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# REVIEWS/COMPTES RENDUS

Linