how corporate management is pursuing global competitiveness, this case study is most valuable. While Stelco ruthlessly reduced costs, created a more flexible workforce, and reformed its management style, its success at raising productivity entailed hardly any of the worker participation, skill upgrading, and decentralized, post-bureaucratic decision-making which so many scholars and pundits claim is the only sure path to sustained profitability in the global economy.

David Bensman  
Rutgers University

Matt Bray and Ashley Thomson, ed., *At the End of the Shift: Mines and Single-Industry Towns in Northern Ontario* (Toronto and Oxford: Dundurn Press 1992).

GIVEN THE VITAL IMPORTANCE of mining to the Canadian economy, it is curious that so few historians of the current generation have paid much attention to it. This collection of essays, drawn from a conference held in 1990 at Laurentian University, provides an interesting glimpse of what kinds of questions might

be asked about the development of mining communities. The contributors include a sociologist, a mining engineer, geographers, and historians as well as the mayors and Reeves of three northern communities.

With such a variety of approaches in the collection, one might expect a rather uneven ride through it — and indeed there is in some ways — but the collection does hold together surprisingly well. In one way or another, all the authors are attempting to deal with the problem of the human need for community in the face of the Innisian “staples trap.” The dependency and boom and bust cycles that plague resource-based economies are magnified in local economies based on single resources or even single companies. These essays explore the emergence and development of Northern Ontario communities in terms of the impact of the single-industry economy on the human experience.

The editors have divided the essays into five sections that are organized roughly chronologically: “Setting the Stage,” “Early Years,” “The Era of Government Intervention,” “Present Challenges,” and “Into the Future.” The first two sections are clearly the strongest in terms of their contribution to academic discussions; the last two sections provide an interesting starting-point for discussions about current responses to economic problems. The Institute for Northern Ontario Research and Development (INORD), which organized the conference, deserves congratulations for bringing together community representatives and academics in order to encourage just this sort of discussion. There is a great deal of lip-service paid in academic circles these days to community-based research and collaboration, but rarely are members of the “community” invited to participate in the hallowed academic ritual of The Conference. INORD’s first annual conference, dealing with the issues of development in the Temagami region, was equally successful at encour-

aging the contributions of a number of community groups. One hopes that others will follow the model.

C.M. Wallace opens the collection with some observations on the history and historiography of northern community development that ought to be read by every graduate student in the field. He observes, quite accurately, that the history of Northern Ontario towns has not been well served and that the time has come to go beyond generalizations and clichés about the “frontier” or ahistorical geographical categorizations. Clearly his remarks apply to the history of the north (both provincial and territorial) more generally.

Essays by Matt Bray, Peter Krats, and Eileen Goltz in the second section demonstrate that historical analysis can indeed provide some new perspectives on resource towns. Focusing on the Sudbury region, the essays do not establish radically new paradigms, but are well-crafted little pieces that challenge the popular perceptions. Bray had access to the newly-available INCO archives and so decided to reconstruct the company’s attitudes toward its town, turning the usual emphasis on its head. Krats challenges the idea that Sudbury is a monopoly-directed “Nickel Capital” by examining the role played by dozens of small companies and individual entrepreneurs in regional economic development. The piece is implicitly an anti-Whig approach to local history because his subjects were often the “losers” in that their development activities did not last, yet they did have an impact on the shape of the community. Goltz re-examines a number of perceptions about company towns through a case study of Copper Cliff and comes to an interesting set of revisions. In particular, she notes the ethnic segregation of the town in a suggestive analysis that could be the beginning of a substantial piece. To what extent did class and religious differences affect the structure of the community? What was the relationship between the structure of the community and

the structure of the labour force or its behaviour in the workplace?

The remaining essays deal with subjects like the government role in resource-town planning in the 1950s, health and safety regulation in mining, and contemporary experiments in local economic diversification. The optimistic tone of a number of the essays in the latter half of the collection seems surprising given the long-term structural roots of the problems described elsewhere. Some fundamental questions come to mind. Is it realistic to attempt to preserve a community when its reason for existence has gone? To what extent should governments (that is, other Canadians) be expected to subsidize the maintenance of these communities? Obviously these are questions that are relevant to many other parts of Canada and deserve some searching consideration.

While the collection provides a good introduction to the subject of mining community development, it is clear that many topics remain to be explored. Because the field has been dominated by planners and geographers, the emphasis has tended to be on spatial and economic development. Social historians, labour historians, women's and gender historians are all badly needed to deal with the many questions. What was the impact of these communities on women? To what extent did the members of these communities shape their structure and history, and to what extent were they company-controlled? Do company towns and other resource-based towns differ? How did life in these communities affect the nature and behaviour of the labour force of vice versa? Do these communities represent the formation of a new society, or did they simply transplant the values and social structure of southern Canada into the north? *At the End of the Shift* is recommended reading as it provides a useful stimulus to discussion of both the questions that it does address and those it does not.

Kerry Abel  
Carleton University

Shaun Comish, *The Westray Tragedy: A Miner's Story* (Halifax: Fernwood Publishing 1993).

"THE WESTRAY MINE and the Ford coal seam lie underground like a large, black spider web. We miners were like insects caught in the trap, occasionally escaping for four days, only to fly back and get caught again. The spider sat and watched, waiting for the right moment. When it finally struck, the wave of horror and grief spread far beyond. This horrific spider now lies in wait one again, ready to strike at those who dare to venture into its black domain." (1) So Shaun Comish, miner, neophyte union activist and draegerman, introduces his brief (58 pages) but compelling account of his experiences underground at the Westray coal mine in Pictou County, Nova Scotia during the months leading up to the massive explosion on 9 May 1992 which took the lives of 26 of his fellow workers. But as graphic as the spider's web analogy is, it is also somewhat misleading, because as this miner's story unfolds, it becomes clear that the Westray Tragedy, in the view of the author, was no pre-ordained, inevitable event beyond the forces of human control.

Indeed, the theme of *The Westray Tragedy* is precisely the opposite, that the spider had all-too-human features and frailties, and that the devastating explosion was at the very least due to human carelessness, if not to the deliberate flaunting of basic safety regulations. More than half of Comish's narrative consists of a litany of cave-ins and other near-accident situations which he encountered, often the result of shoddy mining practices, taking short-cuts, and failing to observe safety precautions, usually with management knowledge if not at its insistence. The most frightening was deliberately disconnecting the methometer on vehicles, the safety device designed to shut down the vehicle if the methane level became too high, because the machine would not work in certain sections of the

mine where the methane level was too high!

The second part of Comish's account details his work as a draegerman after the explosion, probing the depths of the mine for the bodies of his fellow workers. The sheer horror of the experience comes through with every line. Highlighting the awfulness of the tragedy, too, is the small tribute by their families to each of the men killed in the explosion appended to the narrative.

While Comish's account obviously deals with the 1990s, it has a certain timelessness about it, shedding light on the experiences and frustrations of generations of miners that preceded his. The technology may have been different 50 or 100 years ago but the pressures on the workers are very much the same now as then — the desperate need for a job, any job, to support wives and families, the hesitancy in the face of strong company opposition to unionize (a pre-explosion certification vote failed, a post-explosion vote passed), the determination of the companies and company managers to squeeze as much profit out of the mine with as little coast as possible, and the altogether too high price that is paid in the process.

Surprising to this reader, at least, is the note on which Comish ends *The Westray Tragedy*. One might expect a call for the permanent abandonment of the Westray mine; instead, Comish admonishes future miners: "Be safe, be tough and don't compromise your right to a healthy and safe workplace. Don't be bullied or fooled into doing anything you feel is unsafe." (58) The spider may be lurking, but the miner's work goes on.

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Laurentian University

David Ralph Matthews, *Controlling Common Property: Regulating Canada's East Coast Fishery* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1993).

MATTHEWS STUDIES the influence of federal fisheries policy, supported by the Newfoundland Fishermen, Food and Allied Workers Union (NFFAWU), which represents inshore and offshore fishermen as well as fish processing workers, on five Newfoundland inshore fishing communities from the late 1970s to the present. Drawing on interviews of a proportionately representative sample of full-time and part-time fishing people with or without species licences from Charleston, King's Cove, Grates Cove, Fermeuse, and Bonavista (communities chosen for their range in size, types, and scales of inshore fisheries) Matthews reveals the flaws inherent in federal acceptance of the "tragedy of the commons" view: that the fishery is an industry dominated by a common-property resource open to all. That fish swim free in the sea supposedly makes them impossible to control as private property, and this in turn forces fishing people who happen upon them to harvest without regard for conservation because otherwise another competitor will take the fish. This book exposes two fallacies in this supposedly self-evident truth adopted by the Canadian government. The first is an assumption that people are Hobbesian competitors who can only act reasonably under the auspices of a strong, centralized authority. The second is seeing property as a thing, rather than a relationship based on people's recognition of having rights to something, and being able to exclude others from that thing.

The state, Matthews argues, is not the sole source of property rights. Instead "community customs, and norms and traditional practices are the source of certain property rights enjoyed by the residents of a community." (75) Fishing people recognized that they needed to regulate access to the fishery to ensure

that they did not suffer the tragedy of the commons even before the advent of state policy. In the small communities of Charleston and King's Cove, people recognize customary occupation rights to trap berths: places in inshore waters where fishermen could set cod traps to catch fish. Fishermen would not set a trap in a place where they knew that someone else in the community was accustomed to without permission unless it fell into disuse. In Grates Cove and Fermeuse, where local marine conditions necessitated greater investment in larger vessels, people developed lottery systems to ensure that no one group would dominate access to the best berths, and to limit newcomers so as to ensure that all had an equal chance to a fair return on their investment. Bonavista, one of Newfoundland's largest communities in which almost everybody depends on the inshore fishery, developed a modified inheritance custom which emphasized family rights to berths. Fishing people there emphasized family rather than community rights to property because they fished in waters shared by other communities. Local acceptance of family inheritance precluded inter-community rivalry which might otherwise arise from community property rights such as those of Grates Cove and Fermeuse.

Matthews accepts that state regulation can alleviate problems such as community rivalry. In practice, however, he has found that federal policy has at best created tensions in fishing communities, and at worse given some fishing people an incentive to exploit fish resources more intensely. The problem lies in attempts to limit access to the fishery by the creation of a professional fishing elite. With union support, the federal government introduced a system of part- and full-time licences, producing divisions inappropriate among people whose livelihoods depended on balancing fishing against a variety of other work. Union-sponsored market regulations, which favour full-time fishermen during fish

gluts, create tensions between community members. Such tensions may also be exacerbated by restricted species licenses which allow only a few members of communities the right to catch higher-value salmon, lobster, and herring. Communities cannot develop ways to regulate access to these licences because state policy makes them non-transferable. Special licence holders cannot even pass them on to their sons and other male relatives as they might otherwise do by tradition, so they hold on to them even when they no longer fully utilize their rights.

Loans, and other policies designed to encourage professional fishermen to expand their capital investment by using more destructive gill nets and larger boats, are particular problems in communities such as Bonavista. Debt-servicing and operational costs, almost impossible to meet in any event, encourage such fishermen to ignore community regulation of access to fish as they desperately try to catch enough to pay new bills. In addition, unemployment insurance qualification regulations, which require thirteen weeks of consecutive fish sales, restrict fishing people's decisions about when they should begin the fishing season, how they should market fish, and general occupational pluralism. While fishing people have found creative ways to incorporate UIC payments into their seasonal round, and have developed community norms about marketing under the UI system, the relative successes and failures of people have caused community tensions. Matthews' style of presentation — frequent direct quotes from interviews with too-often only brief commentary — obscures his analysis of these points. Nonetheless, a strong sense of fishing people straining to re-establish community equilibrium in the face of fragmentation by state policy does emerge.

Oddly, given his interest in defining property as a social relationship, Matthews' analytical commitment to "community" makes him unclear about class

relations. His argument that state regulation of access to technology is as important a determination of fishermen's class position as their relationship to the means of production is not easily sustainable in a work that does not examine class relationships in fishing communities. Matthews is more accurate in describing regulations which effect the relative status of fishing people. Except for some loose discussion of fish-buyers and plant operators, the state, and even unions (as agents largely external to fishing communities), there is no discussion of class relations here.

A more historical perspective would have helped this sociological study. Matthews' Lockean-inspired view of community self-regulation concentrates on fishing people's control of supposedly traditional technology, particularly the berths needed to use cod traps. Yet cod traps were only introduced in the late 19th century. Most of the customs and traditions of Matthews' subjects must, therefore, be of recent origin. This is not to say that his propositions about community regulation of property are not important for understanding earlier periods. Ommer's work on the Gaspé and a growing Newfoundland historiography (which is barely cited in this work) points to truck as another, earlier way in which communities controlled access to the fishery. This community regulation was, however, an expression of class relations between merchants and fishing people, and often rife with class struggle.

We need to know more about the influence of class relationships on later community regulation of property. Such further work will have to give more attention to unionization in the fishery. Most of the interview excerpts here reveal considerable ambivalence among fishing people about the NFFAWU, but there is no good analysis of why this might be so. Without much explanation as to why, Matthews portrays the union as a partner of the federal state in introducing policies which undermine community control of the inshore fishery. While the study ac-

knowledges that the union has had a positive effect on fish prices, its commitment to the professionalization of fishing people is shown to be a problem. Unfortunately, Matthews does not explain why the union has developed such a commitment.

A final problem emerges in Matthews' conclusion. He wisely rejects the use of 'fishers' as jargon that Newfoundlanders would never use to describe themselves. For a variety of reasons, men have been the ones to catch fish in Newfoundland, and people refer to those who catch fish as 'fishermen.' However, this does not mean that fishermen were not subject to pressure and advice from their female relatives on questions of the fair use of resources. The gender bias inherent in the term 'fisherman' also makes its use, while largely historically accurate, problematic for present use. Matthews, for example, feels that state regulation did little to prevent the present collapse of the fishery, and that east-coast communities need "new institutional structures that empower fishermen in both the design and the implementation of fisheries policy, at both a regional and a local level." (246) While Matthews may not believe that men alone should be empowered, he ends up saying so, although there is increasing evidence of women's more direct involvement in the fishery. 'Fishing people' is a less alienating, more gender-neutral description which might help prevent such a problematic conclusion.

*Controlling Common Property* is an invaluable contribution towards demystifying the rationality of applying state policies based on the 'tragedy-of-the-commons' school to the fishery of Canada's east coast. However, while challenging, the book's assertion about communities' ability to develop their own customary regulation of the fishery requires a more historical consideration if it is to be sustainable.

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Jean Du Berger et Jacques Mathieu (dir.), *Les ouvrières de Dominion Corset à Québec, 1886-1988* (Sainte-Foy: Presses de l'Université Laval 1993).

CETTE ÉTUDE D'ETHNOLOGIE urbaine, abondamment illustrée, est essentiellement fondée sur une vingtaine d'entrevues réalisées auprès d'ouvrières et d'employé-e-s de la Dominion Corset, une entreprise établie à Québec en 1886 et dirigée par la famille Amyot pendant plus de cent ans. Divisé en quatre parties, l'ouvrage veut mettre en évidence les perceptions et représentations livrées par les témoignages à propos de l'entreprise, de ses dirigeants et du travail industriel, en même temps qu'il entend faire ressortir les pratiques de solidarité, de résistance et d'autonomie développées par les ouvrières face aux contraintes du travail en usine. Sans en faire explicitement mention, l'étude se situe donc dans le courant de la nouvelle histoire ouvrière qui s'intéresse à la culture ouvrière et aux stratégies développées par les travailleurs et les travailleuses pour conserver une marge de manoeuvre sur les lieux de travail.

La première partie du livre présente un bref historique de l'entreprise, une description de l'organisation spatiale de l'usine, des différentes catégories d'employé-e-s et de leurs fonctions à l'intérieur de l'entreprise, de même qu'elle s'attarde à l'évolution des produits fabriqués et à l'organisation du travail. La deuxième partie, intitulée «l'encadrement des travailleuses,» examine les rapports hiérarchiques, la discipline industrielle, de même que les conditions de travail et de vie à la Dominion Corset. La troisième partie s'intéresse aux différentes manifestations de rivalité, de solidarité et de sociabilité des ouvrières, et examine les liens entre l'usine et la vie du quartier où elle était située. Enfin, la dernière partie prend la forme d'un essai comparant les différentes images de l'entreprise que donnent à voir des sources aussi différentes que le patrimoine bâti, les documents

d'archives et la mémoire des travailleuses.

L'intérêt de cet ouvrage réside surtout dans les différentes précisions qu'il apporte au niveau du fonctionnement interne d'une entreprise de ce type. Les entrevues sur lesquelles il se fonde permettent en effet d'accéder au coeur même de la vie quotidienne de l'usine et des ouvrières qui y ont oeuvré. Grâce aux témoignages, les auteurs ont pu obtenir de nombreux détails sur les différentes étapes et techniques de fabrication des corsets et autres types de lingerie féminine, sur la machinerie utilisée, les formes d'apprentissage qui se sont succédées, la division des tâches, les conditions de travail, les modalités de paiement des salaires, les relations entre les groupes d'employés et entre ces groupes et la direction, les différentes formes de sociabilité dans l'usine et les stratégies utilisées par les ouvrières pour influencer, ne serait-ce que minimalement, sur leurs conditions de travail et contourner les règles hiérarchiques et disciplinaires. L'étude analyse également l'insertion des travailleuses à la vie urbaine, plusieurs provenant des campagnes environnantes et même de l'Est du Québec. Des faits intéressants sont ainsi mis à jour; par exemple, que les ouvrières étaient parfois sollicitées pour faire l'essai des nouveaux modèles de lingerie développés par les dessinateurs de la compagnie (tous des hommes), que la direction diffusait de la musique pour contrôler la cadence de travail et empêcher les travailleuses de chanter, que ces dernières savaient faire montre de solidarité face aux abus patronaux, qu'il leur arrivait de frauder la compagnie, qu'à au moins une occasion, elles ont stoppé la production parce que la chaleur était vraiment insupportable ou encore que des employé-e-s louaient volontiers des chambres aux jeunes filles qui arrivaient de la campagne pour travailler à l'usine.

L'ensemble des informations qui nous sont ainsi livrées contribuent à dessiner un portrait intimiste du monde



des ouvrières de la Dominion Corset. Le livre présente toutefois certains problèmes. En particulier, l'analyse des phénomènes observés reste trop souvent superficielle ce qui vient peut-être du fait que les auteurs ne confrontent pas les résultats de leur enquête à d'autres études effectuées en histoire sociale et ouvrière. Mis à part les archives de la compagnie, l'ouvrage s'appuie en effet uniquement sur les entrevues ce qui a pour effet de restreindre singulièrement leur perspective. Certains phénomènes font l'objet de commentaires fort intéressants — notamment à propos de l'organisation spatiale de l'usine et ses répercussions sur les relations entre les groupes d'employé-e-s partageant cet espace (18-9) — mais plusieurs autres sont tout simplement décrits ou très peu commentés (voir le chapitre sur les conditions de travail en particulier). Cette faiblesse est peut-être due également au nombre restreint des interviewées qui ont travaillé comme ouvrière. En effet, les auteurs ont recours aux témoignages de 12 femmes seulement, «dont trois ont travaillé comme employée de bureau, infirmière ou modèle» (6), ce qui ne laisse que neuf ouvrières (parmi lesquelles trois sont devenues contremaîtresses). Ajoutons que la moyenne d'âge des témoins au moment de l'entrevue (68 ans) vient remettre en question l'ambition d'illustrer par leurs récits de vie «la prise en main de leur avenir dans le contexte industriel et urbain de Québec durant la première moitié du XXe siècle.» (6; nous soulignons).

L'utilisation même des témoignages n'est pas toujours des plus éclairantes; les extraits des entrevues sont en effet souvent rapportés sans que l'on sache qui parle. Par les propos tenus, on arrive généralement à déduire s'il s'agit d'un homme ou d'une femme, mais assez souvent on ne sait pas à quel moment la personne a travaillé à la Dominion Corset, ni toujours quelle fonction elle y exerçait. Il arrive également que les témoins fassent mention d'événements dont la date aurait demandé à être précisée (76 par

exemple: à quelle grève de la chaussure l'informatrice fait-elle référence; 108: vers quelle époque les ouvrières se renseignaient-elles mutuellement sur «les choses de la vie»?). Un certain «flou» chronologique entoure d'ailleurs d'autres informations: par exemple, à quelle époque la compagnie exigeait-elle de ses ouvrières qu'elles sachent lire et écrire? A partir de quel moment a-t-elle exigé un examen médical? (34) Le cheminement méthodologique des auteurs est aussi laissé dans l'ombre: quel était le contenu exact du guide d'entrevue (s'il avait été précisé au départ)? Combien de temps ont duré les entrevues et combien de fois chaque personne a-t-elle été vue? Par quels moyens a-t-on retracé les témoins? Voilà autant d'informations qui m'apparaissent indispensables pour bien évaluer la pertinence des données recueillies et qui auraient dû figurer, au moins en annexe.

Enfin, signalons que la structure de l'ouvrage donne lieu à plusieurs redites, notamment à propos des liens entre patrons et travailleuses (21 et suiv. et 71 et suiv.), de l'isolement des contremaîtresses (30-1 et 77), du travail des infirmières (94-5 et 122-3) et de la diffusion de la musique sur les lieux de travail (103 et 126) et que les sigles utilisés dans les notes de référence ne sont pas explicités, ce qui n'est quère utile au profane (AFUL signifie archives de folklore de l'Université Laval; coll. VQ est utilisé, sauf erreur, pour collection de la ville de Québec).

Denyse Baillargeon  
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Évelyne Tardy, Francine Descarries, Lorraine Archambault, Lyne Kurtzman et Lucie Piché, *Les Bâtisseuses de la Cité* (Montréal, Actes du Colloque Les Bâtisseuses de la Cité, ACFAS 1992 [Cahiers scientifiques de l'Acfas: 79], 1993).

ON CONNAISSAIT BIEN sûr Jeanne Mance, Marguerite Bourgeoys et Mar-

guerite D'Youville. Mais d'énormes lacunes restaient encore à combler concernant l'apport des femmes à l'essor et au développement de Montréal. Le Colloque des Bâtisseuses de la Cité, présenté lors du Congrès annuel de l'Acfas en 1992, année des célébrations du 350 anniversaire de Montréal, a permis de rassembler une brochette de chercheuses appelées à réfléchir à cette question. Sur les 70 communications présentées à cette occasion, les éditrices en ont retenu trente-trois. Compte tenu de la diversité des textes et des interventions, elles les ont regroupés en fonction des thématiques abordées et des lieux d'intervention visés. Un premier volet porte sur l'action des femmes DANS la ville, privilégiant les domaines du travail, de la santé, de l'éducation, de la production intellectuelle et de la vie sociale et politique. Un second volet traite de l'intervention des femmes SUR la ville, considérant les aspects de l'architecture, de l'urbanisme, de l'aménagement et des productions artistiques.

En guise de premier avertissement à la lectrice et au lecteur, il serait bon de rappeler que le présent collage regroupe un échantillon de textes allant du simple témoignage à l'article scientifique en passant par le compte rendu de discussions en table ronde. La consultation de l'annexe I (programme du Colloque) s'avère à cet égard plus utile que la table des matières qui ne reflète pas cette diversité de traitement des sujets. Une bonne façon d'aborder le livre serait d'en commencer la lecture par la quatrième partie. Les trois textes denses et fort pertinents qui la composent constituent le cœur théorique de l'ouvrage puisqu'ils posent la question de la critique féministe des connaissances en tant que contribution distinctive au développement d'une société. Si le regard féministe sur l'histoire et les réalités de la ville n'apporte aucune alternative valable à l'explication généralement admise, l'ouvrage et les questionnements qu'il propose est d'autant invalidé. Ces textes constituent de solides exposés qui étudient, chacun dans leur champ dis-

ciplinaire (criminologie, théologie et philosophie), l'élaboration d'une critique épistémologique menant à une reconstruction interdisciplinaire des connaissances. Une reconstruction qui vise à proposer une nouvelle grille de lecture des concepts et des pratiques existants.

L'ouvrage se divise en cinq parties. Les deux premières traitent de la contribution historique des femmes au développement de Montréal. Des textes écrits majoritairement par des historiennes soulignent non seulement les contributions marquantes de Montréalaises méconnues (i.e., Madeleine de La Peltrie et Éva Circé-Côté alias Julien St-Michel) mais proposent également un nouveau regard sur les pratiques de femmes engagées dans la vie communautaire montréalaise que ce soit au sein des paroisses (Agathe Lafortune), des associations de charité (Janice Harvey) ou de la compagnie d'assurance la Métropolitaine (Denyse Baillargeon). L'enquête Caron sur le jeu et le vice commercialisé à Montréal, sujet de deux récentes séries télévisées (*Montréal PQ* et *Montréal, ville ouverte*), permet à l'historienne Danielle Lacasse de constater que la mainmise des hommes sur la pratique de la prostitution a conduit à une détérioration des conditions de travail des filles, la fermeture des bordels les renvoyant à la rue ou au cabaret, milieux moins protégés. Le monde de l'éducation, où les femmes ont toujours été très présentes, fait l'objet de trois études qui jettent un éclairage nouveau sur le rôle des institutrices laïques au début du siècle (Andrée Dufour) et sur celui des communautés religieuses féminines (Marie-Paul Malouin et Thérèse Hamel). C'est la partie la plus homogène de l'ouvrage en terme de structure des textes. Seul l'article truffé de trop longues citations de Denise Robillard sur Marguerite Lacorne, épouse de Jacques Viger, n'arrive pas à énoncer de problématique claire.

La troisième section apparaîtra sans doute novatrice à plus d'un. On y a regroupé des articles et des interventions portant sur la présence des femmes en architec-

ture et urbanisme ainsi qu'en création artistique (musique, arts visuels et littérature). Plus hétérogène, cette partie donne lieu à plusieurs découvertes. On sent bien, d'après l'inégalité des textes, que la recherche en est encore aux premiers balbutiements dans certains domaines. C'est le cas notamment du texte de Katia Tremblay sur l'accession des femmes à la pratique architecturale féminine. Le va-et-vient entre les contextes québécois, canadien et américain permet de poser les jalons de l'accession des femmes aux professions (voir les tableaux). Par contre, la section portant sur la pratique architecturale féminine est trop rapidement esquissée pour permettre de conclure à l'hypothèse avancée, soit que les femmes «ont préféré s'abstenir d'affirmer une audace réservée aux hommes en adoptant des styles architecturaux qui tendent davantage vers un consensus social.» (188) Il s'agirait là, tout au plus, d'une observation qui mériterait d'être reliée davantage au contexte social plus vaste précédemment effleuré.

Les seize présentations concernant les femmes-artistes (musique, arts visuels et écritures) ont l'avantage d'initier un plus vaste public lecteur à l'expérience particulière de la création au féminin. C'est surtout vrai pour les domaines de la musique et des arts visuels dont on connaît fort peu de choses en dehors des cercles initiés. Soulignons à cet égard la communication de Hélène Paul sur l'importance des femmes dans la vie musicale montréalaise pendant l'entre-deux guerres et celle de Esther Trépanier sur les femmes «peintres de la cité.» La question posée, à savoir si l'art a un sexe, attire de fait l'attention sur les conditions de la pratique et de la reconnaissance par le milieu, et l'extérieur, de l'esthétique particulière de chaque genre (*gender*). Les témoignages des jeunes compositrices Isabelle Panneton et Sylvaine Martin-Kostajnsnek sont à cet égard très révélateurs. L'écriture des femmes sur la ville complètent fort heureusement cette section. Le très beau texte de Lucie Lequin

sur les femmes migrantes et immigrantes, «chantres de l'exil,» raconte dans une langue suave le rapayement ambivalent, souvent douloureux, de celles qui ont choisi de vivre ailleurs ... c'est à dire, ici à Montréal.

La cinquième et dernière partie traite des stratégies politiques des femmes sur la scène municipale et dans la ville. Phénomène moins récent qu'on ne le croit malgré qu'il soit généralement attribué aux années 1980 (377), l'engagement politique des femmes dans la grande ville est abordé par quatre intervenantes dont une «de l'intérieur» (Léa Cousineau). On y rappelle que c'est dans la grande ville que les femmes semblent atteindre le plus haut taux de représentation sur les Conseils municipaux (Chantal Maillé). Serait-ce parce que les hommes désertent de plus en plus le niveau municipal en perte de pouvoirs? La question est posée et discutée. Car si le niveau municipal a longtemps été celui de la construction des routes et des égouts, il y a maintenant d'autres champs de compétence refileés aux municipalités qui risquent d'intéresser les femmes tels l'environnement et le développement communautaire (Lyse Pelletier et Caroline Andrew). L'exemple de la sécurité des femmes dans la ville, étudiée par Léa Cousineau, montre bien comment l'action d'un collectif de femmes peut amener une municipalité à modifier son approche face à un enjeu largement ignoré auparavant.

En somme, malgré l'inégalité des textes et des interventions colligés par les auteures, l'ouvrage demeure utile à notre connaissance des diverses contributions des femmes à la vie et à l'évolution de Montréal. En fait, on constatera qu'elles sont partout, et de tout temps, mais n'en sont pas pour autant reconnues.

Odetta Vincent  
INRS-IQRC

Andrée Dandurand, *Les carnets de David Thomas: roman* (Montréal: éditions Québec-Amérique 1993).

LA POSTFACE de ce roman nous livre quelques fragments de la vie de Burton LeDoux. C'est un Franco-Américain, natif de New Bedford, au Massachussets, où il voit le jour en 1893. Il semble, à son retour d'Europe, qu'il fréquente le Québec à plusieurs reprises entre 1940 et 1953. Ému et indigné par la tutelle économique que les «grandes sociétés minières et industrielles» (231) imposent aux populations ouvrières, qui travaillent dans des conditions totalement irrespectueuses de l'hygiène industrielle en gestation à cette époque, il va devenir le pourfendeur des maladies industrielles.

Il s'engage, selon l'expression d'Andrée Dandurand, dans une «véritable croisade: faire connaître l'étendue des ravages causés par les maladies industrielles au Québec, dénoncer la négligence qu'il qualifie de «criminelle» — des pouvoirs qui permettent à ces «abattoirs humains» de se perpétuer, forcer les grandes sociétés et les gouvernements qui les appuient à reconnaître les crimes commis et à prendre les mesures nécessaires.» (231) Burton LeDoux dénonce le triste sort de la classe ouvrière dans les nombreux articles qu'il publie dans des revues québécoises et américaines. Il est surtout connu au Québec par son article percutant que la revue *Relations* publie en mars 1948 où il dénonce les méfaits que la silicose produit chez les travailleurs du petit village minier de Saint-Rémi d'Amherst. Puis, en janvier 1949, juste avant le déclenchement de la grève de l'amianté, il fait la une du *Devoir* en y publiant un article dévastateur sur les ravages que l'amiantose cause aux travailleurs d'East Broughton.

Il semble que, par la suite, les forces conservatrices du Québec, où il sera, affirme l'auteur, «en pratique interdit de publication» (232), le réduiront au silence. Sans monter l'expression de «grande noirceur» en épingle, il faut sa-

voir reconnaître que c'est dans des situations de ce genre qu'elle prend du sens. Pensons également au sort de Mgr Charbonneau. Toujours est-il que Burton LeDoux récidive, en 1952-1953, alors qu'il s'intéresse à la condition des mineurs du cuivre de Rouyn-Noranda. Mais LeDoux crie dans le désert. Dès lors il s'isole dans une propriété de famille de sa femme, qui incidemment est un «médecin et chercheur réputé aux Etats-Unis.» (231) LeDoux y vit donc dans l'isolement jusqu'à sa mort, en 1979, même s'il manifeste toujours de l'intérêt pour le Québec, nous apprend-on, tout en nous laissant sur notre faim.

Dans le but de ressusciter ce personnage madame Dandurand utilise les fruits de ses recherches pour écrire ce roman en hommage à la mémoire de Burton LeDoux qu'elle glisse dans la peau et le cœur de ce personnage sympathique qu'est David Thomas. Toutefois c'est David Thomas qu'on placarde au risque de ne pas sortir Burton LeDoux de l'armoire dans laquelle notre société l'a emmuré. Il n'est pas certain que ce roman suffira à briser le mur du silence qui entoure les écrits de Burton LeDoux. Pourtant c'est un précurseur au chapitre de ces maladies industrielles que les ouvriers du roman appellent la «maladie de l'usine.» (145) Doit-on reprocher à l'auteur d'avoir choisi une forme romanesque qui nous révèle la personnalité attachante de David Thomas en occultant la personnalité réelle de Burton LeDoux? Un personnage du roman — en fait c'est Elizabeth-Marie, la scientifique qu'aime Thomas — tente de réfuter les arguments que son amant lui adresse souvent lorsqu'il lui reproche de s'intéresser plus à la science qu'aux humains: «... il n'y a pas de frontière entre les différentes activités humaines et que les unes devraient nourrir les autres comme les différents versants d'une montagne conduisent tous à son sommet.» (137)

Bref, le choix de madame Dandurand est respectable. On peut maintenant espérer qu'un cinéaste de la trempe de Gil-

les Carle ou de Denys Arcand s'impare de cette fiction pour nous brosser un portrait de David Thomas au pays de Vimy Jonction. En fait l'auteure bâtit son roman de façon telle qu'il se prête bien à un traitement cinématographique. Ce n'était pas le cas de Zola et pourtant Berri en a tiré un *Germinal* magnifique. Madame Dandurand, qui en est à son premier essai, n'est pas comparable à Zola. Il n'en demeure pas moins qu'elle nous livre un roman qui «s'inspire largement de la vie et des écrits» (231) de Burton LeDoux.

La postface ne nous révèle que des fragments de la vie de Burton LeDoux. Le roman ne nous fournit que des fragments de la vie de David Thomas qui sont disséminés dans ses carnets et dans les notes biographiques «recueillies par Ayers, Bienvenue, Rooney et associés, avocats et procureurs.» (31) Cette firme d'avocats fut chargée par la New Standard Company de recueillir des renseignements sur cet étranger qui préfère loger à l'Hôtel du Voyageur plutôt qu'au «Guest House» de la compagnie et qui apprécie plus la fréquentation des ouvriers que celle des cadres de l'entreprise. Il faut savoir que ce n'est pas une biographie romanesque ou romancée de LeDoux. C'est un roman. Et, ma foi, c'est un bon roman qu'on peut certes classer dans la catégorie du réalisme social.

David Thomas est un Franco-Américain que revient en Amérique après un long séjour en Europe. Il effectue ce voyage d'affaires pour le compte de la firme anglaise qui l'embauche. Celle-ci l'envoie à Vimy Jonction pour négocier une vente d'équipement industriel avec une succursale d'une compagnie internationale spécialisée dans le raffinage des métaux, la New Standard Metal Chemical Co. Dès ce premier séjour à Vimy Jonction, il est confronté à la triste réalité de cette petite ville de compagnie quand il assiste régulièrement aux séances du procès que des femmes intentent à la compagnie qui embauchait leur défunt mari. David Thomas est particulièrement impressionné par la dignité de Lucienne

Boulangier et par l'émotion de son témoignage alors qu'elle réclame justice pour la mort de son mari qu'elle impute à la compagnie qui a fait disparaître le dossier incriminant. Ce procès émeut David Thomas tout comme il conduira le jeune ouvrier Daniel à prendre conscience de sa condition laborieuse. Membre de «l'équipe d'entretien de l'usine» (48), celui-ci s'insurge contre les pressions de la compagnie, les manigances du président de son syndicat et la lâcheté du maire de la ville. D'ailleurs il sera muté dans une autre usine que la compagnie opère dans le nord. (191) Cette prise de conscience de l'ouvrier évolue parallèlement à celle de l'intellectuel David Thomas. L'un et l'autre sont subjugués par la lucidité de Lucienne Boulangier qui, selon les carnets de Thomas, est «comme un phare dans la nuit.» (155)

Le problème des maladies industrielles que ce procès va lui révéler s'inscrit dorénavant au cœur de toute son action. On pourrait dire qu'il devient un militant dont les préoccupations l'éloignent de son amante pour qui il devient étranger. Ce procès, dont il consigne le déroulement dans ses carnets, est l'élément déclencheur d'une enquête qui va le conduire à prendre conscience de la centralité de ce phénomène dans la vie des ouvriers et de leur famille. Dès lors, il mène un combat contre l'injustice. Il récuse cette phrase fataliste, empreinte de désespoir surtout, qu'une femme de Vimy a prononcée lors d'une entrevue qu'il faisait avec son mari: «Seule la mort est juste.» (145)

Cette question de la «maladie de l'usine» est au cœur de roman. Pour des raisons totalement différentes, elle marque en profondeur les antagonismes sociaux qui ponctuent la vie de l'usine et de la ville. C'est le pôle autour duquel gravitent les peurs et les défis des ouvriers et de leurs patrons, des hommes et des femmes, des ouvriers vivants et des veuves des trépassés, de la mairie et de son archiviste, de la compagnie et de David Thomas, en plus de briser le couple que David et Elizabeth-Marie cherchaient à former.

En réalité, la maladie industrielle est au coeur de la cité. Elle détermine des traits physiques qui colorent le portrait de groupe des ouvriers observés par David Thomas. Lors d'une assemblée syndicale convoquée pour annoncer le licenciement d'une certaine d'ouvriers, notre observateur fut:

... frappé par l'étroite ressemblance de ces hommes entre eux, chacun portant sous son individualité les caractéristiques communes d'un même lieu de travail, d'une même usine, d'une même ville. Généralement petits et minces, les gens de Vimy avaient le teint blafard, les joues creuses et les yeux rougis de ceux qui vivent en présence continue de substances toxiques et leur dos avait pris la courbure du poste de travail qu'ils occupaient dans l'organisation de la New Standard. (36)

C'est le lot de cette ville de compagnie. Une ville mono-industrielle qui vit au rythme et à l'ombre de l'usine. Une usine qui impose à la ville et à ses habitants tant sa discipline et sa loi que sa pollution et son cadastre. En plus de dicter à Vimy Jonction une toponymie anglophone qui cadre mal avec sa population ouvrière francophone. (39)

Donc l'usine, avec ses cours à rebuts, ses entrepôts ceinturés de fils barbelés et ses embranchements de voie ferrée, trône au milieu de la ville. (39) Pour David Thomas, c'est la même atmosphère, sordide mais familière, qui nappait la petite ville de son enfance en Nouvelle-Angleterre. Il sait bien que «la véritable osmose entre la population et la compagnie» (21) que lui vantait le directeur général de la compagnie, lors de sa première visite, n'existe pas. Ainsi Liliane, la femme de Faniel, n'aime pas du tout la petite maison à étage qu'ils habitent. Elle déteste son environnement extérieur et sa rue (67) et même son intérieur dénudé. (43)

Cette usine, garante des emplois, hypothèque la vie des ouvriers et celle de la ville. C'est comme un cancer qui se généralise. Les citoyens mécontents n'ont jamais réussi à enrayer son étalement. La New Standard revient de nouveau à la

charge avec une requête d'autorisation pour construire un nouvel entrepôt en plein coeur de la ville. Le conseil de ville, sensible au chantage de la compagnie de quitter la région, tergiverse. Ce n'est pas le cas d'un groupe de citoyens qui s'y opposent fermement; ils déposent une pétition à cet effet. Leur pétition rappelle «qu'on en avait assez de voir la ville grugée par la compagnie et on demandait à la municipalité d'interdire tout nouveau développement de l'usine en plein coeur de la ville.» (119)

Un groupe de femmes qui appuient la pétition viennent déposer sur la table du conseil une «boîte cartonnée, tapissée de feuilles multicolores et recouvertes de signatures.» (120) Cette boîte sert de support à la maquette d'une conception alternative, dirait-on aujourd'hui, de Vimy Jonction:

Au sommet de la boîte, une maquette en papier mâché représentait Vimy, ses rues, ses maisons, ses écoles, son usine, mais redessinées selon le désir de ses habitants. On y voyait un lac, des arbres, des fleurs et une usine ravalant sa fumée au lieu de la rejeter vers l'extérieur. On avait peint les maisons de toutes les couleurs et tracé des chemins dans les collines en papier qui, à l'image de Vimy, ceinturaient la maquette. Tel un voile de mariée, des rubans de crêpe multicolores portés par quatre femmes ornaient les quatre coins de la maquette. Le tout était grossièrement agencé mais suffisamment évocateur pour qu'on ne puisse s'y tromper. Il s'agissait bien de Vimy Jonction, mais d'une Vimy imaginée et transformée par ses habitants. (120)

Quoique cette épisode d'une manifestation écologiste soit symboliquement intéressante, on peut se demander si c'est vraisemblable. N'importe, la forme romanesque peut faire fi de la vraisemblance historique.

Entre-temps, David Thomas poursuit son enquête aux archives de la municipalité. Le traitement de ses données lui font réaliser «qu'on mourrait jeune à Vimy, emporté prématurément par des maladies dont on taisait la nature et le nom.» (127) Le concierge va lui appren-

dre que les femmes, il y a plusieurs années, avaient «pris d'assaut trois fois d'affilée les réunions du conseil municipal pour tenter d'empêcher l'expropriation de leurs maisons et la mise à sac de leur quartier.» (129) D'ailleurs, lors de son incursion dans les archives, il a découvert une brochure intitulée *Vimy Jonction, une ville sacrifiée*, qui corrobore cette information. En effet, l'un des chapitres décrit les nombreux déménagements que les agrandissements successifs de l'usine imposent aux habitants. (131)

Cette brochure lui a surtout révélé que des médecins avaient étudié et analysé l'état de santé des habitants de Vimy Jonction durant les années 1920 et 1930. Dès lors, David Thomas va consacrer toutes ses énergies d'une part à la recherche des résultats de ces enquêtes médicales et d'autre part à la compréhension des raisons pouvant expliquer le fait qu'ils n'avaient jamais été divulgués. L'accident mortel survient juste au moment où il retrouve la piste d'un médecin bostonnais qui faisait partie de l'enquête médicale effectuée à Vimy Jonction dans les années 1920.

Les lecteurs de *Labour/Le Travail* soucieux de connaître la conclusion du procès et les démarches de David Thomas devront lire ses carnets. Quant à Burton LeDoux, il faudra sans doute attendre un éventuel Dictionnaire du mouvement ouvrier avant qu'une biographie lui soit consacrée.

Georges Massé

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Carole Turbin, *Working Women of Collar City: Gender, Class, and Community in Troy, 1864-86* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press 1992).

CAROLE TURBIN's study of female collar workers in Troy, New York takes aim at those historians, mostly writing in the 1970s, who attributed the lack of organization among women workers to their fam-

ily roles. Instead of asking why most 19th-century working women failed to form enduring unions, Turbin asks a "new" question: "Under what conditions were some women able to form relatively successful and permanent unions ... and form strong alliances with male workers?" (77) To answer this question, she turns to Troy's collar laundresses, who formed the first continuously organized woman's trade union in the United States. Describing their labour activism as "exceptional but not unique," Turbin asserts convincingly that understanding how and why a minority of 19th-century women unionized is as important as knowing why the majority did not. (208)

Turbin's study is divided into two parts. Part One, on "Work, Family, Community," traces Troy's emergence as collar city and explores the diversity of collar women's working lives. Turbin's skilled analysis of manuscript census data on age, marital status, nativity, household structure, and occupation paints a remarkably vivid and complex picture of Troy's collar women. It shows that Troy was a "good place to work," for working-class women there had better employment opportunities and more economic security than their counterparts in other cities. Troy was a particularly good place for Irish immigrants, many of whom found employment as collar laundresses beginning in the 1860s. Although physically demanding, collar laundering was the most skilled branch of commercial laundering, and it paid relatively high wages. By the 1880s, three-fourths of Troy's collar laundresses, and one-half of its sewers, were first- or second-generation Irish women.

The second section, and the heart of the book, analyzes women's "Ideology, Consciousness, and Labor Activism" by comparing the collar strikes of 1869 and 1886. The Collar Laundry Union, formed in 1864, was the first woman's labour union. Led mostly by single Irish women who supported themselves or other family members, the union developed close ties

to male unionists and, to a lesser extent, to middle-class women reformers. Collar laundresses remained active even after their union dissolved after the 1869 strike, and Turbin argues that their experience and sense of solidarity shaped the labour upheavals of the 1880s. In 1886, collar laundresses, along with sewers, formed the 4,000-member Joan of Arc Assembly of the Knights of Labor and went on strike again. The Joan of Arc Assembly was the largest of Troy's Knights locals and the largest assembly of women Knights in the United States.

In comparing the Collar Laundry Union and Joan of Arc Assembly, Turbin seeks to explain what conditions made it possible for collar workers to build a relatively strong union. First, she points out that Troy's unusual industrial structure facilitated cooperation between male and female workers. Because Troy's two major industries (collar and iron) were sex-segregated, women's employment was not seen as a threat to men's jobs or identity as providers, but as a contribution to family economic stability. Irish workmen recognized that collar women made a significant contribution not only to the economic survival of individual families, but to the relative prosperity of the city's entire Irish community. Workers in both industries benefitted because they could rely on the income of family members during strikes and hard times.

Turbin's study is not just an analysis of women's labour activism; it is also a call for "new conceptualizations" about gender and a critique of dichotomous thinking. (13) Rejecting analytic frameworks that rely on oppositional categories, Turbin advances the common-sense notion that women's ethnic and religious differences, as well as differences in age and family status, shaped their views of themselves as women and thus their relationship to the trade union and suffrage movements. A good deal of Turbin's challenge to past scholarship is setting up a straw man, but she is right to point out that oppositions such as depend-

ent/independent and temporary/permanent tell us little about working women's lives. For example, although most collar women were unmarried, they were not necessarily "dependent," since many supported other family members. Similarly, descriptions of women as "temporary" and men as "permanent" workers overlook variation in male and female employment patterns and minimize the insecurity of working-class life.

One of Turbin's most important contributions takes on another enduring — though hardly unchallenged — opposition, public/private. Through her study, Turbin shows how family and household experiences intersect with paid work. She questions scholars' tendency to classify women as "unskilled" workers, pointing out that expertise in collar laundering depended in part on skills learned at home. And she notes that family responsibilities, and the expectation of continuous employment, may have encouraged some women to become union leaders.

Despite her skilled use of quantitative analysis to highlight the variations in working-class women's views, Turbin — like historians of the 1970s — finds that 19th-century gender ideology is fundamental to an understanding of working women's lives and labour activism. The ideology of the family wage, which held that women and children should be economically dependent on male breadwinners, was "as relevant for understanding working women who did not live up to the ideal as it was for those who could fulfil nineteenth-century women's destiny." (210) Turbin uses the collar laundresses' probable opposition to woman suffrage, and an 1869 speech by union leader Esther Keegan, to show the complexity of, and inapplicability of binary oppositions to, working-class women's gender ideology. Remarking on the courage of her members, only two of whom had given up after a six-week strike, Keegan said proudly, "I fancy but there are few men's organizations that can show such a record, and we are nothing but women." (71)



Equal or even superior to men as unionists, collar laundresses remained inferior as women.

*Working Women of Collar City* is a thoroughly researched and insightful reconstruction of 19th-century working women's lives and labour activism. In its critique of binary oppositions and attention to diversity, it reflects the state of American labour history in the 1990s.

Molly Ladd-Taylor  
York University

Genevieve G. McBride, *On Wisconsin Women: Working for Their Rights from Settlement to Suffrage* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press 1993).

WISCONSIN is a paradox. The cradle of Progressivism remained determinedly recalcitrant on the issue of woman suffrage, yet was the very first to ratify the Nineteenth Amendment to the American Constitution. Genevieve McBride's case study of why and, in particular how, woman suffragists in Wisconsin obtained the vote, explores this paradox and plots the emergence of female activism in Wisconsin from its origins in antebellum reform movements, through temperance and the club movement to woman suffrage and beyond into the 1920s. McBride, assistant professor of mass communication at the University of Wisconsin at Milwaukee, and an experienced journalist, effectively examines female activists' use of the press to spread their message and foster public support. She argues that through their activities in temperance, the club movement, and woman suffrage, women skilfully and innovatively moulded public opinion. Noting the antebellum origins of female journalism in a number of reform-oriented newspapers, McBride observes that beginning with temperance papers, women editors and contributors created an effective network for the dissemination of women's analysis of social problems. In women's

columns, "exchanges" from other reform papers and letters to the editor, Wisconsin women articulated and refined their critique of late 19th-century American society.

In Wisconsin as elsewhere, temperance catalyzed female activism, pointing it in the direction of suffrage. McBride draws attention to the surprising number of temperance activists who had experience as journalists, including both Annie Wittenmyer and Frances Willard, the first two presidents of the WCTU. The familiarity of these female journalists with the mechanics and potential of print contributed significantly to the growth of the temperance movement. In addition, although McBride mistakenly attributes the slogan "the Home Protection Ballot" to Frances Willard (Canadian temperance activist Letitia Youmans coined the motto which Willard later adopted), she wisely points out something that is all too often overlooked in the relationship between temperance and women suffrage. Suffrage had as much potential to alienate women from temperance activism as it did to convert temperance supporters into suffragists. Women who argued that their apolitical status and altruistic natures justified their temperance activities often believed that the whole rationale for their public campaign would be lost if the self-sacrificing work of temperance were yoked to the self-serving interests of woman suffrage.

The argument of woman suffragists and their Progressive allies in Wisconsin and elsewhere was predicated on expediency. In order to accomplish goals such as prohibition, women needed the vote. In her conclusion, McBride asserts that the philosophical basis of suffrage advocacy in Wisconsin did not matter nearly so much as the fact that suffrage was eventually achieved. However, the argument from expediency that fuelled temperance, was inherently linked to the elitist and at times racist aspects of Wisconsin's suffrage campaign. McBride acknowledges and regrets these tendencies, but her ana-

lysis fails to disclose that expedience is the inevitable corollary of maternal feminist rationales for woman suffrage. Arguments that the votes of women can accomplish a given goal are predicated on essentialist views of women and marginalize non-conforming women. The elitism of woman suffragists was not an accident.

The question of expediency has bedeviled the quest for women's rights. In the 19th century, women were often denied their rights on the grounds of expediency. In 1840, the radicalism of "the woman question" threatened antislavery politics and so abolitionist politicians jettisoned their interest in women's rights. Similarly, contrary to McBride's assertion, the demise of the American Equal Rights Association in 1869 resulted not from a failure to organize, but was a consequence of a resort to arguments based on expediency. In 1869, former abolitionists in the Republican Party abandoned their interest in woman's rights and in rights-based arguments for Black suffrage in favour of expediency as women were told they should stand aside because African Americans needed the vote to protect themselves in the post-Civil War South. Less audibly, but more influentially, Republicans acknowledged that their party needed African American votes in the South if it was to retain the Presidency and advance its policies for Reconstruction. Once the Republicans had sufficient strength elsewhere and no longer needed Black votes, they abandoned their efforts to safeguard the franchise for African Americans.

For tactical and philosophical reasons temperance women concentrated on establishing their need for the vote. The logic of temperance was inherently antithetical to rights-based arguments. By the 1870s, if not before, its goal was to remove by means of prohibitory legislation, individual choice where alcohol consumption was concerned. Therefore it was virtually impossible to develop a rights-based and therefore an inclusive rationale for woman suffrage from tem-

perance activism. Temperance was to be enacted to end women's suffering, not to emancipate them. The emotional appeals of the temperance campaign left the underlying assumptions and motives of women reformers unexamined, masking problematic issues of racism, elitism and religious and ethnic biases as well. Thus calls for an educated suffrage, the exclusion of Black clubwomen or the overt racism of Olympia Brown which clearly embarrass McBride, were not regrettable accidents of the suffrage campaign, but are absolutely rooted in the philosophical ground of maternal feminism.

McBride's decision not to extend, for the most part, her analysis beyond the activities of white middle-class American-born women subtly underscores this problem. Despite the presence of an unusually large number of women in Wisconsin's labour force, many of them foreign-born, we learn little of the rights for which they contended or the means by which they chose to advance their struggle. There is scant mention of the admittedly small number of African American women and no mention of the conditions or aspirations of Wisconsin's Native American women, but numbers are not the point. The elitist underpinnings of the suffrage agenda existed irrespective of numbers. *On Wisconsin Women* tell us about the winners, rather than the actors in the struggle for women's rights in Wisconsin.

Margaret M.R. Kellow  
University of Western Ontario

Richard Schneirov, *Pride and Solidarity: A History of the Plumbers and Pipefitters of Columbus, Ohio, 1889-1989* (Ithaca: ILR Press 1993).

*PRIDE AND SOLIDARITY's* first audience is the members of Local 189 of the United Association of Journeymen and Apprentices of the Plumbing and Pipe Fitting Industry of the United States and Canada

(UA), the organization that commissioned and assisted in the preparation of the volume. However, labour scholars, members of a secondary audience, will also find much of value in this work, for while the book lacks some academic paraphernalia like footnotes, it is nonetheless informed by the concerns and conceptualizations being bandied around the academy. And so it should since Richard Schneirov of Indiana State University is an accomplished practitioner of labour history who has written extensively on the Knights of Labor and other topics, including another book on a building trades local, the Chicago carpenters.

One virtue of Schneirov's narrative is its skilful development of the parallel themes of craft pride and union solidarity. "These two identities are balanced and intertwined in the experiences and roles, past and present, of all craft unionists and, in particular, of the members of Local 189 ...," Schneirov writes. "But there is a constant tug and sometimes an outright conflict between the two identities." (3) The pride derived from mastering skilled work, combined with the structure of the construction industry, produces a high level of collaboration between journeyman and contractors. "Instead of the top-down, hierarchical relationships characteristic of work administered through large bureaucracies and so productive of impersonality and adversarialism," Schneirov observes, "construction work tends to breed an ethic of cooperation among individuals based on mutual respect for craft knowledge, skill and ingenuity." Yet, "despite the common bonds with employers, most journeymen recognize that the wage bargain ... is inherently unequal." To have some control over the vicissitudes of the labour market and the standards of work, journeymen plumbers came together in union solidarity — a solidarity that had significant social as well as economic dimensions. The organization they formed made such a positive contribution to stabilizing practices on the job site that until the 1970s most con-

tractors accepted collective bargaining as both inevitable and good. As Schneirov documents for the Columbus scene, the "contractors and the building trades unions have established a tradition of nonadversarial conflict within a climate of cooperation." (6, 8)

Schneirov successfully traces these themes as they interact from the first founding of a union among Columbus journeymen plumbers in 1889 as a result of the widespread agitation for the eight-hour day. Another reason that *Pride and Solidarity* is of academic value is that there are few histories of the building trades (scholars being generally preoccupied with factory settings and industrial unions), fewer still focusing at the local level, and none involving a medium-size city. In actuality it should be noted that today Local 189's jurisdiction ranges across a multi-county area in central Ohio. While in broad strokes the history of 189 parallels the history of New York, Chicago and other big city locals in the UA — as they all respond to the forces of technological change, urbanization, economic cycles, public sector growth, and affirmative action — the local environment gave Local 189's past unique twists. Periods of intense militancy in the 1890s and again in the 1970s and 1980s, have been offset by a period of conservatism and stability from 1900 to the 1930s, and an era of growth, prosperity, and collaboration from World War II until the late 1960s. And while the union has been sharply affected by the economic and construction history of Columbus, it has been less influenced by the broader labour and social history of the city. For most of its history UA Local 189 has been very secure and insular, with its membership mainly recruited along family lines and with the union hall serving for many plumbers and pipefitters as the centre of their social life. Consequently, the local mixed only occasionally and lukewarmly with the broader Columbus labour movement or even with the other building trades in the city. During the late 1930s,

for instance, as the city's labour movement was fighting the battle over craft versus industrial unionism, Local 189 stayed removed from the contest, belonging neither to the city body or the association of building trades. Only since the 1970s, as Local 189 finds itself losing jobs to non-union workers tied to the Associated Builders and Contractors (ABC), do militancy and a search for allies in the wider labour community become the dominant motifs for the local.

Readers will find places in *Pride and Solidarity* where they will wish the Schneirov had said more, like the cursory treatment — 12 pages — covering “Two World Wars and the Great Depression.” But such gaps generally derive from a lack of sources, for as a commissioned study, the author was not free to pick the local with the best surviving records. Schneirov has, however, successfully offset these shortcomings with a set of engaging interviews with various current union members, the main thrust of which is to emphasize the growing diversity within the organization as a result of affirmative action policies.

*Pride and Solidarity* will provide the membership of Local 189 with a respect for the local's past and a grave concern for its future as non-union contractors make deeper inroads into its jurisdiction. Scholars reading the volume will gain insights into the historical problems, actions, and attitudes of a group of men, and now several women, not extensively studied.

Warren Van Tine  
Ohio State University

James C. Cobb, *The Selling of the South: The Southern Crusade for Industrial Development, 1936-1990*, 2nd edition (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press 1993).

**SUPPLY-SIDE ECONOMISTS** contend that free-enterprise capitalism leads to general

prosperity. Encourage business to pursue profit without restriction, they argue, and good jobs are bound to follow. In the process, old social relations which keep the poor in their place are supposed to be swept away. Proof of this proposition lies in the Sunbelt South, which in the 1970s shattered the image of a racist, socially backward region. Even Blacks, it was noticed, were abandoning the depressed crime-ridden North to seize the opportunities of the New South. Those who find the supply-side argument compelling may be disabused by James C. Cobb's *The Selling of the South*.

In pursuing the “selling of the South,” Cobb ransacks the archives of a host of state government and local community organizations set up to attract business to the region. The “selling” originally involved subsidies raised from bonds issued by particular cities for factory building. Later, development agencies in Southern states offered low-interest loans, relief from state taxation, improved infrastructure, and the use of schools for worker training.

In addition, Southern leaders offered what we might call “negative inducements” to bring manufacturing to the South. One was freedom from anti-pollution restrictions, which became more important as the environmental lobby grew in the United States. More important, however, Southern leaders went out of their way to stress the appeal of low wages and a docile work force. Not surprisingly, Southern politicians were among the chief advocates of the Taft-Hartley Act in 1947, which put the brakes on the union rights gained under the Wagner Act of 1935. But Cobb also shows how the South could generate a climate inhospitable to unions whatever the letter of the law. Local leaders including clergymen cooperated in keeping out “labour agitators” who were labelled “Yankees” and “Communists.” The notorious success of the J.P. Stevens Company of South Carolina in thwarting the right of employees to form a union during the

1970s showed how far anti-unionism could be taken. A local university even offered a seminar for business executives based on the company's tactics.

Cobb is also interested in the "buying of the South." Using a vast array of contemporary surveys that tried to establish why business moved South, he attempts to determine the success of the selling campaign. One reason often given by migrating businesses was the proximity of Southern locations to their markets, something that Southern leaders ignored in their sales pitch. Although Cobb finds that many of the conclusions to be drawn from the data are anything but clear, he is nevertheless convinced that the prospect of cheap, union-free labour was the strongest attraction.

The study of the South's industrial development since World War II makes Cobb reflect on the continuity of Southern history, and this forms a secondary theme in his book. Cobb puts himself in the same school as historians like Jonathon M. Wiener and Dwight B. Billings who see the original "New South" — the one that followed the Civil War — as engineered by the old planter class and aimed at preserving the social status quo. Admittedly there are many differences in the later period, but Cobb concludes that "reduced to its essentials the so-called good business climate of which southern politicians remained so protective in the 1990s still bore a striking resemblance to the planter-industrialist policy rapprochement of the 1880s."

To speak more generally about Cobb's work, the book has the characteristics of a morality tale. On the one hand, the South seemed to enjoy great success in the boom of the 1970s through the efforts of its leaders. Cobb's most readable (and funniest) chapter is a survey of all the journalistic ballyhoo about the Sunbelt. The image of the south had changed completely from the murderous habitat of the Civil Rights' era. TV serials like *The Waltons* gave a sympathetic rendering, and even the Southern redneck

became a lovable buffoon in the form of Billy Carter, the brother of the President. On the other hand, behind all the glitter, there were serious problems. Industrial development on the basis of cheap labour had perpetuated poor conditions and low purchasing power. In the final analysis Southern states remained at the bottom of the standard of living index of the United States. Instances of real progress like the better schools and higher education in the North Carolina "triangle" attracted outsiders into the region but did little for natives. Ironically, smaller local firms provided more jobs for ordinary people than the big firms that Southern leaders made it their business to attract. Yet the poor paid for the whole selling of the South since subsidies were drawn from regressive taxes like the sales tax. The decade that has passed since the first edition of the book brings even worse news. By attracting industries that relied on low wages, the South fell prey to third world countries that could offer even less.

Such then is Cobb's morality tale. But will supply-side economists be convinced? Even while admitting that Southern development had its drawbacks, they might be justified in asking what the situation would have been if the selling of the South had not taken place. Although statistics abound in the book, there is no consistent examination of jobs created or of wage scales that might throw light on the subject. At times, Cobb seems cautious about his argument. He admits that "there is no evidence that the Southern economy would have grown more rapidly had the south not received concessions and tax exemptions." He also points out that workers as well as employers expressed hostility to unions, and that other regions besides the South suffer in the world economy. Still, it is difficult to read this book without wondering whether the South paid too high a price for its development.

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University of Toronto

Gary M. Fink, *The Fulton Bag and Cotton Mills Strike of 1914-1915: Espionage, Labor Conflict, and the New South Industrial Relations* (Ithaca: ILR Press 1993).

GARY M. FINK's book is a crisp account of the Fulton Bag and Cotton Mills strike that occurred in Atlanta, Georgia in 1914. The strike was significant because it was an early effort by labour to organize the South in order to protect northern wage rates and prevent runaway shops. Labour hoped the Fulton Bag strike would replicate General Sherman's victory at the Battle of Atlanta. The union would march fresh from its victory in Atlanta to organize the rest of southern textiles, like Sherman marched to the sea. The opportunity for labour to establish a beachhead in the South at Fulton Bag appeared brighter than at rural mill villages. First, grievances among workers ran deep. Conditions at Fulton Bag were so bad that it was considered the employer of last resort by mill workers. Second, the company's efforts at paternalism were so pathetic that instead of creating loyalty to the company, they only increased the workers' sense of injury. The fact that the mill owners were Jewish and the workers Protestant, and that the strike followed on the heels of the Leo Frank case in Atlanta, only added to the distance that separated workers and employers. Third, workers could depend upon community support of their demands. Atlanta was a union town where one-fifth of its white workers and one-half of its registered voters were union members. Employer hegemony did not extend as far in cosmopolitan Atlanta as it did in rural, isolated mill villages. The police remained neutral throughout the conflict, social gospel ministers in Atlanta defended the righteousness of the strikers' cause, and the Atlanta Federation of Labor, the AFL and the United Textile Workers of America (UTWA) provided generous financial support. Despite these advantages the strike ended in defeat, just as subsequent battles in southern textiles would fail. The economics of the

industry, in which profit margins depended upon low labour costs, conditioned management's unyielding opposition to defeat the strike.

Ironically, Fink's story begins with General Sherman's march across Georgia. Among his soldiers was Jacob Elsas, a Jewish immigrant, who saw a business opportunity in the war's devastation. Upon his discharge from the army he opened a dry goods store in Cartersville, Georgia, and then a paper and cloth bag factory in nearby Atlanta. The Atlanta site soon expanded into a fully integrated factory that employed over 1,200 workers and Fulton Bag approached becoming a Fortune 500 company.

In 1913, loom fixers and weavers struck over the firing of a popular foreman. This brought suppressed grievances to the surface. Workers at Fulton Bag were subject to fines and deductions for breaking a more elaborate set of work-rules than at any other mill in Georgia. In addition, their employment contract, which required workers to forfeit a week's wages if they failed to give sufficient notice of quitting, was unique in the industry. The militancy of the workers, the size of the mills and their location in booming Atlanta caught the attention of AFL and UTWA officials anxious to begin an organizing drive in the South.

At this point, Fink's book becomes noteworthy. He reconstructs the strike mainly through the eyes of labour spies hired by the company. Their reports offer a revealing and fascinating account of the strike's progress, the union's strategy, and the agents' plans to disrupt it. Labour spies passed on transcripts of union meetings and conversations among strike leaders to the mill owners. At one point, a labour spy became so involved in an internal struggle for strike leadership that he lost sight of his employer's interest and allied with the faction that his own reports indicated posed the greater threat! Fink uses these reports judiciously. While he relies upon them to drive the narrative he is never so seduced by them to give es-

pionage much explanatory weight in why the strike failed.

*Fulton Bag* is not only enhanced by the unusual source material Fink draws upon, but by the photographic record that accompanies the text. The strike was one of the first in which organizers consciously used the camera as a weapon in a labour struggle. Organizers appreciated the emotive power of the image and took pictures of workers being evicted from their homes, of emaciated mill children the company exploited, and of the privations the strikers endured. These pictures, many of which are reproduced in the book, were circulated outside of Atlanta to raise awareness of the strike and to generate support for it.

Fink's book is a graphic, engrossing portrait of the Fulton Bag strike. Although the topic appears limited in its potential, Fink draws rich analytic conclusions from it regarding the overwhelming obstacles unions faced in the South. Such conclusions are especially welcome today when other historians conjure up "lost opportunities" for unions in the South and place the burden of defeat on unions instead of on the obstacles they had to overcome there. Fink's book displays clearly that whatever strategic mistakes unions made, the greatest obstacle was employer intransigence, which was fostered by the kind of market in which they competed and by their belief in the sanctity of private property.

Alan Draper  
St. Lawrence University

Alan Draper, *Conflict of Interests: Organized Labor and the Civil Rights Movement in the South, 1954-1968* (Ithaca: ILR Press 1994).

ONE OF MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.'s persistent pleas was for a close alliance between civil rights and labour forces. "The two most dynamic movements that reshaped the nation during the past three

decades are the labor and civil rights movements," King declared. "Our combined strength is potentially enormous."

King's was a plaintive plea, for while he was encouraged — at times — by organized labour's contribution to the civil rights movement, he was often disappointed. A durable civil rights-labour coalition never quite materialized during the heyday of the black freedom struggle, and King frequently noted that labour was no longer the fresh, progressive force that it had been during the 1930s.

Alan Draper's new book supports this last assessment; yet it largely offers a revisionist portrait of the connection between organized labour and the civil rights movement in the South. While it does not deny the shortcomings of labour in advancing racial justice, it highlights the constraints and limits that unions in the South faced on this issue. It counters the critical tone of scholars (and activists) like Herbert Hill who stress the "great opportunity" that the AFL-CIO missed "to make a new beginning in the South" with a ringing endorsement of the civil rights movement. (3)

In particular, Draper takes aim at what he calls the "new southern labour history" which argues that had trade unions employed different strategies they might have boosted black rights as well as working-class organization. As Michael K. Honey, whom Draper cites as a leading practitioner of the new school, has recently noted in *Southern Labor and Black Civil Rights* (1993), "Mobilization of the kinds of working-class radicalism that existed in the South required a greater degree of confidence in the workers and a broader vision of change than most white CIO leaders possessed."

Draper contends that union organizers and leaders faced "a membership and region that were determined to defend" segregation. (14) This was the fundamental reality. There were two competing visions held by southern white labour (and Draper focuses on white, not black, labourites) toward the civil rights move-

ment. "These competing visions," Draper writes, "of the interests of white workers, one articulated by the union political leaders, the other by its rank and file, one desperate to create a class-based party system that included blacks, the other determined to preserve a caste-based party system that excluded them, created an explosive tension within the southern labor movement." (15-6)

Draper explores that tension in this short book, with an accent on the advances for black rights, however slight and halting. He shows that although organized labour did not endorse integrated public schools in the aftermath of the *Brown* decision, its response to the Supreme Court ruling "was no worse" than that of "southern religious and business leaders at their best." (38) In another revealing chapter, he traces how southern unions sought to educate their membership on racial justice and how they desegregated — albeit slowly — their own conventions. But most of *Conflict of Interests* is devoted to examining the political strategy waged, particularly by AFL-CIO state councils, to forge a labour-black coalition which would ensure a southern wing to the Democratic party that would endorse, not obstruct, progressive initiatives.

Souther politics are no longer held hostage to white supremacy and, as Draper suggests, the groundwork laid by organized labour in the late 1950s and 1960s (especially after 1965) has yielded political benefits. By stressing labour's quest for political realignment, Draper opens an intriguing line of analysis. Still, one wishes that Draper had widened further the focus on his study. In many ways, this book is episodic and selective, rather than comprehensive. To be sure, at the outset Draper delimits his field of inquiry. This is not a book about black trade unionists, he notes. Nor is it a book about the records of AFL-CIO affiliates in the South to eliminate discriminatory practices within their own ranks. Rather, it stresses "labor's relationship to the civil

rights movement." (7) The term "relationship" is inherently fuzzy and, thus, raises expectations that *Conflict of Interests* does not fully meet.

Draper, for example, focuses on labour's responses to the Voting Rights Act of 1965, but oddly he says little about those pivotal moments of the civil rights movement which helped spur national legislation. There is no mention, for instance, of the Birmingham campaign spearheaded by Martin Luther King and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference in 1963. Nor is there any discussion of labour's contribution to the Selma campaign in 1965 that nurtured the Voting Rights Act. Certainly, labour's response to these climactic episodes that precipitated national crises must be considered an important part of Draper's story. Nor does Draper say much about how organized labour responded to the evolution of the black freedom struggle, particularly when militants began to endorse a Black Power stance. In an illuminating chapter on Claude Ramsay, the president of the Mississippi AFL-CIO from 1959 to 1985, we do not learn, for instance, how Ramsay reacted to the controversial Meredith March in 1966. Finally, Draper neglects Martin Luther King's effort — his last public act — to connect labour and civil rights issues in Memphis, Tennessee in 1968.

Draper might also have profited by setting his story of the 1950s and 1960s more firmly against the backdrop of the heady days of the expansion of industrial unionism in the 1930s and 1940s when interracial cooperation seemed more possible. To what extent, it is important to ask, was this vision reappropriated by union veterans in the 1960s? Draper, too, could have followed his own lead in his chapter on Claude Ramsay by bringing even more personalities to life.

These criticisms should not minimize the contribution of this study. Draper has composed a readable and valuable book which admirably does not lump the South into one category but rather accents the



diversity within the region and which is based on an impressive range of archival research. *Conflict of Interests* advances our understanding of southern labour and civil rights and should serve as a springboard for further investigation into this important — and until now, largely neglected — subject.

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Michael K. Honey, *Southern Labor and Black Civil Rights: Organizing Memphis Workers* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press 1993).

THE PERIOD of southern history from the end of Reconstruction to the Civil Rights movement of the post-World War II era has long seemed a dark age in American historiography. By design or neglect many historians have led us to believe that most black southerners were resigned to the hardships and indignities of life under Jim Crow. Historians have devoted considerable attention to out-migration (both to Kansas in the 1870s and to northern cities during the two World Wars), but in doing so they have inadvertently given the impression that those with any fight left in them simply abandoned the South. Among those who remained behind, the more well-to-do African Americans who joined anti-lynching societies or lead the NAACP have been identified as champions of social change, while working-class African Americans appear in the pages of southern historiography as passive victims of debt peonage, lynch mobs, and desperate poverty.

In recent years, several southern studies have shed new light on the South's dark age. Led by Nell Painter's biography of Hosea Hudson and Robert Korstad's history of Durham tobacco workers, these new histories have emphasized both open and underground resistance to low wages, terrible working conditions, and segregation. While Robin Kelley's study of black

communists in the Mississippi Delta and Tera Hunter's work on domestic servants in Atlanta emphasize the hidden history of the unorganized, everyday conflict waged by African-Americans in the 20th century South, Korstad's dissertation and Earl Lewis' recent book on Norfolk's black community focus on efforts to organize openly and bargain for change. Michael Honey's marvellous new work on the history of civil rights and industrial unionism in Memphis is the latest contribution to this exciting new subfield of southern historiography.

Honey's study, which is based on his dissertation, grew out of his experience as a community and civil liberties organizer in Memphis in the early 1970s, not long after Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was assassinated there while lending support to striking sanitation workers. This background is reflected in Honey's obvious passion for his subject. Without seeming overly romantic, he champions those Memphis working people who stood up to the segregationist South and fought for industrial unionism in an earlier era "when organizing a union was worth the price of one's life." (6-7, 10) His book seeks to provide the missing link between the black freedom movement of the 1950s and 1960s and the biracial industrial unionism of the 1930s and 1940s.

Honey chose Memphis for less personal reasons as well. It was a bastion of southern slavery, the centre of post-Civil War commerce and industry in the Delta, and, consequently, an arena of struggle over the meaning of freedom. For much of the 20th century, it was the stronghold of one of the nation's "toughest" political bosses, Edward H. Crump. Yet, despite Crumps' iron grip on political life, the police, employers, and conservative black leaders, Memphis also saw one of the most successful CIO efforts in the South in the 1940s.

Honey first provides background on the Jim Crow economy, demonstrating quite clearly that, far from resisting the racial division of labour, white workers

used it to their advantage. By the end of World War I, Memphis' skilled workers were among the most organized and highly paid workers in the South, but their achievements rested on the exclusion of black workers from skilled jobs and AFL unions. This segregated labour market paid obvious dividends to white craftworkers, but, Honey shows, its economic benefits to white unskilled industrial workers in general were mixed. The racial fragmentation of the labour force and the repressive social climate maintained by Crump gave employers the power to hire unskilled white workers at the same low wages paid to black workers. It exempted them from the dirty, heavy, and menial tasks reserved for African-Americans, but it also kept them from allying with black workers in a collective effort to improve their condition. Until white workers were ready to abandon the privileges of race, Honey argues, no industrial union movement could succeed.

Indeed, the success of the CIO, Honey shows, depended on how far it would go to convince white workers to give up their privileged position. Textile, auto, dock, and riverboat unions won their fights when white and black workers, in Honey's words, coordinated picketing, held joint meetings, and warmed their hands by the same fires. He lays to rest any notion that black workers were hostile to unionism or had any predilection for strike-breaking. On the contrary, they were the first to join and the last to abandon the CIO, and the most ready to risk body and soul in strikes. This led to an inversion of the CIO's established strategy. When the UAW tried to apply the northern model of CIO organizing to Memphis' Ford plant, organizing the core of an industry first, and expecting the rest to come along, they ran up against hostile white workers. In contrast, by organizing widely among the city's poorest black river workers, UCAPAWA was able to shut down the shipping industry and win over white workers in the process.

For Honey, it was black workers who built the foundation of Memphis' CIO, and as they did so, "they also began to break the bonds of Jim Crow." The CIO's success required that white workers organize alongside black workers and modify their behaviour, if not their racist attitudes. White and black workers struck together to increase their bargaining power, but they continued to struggle among themselves over the meaning of unionism as a social movement, "with blacks wanting to use the union to batter down segregation and many whites wanting to use it to keep segregation in place." (201) If the CIO took greater action in combating workplace discrimination, it risked alienating white workers who benefited from their higher wages and better positions within Memphis' plants.

Ultimately, Honey shows, the CIO made real gains for workers black and white but fell short of challenging the fundamentals of the Jim Crow system. This was its undoing. Employers and politicians used racism and anti-communism interchangeably to beat down union organizing and demands for social change. Internally divided on issues of race, the CIO could not meet the challenges of the post-war era. In the face of race riots and the red scare, its more conservative leaders sought to make themselves more acceptable to business leaders by purging the movement's strong black-led locals. In doing so, Honey argues, the CIO cut out its own heart. Memphis' black trade unionists continued to fight Jim Crow — joining with teachers, deacons, and students in the civil rights movement of the next two decades — but they did so on their own, with only a handful of stalwart white radicals at their sides.

This is an impressively researched and readable book. Honey's sparkling prose ranges easily from demographic data to fist fights between organizers and corporate thugs. The book is ideal for classes at the graduate or undergraduate level, and it should be a starting point for

anyone interested in labour, African-American, and southern history.

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Gary Cross, *Time and Money: The Making of Consumer Culture* (London: Routledge 1993).

EVER SINCE the prosperous 1920s, experts have forecast a declining work week and a new era of leisure for all. But while many people have experienced greater access to goods, the dream of freely-chosen leisure (as opposed to under- and unemployment) has proved elusive. The thesis of *Time and Money*, a synthesis of work in the fields of labour, leisure, and consumption, is that the triumph of consumerism in the 20th century was obtained through the defeat of "the movements for the progressive reduction of worktime and democratic leisure as legitimate fruits of productivity."

Like much work on consumption, *Time and Money* is very much informed by a political and ethical critique: Cross wants to foster a renewed sense of the politics of time and money and widen the possibilities for collective action by demonstrating that the ascendancy of consumerism was not inevitable, but rather "a choice made within complex cultural, political, and social contexts." To that end, he marshals evidence from three national contexts (Britain, France and the United States) to explore two critical historical junctures: the interwar years (the book's real focus) and (briefly) the post-1945 period, when the promises of consumerism seemed on the point of realization for the majority of people.

In most recent histories of 20th-century mass consumption, the role of merchandisers, retailers, advertisers, and the mass market magazines is given pride of place, as is the construction of woman-as-consumer. Cross' cast of characters is rather different. A labour historian whose

previous published work is in working-class leisure and struggles for shorter work hours, Cross is interested in intellectuals, trade unionists, and managers, and progressive movements for democratic leisure. *Time and Money* examines the transformations in the "male" worlds of paid labour and leisure, in time and money, that were occasioned by, and contributed to, the coming of consumer society.

Intellectuals, in particular, come in for a good deal of heavy fire from Cross for their profound ambivalence about the prospect of working men enjoying time free from labour. Not only did increased working-class leisure appear to erode the work ethic, but it also threatened to weaken "cultural standards by potentially giving the 'masses' time and access to cultural goods." In the end, anxieties about the work ethic were effectively banished with the realization that, while the minimum physical needs of human beings might be met through mass productivity, there was no brake on psychological needs and consumer desire. With higher wages, the argument went, workers would willingly chain themselves to longer hours in exchange for alluring consumer goods. Cultural standards, by contrast, were not so easily rescued. The desire to save high culture from the encroachments of mass, commercialized culture led chiefly to increased pessimism, isolation, and elitism and to a hardening of the lines between intellectual and popular culture.

The closing of cultural and ideological options to the market was accompanied by the loss of political and economic alternatives. In the immediate aftermath of World War I, workers in a number of national contexts succeeded in winning the eight-hour day despite the resistance of employers. But increased global competition, job insecurity, the coming of the Depression, and the weakening of trade union movements meant that the victories of 1919 were soon eroded. With defeat came a transformation in the very definition of time and leisure. The dream of a

six-hour work day gave way to packaged occasions for consumption in the form of the weekend and the annual vacation.

The weakness of interwar progressive movements for democratic leisure further narrowed the political space for re-thinking the relationship between time and money. Cross attributes the failure of such movements to an inability to understand, much less counter, the real popular appeal of consumer pleasures. For the millions of unemployed during the Depression, utopian visions of free time had little allure; instead, in the midst of scarcity and the weakening of social solidarity, "the psychological need for consumer goods grew in intensity."

Exactly why this should be the case is the focus of the book's penultimate chapter. "It was not," argues Cross, "simply the culmination of the anti-democratic biases of the intelligentsia, the political power of capital, or the social and cultural subordination of workers." Rejecting theories of mass consumerism which assume both consumer passivity and "that social life constructed around goods is somehow inferior," Cross uses the examples of domestic spending and the vacation to analyze the "positive" meanings of consumption and goods for working-class people, and to elucidate the specifics of popular choices with respect to time and money.

While in many ways the most interesting chapter, Cross' analysis is frequently unconvincing; he assumes what he really ought to explain, or at least open to question. About vacations, for example, he writes, "The quest was not for the intellectual's dream of social interaction in high-minded discussion groups or didactic holiday tours; rather, people strove for a society of consumer symbols, where their individuality was projected on to goods. Indeed, consumer items probably provided a valued balance between social identity, on the one hand, and individual freedom from social intrusion, on the other." Cross writes as if there is a self-evident, pre-existing need for individuality and privacy that somehow pro-

gressive leisure movements ignored at their cost. There is no attempt to show how such notions are constructed within a given context. His account of domestic spending is similarly limited. While he cites her work, Cross does not discuss Dolores Hayden's argument in *The Grand Domestic Revolution* that we need to understand the rise of consumerism in the 1920s within the context of the defeat after World War I of feminist visions of utopian housing and collective house-keeping.

Indeed, a major weakness of *Time and Money* is the lack of attention to women's experience. While Cross does admit that he provides no systematic analysis of the gendered construction of time and money, he does not consider the ways this might seriously weaken his overall argument. No doubt anticipating feminist critiques, Cross states in the introductory chapter that his focus is the male worker's dilemmas of time and money. He argues that it was "the *waged* worker who has been directly affected by increased productivity and the politics of its distribution." And since waged work in the interwar period was "a lifelong experience *primarily* of male providers," the male worker is at the centre of *Time and Money*.

Yet, while women's paid labour force participation was lower than men's during this era, that does not mean that it is of no consequence for the issues under discussion in Cross' work. In her groundbreaking book, *Women Assemble*, Miriam Glucksmann shows how it was women workers who were drawn into the new consumer goods industries (food and electrical goods) of interwar Britain, just as it was women who were primarily responsible for domestic consumption. In the US context, Alice Kessler-Harris has argued that new categories of work for women, together with an increase in real wages, "contributed to the advent of the consumer society ... New definitions of wants attracted new groups of women to the work force and suggested new rationales for staying there." And without the

contribution of women's wages to the household budget, many of the new consumer items available in the 1920s could not have been purchased.

Cross's discussion of leisure also focuses exclusively on the male worker; this, he argues, simply reflects the interwar debates. Yet feminist social historians such as Kathy Peiss and Victoria de Grazia have shown both the importance of commercialized pastimes such as the cinema and popular magazines in the lives of interwar working women, but also how much official anxiety and commentary these pleasures generated. Similarly, nowhere in his lengthy discussion of intellectuals and mass culture does Cross consider the gendered organization of debates about high and low culture, the "traditional" and the popular. Yet, as de Grazia and others have argued, "prevailing intellectual opinion identified mass culture with femaleness."

In the end, then, the book's claim to be about "the making of consumer culture" is limited by Cross's failure to fully take into account the gender processes at work in the material he analyses. At the same time, while often buried in inelegant and dull prose, the book does raise some stimulating questions about the central dilemmas of time and money. While they may quarrel with some of Cross's arguments, interpretations, and evidence, historians of labour, leisure, and mass consumption/culture should nevertheless find *Time and Money* worthwhile.

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Hardy Green, *On Strike at Hormel: The Struggle for a Democratic Labor Movement* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press 1990).

THIS YEAR MARKS the tenth anniversary of the beginning of the great Hormel meatpackers' strike, one of the central industrial disputes of the 1980s. In 1984,

the George A. Hormel Company — whose most famous produce was the World War II creation of canned spiced ham, or Spam — announced a 23 per cent wage and benefits cut for the workers in its seven plants in the American heartland. Of these workers, it was the 1,500 members of the P-9 local of the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) in Austin, Minnesota (a town of 25,000), who challenged the contract. By the summer of 1986, they had lost their battle, but not before showing in action how concessions and the employers' offensive could be opposed. This is captured marvellously in Hardy Green's account of the battle at Hormel.

This "middle America" strike took place at the mid-point of the Reaganite 1980s. The state and the employers saw the 1980s as marking the triumph of the market and free enterprise. This capitalist victory was supposed to lead to wealth, prosperity, and all the good things "trickling down" to the workers below. But the triumph of the market at Hormel produced not a trickle but a stream that flowed up to the rich, not down to the poor. To cite just one example, after the defeat of the strike, wages plummeted from around \$10 an hour to \$6.50 for those 300 workers whose jobs were subcontracted to Quality Pork Processors. (293)

Much of the academic left saw the 1980s as marking the disappearance of the working class. But "during 1985-86, P-9 received thousands of letters of support. ... Many union officers and individuals said that they had walked on picket lines and knew all the associated anxieties well." (287) In the course of the strike, "over three thousand unions and other organizations from every state responded" to P-9 appeals for solidarity. "Supporters from across the country came to Austin to attend mass demonstrations, marches, and rallies. Thousands sent letters of support, food, and funds and joined in the anti-Hormel protest activities that took place in virtually every U.S. city." (4) Even deep in the heart of Texas,

"sponsors of a heavily publicized annual spoof event, the SPAM-O-RAMA barbecue, announced the event's postponement, saying that they had instead 'decided to honor the nationwide Boycott of Hormel products.'" (254) The spread of T-shirts, buttons, and posters invoking the viewer to "CRAM YOUR SPAM" became the slogan which demonstrated that the working class in the US was indeed far from dead.

Finally, the official union leadership, particularly in the US, saw the 1980s as marking the end of the era of class struggle and the "traditional" tactics of the workers' movement, and the time for a transition to the realm of reason and compromise. But as Green clearly shows, it was only class struggle unionism which allowed the workers to fight at all. In January and February 1986, mass pickets again and again kept scabs out of the plant, fought the National Guard, and brought out several Hormel-owned plants in nearby towns in sympathy strikes. Green sees these class struggle highpoints as the key to the strike, and that had the strike leaders gone just a few steps further, "Hormel would have had to find a way out." (286) There is no doubt in my mind that Green is absolutely right.

However, the strike was lost, and after reading Green's account, three factors seem to have been all-important in that defeat. First, the concerted and oftentimes illegal violence organized by the employer and the agencies of the state kept workers on the defensive. Second, the incredible betrayal and pro-employer, pro-concessions stand of the national leadership of the UFCW undercut labour's resistance. Third, the limits inherent in the "corporate campaign" in which Green was centrally involved (he was, at the time of the strike, employed by Ray Rogers' union consulting firm, Corporate Campaign Inc.) circumscribed and contained the challenge to Hormel. Green is without question right to lay the principle blame for the defeat of the strike at the foot of boss and bureaucrat, the first two

of these three factors. He is not clear, however, on the third — the limits inherent in the corporate campaign strategy. Let us look at each of these three factors in turn.

Green shows how employers and the state acted in concert to attack the P-9 strike. The strikers at one point were picketing branches of First Bank as part of Rogers' strategy of making any corporation closely linked to Hormel suffer economically. On 23 September 1985, US District Court Judge Edward Devitt "issued a temporary injunction prohibiting any further First Bank activities." (79) In April 1986, the same judge issued an injunction "prohibiting threatening or harassing scabs by any means." (241) On 2 June, Devitt upheld the right of the anti-Hormel strike UFCW bureaucracy to place the P-9 local under trusteeship. (253) And one month later, he ruled that P-9's union hall was no longer theirs — that it was now the property of the UFCW leadership who had sabotaged the strike. (261)

The close link between state and employer did not end with the judiciary. On 13 January 1986, the company tried to reopen the struck plant. After mass pickets prevented them from doing so, Governor Rudy Perpich called in the National Guard. They, together with local police, used tear gas, mass arrests, and armoured personnel carriers to allow scabs to slowly filter into the Austin plant. Even the State Highway Patrol, "supposedly banned by law from any involvement in a labor dispute," at one point prevented P-9 strikers from keeping scabs out of the plant. (137) This, then, was the real face of "free" enterprise triumphant — an intransigent employer, with access to the courts, the cops, and the army, unencumbered in its use of any and all means to crush the P-9 strikers.

But vicious as the attacks of the employer and the state were, they could not in themselves have defeated the strike if it were not for the role of the national leadership of the UFCW. Along with the entire union leadership in the US, the

UFCW bureaucrats strongly believed that resistance to attacks on wages and jobs in the early 1980s was impossible. The 1979-82 recession had a devastating impact on US employment. In that context, under the sheltering umbrella of Reaganism, employers everywhere threatened plant closures unless their workforces agreed to wage cuts and reductions in benefits — in short, the type of concessions over which the Hormel strike was fought. And the US union bureaucracy, perhaps more than any other national union leadership, believed that not to agree to concessions would mean an inevitable loss in jobs. UFCW national leaders were enthusiastic backers of this pro-concessions policy.

In 1981, this UFCW bureaucracy decided that all Hormel locals should agree to concessions (41) to “bring lower wage operators more in line with master agreement companies” and “minimize the wave of plant closings.” (46) The response of the company was to use the money saved to finance a new \$100-million plant opened in August 1982, get rid of 2,600 of the 3,000 old-plant workers, and hire on 1,000 new workers with little or no union experience. The result was a workforce of 1,500, half the size of the 1970s, and with many of the most experienced unionists no longer employed. This done, Hormel imposed their drastic concessions package in 1984 — a 23 per cent wage and benefits cut that became the spark for the strike.

Agreeing to concessions had done nothing to save jobs. But the UFCW bureaucracy still refused to fight. Worse — at every point it actively sabotaged the P-9 strikers. Lewie Anderson, director of UFCW’s Packerhouse Division, began openly denouncing the tactics of the local as early as 1984. (26) In March 1985 UFCW president William Wynn “sent out a letter notifying all UFCW meatpacking locals that they should offer neither moral nor financial support for P-9’s ‘ill-advised’ campaign” (27) of picketing corporations with links to Hormel. And on 15

March 1986, they killed the strike. A P-9 local meeting had passed a resolution calling for unity between their local and the UFCW national leadership. Wynn “seized upon the resolution to order an end to the strike and cut off strike benefits” (200) something no one voting for the resolution had in any way intended. In May and June, the UFCW took legal steps to place the local under trusteeship. With the enthusiastic cooperation of the judiciary, it seized P-9’s assets, occupied the union hall and even went so far as to sandblast an internationalist, class struggle mural painted in support of the P-9 struggle. The betrayal was complete when they “signed a strike settlement with Hormel that gave scabs priority job rights ... And the 1,000 loyal union people were issued withdrawal cards, forcing them out of the union altogether.” (5)

Boss and bureaucrat together broke the strike. But the defeat did not go unchallenged. The best part of Green’s book is his documentation of the tremendous self-organization and self-activity of the P-9 strikers and the Austin working class, and the way in which this inspired mass working-class support across the US. Green provides pages of evidence showing that there was, in this self-activity and solidarity, the potential to beat back Hormel, setting the employer and the defeatist union leadership on their heels.

In response to the company’s attacks, spouses of the workers, “primarily wives and a few husbands,” formed the United Support Group. Two wives called a meeting in a park in September 1984, almost a year before the strike began, and 300 women and men attended. (13-4) In October 1984, the dispute captured the attention of Rogers’ Corporate Campaign. “When Rogers and his partner Ed Allen first came to town in October 1984, they were amazed ... [to find] several hundred women with signs and banners waiting outside to greet them. And rather than the anticipated fifty-odd union members, the hall was crammed with over three thousand P-9ers and family members.” (14-5)

Again and again the mass self-activity of the P-9 strikers pushed the strike forward. On 23 August 1986, one week into the strike, "a thousand strikers and supporters ... completely ringed the downtown block" containing First Bank headquarters in Minneapolis. More significant was their direct approach to other Hormel workers. Between 26 August and 31 August that year, 300 P-9 members went on a car caravan to hit every Hormel facility within driving distance. The strategy included "leafleting every home in the town, then lining up P-9ers in front of the plant, not to block entry, but to show their potential strength and to get workers as they came off shift." (63-4) At the large Hormel plant in Ottumwa, Iowa the 300 P-9ers formed two lines of pickets "along both sides of the road and extending 300 feet on each side of the plant ... The reaction was electric. Truck drivers making deliveries to the plant and others who drove by showed enthusiastic agreement with the ... P-9 signs ... From the dock at the rear of the plant workers raised clenched fists to show solidarity with the P-9 members." And after work, 80 per cent of the local's membership came down to the city park. Local executive board member Lynn Huston described the meeting.

One after another they [the Ottumwa workers] got up and talked ... A lot of them had tears in their eyes. They said we had to stick together, that it was the only way we'd get fair treatment ... Guys would say, I haven't always been a good union man, but I'm here to tell you that I've changed. About seven or eight said that they'd never been able to say the word Austin before without following it with the word assholes. They'd always wondered what Austin people looked like. Now, they said, we know that you're just like us. (68)

This was the great strength of Rogers' corporate campaign. In using a car caravan of dozens of striking workers, a powerful message of solidarity was delivered, far more direct and effective than any leaflet or newsletter. However, not all of Rogers' approach had this effect. There

were other aspects of the campaign whose long-run impact was to demobilize rather than mobilize the rank and file. At its core, the campaign was based on an assumption that the UFCW leadership would respond to reason, that management at Hormel was essentially rational, that much of the dispute at Hormel, as elsewhere, was based on misunderstanding, and that therefore the rank and file should structure the mass pressure exerted through the corporate campaign to appeal to the positive side of bureaucrats and businessmen, people who were essentially "good." Thus Rogers emphasized information pickets, consumer boycotts, and civil disobedience, as opposed to mass pickets designed to result in sympathy strikes, militant and large pickets in front of the struck plant, and self defence against the organized violence of the state. The corporate campaign was a step towards self-activity, solidarity, and the politics of class-struggle unionism. But it always stopped short, derailed by a naive trust in the good will of the powers that were confronting the strikers.

Immediately on becoming involved in the dispute, several months before the strike began, Rogers argued that Bill Wynn of the UFCW was a "reasonable man." (15) This left P-9ers who believed Rogers unprepared to deal with the real Wynn, a cynical bureaucrat who had no intention of being reasoned with, who did everything in his not inconsiderable power to wreck the strike.

Instead of using the consumer boycott as a tactic to pull supporters to the picket line — an effective and frequently used method of strike organizing — Rogers counterposed boycotts to picket lines, arguing that staffing the picket line around the Austin plant was very much a secondary activity. He argued for a "minimum number of pickets" (63) outside the Austin plant while the caravans to surrounding towns were being organized. This left the local less prepared than it might otherwise have been for a mass defence of their plant when the company, sheltered by the



armed might of several agencies of the state, began running scabs into the struck facility in January.

True, it might have made sense to "minimize" the Austin pickets if the caravans were travelling to other Hormel facilities to try to shut them down. But for months they were instructed to have information pickets only. It was only out of desperation, five months into the strike, that these changed to real picket lines, as the strikers began to realize that Hormel was determined to reopen the Austin facility with scabs.

When the information pickets were scrapped for pickets calling for solidarity and sympathy strikes, the initial result was spectacular. On 21 January 1986, 75 P-9 strikers closed Hormel's Ottumwa plant when 850 refused to cross their line. On 22 January, P-9ers had less success at two other Hormel plants. But the key was Fremont, Nebraska. If the P-9ers could shut the Hormel plant in that town, alongside the plants in Ottumwa and Austin, enough Hormel production would be affected that the company would be economically hurt. On 24 January, then, a caravan of pickets set out for Fremont to try and close the plant. "Then the executive board [of the local] flinched." They thought the attempt to shut Fremont was "too rash," that they had to show Hormel management some "good faith." By the time this decision was reached, the caravan had already set out. So they worked the phones all night to get the caravan stopped. In the months to come, many of those on the phones that night would see this as an enormous mistake.

Most cars and vans were contacted and instructed to return home. At least one van was missed. The 5 P-9ers in that van, not knowing that their executive had called off the picket, set up a line by themselves at 4:45 am on Saturday morning, in spite of the presence of 50 deputy sheriffs and the Highway Patrol. These five kept over 200 people out for 2-1/2 hours. The 200 went to the union hall instead of to work. There is no question

that had the whole caravan arrived, there is a very good chance that Fremont would have closed, and the Austin strike would have been immensely strengthened. The phones should have rung all night to build the picket, rather than call it off. But by looking to show "good faith" to the "reasonable" men of Hormel management, a magnificent opportunity was thrown away.

Green sees clearly that these events of 24 January were the key to the strike. Never again were the P-9 workers to be so close to shutting the three decisive Hormel plants simultaneously. But he does not see how this decision was linked to the logic of Rogers' whole approach. The failure to shut Fremont cannot directly be pinned on Rogers. In fact he was furious at the local executive for calling off the 24 January picket. But because the whole corporate campaign strategy was based on appealing to "reason" — exactly the argument used by the executive — Rogers must take indirect responsibility. Employers are not reasonable — they understand only the rational of profit and loss. The state is not reasonable — in a capitalist society, its only reason for involving itself in industrial disputes is in order to assist employers with their profit and loss difficulties. For strike leaders to appeal to reason serves, then, to sow illusions that management will listen to a rational argument, leaving the rank and file unprepared for the cynicism and brutality which is the essence of employer-side collective bargaining.

As an issue in the labour movement, this is a major point. There is a need to return to class-struggle unionism, a need to dispel any and all illusions which stand in the way of that return. As a criticism of this book, it is a minor point. For this account of a major strike breathes with the life of the picket line. It shows the deep humanity and heroism of ordinary workers in small-town America. It shows no mercy to a union bureaucracy ossified and corrupt in a way that is almost beyond belief. It provides powerful evidence that

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the state in capitalist society is very far from being neutral.

The lessons of Hormel are there for all to see in this first-hand account. And in spite of the defeat, these lessons need not make one pessimistic. There are only a handful of former strikers at work in the plant today — more than 1,000 were driven out by boss and bureaucrat. "Nevertheless," as one account recently reported, "in 1993, candidates from the relative handful of former strikers still in the plant won a majority on the local's executive board, and a former worker at Hormel's Ottumwa, Iowa plant, who had helped to lead a solidarity walkout of 500 workers in January 1986, was elected Local 9 secretary." So don't discard that "CRAM YOUR SPAM" t-shirt. It just may become fashionable again.

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Jo Vellacott, *From Liberal to Labour with Women's Suffrage: The Story of Catherine Marshall* (Montréal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press 1993).

THE NON-MILITANT CAMPAIGN for votes for women in England by the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies between 1907 and 1914 comprised most of the work for women's suffrage, and certainly the most effective, in the pre-World War I era. But it has received much less attention from historians than the militant and more spectacular activities of the Women's Social and Political Union. Jo Vellacott sets out to remedy this by studying Catherine Marshall, who, as a brilliant organizer and influential lobbyist in the main (male) circles of political life in the pre-War period, was one of the National Union's vital figures.

In 15 chapters that cover chronologically the period between Marshall's birth in 1880 and the outbreak of war on 4 August 1914, Vellacott uses Marshall's

life and work as a case study illuminating both women's history and mainstream political history, and breaks down the artificial barriers that have developed between them. Paying particular attention to the years from 1907, she explores the suffragists' fight to induce an all male parliament to give women the vote, Marshall's singular contribution to "The Cause," and "The Cause's" contribution to her conversion from a naive and purposeless country girl into a courageous and politically astute woman with remarkable organizational and communication skills. In the course of so doing, the author gives credit to the National Union's committed male allies, a welcome change from feminist studies that ignore the assistance of men and at times even their existence as other than enemies. Most important, she makes crucial linkages between the work of the suffragists and mainline political history. These linkages are the book's primary contribution, for they illuminate the ongoing exploration of Liberalism and Labour, the place therein of middle-class women and women's issues, and the complex cross-currents running through and between them.

Secondary themes involve the international dimension of the campaign for women's suffrage; the connection between the international women's and peace movements; the vocational opportunities suffrage work provided to otherwise under-occupied and unfulfilled middle-class women; the unusual degree of independence it provided them; and the continuing power of the repressive culture of the age to limit that independence. (Although Catherine Marshall was blessed with liberal and very supportive parents, she remained financially dependent on them and at their beck and call.)

Throughout the work the author manifests a commanding knowledge of contemporary personalities, issues, and power struggles, an awesome mastery of detail and chronology, and an enormous amount of research. She has meticulously

examined the previously unstudied papers of Catherine Marshall in the Cumbria archives, as well as numerous other archival collections, newspapers, periodicals, memoirs, and correspondence ranging from Bertrand Russell to Lloyd George, and Barbara Strachey to Labour officials, and a plethora of secondary sources. Her prose style is pleasingly clear and elegant; her selection of illustrations enlivens the narrative; and her appended biographical notes provide much needed assistance in sorting out the large case of characters. Her arguments are well balanced and convincing, and her conclusion, that it was the National Union's work that managed to make women's suffrage a respectable cause among parliamentary suffragists and brought it to the point of inevitability by 1914, is sound.

Unfortunately neither as biography nor political history does the study show particular originality or critical analysis. The narration of minute detail at times overwhelms and obscures meaning and significance. For example, despite the tremendous amount of information Vellacott collected, she does not give her readers — who are told in exhaustive and at times exhausting detail what Catherine Marshall did — a clear idea of what made her tick; and the play-by-play chronology of the National Union's activities is mostly straightforward historical narrative. While her summaries of what happened are excellent, Vellacott asks few probing questions of her material.

These criticisms notwithstanding, as a partly biographical, partly feminist, and partly political history of the Edwardian period, *From Liberal to Labour with Women's Suffrage* provides much information on the philosophy, aims, and methods of the major non-militant women's suffrage organization prior to 1914 that has not been available previously in book form. It should thus be a valuable resource for scholars working on related topics. The work is intended as Part One of a complete biography of Ca-

therine Marshall, who did not die until 1962. It is to be hoped that Dr. Vellacott completes her study.

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John Saville, *The Politics of Continuity: British Foreign Policy and the Labour Government: 1945-46* (London: Verso 1993).

THE ATTLEE GOVERNMENT was elected in July 1945, midway through the Potsdam conference which was to define the postwar political shape of Europe and the world. The new premier and his foreign secretary, Ernest Bevin, took over as British representatives from Churchill and Eden. There was no discernible shift in policy. It is a familiar story that the first majority Labour government in Britain made no gesture towards the 'socialist foreign policy' which some on the left had hoped for. The dominant influences on government perspectives were a profound anti-communism linked to an exaggerated suspicion of Russian aggressive capacity and intentions; a pro-Americanism reinforced by dependence on US economic backing; and a commitment to sustain a global military and colonialist role at odds with new geopolitical realities and with Britain's diminished economic resources. Indeed the priority of maintaining Britain's traditional position as a 'world power' imposed an economic burden which in the short term locked the government within the US embrace and in the longer term accelerated national decline.

Critics on the left were marginalized or disciplined: the cold war, in effect, provided its own justification. Yet was there really no alternative? And if the defeat of Hitler did offer a window of opportunity to a new Labour government, why was this not taken?

John Saville — at the time a young communist historian — has turned his

scholarly attentions to such issues. His detailed archival investigations — complementing parallel work in the US in recent years — puts to shame the neglect by many specialist historians of the period.

*The Politics of Continuity* is not an easy book to review: in many ways it can be regarded as a set of linked essays as much as an integrated text. The specific historical focus differs between chapters: in some cases concerned solely with the brief period indicated in the book's title; in others, ranging over the whole decade of the 1940s or indeed beyond. Thematically, too, there is an unexplicated selectivity. The British military role in Greece in suppressing the EAM/ELAS forces and reimposing the monarchist regime is discussed only in passing; so is the secret decision to build the atomic bomb. One important issue which is barely mentioned is British policy towards postwar Germany: in short, could there have been an 'Austrian solution' involving demilitarization and neutrality? This is important. Saville's position on the 'Soviet threat' is in essence that Russia was war-weary, had suffered horrific human and material damage, lacked the logistical capacity for a western offensive and was primarily concerned to protect its already extended borders. (He concedes, though, that Stalin's actual behaviour seemed calculated to reinforce suspicion in the west.) Against this background, it seems plausible that a different mode of German reconstruction might have been reciprocated by a very different post-war history east of the Oder-Neisse line. How far was such an option considered, and was there any difference in British and US perspectives?

Saville's book consists of five substantive chapters together with some brief appendices. The first, and longest, explores 'the mind of the Foreign Office.' The top civil servants were products of the pre-1914 era, to a large extent educated at Eton, and informed by the prejudices of upper-class conservatives.

Cadogan, the senior official until 1946, is revealed by his diaries as sharing the political sentiments of 'the reactionary core of Tory backwoodsmen.' His successor, Orme Sargent, suffered from 'some kind of neurotic phobia which apparently made foreign travel impossible.' Their world view was that of the 19th century when Britannia ruled the waves. Three assumptions predominated. The Soviet Union was a dangerous threat. The United States, because of its size and economic strength, would inevitably play an important role in the postwar world; but it lacked diplomatic experience, and could and should be guided by Britain. (Saville has unearthed a remarkable minute from a junior official which in a fascinating mixture of metaphors exemplifies this attitude: "They have enormous power, but it is the power of the reservoir behind the dam, which may overflow uselessly, or be run through pipes to drive turbines. The transmission of their power into useful forms, and its direction into advantageous channels, is our concern. ... if we go about our business in the right way we can help to steer this great unwieldy barge, the United States of America, into the right harbour. If we don't, it is likely to continue to wallow in the ocean, an isolated menace to navigation.") The third — and in many ways most crucial — assumption was the importance, both economic and strategic, of maintaining the British empire. The strength of nationalist sentiment, and the capacity for self-government, within much of the colonial empire were in no way comprehended. On this one issues — at least until the State Department discerned dangerous links between anti-colonialism and communism — British policy was at odds with important sentiments in the US.

From the civil servants, Saville proceeds to the minister. Bevin's role as foreign secretary has been eulogized by his biographer, Alan Bullock. Not surprisingly, Saville is more critical. Bevin shared the anti-communism of the Foreign Office, and had no sympathy with

anti-colonialism. His own trade union career had brought him close, and cordial, links with the US. On broad policy commitments, then, he was at one with his advisors. Bevin came to the Foreign Office after great success as Minister of Labour in the wartime coalition government, and with the self-confidence to match. But in the earlier position he could draw on his personal experience and comprehensive knowledge as a trade union leader; in the new role he had none of these advantages. His health was deteriorating; and the capacity which he most obviously lacked was the organization of arguments and their formulation on paper. For all these reasons, argues Saviile, on the specifics of policy he was very much the mouthpiece of his civil servants.

The third chapter reveals previously undisclosed differences between Attlee and Bevin during the early period of the Labour government. Foreign Office orthodoxy assumed that British strategic and economic interests required a (re)imposition of colonial control in the Mediterranean, in particular in the former Italian colonies of North Africa. Attlee disagreed — partly on grounds of expense, partly because the advent of air warfare made obsolete a colonial policy founded on the requirements of naval power. His memoranda provoked great alarm among the civil servants, who received Bevin's backing. Attlee himself never pressed his 'slight case of heresy' to the point of explicit disagreement with the cabinet.

A brief and somewhat discursive chapter on the interconnections between economic policy and foreign policy is followed by an account of a disgraceful and hitherto neglected aspect of British action in the aftermath of war. The corrupt and brutal French colonial rule in Vietnam gave way to wartime collaboration between a colonial regime loyal to Vichy and the Japanese occupying forces. After the Japanese surrender in 1945 a small British force was sent to disarm the occu-

pying army. But the insurgent Viet Minh was set to take over the county; and the British, anxious to bolster their own claims to resume control of their prewar colonies, made common cause with the French. Rather than disarming the Japanese — the largest force on the ground — the British command therefore used them to oust the Viet Minh from Saigon and re-impose French colonial rule — with barbaric results. Overshadowed by the somewhat analogous British role in Greece, this cynical intervention demonstrated the degree to which reactionary *Realpolitik* from the outset dictated Labour's foreign policy.

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Ronald Aminzade, *Ballots and Barricades: Class Formation and Republican Politics in France, 1830-1871* (Princeton: Princeton University Press 1993).

CATASTROPHIC MILITARY defeats in 1870 stimulated republicans in several provincial French cities to topple the imperial authorities, proclaim a republic, and institute a regime of the people, a Commune. While all of these revolutionary movements eventually foundered, Toulouse witnessed an energetic working-class rebellion in 1871; in Saint-Etienne, workers needed the cooperation of a radical bourgeoisie to make a revolution; in Rouen attempts to establish a Commune failed entirely. Why were there these differences? Was the level of industrialization in each city the crucial factor? Were workers more class conscious in some of the cities than in others? If so, why? Aminzade believes such explanations rest on faulty assumptions and are wrong-headed. They represent a reductionist way of thinking about class because they take for granted that being a worker yields a clear-cut set of interests and political strategies. Aminzade offers a new approach to class analysis which

bridges differences between materialists and culturalists and which should be intriguing to everyone. Insisting that class as a material reality is crucial to political behaviour, he revises economic determinism by making the implications of class much more complex and uncertain than ever before. His book contains both a theoretical statement about the problem of class formation in 19th-century France and a practical application. The book is compelling on both levels.

Aminzade's analysis begins with the claim that there is no *a priori* way of knowing what class interests are, for they are embedded in concrete situations, with strong elements of contingency. Moreover, rather than shaping politics in an autonomous manner, class interests are "constituted through political activity, via organizational and ideological mechanisms that link social structures ... to political behavior." (6) Though grounded in material realities, not just discourses, interests and identities are complex and unstable, in the author's view. Workers make political choices based on the range of available options, and these, in turn, define their interests. Singular events or the conjuncture of long- and short-term developments present or suppress opportunities, and workers respond accordingly to these concrete developments. In short, Aminzade's theoretical position leaves no room for what "should have been" in labour history, and for that very reason, he is proposing a new kind of labour history.

Aminzade seeks to justify his abstract ideas about class by presenting comparative case studies of working-class formation in Toulouse, Saint-Etienne, and Rouen. In the first of these cities, workers grew as a class in the context of strong Legitimist and liberal republican movements. A working-class insurrection in 1834 radicalized Stéphenois republicanism and ensured continued cooperation between socialists and radicals. By contrast, early workers' violence in the Norman capital polarized class relations and made bourgeois leaders lean to lib-

eralism, isolating the workers. Aminzade's detailed narratives point to the crucial role that timing, fortuitous national events, and even personality played in setting the direction for party development. The comparative histories leave little room for assuming that shop floor developments predetermined the lines of worker defense.

Conventional class analysis would probably explain the differences by resorting to a language of "consciousness." If Toulousan workers were more active than the Rouennais, it was because they had a higher level of class consciousness and, therefore, could act with more force and unity. Without explicitly discussing the problem of consciousness, Aminzade puts aside this sort of explanation. He does not see it as relevant because workers based their political behaviour on the opportunities available to them at any particular moment. This could entail alliance with a radical bourgeoisie at one time and autonomous action at another. Indeed, the author has no trouble showing the absence of a close link between levels of industrialization and working-class political activity. He also demonstrates that, in some instances, autonomous working-class parties were not at all a sign of strength, but rather of marginality. What this implies to him is that consciousness is determined by the interests and opportunities available to workers.

While the case studies give the ambitious theoretical claims plausibility, this mode of class analysis is bound to remain controversial and even unsatisfactory to economic determinists. Class, as Aminzade uses it, is no longer a simplifying concept which cuts through complexity and shows what is "really" happening. Suddenly, all categories become problematic and contingent. Marxists will wonder whether there is an element of circularity in Aminzade's thinking. If workers did not build parties of their own, based on a revolutionary overthrow of capitalism, was it because they lacked the capacity or because circumstances did not make

it reasonable to strive in that direction. By throwing out the category of consciousness, Aminzade brings in the assumption that what workers did was a rational response to the available opportunities. Perhaps social scientists are on safest ground in making this assumption, but it does discourage asking about the paths not taken.

*Ballots and Barricades* is an important and original book. Students of politics will have to grapple with its rich implications. Possibly, it will launch a new sort of labour history. It certainly marks an important moment of revisionism in the field.

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Gilbert Badia, *Clara Zetkin: Feministe Sans Frontieres* (Paris: Les Editions Ouvrieres 1993).

GILBERT BADIA's delightfully written and jargon-free biography of Clara Zetkin is the most recent addition to a body of work thus far available mainly in German and English. Unlike earlier biographers, who were denied access to papers held in East Berlin, Badia was permitted in 1991 to see hundreds of previously unavailable letters written by Zetkin. This has shed new light on her last 15 years, and challenged previously held assumptions about her relationship to those years both to Stalin and the International. In particular, Badia has revised the depiction of Zetkin in the magisterial 500-page biography written by Louise Dornemann in 1974 by pointing out that in these letters a great deal of opposition to the pro-Stalinist direction taken by the *Kommunistische Partei Deutschlands* (KPD) emerges, a fact that Dornemann ignores. What is unclear in this criticism, however, is whether Dornemann was genuinely unaware of Zetkin's analysis because of missing documentation, or whether she chose to ignore any materials that contradict her

portrait of Zetkin as largely compliant with the Soviet line after 1928.

The historical debates about Zetkin's feminism seem to interest Badia relatively little; nor do questions raised by the exercise of the biographer's craft and the immense power of the living to construct and reconstruct the dead enter into what is a straightforward narrative of her life and attitudes on major question facing the socialist and communist movements during her lifetime. "*Qui dit biographie dit chronologie*" is his approach, and the book proceeds in just that fashion. The bibliography also neglects some major German secondary sources, such as works by Karin Bauer and Joan Reutershan, published in 1978 and 1985 respectively.

Overall, the work serves as a good introduction to the life and work of Clara Zetkin, and despite a certain element of "heroine worship" it remains a solid and readable introduction for the non-specialist to this remarkable woman.

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Eduard M. Dune, *Notes of a Red Guard*, trans. and ed. by Diane P. Koenker and S.A. Smith (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press 1993).

AT ONE POINT early in his memoir, Eduard M. Dune asks himself, "Am I idealizing the past, like all old men?" (15) His fascinating account of the Russian Revolution and Civil War was written more than 30 years after the events by what we would more generously call "a middle-aged man" in his early 50s. Rather than idealizing, Dune in fact writes vividly and frankly of his experiences as a factory worker, Red Guardsman, Communist, and prisoner-of-war held by the Whites. A Latvian, born in Riga, Dune was evacuated with his parents to Moscow during World War I and there became a worker in the same factory as his father. A fellow worker from a printshop opened

the road to the socialist movement by passing along Lily Braun's *Diary of a Socialist* which, in conjunction with subsequent readings of Engels and others, offered an interpretive matrix through which the young Dune gave new meaning to his childhood and young adult experiences. Dune soon met the Social Democrat Timofei Sapronov, who proved to be his life-long friend and political mentor. He took up arms in 1917 and fought in the south of Russia and Daghestan during the civil war.

Dune is particularly interesting when he leads the reader through the confusion of the civil war campaigns. In an unforgettable scene he describes his capture by Greens (peasant rebels), who turned him over to the Whites. As the Cossack commandant reviewed the prisoners, he arbitrarily selected those to be shot, pulling from the ranks people he suspected of being commissars or Jews. The memoir ends in 1921 with the author in the mountains of the North Caucasus receiving distant echoes of the post-revolutionary politics of the new regime. The idealism and humanism that characterized people like Dune during the revolutionary years was overwhelmed by the tougher and more pragmatic currents in Bolshevik political culture and practice, and Dune eventually fell afoul of the authoritarians who controlled party and state. He joined the opposition in the Communist Party, was expelled, arrested, and exiled to Siberia. During World War II he returned to his family briefly, but was then separated from them, captured by the Germans, and deported to France. There he wrote his reminiscences and sold them to interested journals and scholars in order to live. He died in 1953 without ever learning that his wife and son had survived the war and the Stalin years. One of the editors of this volume, Diane Koenker, met Vladimir Dune while preparing his father's memoir for publication.

With a first-rate introduction and excellent notes by Koenker and Smith, two of the most insightful historians writing

on the revolution, this memoir, long buried in the Hoover Institution archives, is a wonderful supplement to the monographs that have deepened our knowledge of the revolution in the last several decades. The volume has been prepared in such a way as to be not only informative for the specialist, but particularly useful for adoption in college-level courses. At a time when the images of the Russian Revolution are being darkened in light of its consequences, Dune's story will remind readers of the profoundly emancipatory impulses that led young men and women into battle against earlier tyrannies.

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Raelene Frances, *The Politics of Work: Gender and Labour in Victoria, 1880-1939* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1993).

SINCE THE PUBLICATION of Harry Braverman's important 1974 study of capitalist labour processes labour historians have been interested in workers' responses to changes in work processes and how "skill" has been socially constructed. Feminist critiques of Braverman's argument have illuminated the ways in which gender inequalities shaped work processes and definitions of skilled work. These writings have done much to explain why women occupy lesser-paying, lower-status jobs in the wage labour force. Raelene Frances' *The Politics of Work* is a contribution to the growing body of literature which argues that gender is crucial to understanding transformations in work processes.

Frances focuses on three industries, namely, clothing, boot and shoe, and printing in the state of Victoria during a formative period of manufacturing growth in Australia between 1880 and World War II. Victoria was at the forefront of the early development of the nation's manufacturing industries. Al-



though New South Wales eventually overtook it in terms of total manufacturing output in the 1890s, Victoria remained the leading employer of female labour and an important centre for the production of clothing and footwear.

The book is divided into three broad sections defined by the level of state involvement in wage-fixing. Part one considers each of the three industries during the period before the establishment of the wages board system following the passage of the Shops and Factories Act in 1896. The state wages boards were comprised of five representatives each from the employers and workers and an "independent" chair, usually a police magistrate or a formal civil servant. They were organized to regulate wages in the sweated trades. Part two embraces the era of state wage-fixing between roughly 1896 and the end of World War I. In part three the period of federal wage-fixing under the Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration is examined. Whereas the object of the wages boards was to prevent sweating, the intent of the federal arbitration court was to preserve industrial peace. Using in-depth case studies of each of the three industries, Frances examines how "the structure of work arose out of the interplay between product and labour markets, capital supply, technology, racial and gender orders and the activities of the state." (11)

The complexities of industrial transformation and the diversity of workers' experiences are well-illustrated by the author in her case studies of the three industries. Within the state's clothing industry several structural factors were singled-out as primary determinants affecting the nature of work processes, notably the limited colonial market, a chronic shortage of capital, the suitability of clothing manufacture for home production, and the gender division of labour. The organization of the late 19th-century clothing industry was heavily influenced by the sexual division of labour in the home whereby men were defined as the

family breadwinners and women as dependent housekeepers and child-bearers. Already socially defined as women's work, much of the stitching work in the clothing industry was carried out by women homeworkers. Gender inequalities also functioned to keep the wages of women down and curtailed union organization and worker militancy. Within the tailoring trades, a traditionally male sector, tailors successfully protected their position of gender privilege as skilled workmen. The growth of the "slop trade" in ready-made garments in the 1870s, accompanied by an expansion of factory production, provided the structural preconditions for the organization of the Tailoresses' Union in 1882 in the midst of a strike by tailoresses over wage-cuts. While the 1896 legislation established piece rates slightly higher than weekly wage rates, overall the wages board system provided little protection for women workers. Similarly, Frances suggests, the federal arbitration courts merely reinforced existing trends in the trade and little headway was made in regulating women's outwork.

In contrast to the clothing industry, the actions of organized male workers in the boot and shoe trade played an important role in precipitating the mechanization and fragmentation of the labour process. Previous to the widespread introduction of specialized machinery into the Victorian boot and shoe factories in the early 1890s, male workers possessed a defined "skill" in the trade and enjoyed a high degree of independence in the workplace. In Chapter two Frances explains how the workplace control of male shoemakers rapidly eroded in the 1890s under the combined effects of economic depression, mechanization, further subdivision of production processes, and the substitution of weekly wages for piece rates. Fuelled by the growth of wholesaling and a demand for mass-produced products, manufacturers sought to reduce labour costs by intensifying production. The result of the mechanization of the

production process in the 1890s was the replacement of hundreds of male craftsmen with male machine operatives. Employer-worker hostilities after 1896 centred around the meeting of the wages boards. The fixing of a minimum wage sounded the final death-knell of the piece work system and encouraged the intensive mechanization of the production process. Male unionists, furthermore, looking to protect their own interests in the trade ignored the concerns of women workers.

The third industry considered in the book is the printing industry. Traditionally a male domain, women seeking employment in the printing trades during the 1880s and 1890s were restricted to a narrow range of occupations, namely folding, sewing, collating and gluing in bookbinding and stationary manufacture. How male bookbinders successfully resisted attempts by employers to have machine case-making classified as "unskilled" women's work is discussed in Chapter three. The successful appropriation of machine typesetting by male typographical unionists for their male membership during the 1890s is also considered in the chapter. Both the wages boards and the federal courts of arbitration reinforced long-standing divisions between men's and women's work in the printing trades.

Frances argues convincingly that labour and product markets, technology, the supply of capital, and gender and class relations all affected transformations in the labour process in the three industries in trade-specific ways. At times, however, she tends to fall into a kind of "structural determinism," and less of the actual experiences of the workingmen and workingwomen of Victoria comes through to the reader. I would have liked to have heard the voices of Victoria's workers more often. Also, somewhat surprising given the organization of the book, state and federal wage boards and the courts of arbitration appear to be of comparatively lesser significance to changes in the labour process and gender definitions of

skill. Despite these criticisms, *The Politics of Work* does much to explain how "skill" has been gendered historically and how women have come to occupy an inferior position in the capitalist labour market.

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Walton Look Lai, *Indentured Labor, Caribbean Sugar: Chinese and Indian Migrants to the British West Indies, 1838-1918* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press 1993).

GENERALIZATIONS about migration to the Americas before the 20th century usually focus on the North American mainland, and have European free migrants and African slaves arriving concurrently before 1800 — with the huddled European masses swamping all thereafter. The reality is quite different. First, post-Columbian immigration to the Americas changed from mainly free to mainly indentured servants in the 16th and 17th centuries. Thereafter, African slaves quickly became numerically overwhelming until well into the 19th century, but even when European free labour emerged as the largest branch, Asian indentured labour was crucial in some regions. Free migration dominates the literature, but not the pre mid-19th century historical reality. Second and more important, the North American mainland was something of a backwater in relative terms before the 1830s. By far the greatest number of migrants before 1840 went to the Caribbean — mainly the offshore Americas — rather than the mainland. As the dominant reception zone for two centuries, the Caribbean received mainly indentured Europeans before the late 17th century, followed by millions of African slaves, and then, after 1850, indentured or contract labour from various parts of Asia. William Look Lai's book is about the last — and often forgotten — of these three distinct phases.

Of course, for many historians these categories of migrants appear artificial. If those thrown on to the labour market could be described as wage slaves — a term making a strong comeback in the post-slavery literature — then how much closer to chattel slavery was indentured labour? Hence the title of the standard work on Asian contract labour in the West Indies, published 20 years ago, is *A New System of Slavery* (Hugh Tinker). Yet surely no one but academics truly believe in this tendency to lump all labour regimes together under the nomenclature of the most severe. The historical figures themselves, slaves, wage earners, and contract workers, were as acutely aware of, and shaped by, these different categories as the elite that organized long-distance migration. Lai's book presents a clear-headed overview of the contract system, yet in the end fully recognizes the differences between on the one hand the traffic in long-distance contract labour and the labour regime it supported, and on the other, their slave and free labour counterparts. More, where many authors see only social injustice and unrelieved exploitation, Lai is prepared to search for paradox. Clearly, many migrants eventually increased control over their lives by leaving Asia, and the traffic itself was abolished against the wishes of the Indian communities in Trinidad and British Guiana.

Lai aims for comprehensive coverage of his subject. He begins with an intriguing, and all too brief chapter on the Indian and Chinese background to the traffic, and a particularly useful examination of the contracts themselves, which are depicted as civil contracts, backed up explicitly by criminal law sanctions. Lai interprets this as an exceptional, hybrid response to a post-emancipation labour supply crisis that incorporated aspects of wage and slave regimes. But Robert Steinfeld's recent book, *The Invention of Free Labor* (not cited here), shows the strong English and American precedents for this arrangement. The bulk of the book

is centred on the Americas and examines behaviour of the migrants themselves, particularly in Trinidad and British Guiana. The fate of the migrants and the evolution of the communities they established received particular attention. There is surprising new information on return flows (especially to India) and reindentures. Lai makes clear that, as with the slave trade itself, the contract labour traffic did not fade away in any economic sense; it was legislated out of existence by outsiders — in this case, in response to the nascent nationalist movement in India, rather than metropolitan reformers.

The book's weaknesses do not appear to be crippling. There is a tendency to lose sight of broader global trends, and comparisons are limited to Chinese and Indians. The economic component is not as prominent as it need to be, though for many readers this is no doubt a recommendation rather than a criticism. Finally, I am somewhat surprised at the lack of citations to the original Colonial Office documents. References to the Parliamentary Papers outnumber those to the CO series by about twenty to one. Even allowing for 19th-century British officialdoms tendency to publish everything to do with migration, such a ratio suggests that still another layer of the story remains to be explored. Nevertheless, this book will, I hope, become accepted as the new standard treatment of the subject.

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Eero Loone, *Soviet Marxism and Analytical Philosophies of History* (London: Verso 1992).

THIS WORK, by a distinguished Estonian philosopher, attempts to define a role for the philosophy of history in Marxist theory. The main body of the text was composed in the late 1970s and published in Russian in 1980. It appears here, in Brian

Pearce's translation, together with a post-script written in 1989.

The book opens with a discussion of the nature and purpose of the philosophy of history itself. Stressing the diverse ways in which the discipline has been understood, Loone charts its development from Hegel's idea of a universal history of mankind to Collingwood's study of the nature of historical knowledge. Like Collingwood, who he evidently admires, Loone's own conception of the discipline is primarily epistemological: philosophy of history concerns itself with how historians cognize the world. But unlike Collingwood, who "belonged to the party of philosophical idealists," (31) Loone's approach is materialist and scientific in aspiration. He rejects not only speculative Hegelian visions of history, but all attempts to argue that historical enquiry involves modes of explanation that are qualitatively different from science. He thus downplays the significance of historical narrative and rejects outright the supposed distinction between the *Geistes-* and *Naturwissenschaften*. Marxism, he insists, upholds the unity of science as a single body of knowledge which includes history.

Loone offers a hierarchical conception of historical knowledge. At the reconstructive level, historians draw on sources to sketch a map of the past, describing it "as we should have observed it if we had lived at that time." (69) Such reconstructions form the basis of empirical investigations which identify historical phenomena and establish regularities, enabling historians to form concepts which figure in explanations. These explanations are given by theories, which represent the highest level of historical cognition. Though this tripartite account recalls the distinction between "everyday," "empirical," and "theoretical" knowledge common in Soviet epistemology, it is to a Western philosopher, Carl Hempel, that Loone turns for his view of the scientific status of historical explanation, adopting Hempel's celebrated (if now dated) "hy-

pothetico-deductive" model. If historians seek knowledge, Loone argues, they must establish laws entailing predictions which, if correct, confirm the law and the theory in which the laws figures. While Loone claims — remarkably — that "at the reconstructive level everything of major importance has already been done as far as European history is concerned," (74) he maintains that genuine historical theories are few. He thus proceeds to an examination of one of this rare breed: the Marxist theory of socio-economic formations. Here Loone is concerned not so much to evaluate the theory as to explore its conceptual structure and to consider ways it may be developed while remaining compatible with Marxism.

While readers will admire the clarity of Loone's presentation and his familiarity with Western sources, they are unlikely to find his position particularly innovative or illuminating. He shows little feel for the interpretative dimensions of historical research and the distinction between reconstruction and explanation is strikingly naive. Moreover, too many big issues receive scant attention. There is not much discussion, for example, of exactly how economic factors have a determining influence in history, or of how the notion of a historical "law" is to be understood.

Yet despite these weaknesses the book is not without interest. It is important to remember that it was originally written for a Soviet audience in the Brezhnev era and as such it has a pronounced sub-text. Loone's concern to establish philosophy of history as a genuine discipline, his hostility to speculative theorizing and commitment to rigorous analysis all stand as challenges to the Soviet establishment to replace shoddy ideology with a critical intellectual culture. In this, Loone's approach is representative of those Western-looking Soviet philosophers who sought to rationalize Soviet Marxism by shrugging off the influence of Hegel, establishing a principled distinction between "normative" and "factual" questions, and adopting the methods

of natural science as the model of serious theorizing.

Recognizing this sub-text does not redeem the work entirely. On the contrary, it helps reveal the book's fundamental flaw. For when Loone himself is doing history, he lapses into precisely the speculative, unsubstantiated posturing he is supposedly attacking. For example, Loone asserts that theories which deny the existence of historical laws were fostered and nurtured by the Western European bourgeoisie because they "feared instinctively any study of the laws of social development." (24) We are further told that, by the mid 20th century, "the forces of socialism had grown to such an extent ... that the bourgeoisie was ready to tolerate and support any non-Marxist worldview" and that "this situation gave rise to analytic philosophy." (25) Loone fails to support these contentious claims with evidence of any kind. It may be, of course, that he included such passages in order to appear faithful to a worldview of the Soviet establishment; throughout the main text, he is anxious to protect himself from criticism by representing his position as orthodox. Nevertheless, the presence of such poor history in a book devoted to upholding high standards of historical research undermines the integrity of the text. By protecting himself this way, Loone contributes to the problem rather than its solution.

The 1989 postscript finds Loone more openly critical of the Soviet Union and its ideology. This piece, which originally appeared in *Soviet Studies*, represents a typical contribution to Soviet debates about the fate of Marxism that became so common under glasnost (see *Studies in East European Thought*, I, 1993). He argues that the USSR is not even a distorted form of socialism, but either a mixture of slavery and feudalism or a distinctive socio-economic formation in its own right. Thus, the widely acknowledged tension between the forces and relations of production in the Soviet Union presages not a transformation within a single

socio-economic formation, but a transition between formations. Such a transformation, Loone far-sightedly argues, cannot proceed without a fundamental change in the role of the CPSU. As for Marxism itself, Loone suggests that it has failed both as a secular religion and a speculative theory of history. The notion of a centrally planned economy has been discredited and, Loone curiously argues, egalitarianism must be rejected as "a feudal idea." (229) He maintains, however, that Marxian concepts still have significant explanatory potential, despite the fact that Marxism's lack of sophisticated theories of political institutions and ethnic identity is an obstacle to perestroika.

Though flawed as an exercise in the philosophy of history, *Soviet Marxism and Analytical Philosophies of History* has much to teach us about the nature of the Soviet intellectual climate and its relevance to the political scene. It also shows Professor Loone to be a thinker of stature. His analysis of the present situation in the "former Soviet Union" would no doubt be interesting to hear and it is to be hoped that more of his writings will become available to Western audiences.

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Nelson W. Keith and Novella Z. Keith,  
*The Social origins of Democratic Socialism in Jamaica* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press 1992).

THIS BOOK fills a gap in the literature pertaining to the Manley era in Jamaican politics. In the studies that have appeared since 1972 when Michael Manley embarked on the path of democratic socialism, much more attention has been paid to external and third party influences on the Manley government than on its own internal dynamics and assumptions. Apart from the critiques offered by the Jamaican left, and particularly by the Workers' Party of Jamaica, no sustained

account focusing on the peculiarities of national class formation, and the People's National Party (PNP) place in it, has been offered to explain what happened in those years and why.

And yet, few political developments in Jamaican history are as startling as the reversal of the PNP, and of Michael Manley himself, from the radical postures of the 1970s to the much more conservative stance of the 1980s and 1990. Michael Manley himself significantly contributed to the bibliography of the period with three notable publications which caught the essence of the adversarial and combative position of the PNP in the period 1972-1980. His books, *The Politics of Change* (1974), *Jamaica: Struggle in the Periphery* (1982) and *Up the Down Escalator* (1987), reflected the outlook of a radical Third World politician on the frontline of the struggle for change against the historical legacy of colonial domination, dispossession, under-development and what another noted Jamaican, George Beckford, had adequately described as a state of persistent poverty. Secondhand accounts did the same: Michael Kaufman's *Jamaica under Manley: Dilemmas of Socialism and Democracy* is one useful example of the genre.

These interpretations were neither erroneous nor inaccurate; but they were incomplete. It is well understood that the political history of Jamaica in the last two decades can not be understood outside the framework of Cold War conflicts and rivalries, sharpened by the turbulent events of Caribbean affairs in the period 1968 to 1983, from the Rodney riots down to the Grenada revolution and its demise. At the same time, though, a deeper understanding of Jamaican political strife in the period concerned, and of its outcome, requires an analysis of the activities of the major players, as well as their declarations. It is in explaining this counterpoint between rhetoric and reality, between words and deeds, that the book finds its greatest strength.

This is not to say that the authors are unequivocally successful in their attempt at a fuller analysis of the period. Their crucial submission turns upon two specific propositions. First, they argue that democratic socialism, Jamaica style, was a badly flawed concept from its inception, in part because the definition of democratic socialism was much more aimed at disarming and incorporating critical social sectors running the range of traditional Christians to Rastafarians to "patriotic" businessmen to workers than with offering a reliably rigorous definition of the term which would translate into specific and consistent policies and initiatives.

Second, they affirm the unchanging character of the PNP which remained more the party that the older Manley, Norman, had created and less the vehicle for radical change that the younger Manley, Michael, yearned to possess. The stamp of 1938 weighed heavily on the party of the 1970s and 1980s, as did the conservative influence of "old hands" within it. Enlightened, democratic, liberal and populist, the party's dominant ideological position was "Manleyism" defined as an essentially centrist construct committed to:

the global radical tradition while managing to remain faithful to capitalism ... [occupying] the contradictory positions of pillar of capitalism and haven of radical tenets and practices that are inimical to the capitalist mode of production ... [possessed] of a blend of political philosophy and economics whose strongest suit was perhaps the ability to offer realistic promises, generate political progressivism through the advocacy of the common good, and thereby contain the forces of discontent kept alive by a long and seemingly unending tradition of want. (109)

I should have said, though, that "populist" was my word, not the authors'. Their word would be "populist." The distinction is at the heart of their enquiry into the Jamaican problematic. National populism is defined as "a model of interpretation that explains the socio-political correlates of a crisis in capital accumulation." It is a device resorted to, argue

the authors, by Third World leaders who opportunistically align themselves with radical social theories, for example, socialism, egalitarianism and anti-imperialism "though everything else about them stands in stark contrast" (reviewer's italics) to their articulation of those views. Such alignments have produced, the authors remind us, "Kenyatta in Kenya, Forbes Burnham and cooperative socialism in Guyana, and many others." (28) Further, national populism aims at some re-distribution of the social product; but it avoids the formal empowerment of the subordinate, popular elements through formal institutions like unions and peasant organizations.

Simply put, the PNP of the period 1972-1980 was not populist, but populist; or, to say it another way, it was populist from above, not from below, often in response to theoretical and ideological challenges launched from the Marxist left and, less often, by its own increasingly alienated left-wing. To which, of course, must be added the external seduction offered to its main players by the opportunities provided on the global stage for vocalizing the rhetoric of change and renewal.

The explanation of what has happened in Jamaica since 1980 is, of course, more complex than this theory affords. The Jamaica Labour Party (JLP) interregnum, the debacle in Grenada, the popularizing of conservative, market-oriented social and economic policies in the Reagan-Thatcher years, the collapse of socialism in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, are all part of the explanation of the great reversal in Jamaica. What the book does, however, is to suggest that even without these developments the internal dynamics would very probably have led to the same conclusion because of the ideological confusion within, and the fundamentally conservative position of the principal agent for change, namely, the People's National Party.

It is a view that finds many supporters inside and outside of Jamaica. Yet is can-

not be the whole view. As the authors themselves argue, the ascendancy of the PNP in historical perspective, and of the middle-class entrepreneurs who support it, has been at the expense of the genuinely popular and lower class sectors and their organizations. It is fanciful to believe that these sectors will be permanently reconciled to an acceptance of "the tradition of want," the "persistent poverty" to which generations of PNP and JLP politics have sentenced them.

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Baruch Hirson and Lorraine Vivian, *Strike Across the Empire: The Seamen's Strike of 1925 in Britain, South Africa and Australasia* (London: Clio Publications 1992).

FROM TIME TO TIME, an event of potentially great significance is, for one reason or another, ignored by historians. This is no less true of labour history than of other branches of the discipline, and many a vital moment in the history of class struggle has, for want of attention, remained lost from our collective memory. Baruch Hirson and Lorraine Vivian unearth such a "forgotten" occurrence, one which may force revisions in the historiography of labour in Britain and its late Empire. The strike in question, which spread beyond the United Kingdom to the self-governing dominions of South Africa, Australia, and New Zealand, has gone almost entirely unmentioned in histories of the British labour movement. Its absence is, according to Hirson and Vivian, nothing less than astounding, particularly given the role played by union bureaucrats in the strike, the significance of the "race" question in shaping its trajectory, its "international" dimension, and its proximity to the unsuccessful General Strike of 1926.

As described by Hirson and Vivian, the 1925 strike was largely a spontaneous

action undertaken by the rank and file of British seamen. Indeed, it was directed not only against a powerful cartel of shipowners but against the upper echelons of Britain's largest seafarer's organization, the National Sailors and Firemen's Union (NSFU), presided over by the jingoistic, red-baiting J. Havelock Wilson. As head of this archetypical "company union," Wilson in August 1925 unilaterally offered employers a 10 per cent wage reduction without consulting the union membership, sparking a walkout by thousands of seamen. Their strike was unsuccessful, however, receiving little or no support from any established working-class organization. Most notably, the Trades Union Congress remained aloof from the struggle, rejecting any attempt at solidarity with the striking seamen. This, as Hirson and Vivian note, would have dire consequences a year later, when the NSFU would play a pivotal part in defeating the General Strike. Moreover, the authors suggest in their preface that the 1925 strike may have been "provoked in order to undermine the seamen before the main action was played out." (ii) While they admit being unable to confirm this speculation, it is nevertheless intriguing, and poses a clear challenge to other historians.

The seamen's strike also provides labour history with a much-sought-after rarity: a working-class action which managed to cross national boundaries. Although still technically within the Empire, South African and the Australasian dominions were effectively autonomous states by the 1920s, and their labour movements had few connections to that of the "Mother Country." In examining the course of the strike in each country, Hirson and Vivian bring to light both commonalities and divergences in the experiences of seamen in these different national contexts. The strike, for instance, though it began in Britain, was both more widespread and longer-lived in the dominions. It was also in the dominions that the strike's racial aspect was most pronounced. Both shipowners and union

bureaucrats played upon white seamen's fears that their jobs might be lost to lower-paid "Lascar" (Indian) and Chinese sailors in defusing the rank and file walkout. Scattered attempts at cross-racial solidarity, meanwhile, were ineffective in overcoming the racist attitudes which pervaded the British Empire.

Despite its importance in bringing to light a vital moment in labour history, this treatment is not without its shortcomings. First, while Havelock Wilson is the central character in Hirson's and Vivian's account the NSFU president remains something of an enigma. As a vocal and indeed violent opponent of the strike, he is portrayed in stark terms throughout. A loyal collaborator with employers through the mechanism of the National Maritime Board, Wilson emerges, quite rightly, as the villain of the piece. Yet Wilson had not always been such. Though always an opponent of socialism, he was, at least until 1911, a militant organizer and a thorn in the side of shipowners, a fact noted by Hirson and Vivian. Nevertheless, his conversion to a right-wing, almost fascist, demagogue receives only a cursory treatment in their account. This is unfortunate, since Wilson's, while an extreme case, was not an isolated one. John Burns, Ramsay MacDonald, and Ernest Bevin, to name but a few, were transformed over time from militant radicals to "respectable" collaborators with the ruling classes. A more in-depth analysis of Wilson's political background would not only throw more light on this general phenomenon, but would assist in explaining his endurance in the face of a rank and file revolt.

Hirson's and Vivian's treatment of the question of racism in shaping the course of the strike is similarly lacking in analytical depth. This is especially curious given the large and growing body of theoretical work on the relationship between race and class, and in particular on the language of racism and colonialism. Their failure to bring such analysis to bear upon the racial attitudes of white seamen



leaves race as a "given" and, at times, results in important inconsistencies. Early on, for instance, the authors condemn as "absurd" an allegation that Asian seamen were "much cheaper than white men [and would] live anywhere, and anyhow on the meanest fare imaginable — curry and rice, for instance ...." (38) Later in their account, however, they endorse another writer's "courageous" assertion that "because the subsistence level of the Lascar was so low ... his wages were kept down." (76) Yet, aside from the obviously pejorative tone of the first statement, both passages refer to the same phenomenon: that employers could, and did, pay Asian workers less than they did Europeans. Hirson and Vivian ultimately do little to enlighten us as to why this was so, or why those who sought to achieve inter-racial solidarity found their efforts frustrated. An understanding of the role played by racism in the 1925 strike would benefit greatly from closer attention to the mechanics of a racially structured work force, as well as to the centrality of the concept of race within the context of British discourse on class relations.

These criticisms aside, Hirson and Vivian have produced a stimulating and valuable study of a little-known event, which succeeds throughout in bringing to life the voices of those on both sides of the dispute while not shrinking from placing blame where they believe it is deserved. Despite its brevity, clocking in at a mere 94 pages, their book represents a prodigious effort of combing through the newspapers of four countries, with little other primary or secondary work for guidance. Without question, the 1925 strike requires more work, particularly in integrating it into the broader scope of British labour history. In the meantime, *Strike Across the Empire* will remain essential reading for those interested in the history of the working classes of Britain and the dominions.

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Jonathan Crush and Charles Ambler, eds., *Liquor and Labor in Southern Africa* (Athens: Ohio University Press and Pietermaritzburg: University of Natal Press 1992).

JONATHAN CRUSH and Charles Ambler have brought together the most thorough and wide-ranging collection of carefully-researched essays to date on the importance of alcohol in the social and labour history of southern Africa. These essays are primarily case studies where each of the twelve contributors focuses on some aspect of the complex relationship between liquor and labour within a particular time-place setting. This fifteen-chapter volume includes contributions from a diverse group of academics, drawn mainly from history, sociology, and geography, thus fulfilling an important objective of stimulating collaboration across disciplines and bringing a variety of voices into scholarly discourse. While some focus on earlier periods, the bulk of these essays concentrate on the period from the 1930s through the 1950s. The geographical distribution of these studies is impressive. Most are primarily situated in South Africa proper, although the Northern Rhodesia Copperbelt, Salisbury, Swaziland, and Botswana are also included. This provocative volume accomplishes more than simply informing the scholarly debate: it also promises to stimulate new historical scholarship on the importance of alcohol in the social and labour history of southern Africa.

As Jonathan Crush and Charles Ambler point out in their excellent introductory essay, the volume aims to "explore the complex relationship between alcohol use and the emergence in southern Africa of a modern urban-industrial system, based on mining and the exploitation of migrant labor." (2) Despite the prominence of alcohol production and consumption in descriptions of southern African social life, this subject has received little systematic scholarly attention. What becomes readily apparent from the intro-

duction is that studying the historical context of liquor offers a unique opportunity to discuss broader patterns of change and resistance in southern Africa history.

With one or two exceptions, liquor is the central organizing principle of each of these essays. Yet what emerges is less a single causal chain connecting liquor with labour than a complex mosaic where liquor — its manufacture, its consumption, and multiple socio-cultural meanings — becomes a site of struggle in its own right. On balance, the essays oscillate between two polar positions: on the one side, some tend to treat the manufacture and sale of strong drink as a capitalist plot to ensure a docile labour force and as a ready mechanism to increase state revenues; on the other side, there are those who regard clandestine manufacture of backyard alcohol and its place in social life as a form of resistance to colonizing power and domination. There is a creative tension here, and the various contributors demonstrate with great clarity that these are not contradictory positions, but that the understanding of liquor and class varies in accordance with the vantage point from where this complex relationship is observed. Crush and Ambler capture this fundamental ambiguity in their Introduction. "Those in power saw alcohol as a source of revenue and profit and as an effective tool of social engineering and control," the editors suggest, "but they often viewed drink also as a dangerous source of disorder, indiscipline, social deterioration, and human degradation." (2)

Because the contributors to the volume do not share a common point of departure, the essays focus on widely different aspects of the liquor question. In his carefully argued study of the municipal beer monopoly in Durban, Paul la Hausse documents how the so-called "Durban system" became a "model for the control and exploitation of Africans living and working in South African towns" and how this model was exported to other parts of the British overseas Empire. (79, 105)

This theme of social control is echoed in the essays by Richard Parry on Salisbury, Ruth Edgecombe on the Natal Coal Mines, Sean Redding on Umtata, Charles Ambler on the Copperbelt, Jonathan Crush on Havelock (Swaziland), and Pamela Scully on the Western Cape. What emerges from these studies is a common conclusion — namely that the state authorities were unable to unilaterally impose their will and to use alcohol as a tool of manipulation as they would have liked.

The resistance of common people to state alcohol policy is a powerful theme that runs throughout all the essays, and some contributors do an excellent job in placing it at the centre of their analyses. For example, in taking women-organized beer protests in the Natal countryside in 1929 as her starting point, Helen Bradford — in what I think is the most strikingly unique and best argued piece in the volume — is able to show how men and women experienced capitalist penetration of the countryside differently and hence responded in ways shaped by gender relations and patriarchy. Similarly, in adopting a 'moral economy' frame of reference, Dunbar Moodie is able to demonstrate how illicit brewing and illegal drinking on the South African gold mines "helped support ethnic solidarities sustaining resistance to proletarianization." (163)

Some of the essays in the volume address the problems of liquor and labour from what appear to be rather odd vantage points. While his essay does not focus primarily upon the conjoined issues of alcohol consumption in any detail, Phil Bonner provides an excellent study of "disorderly" urbanization on the East Rand. In a similar vein, Patrick McAllister emphasizes the cultural meanings of beer drinking and brewing rituals in a detailed investigation of the Xhosa inhabitants of Willowvale district, Transkei. The emphasis on the importance of social geography in Christian Rogerson's essay on the removal of beerhalls close to Johannesburg's central business district

in the early 1960s gives location the close attention that is missing in other studies. In Steven Haggblade's careful study of Botswana, we learn that, for example, roughly 30 per cent of all households earned regular income in the 1980s from sorghum beer production, making it the largest nonfarm employer in the country. (395)

Despite the apparent commonality of subject matter, the individual studies in this book are surprisingly different, not only regarding the topics covered but also the style of presentation. The contributions to this volume are both academically sound and interesting reading. For anyone interested in the social and labour history of southern Africa, this book must be read.

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Rene Loewenson, *Modern Plantation Agriculture: Corporate Wealth and Public Squalor* (London: Zed Press 1992).

THIS WORK, written by an occupational health specialist with the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions takes as its primary focus the health implications of the development of plantation agriculture in Zimbabwe and its predecessor state, Rhodesia. The book is divided into three sections, the first providing a brief overview of the origins and evolution of plantation agriculture as a form of production within capitalism. The second section, comprising the bulk of the book, outlines the specific history of the plantation or large farm sector in Zimbabwe (Rhodesia). The final section, made up of one chapter, is concerned with the prospect and the reality of transforming the Zimbabwean countryside with the re-organization (abolition?) of the plantation/large farm sector.

The thesis here is that plantation economies world-wide have only been

brought into being and maintained through the organized violence of imperial and later nominally independent states. Moreover, it is argued, plantations have served not to meet the consumption needs of those who labour in and live amidst them but rather the criteria of profitability. Moreover, the health consequences of plantation agriculture have been universally deplorable as a result of low wages, poor living conditions and increasing exposure to herbicides, fertilizers, and pesticides. The large scale farming or plantation sector in Rhodesia was no exception to this pattern. Land was expropriated from its prior African users by the nascent colonial state and made available to European settlers. Forced onto what became steadily overcrowded reserves, Africans had little choice but to labour on what was once their own land. Pay was low, living conditions squalid, education barely existent, and health poor.

The end of white minority rule in the reincarnation of Rhodesia as Zimbabwe was meant to change all — or at least a substantial part — of this dire reality. Yet it has not. And it is in detailing and understanding why not that Loewenson runs into trouble. We are never really told just why it is that the agrarian sector of Zimbabwe has not been transformed. Yet, almost a decade ago, Andre Astrow put forward a case for the betrayal of the hopes and aspirations of, among others, farm workers in his *Zimbabwe: a revolution that lost its way?* (1983). It is disturbing that Astrow's work does not figure in Loewenson's account nor does it appear in the latter's bibliography. Yet Loewenson's concluding remark that,

One of the most serious contradictions between the stated aspirations of both ZANU (PF) and early government policy documents and the real situation in the agricultural sector, has been the continued profound social and economic marginalisation of a substantial sector of the rural working class population.

This statement cries out for an updating, or at least an engagement, with Astrow's work. Is such engagement an impossibility in a 'free' Zimbabwe?

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Peter Drucker, *The Ecological Vision* (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers 1993).

AS A BEGINNING graduate student in political economy I soon became dimly aware of Peter Drucker as a contributor to the literature advocating taking the American large corporation seriously on its own terms as a kind of new social form. I also got the impression that Drucker had played a key role in the normalizing of the notion of the giant firm, making it fit for public consumption, as it were. I left it at that. I "knew" that North Americans had been given to understand that at least these powerful new entities were not like the "robber barons" of days of yore. Above all they were different and more complex. In terms of sociological detail Drucker was right of course. In terms of overall class analysis I'm not so sure the reality is functionally so very different, although the wasting of human energy is on a vastly larger scale. We will return to these points later.

My *a priori* image of Peter Drucker first sharpened when I read the "Author's Acknowledgements" in Karl Polanyi's *The Great Transformation: the Political and Economic Origins of Our Time* which was completed over the years 1941-3 at Bennington College (Vermont) where Drucker was apparently on staff. Polanyi says that Drucker "and his wife were a source of sustained encouragement, notwithstanding their wholehearted disagreement with the author's conclusions." Since Polanyi was a socialist whose unwillingness to embrace the Marxist analysis of capitalist societies was only matched by his relentless and wholly

original criticism of the liberal idea of a system of self-regulating markets, this rather back-handed "thank you" intrigued me. I found it interesting, then, as a matter of 20th-century intellectual history to read the present sampling of Drucker's essays over the last half century. The first piece in the volume was written in 1946 and one immediately sees why Polanyi could hardly disregard him. We see Drucker struggling to express his sense that American has distinctive institutions. I can imagine him gesturing to these in order to counter Polanyi's foreboding sense of what the post-war period was going to be like. One thing that bothered Polanyi was he could not see how the economic forces unleashed over the period since 1800 were going to allow room for the free development of the individual human spirit, of the kind Protestant Christianity had promised, but which capitalism cannot tolerate. It is clear from Drucker's interesting essay on Kierkegaard (written in 1949 but revealingly placed at the end of this volume) why he unlike Polanyi simply gave up on that problem. For overall this book is a series of hymns to the American middle-class way whereby true spiritual freedom and democracy are left to fend for themselves against the new corporatism. They are not to be explicitly aimed at institutions. It would be a hasty and utter fool however who would take my last remarks as an excuse not to read Drucker.

The thirty pieces (all previously published) range over many topics (with truly admirable coherence), are well-written (beautifully concise), very provocative (usually iconoclastic) and deeply (albeit randomly) seasoned with doses of sharp realism. It may be the abandonment of high ideals for society that makes the realist stance so easy to maintain, but the fact remains that this text is crammed full of profound insights into American society and culture, in particular the way problems due to large-scale institutions are handled. Since American social forms are proliferating world-wide at the pres-

ent, we are not talking about a trivial subject here. I would certainly like to thank Drucker for further clarifying why I dislike so much what he so uncritically loves. It is not that he is a conservative in any ordinary sense. Indeed Drucker is classically liberal in his absolute acceptance of what has happened. History could not have taken us anywhere other than where it took us. As a Marxist of the Kozo Uno persuasion I find that kind of casual implicit determinism extremely offensive. Lamentably I know (from experience) that it would take an entire essay properly to explain why I think, *contra* Drucker, that modernity could have taken and still could take other forms. Here I can only say Drucker helps a lot to explain how the current form works, but not why it was tolerated. For instance, he says that mass transportation is what made the large-scale organization possible. This interests him because large-scale organizations have special management problems. Well, one can look at this same point and say that one now sees more clearly than ever why constructing mass transportation systems was such an appalling waste of the lives and energies of working class people. Without these crazy bourgeois projects ordinary people could have spent their time (and the materials) improving their housing stock.

It was when I was still only in Drucker's first essay that I recognized the confident tone and the analytical style and the bizarre anti-non-conservative outlook as strongly reminiscent of Walter Bagehot, who wrote on *The English Constitution* in the second half of the 19th century with a mixture of fondness and sharpness that remains profoundly disconcerting to this day. Similarly, Drucker clearly adores the way corporatist America works but his foremost aim is to explain that it doesn't work in anything like the way most of its admirers think it does. He lovingly details how, for example, democratic principle is virtually irrelevant in American government and how sectional interests can manipulate this fact in a

seemingly infinite number of ways. Any mere individual doesn't stand a chance of influencing such a leviathan, and cooperating groups are bound to soil their principles if they try to work together to alter the sociological ground rules. It is Thomas Jefferson's nightmare, but also Karl Marx's nightmare. We see now that society passed from feudal corporatism through to contemporary corporatism with only a brief interlude during the liberal era when it looked as though principled individualism might eventually win the day. It is worth reminding ourselves that the new social movements on which many pin elaborate hopes today are the offspring of liberal individualism: the general idea that individuals must not be discriminated against arbitrarily. What has counted as "arbitrary" has had of course to be extended many times but the logic of the principle has always been the same. Unfortunately these direct descendants of liberalism did not inherit the relatively open 19th century sociological context which alone made it seem a viable picture of the modern future. It is always disturbing to be reminded how much the possibility of socialism as originally conceived depended on getting there first. It is extremely hard to envisage either classical liberalism or socialism taking root inside modern societies of the sort Drucker describes.

It is necessary to comment on the old-fashioned title which is liable to mislead most people very seriously by seeming highly topical. By "ecology" Drucker decided (evidently many decades ago) to mean something like: the study of sociopolitical or institutional context. His "ecological vision" then consists in seeing how America works on analogy with the way a biologist might try to see how an ecosystem works. As I see it this allows me to reiterate the significance of Drucker's work by saying that modern progressives are about as likely to be able to change the ground rules of the conditions of their existence as a few species of

butterflies would be able to unravel a tropical ecosystem.

There is one line which neatly illustrates how distressing this book must be to conservatives, liberals, and socialists alike (although the reasons would diverge). It also indicates a rather more insidious side to Drucker's sociological spring-cleaning. "Increasingly, especially in the United States, the only way in which the individual can amass a little property is through the pension fund, that is, through membership in an organization." This is one of the relatively few places where the word "own" appears and it is the only one which says much, but what is amazing is what it doesn't say. One has to conclude that Drucker would simply nod smiling approval if one suggested that the average feudal serf had a slightly greater chance of successfully challenging the ownership patterns of society than the average American "citizen." But Drucker's claim about pension funds, if true (and he wrote a book on them and so presumably knows), cries out for comment and analysis. For while membership in the club of American owners is now I daresay fully as exclusive as Drucker's aside implies (and it was just an aside), it surely follows that it must be especially nice to be among those who got in before the gates closed. But there is not even a whiff of class analysis in this collection which ranges so widely over dozens of key American institutions. Are we to conclude that every society in which access to property has been discontinued is no longer to be counted a class society????

In comparison it was a blessed relief to see that Galbraith in *The Culture of Contentment* was able to declare that very recently it has become "o.k." in the US to speak of the "underclass." Another element of American life missing in Drucker's account is the myriad workers outside America who produce so many of the things Americans consume. Likewise the high-grade fuels and raw materials without which most who now "manage"

and "communicate" would have to toil with things just like in the old days are nowhere acknowledged. Since I could go on for pages about the problems raised in Drucker's fascinating collection of essays but mustn't, I will indulge in one more observation. When I found out very late at night from the "Afterword" that Drucker's main intellectual hero has always been none other than the above-mentioned Walter Bagehot my delight at my own perspicacity was only matched by my political chagrin. But I for one have long insisted you cannot understand anything about modern England until you read Bagehot. Drucker is arguably in the same league but (thanks, incidentally, to Hitler) talks about America.

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Frank Gaffikin and Mike Morrissey, *The New Unemployed: Joblessness and Poverty in the Market Economy* (London: Zed Books 1992).

THIS BOOK examines unemployment in the European Community, Northern Ireland, the Republic of Ireland, the UK, and the US. Packed with useful statistics and tables on productivity, GDP, income, poverty, welfare expenditures, labour force, and trends in employment and unemployment, it also contains illuminating discussions of government policies, their informing economic theories, and evaluations of their impacts. Economic debates and competing interpretations of economic patterns are interwoven throughout the text.

Although never defined, the term "new unemployed" refers to more than recency. First, unemployment rates in the 1980s and 1990s, especially in the EC, were substantially higher than in previous post-World War II decades. In the 1960s, for example, the average rate in the UK was under 2 per cent and less than 1 per cent in France and West Germany. In

1989 rates in these countries ranged from roughly 6 to 10 per cent, despite having experienced real economic growth. Second, in contrast to earlier decades, recent unemployment features a significantly higher proportion of long-term joblessness (without work for over a year). Third, governments of the 1980s and 1990s devalued unemployment as a social concern, choosing instead to contain inflation. The mid-1970s marked the point when Keynesian policies of stimulating demand to achieve full employment were supplanted by monetarist and supply-side economics.

Two chapters assess the Reagan-Bush years in the US. Reagan slashed spending on public works and welfare, deregulated economic sectors, and instituted supply-side programs based on corporate and income tax cuts. These measures were designed to stimulate investment and job growth, but the resulting increase in profits was used not for job creation but for mergers and takeovers. Under Reagan the government spent over \$1 trillion more than it took in from taxes and government receipts. In less than three years the US was transformed from the world's largest creditor to its largest debtor. The income gap between the rich and poor widened, with the top 1 per cent enjoying an 85 per cent increase in real income while the income of the bottom 20 per cent fell by 20 per cent. A chapter is devoted to discussing the US underclass and competing explanations of its persistence and growth. Still, despite fluctuations, unemployment rates in the US in the 1980s were lower than in most EC countries, and the US rate in the late 1980s was lower than it was in the 1970s. The main explanation — military Keynesianism in which about 60 cents of every tax dollar was absorbed by military spending. But military pump-priming failed to prevent a steep decline in manufacturing (deindustrialization), and over the past decade many new jobs in the US (as well as in Canada and the EC nations) were poorly paid, part-time, and in the service sector.

One chapter deals with programs developed by the EC to combat poverty. Half-hearted and poorly funded, these programs were not intended as a substitute for national initiatives. The authors view the social charter of the EC as long on rhetoric but short on substance.

There is a chapter on the Irish Republic and Northern Ireland (whose unemployment rates in the late 1980s exceeded 17 per cent) and another on the Thatcher years in the UK subtitled "Engineered Mass Unemployment?" A deteriorating British economy in the 1980s marked by the simultaneous rise of unemployment and inflation undermined Keynesianism and paved the way for the emergence of the New Right. Thatcher first opted for a monetarist strategy — keeping a lid on the money supply via high interest rates and reduced government spending — and later a supply-side strategy of lowering taxes to stimulate investment. These policies were accompanied by rampant privatization and deregulation. While inflation was brought under control, these measures accelerated the decline in manufacturing and created "levels of unemployment far beyond anything envisaged or considered acceptable in the previous 30 years." I got a sense of *deja vu* from reading about the Thatcher years because they paralleled in so many ways the situation in Canada under Mulroney.

The authors lament the tragic failure of neo-conservative economic policies and their victim-blaming programs to reintegrate the jobless through reducing their social benefits dependency and improving their marketability, thus ignoring the structural sources of the problem. With no end to capitalism in sight, the authors' solution is a revitalized social democracy. Revitalization is needed because social democratic parties have adopted technocratic, market-dominated strategies and soft-pedaled increased taxation and expenditures. In an indictment that will sound familiar to those who have followed the actions of recently elected provincial New Democratic parties in Ca-

nada, the authors state that social democracy "embraced markets, preaches fiscal rectitude, promises to reconstruct the supply-side, but continues to assert a marginally more ambitious social agenda."

The key to resuscitating social democracy is democratization. The authors point to sections of the UK, Spain, Northern Italy, and West Germany where community-based development projects have been successfully implemented. Unfortunately, no details are provided. They recommend restructuring electoral systems, greater regional autonomy, facilitating local economic development and public participation in planning. They speculate that the power of transnational corporations might only be checked by the establishment of a supranational body and understand such an overarching institution would further complicate democratization. They conclude that social democracy must "offer a broader, more pluralistic vision of social change based on a radical democratization" and a reasonable balance between market forces and state intervention.

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Brian Pronger, *The Arena of Masculinity: Sports, Homosexuality, and the Meaning of Sex* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1992).

IT WASN'T MORE THAN a kafuffle in the advertising wars, but when the New York editors of the Canadian edition of *Sports Illustrated* declined in late June 1993 to feature a photograph of a North York soccer team — wearing Adidas running shoes and nothing else — the masculinist ideology of sport once again struck its colours. For most *SI* readers drool at the magazine's hugely successful annual ritual, the swimsuit issue, featuring gorgeous and nearly nude females in suits that no one would or could wear to the beach or pool. But nude men? Wearing

soccer cleats? The point, of course, becomes clearer in its deconstruction: sport is a bastion of male power; sports magazines cater to traditional male tastes; and males do not wish to look at other males, unclothed. They want to look at females, unclothed, or, at most, scantily clad.

Or do they? This question provides one prism through which to view Brian Pronger's study of the ways in which assumptions about sex and sexuality permeate and structure the world of white, middle-class athletic endeavour. Published in hardcover in 1990 and now available in paper, *The Arena of Masculinity* provides a pioneering synthesis that makes use of a wide range of cultural sources: films, pertinent journal articles and monographs, photographs, and — most interesting — interviews with thirty-four predominantly gay Canadian athletes. Pronger seeks to provide an interpretation of the unique perspectives on sport of gay men and to ponder cultural meanings of homosexuality, as well as of sex and gender generally, within contemporary athletic environments.

The homoerotic potential within sport constitutes a force profoundly subversive to dominant patriarchal and sexist values. No less than the military, the organized sports world enshrines competition, toughness, the will to win — and bonding. For this reason, perhaps, just as the dominant culture assumes that women in competitive sport (also as in the military) must be lesbian, the corresponding premise holds that men in athletics must be as straight as they are manly and powerful.

But if this cultural axiom is potent, it also is erroneous. The middle-class sporting milieu that Pronger explores provide an ambience rich in sexual imagery and fantasy, as well as the possibility of re-making the gender order. On one level, homosexuality not only violates masculine norms and denigrates mythic male power, it becomes a key contradiction in the myth of gender. Hence, while rejecting Alfred Kinsey's conclusion that most



homosexual men behave in ways as "normally masculine" as heterosexual men, Pronger also challenges views that have governed cultural definitions of homosexuality for the last century — that homosexuality should be understood as either essence or identity. For the author, being gay (or heterosexual, for that matter) is less a sexual drive, *per se*, than "a way of being and understanding." (8) Homosexual men possess great insight into the gender myths and paradoxes of North American culture, although Pronger admits — and the point makes his analysis problematic — that "homosexual knowledge" ("paradoxical intuition") is fluid, varies considerably in intensity, and affects different men at different times and in assorted circumstances.

In his chapter on "Gay Sensibility," the linch-pin of the book, the author suggests that homosexuals react to the world in three different ways: suppressing their intuitions and embracing (as much as possible) cultural orthodoxy; comprehending the paradoxical irony within the gender myth; or viewing their lives within the framework of potential challenge to the primacy of this fiction. Because of the diversity of gay men's lives, these sensibilities are not exclusive, but appear in different blends at different times in different venues.

Pronger argues that most sporting activity involving men (the Gay Olympics provide one notable exception) proceeds on the assumption that participants are heterosexual. Yet within contact sports like football or hockey, non-contact sports like figure skating or gymnastics, in the shower after a workout, or within the close relationship that may develop between coach and performer, there always exists homoerotic potential. But only the participants who have grasped the gender paradox know for certain the erotic impulse that may lie ahead (no pun intended).

We heterosexuals who cast glances at our showermates (and who among us has not checked our fellows for size and

shape?) share in Pronger's judgment an "unthinkable" secret that most men think but few admit. The secret is safe because in sport, all are assumed heterosexual. Gays who move through sport environments, therefore, may "pass" undetected. And, Pronger avers, many gays who use this incognito power achieve increased ironic awareness of themselves and their masculine environment.

Indeed, it is not surprising that in the last quarter-century sporting motifs have come to provide gay communities with a pivotal mode of definition. The antithesis of the stereotypical limp-wristed cookie-pusher, gayness now leads to explicit brawn and active lifestyles. On one level the muscularly masculine athlete is now a sex symbol par excellence, the object of sexual desire for that archetypal and mythic model — and the author does a perceptive job in delineating ways in which straight film, journalistic, fitness, and advertising media contribute to this milieu. More important, Pronger shows how desiring gay sex with robust athletes is at once — again paradoxically — both reverence for, and violation of, traditional masculinity. If the male organ serves as the apotheosis of this masculinity, the jock strap, especially after use, serves as its "shelter and shrine" and "sacramental element." (159, 161) Gay pornography is loaded with jocks and jock-straps, men who are fit (in keeping with the recent gay discovery of the fitness industry) but not necessarily brawny, and who are decked to the nines in the latest pretty, colour-coordinated outfits. In the larger culture, Pronger suggests, the emphasis upon muscularity — emphasized in bodybuilding — extends the ironic gay fascination with appearance; the muscles are developed not for actual athletic activity, but for posing. Here, in short, is homoerotic burlesque at its utmost — gay irony at its zenith. One need not be Einstein to appreciate why the annual New York City Police body-building competition appears on video in Big Apple gay bars.

Ultimately, Pronger suggests, the dominant perception of sport as heterosexual in its premises and expression reflects neither the fear of physical pleasure (one of the prime reasons for athletic activity) nor the anxiety about the experience of masculinity (which drives men to excel and achieve mythic success). No, the answer lies in the dominant culture's perception of athletic arenas as sites of apprenticeship to orthodox masculinity. The institutions that buttress contemporary sport — corporations, churches, media, the military, and government itself — are all heavily invested in conventional definitions of sex and gender. The AIDS crisis seems to have strengthened this heterosexual matrix. Hence few gays in big-time sport (former NFL star Dave Kopay and body-building champ Bob Parish are two notable exceptions) have declared openly their homosexuality. Yet if most gay men involved in sport seem to embrace the "rules" of heterosexuality, there can be no doubt that those who appreciate the gender paradox subvert in their own way the dominant culture's assumptions about the meaning and function of athletic activity.

In sum, Pronger does for gay, middle-class culture what Donald J. Mrozek did for heterosexual, middle-class culture in the United States at the turn of the 20th century in his intellectual history, *Sport and American Mentality, 1880-1910* (1983). Even more than Mrozek, Pronger deconstructs the meaning of athletic culture generally and the tensions between and within dominant and contending communities.

Two queries end this review. First, Pronger's sources suggest that the author finds a seamlessness between British, Canadian, and American sporting environments. May a historian of sport — gay or straight — use such scholarship interchangeably? How might we seek to compare and contrast distinct national gay and lesbian environments and cultures? Must we? Finally, one wonders about the absence in Pronger's bibliography of work

by Berkeley anthropologist Alan Dundes and Canadian sociologist Gary Kinsman. Both scholars have written seminally on sport, sex, and questions of social regulation of gender.

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William J. Puette, *Through Jaundiced Eyes: How the Media View Organized Labor* (Ithaca, NY: ILR Press 1992).

READERS of this journal will not be surprised to learn that the mass media view organized labour and the working class "though jaundiced eyes." William J. Puette's monograph provides all the evidence one would ever need to prove that point or to demonstrate it to students. Nevertheless, despite its detailed description of the prejudice against labour to be found in the American media, the book is somewhat unsatisfying because of its lack of analysis of the reasons for this bias or of its consequences.

Puette's main purpose is to expose to view the negative stereotyping of the labour movement in the contemporary mass media. Chapters on movies, television news, television dramas, newspapers, and cartoons are supplemented by two case studies — one being the local newspaper coverage of the treatment of Walter Kupau, a Hawaiian union leader (Puette teaches at the University of Hawaii), and the second an examination of the coverage of the Pittston mine workers' strike in 1989-90. One chapter also briefly surveys the labour movement's response to its media image. While most of the emphasis is contemporary, many chapters also have a brief historical retrospective. Useful appendices provide lengthy lists of examples of cinema and television representations of labour.

To summarize a great deal of fascinating material briefly, Puette concludes that each medium tends to reveal one facet of the stereotype of labour. Movies, for

example, over the years have often portrayed unions as corrupt and tied to organized crime. Like many media, movies have also frequently depicted union leaders as alien communist agitators. Walt Disney's 1925 short, "Alice's Egg Plant," in which the "little Red Henski" leads the hens out on strike is one example. Television, both in news stories and in serial dramas, often emphasizes the pettiness and foolishness of bargaining goals. Sitcoms, like movies, are particularly powerful in conveying stereotypes because the negative images are presented tangentially in an entertainment format. Both television and the print media disproportionately emphasize strikes in their labour news coverage. Strike stories, as we know, often portray both the employers and the public/readers as hapless victims of selfish unions. Headlines, captions, and placement subtly bias the stories as well; all too often labour news appears next to coverage of crime and violence. Interestingly, Puette suggests that some of the best labour reporting is to be found in the *Wall Street Journal*. Despite its conservative agenda, that newspaper cares enough to assign the labour beat to experienced reporters who cover it in depth. Cartoons and comic strips, Puette argues, portray blue-collar workers as unproductive and overpaid. They also reinforce other stereotypes. One illustration in the book depicts a high-walled prison decorated with a banner: "Welcome Teamsters Convention." As Puette points out, twenty or thirty times as many readers probably smiled over that cartoon as read news stories or editorials on labour subjects. The general image of the labour movement to be found in the contemporary mass media, then, is of corruption, greed, power, and self-interest. While the "little guy" may indeed be oppressed, he is as much oppressed by unions as by business or government. Moreover, many of these negative messages are all the more effective because sent indirectly and subliminally.

Despite the occasional exaggeration, all of this material is convincing enough. Where Puette is not so successful is in explaining why these negative stereotypes abound. Lacking either a historical or a class analysis, he falls back on some dubious and dated assumptions. Moreover, his understanding of the role of the media in modern society is simplistic and superficial.

One of Puette's central concerns, for example, is to try to explain why the American media, normally assumed to be dominated by "liberals," are so unsympathetic to labour. But his answers are brief and ahistorical. Perhaps, he suggests, liberals and labour have "sold one another out" in the race to achieve respectability in American society. Possibly there is some "class antipathy" at work. Perhaps liberal journalists perceive organized labour as a powerful interest group. All of these suggestions raise interesting possibilities, but none is pursued or analyzed.

Puette also raises the issue of whether the negative portrayal of labour is deliberate or unconscious. Is there some sort of "institutional" bias in the media that prevents them from treating labour fairly? Here he offers off-hand suggestions that most media "gatekeepers" are middle-class professionals, that they themselves employ unionized workers, and that the media are increasingly concentrated in the hands of a few big corporations. Again, however, none of these ideas is pursued into an explanatory framework.

Most disturbing to me were Puette's unexamined assumptions about the power and influence of the media in our society. The best of today's media scholars are attempting to explain and disentangle a complex process that involves not only the power of those who control the technology and the enterprises of big media, but also the professional practices of the journalists and producers, and especially the unique responses of individual viewers and listeners who may not necessarily buy into what they see and hear. It is

quite a balancing act, but a useful one, because it is sophisticated and subtle and much closer to reality than simple emphasis on media manipulation. But Puette barely acknowledges the work of the last two generations of media scholars and seems still to believe that media content is some sort of "bullet" that penetrates and changes minds. His main source on the subject is a work published in 1961!

The problem with Puette's book, then, despite its overwhelming success in adducing the evidence to show that the media present a distorted and negative view of labour, is that it rests on several dubious assumptions. Most importantly, the book's underlying premise, that the mass media's negative images of the labour movement have taken over the minds of Americas, is never proven. A more analytical approach would have strengthened the argument and the utility of the book.

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Richard E. Wokutch, *Worker Protection Japanese Style: Occupational Safety and Health in the Auto Industry* (Ithaca: ILR Press 1992).

COMPARATIVE RESEARCH is an important tool of analysis. The major reason for this is obvious: we can learn about the dynamics of our own society by placing them alongside those of another or others. Indeed, sometimes it is only by making the comparisons that certain features of one's society that have defied clear understanding come shining through. Moreover, there is the undoubted value of simply finding out about the ways in which people in other lands think, act, work, play, engage in cultural and political life, and the like.

But doing comparative research is also fraught with conceptual and practical difficulties. For example, given national differences in historical development that

are the result of economic, cultural, and political particularities, analysts must be careful about devising proper categories of investigation, interpreting results, and making conclusions of a generalized nature. This is particularly true if the research has a proscriptive intent; that is, if one of the purposes of a study is to address the question whether all or some aspects of one country's institutions and/or ways of life should, or ought to be, adopted by other nations and peoples.

Richard Wokutch's study of occupational health and safety in the Japanese and American automobile industries simultaneously illustrates both the positive and potentially negative features of comparative research in graphic fashion. On the one hand, those individuals and groups whose intellectual and political interests revolve around occupational health and safety are exposed to a number of illuminating and distressing observations about the health and safety of Japanese and American autoworkers. We learn, for example, that while severe and fatal injuries among autoworkers in both countries seem to be on a long-term decline, occupational diseases such as "cumulative trauma disorders" (illnesses caused by the stresses and strains associated with repetitive motions) are unquestionably on the rise in both nations. On the other hand, however, because of almost woefully inadequate comparative statistical information, Wokutch's efforts at interpretative and proscriptive conclusions are most notable for their shortcomings than their value in guiding us to production practices that will produce both a safe car and a healthy worker.

Wokutch introduces his investigation within the now familiar context of post-war Japanese economic success. Within this context, his intention is to contribute to breaking down two myths that have become tightly intertwined with this unparalleled economic growth — the first being that Japanese prosperity has come as the result of the super exploitation of its workers, and, second, that Japan is a

workers' paradise. His conclusion, not surprisingly, is that neither myth is true. However, he does argue that there are important areas where occupational health and safety regulations and practices at Jidosha (the fictional name Wokutch employs for the auto plant he studied in Japan) are superior to both its American subsidiary (Jidosha-USA) and the American auto industry in general — regulations and practices which result in lower rates of acute and chronic injury and occupational disease. This superiority stems from the largely successful efforts of Jidosha management to develop and institute policies and programs aimed at developing cooperation and loyalty among its workforce. This situation is in growing contrast to Jidosha-USA where more traditional adversarial and confrontational worker/union/management relations are increasingly coming to the fore after a honeymoon period associated with the start-up of the plant in the 1970s.

Why is worker/management cooperation achieved at Jidosha and not at Jidosha-USA? According to Wokutch, the answer lies, first, in understanding that the Japanese flexible manufacturing system demands a high degree of employee involvement and cooperation while simultaneously exhibiting a low tolerance for down-time associated with injured or ill workers. That is, the overall efficiency of a production system which is based on lean production can ill-afford the disturbances associated with poor health and safety practices. Hence, it is not out of altruism that Jidosha management stresses employee involvement and responsibility in health and safety. Rather, it is "enlightened self-interest" that motivates company officials to put front-line management and workers alike through extensive health and safety training sessions, to institutionalize morning safety checks, and to establish management/worker health and safety committees.

The second part of the puzzle is filled in by reference to the paternalistic power of the Japanese corporation over its work-

force. As we have come to learn from other studies of Japanese workers and workplaces, understanding the power and place of the Japanese corporation is crucial to analysing the actions, or lack thereof, of Japanese workers. The much-heralded systems of payment by skills and seniority, life-long employment, and employee involvement in production decisions through teams, while applying only to the core section of Japanese industry and workers, has as its flip side the build-up of loyalty and dependence. In essence, workers fortunate enough to work in sectors such as auto and steel make good wages and have employment security; but, they are, concurrently, drawn into a web of corporate paternalism that whittles away at their workplace autonomy and means of resistance.

In the context of health and safety in the Japanese auto industry, Wokutch highlights Honda's "Ten Golden Rules," most of which are directed at instilling obedience in its workforce. Rule seven, for example, is entitled "Life By The Rules," and "refers to life off the job and suggests refraining from activities such as heavy eating or drinking, which could lead to lethargy and tiredness, or worrying about home life, which could affect concentration and performance on the job and lead to injuries." These Golden Rules, together with the "Four Cs" of control ("distinguishing between activities that are necessary for production and those that are unnecessary and getting rid of the latter"), conformity ("putting necessary items in a predetermined location for easy accessibility and use"), cleaning up, and cleanliness have, Wokutch writes, "social and value implications that go beyond health and safety. They are clearly intended to promote the corporate culture and values that are deemed important throughout Japanese society."

As with many studies that purport to demonstrate worker consent and loyalty to corporate practices and objectives, Wokutch fails to provide us with good first-hand evidence that Jidosha workers are in

essential accord with their employer's views of what constitutes satisfactory means for ensuring a safe and healthy workplace. In fact, he seems not to have interviewed Jidosha workers in any systematic manner. Hence, he is left to surmise consensual attitudes concerning health and safety from accident and illness records that Wokutch himself holds suspect. That is, his conclusion that the lower accident and illness rates at Jidosha as compared to Jidosha-USA are due to the ability of the company to successfully incorporate the hands and minds of Japanese workers is undermined by the acknowledged propensity of Japanese employers to under-report work-related injuries and illnesses. Wokutch would rebut this point by stating that under-reporting is endemic in the US auto industry as well. But this does not prove his point; it only leads us into a infinite, and not-very-useful (from an injured worker's standpoint), regress of charges and countercharges about which company is more guilty of under-reporting.

Under-reporting of occupational injury and illness in Japan has a corollary — especially in the context of strong corporate power and enterprise unions — of workers themselves not reporting bruises, cuts, and chronic pain for fear of not being seen as team players, or, worse, losing their jobs. With reference to honour, Wokutch relates an incident where a worker “was dismissed from his normal production activities [for a health and safety violation] for two hours and required to stand beside the department manager. The following day he was permitted to go back to his job but was required to wear a yellow shirt designating him as a rule breaker. The department manager felt that this discipline was very effective in discouraging a recurrence of the violation and in dissuading other workers from such behaviour.”

Largely because of the presence of a local of the United Automobile Workers (UAW), now directed by a slate of officers affiliated with the anti-concessionist New

Directions movement, such disciplinary methods are not in evidence at Jidosha-USA. Nor are other policies, practices, and ideas relating to health and safety that Jidosha management hope to install and instill in its American plant. For example, after an initial burst of enthusiasm concomitant with the opening of the plant, most workers no longer engage in morning exercises or exalt in the philosophy of teams and teamwork. Instead, a growing number of workers are complaining about the pace of the line — a grievance that has real foundation in the “alarming ... incidence of stress-related cumulative trauma disorders, including carpal tunnel syndrome, relative to the rest of the US auto industry.” According to management, the causes of cumulative trauma disorders at its American plant have more to do with improper ergonomics (machinery designed for smaller Japanese workers), and the inexperience of the workforce.

Workers and union officials at the plant take a different view. They place the onus for the rapid proliferation of cumulative trauma disorders squarely on the dynamics of an assembly line system that favours production over safety and health. Wokutch reports of Japanese personnel at Jidosha-USA gaining the admiration of their American colleagues “for their willingness to fix malfunctioning machines while they are still powered up ... Such practices obviously send the wrong message about the priority of safety relative to production. Such apparent conflicts between Japanese production methods and safety health concerns had led one UAW safety and health expert to quip that kaizen means ‘take off all the guards, jump into the machine, and the foreman works.’”

What conclusions or general observations can be gleaned from these few but nevertheless revealing scenarios? According to Wokutch, when it established its plant in the US, Jidosha hoped to be able to transfer the health and safety model developed at its central plant in Japan to its American operations. This

has not occurred, with the result, at least from Jidosha management's perspective, that workers at the US plant suffer from high rates of injury and disease. That is, given that they work with the same machinery and processes as their counterparts in Japan, the aches, pains, temporary and permanent disabilities of workers at Jidosha-USA are largely their own fault: if they followed proper procedures, as do workers at the plant in Japan, there would be far fewer accidents and illness.

The major lesson that Wokutch draws from his study, then, is that labour/management cooperation produces a safer and healthier workplace. Despite difficulties in comparing accident and disease rates because of marked disparities in how statistics are gathered and how injuries are defined and recorded (in Japan a worker must be off-the-job for four full days before it is recorded as a lost-work accident; in the US the time period is much the same but lost work days also include restricted work duties whereby an injured worker comes to work but is unable to perform her/his normal labours), Wokutch concludes that "in spite of several significant weaknesses, the safety and health conditions and practices in major Japanese corporations are superior to those in comparable American firms...." The prime reason for this superiority, Wokutch believes, lies in Jidosha's success in getting management and workers throughout the firm to take responsibility for the health and safety of themselves and their coworkers. From this it is but a small step to a final point: "safety and health, product quality, and productivity can be positively related in practice in much the way safety and health rhetoric in the United States claims they are."

What does all this say about Wokutch's theory of cooperation versus conflict in the arena of occupational health and safety? His summary argument is that his study demonstrates the value of cooperation over confrontation: more cooperation means few accidents and lower rates of occupational disease. It is per-

plexing, than, that directly after this observation, he states that "Cooperative relations appear to work less well ... when one or more of the parties are relatively powerless and unable to assert their rights." Interestingly, Wokutch is referring here, not to workers in major corporations such as Jidosha, but to smaller firms in the more highly competitive sectors of Japanese society. They are the ones which are weak and require the legislative powers of the state to promulgate and ensure their rights to a safe and healthy workplace.

Whether a basic contradiction or a conceptual conflict, the above assertions point to a fundamental weakness in Wokutch's formulations: there is no theory of power. Nowhere in his book does Wokutch discuss the bases of the economic and political power wielded by Japanese corporations — both in Japan and increasingly in the United States. It is power based on the ownership of private property, which in Japan is augmented by the historically close relationship between government and business that provides corporations such as Jidosha with its administrative and persuasive power. Health and safety legislation in Japan is the fruit of much discussion among government and business officials charged with this set of responsibilities. As Wokutch's recounting of these laws attests, they are based on a philosophy of "administrative guidance" rather than, as in the United States, punitive sanctions such as fines and jail sentences. (This is not to argue that the latter system automatically works in the interests of workers. Evidence from Canada and the United States suggests persuasively that it does not.) Moreover, they depend on an inspectorate that has minimal enforcement powers. Combine each of these factors with a legislated health and safety committee system that does not require worker/management parity, and one is left with an overall structure that is voluntarist in essence and in practice. And, with voluntarist health and safety structures and prac-

tices dominating, it is not evident that lower rates of accidents and illness are the result of cooperation rather than management under-reporting and worker fears.

As Wokutch alludes to in an all-too-brief paragraph, national differences in health and safety regulations and enforcement activities are directly contingent on the success that various acts and classes have in securing their interests and demands in the economic and political arenas. The rise of neo-conservatism and the accession to power of conservative parties in countries such as the United States, Britain, and Canada, has witnessed the weakening of occupational health and safety legislation. Workers' compensation systems are being attacked by business interests as being too generous to workers and too expensive for employers. Some advances made by workers in the 1970s have now been institutionalized, leaving a coterie of trade union, business, and government health and safety experts to preside over an increasingly dispirited and alienated population of health and safety activists. All of these developments point to the overwhelming importance of political factors when considering occupational health and safety. Anyone reading this book will be able to understand the relevance of politics even if its author ultimately does not.

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Steven E. Rhoads, *Incomparable Worth: Pay Equity Meets the Market* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press 1993).

TWO CATEGORIES of critiques have emerged in the vast international literature on equal pay for work of equal value (pay equity or comparable worth). Some proponents of pay equity in the feminist and trade union communities suggest that equal value legislation has not gone far enough in closing the wage gap between women and men; further, it

has the potential to divide workers against one another (especially men against women) and disempower them (by placing the technical fight for equal wages in the hands of tribunals, consultants, experts, and lawyers and foreclosing working-initiated struggles for equal pay). Yet in business and management, and among many academics in these fields, equal value is often critiqued for violating the free market ideal of wage-setting by the supply and demand of labour power, for increasing a host of costs (monetary and administrative costs, loss of productivity, rising prices and taxes), and for subjectivity, biases, and politicking in the application of job evaluation methods. This book by Steven Rhoads falls solidly into the second category.

Rhoads attacks equal pay for work of equal value for violating the market principle that freedom of supply and demand of workers should solely determine wages. In many cases women's wages are artificially elevated above levels dictated by the supply of women for female-dominated jobs, thereby forcing even more competition for such jobs (without a depression in wages). Employers respond by introducing labour-saving technology, thereby increasing unemployment among women. Wages for many male-dominated jobs are held in check, despite scarcity of supply, resulting in decreases in applicants for such positions. Rhoads suggests that comparable worth reinforces or increases gender segregation of occupations by encouraging women to stay in female-dominant jobs where wages are rising, and discouraging them from applying for male-dominant jobs in which remuneration is not rising as quickly.

Steven Rhoads focuses his critique of the implementation of pay equity on four jurisdictions — Minnesota in the United States, Australia, the European Community, and the United Kingdom. His information is derived from reading the large literature on this topic, and interviewing the experts, consultants, and administrators of pay equity in these regions



of the world. Ontario was specifically excluded because its new pay equity law has not had a sufficiently long gestation period.

After an introductory chapter, Rhoads summarizes the debates between proponents and opponents of comparable worth. Proponents argue that pay equity is necessary because employers discriminate against women by crowding them into a narrow range of occupations or by undervaluing their work precisely because it is done by women. Rhoads spends considerable time attacking such arguments by belittling the existence of gender discrimination in the labour market, suggesting that women choose to work in lower-paid flexible jobs that allow them to take time off to perform household and childcare responsibilities. He also critiques the way proponents have used job evaluation to correct gender inequities in wages (for instance, by stacking job evaluation committees with 'feminists' and 'unionists'.)

In two chapters on Minnesota, despite the apparent success of the 1982 State Employees Pay Equity Act (27 per cent of the pay gap was closed), Rhoads critiques its implementation largely because underpaid men have difficulty qualifying for pay equity increases, and because of the intense opposition to pay equity from local government authorities. He suggests that job evaluation techniques are subjective and arbitrary, open to politicking by affected groups, with wide variation in job factors, criteria, and weights. Job evaluation between women and men, and in some cases inversions in pay hierarchies (rating police lieutenants higher than police chiefs). Most of all, it violates the market as some women are paid over their market rates, while others are paid less, thereby creating inefficiencies in the management of labour, resulting in an 'unnecessary' escalation in wage and other costs.

In Europe, equal pay for work of equal value gets little support (especially in Germany, Greece, Portugal, and Luxembourg), although the civil servants in

the European Community have forged ahead of the legislative process to make some gains. Rhoads notes that there is less support now for equal pay than in the 1970s. Out of all the European states, the greatest support and activity is in the United Kingdom. Unlike the United States, there is very little criticism of equal value here. The 1970 Equal Pay Act came into full force in 1975. Tripartite industrial panels, with advice from an "expert," hear equal pay cases. Rhoads criticizes this system for the inconsistencies in the values the experts assign the same jobs across companies, its monetary and administrative costs, the increased unemployment and loss in productivity it causes, its violation of labour market supply and demand factors, its biases against male-dominant jobs, and its ultimate failure to make much difference in the overall wage gap.

Rhoads takes dead aim at the argument that Australia has the most successful pay equity in the world. The Australian Conciliation and Arbitration Commission established equal pay for equal work in 1969, and equal pay for work of equal value in 1972. Even though the gendered wage gap closed dramatically, Rhoads questions whether this is due to pay equity, suggesting it results more from raising minimum wages. He questions R.G. Gregory's and R.C. Duncan's widely-cited finding that pay equity did not lead to a noticeable increase in women's unemployment. Relying on P.A. McGavin's PhD thesis, Steven Rhoads suggests that women's employment increased mainly because of the government's huge stimulation of public service jobs, while women's employment in manufacturing decreased. Raising doubts about whether Australia does, indeed, have comparable worth, Rhoads argues that women are better off having their wages determined by skills shortages in the labour market than by the rigid and highly centralized wage-setting Conciliation and Arbitration Commission which has impeded economic growth, in-

creased inflation and unemployment, and hurt Australians' international competitiveness.

This book is a relentless attack on pay equity or comparable worth from the business viewpoints on markets, profits, wages, unions, and feminists. Rhoads' ideal world is one where workers compete against one another at low wages so business can remain competitive internationally. He completely fails to understand how women's labour may have historically come to be undervalued by the division between unpaid work in the household and paid work in the market. Although he touches on this, he refuses to accept the principle that wages can be determined by any standard other than cut-throat competition between workers. For Rhoads, work has no intrinsic value. It is merely an extrinsic instrument by which employers make profits. This book will warm the hearts of business and management. But it should not be ignored by feminists and unionists. To adequately promote and defend pay equity, they need to understand thoroughly the position, rationales, and analyses of their opponents. Although Rhoads did not intend this, his book is an unwitting argument for massive worker ownership domestically and internationally. Since wage-setting in the hands of the state and employers has failed, the only realistic alternative is to leave it in the hands of workers in worker-controlled enterprises.

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Antonella Picchio, *Social Reproduction: the political economy of the labour market* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1992).

IT IS FREQUENTLY CLAIMED by left-wing historians and economists that classical political economy offers more robust and rounded understandings of the economy and society than the atrophied

and soulless science which displaced it in mainstream thought. Many years ago Maurice Dobb observed that modern economics was little more than a study of the exchange process. He was critical of economists' preoccupation with the market, dissatisfied with their readiness to assume hypothetical conditions of market equilibrium, and contemptuous of propositions which treated labour as a productivity factor no different from any other. For the inspiration to alternative understandings, Dobb and others returned to Smith, Marx, and Ricardo. In these writers they found a larger conception of the proper sphere of economic enquiry. Most important was Marx's concept of the social relations of production. It embodied an uncompromising view of the workings of capitalist economy and society.

Picchio, too, returns to the classical economists. Her thesis is that child bearing and child rearing has an essential, but frequently unacknowledged, relevance to economics as the source of labour's replenishment. Smith, Ricardo, and Marx were aware of it, but, she argues from an examination of their writings, Mill, Torrens, and McCullough were not. The latter are blamed for obscuring the significance of social reproduction. They coined an economics of the labour market in which it had no place. Picchio laments their influence upon policy-makers in the 19th century and down to the present day. Towards the end of her book she links the contemporary world-wide crises of resource use and allocation to the wrong-headed ideas of these economists. Her commitment, revealed in these final pages, is to change our thinking before these crises become insuperable.

The early chapters, where Picchio unfolds her thesis through a study of the late 18th- and 19th-century British economists, are the most coherent and scholarly part of her book. Textual analysis of great economic thinkers is decidedly out of favour in the history departments of our universities, and it is good to see Picchio arguing her case from a reading of their

works. Here she makes her most incisive points. Key emphasis is placed upon the disembodiment of labour in neo-classical paradigms. Picchio suggests that when the neo-classicists adopted market-based supply and demand models, they disguised the costs of labour's (re)production. These costs did not vanish: they were switched, unacknowledged, to ordinary men and, even more so, to women. Policy makers, taking their lead from the neo-classical economists, consolidated these assumptions in public policy. The reformed poor law of Victorian and Edwardian Britain was critical. It instituted punitive sanctions and the power of persuasion to make child bearing and rearing the duty of working class families. There was no question but that the expense should be borne out of the wages of a male breadwinner and the unremunerated domestic labour of his wife. Picchio embarks on a study of the ideas of the makers of poor law policy from official parliamentary reports. Her focus is the 1909 Royal Commission. She claims to encompass a longer time-span, but that claim does not hold up, and she fails to add much to the arguments made in the first section of the book. The short-comings of a patch-work approach to this topic begin to show.

The book's final section is different. Broad in scope and speculative, it highlights contemporary problems which Picchio believes have resulted from the contradictions produced by the post-classical separation of social reproduction from the economics of the labour market. This reviewer was, however, left confused by the

non-specific nature of her comments and unable to discern a direct line of argument from the book's previous sections. In short, she does not carry her case by the intellectual force of arguments pre-figured earlier. It is a pity since, potentially, she has important things to say.

Is the brevity of the book the reason for this failure? At less than 160 pages Picchio has precious little space to develop an argument with such wide ramifications. Even so it is a curiously-conceived book. Early on Picchio tells us that she is not setting out to produce a theory or history of the social reproduction of labour: one has no illusions on that score. Nevertheless Picchio is committed to a chronological structure and to a form of historical analysis which obliges closer references to changes in the capitalist economy over time. If we are to take seriously her suggestion that the costs of labour's reproduction were subsumed in men's wages and women's unremunerated labour by the sleight of hand of the neo-classical economists, we might reasonably want to know more about the relationship of the accumulation of capital to the costs of reproduction as it changed over time. Fortunately this sort of work is underway. Picchio's study (at least its first section) is important enough to merit attention, but others are pushing similar insights further, and are doing so in a more sustained manner.

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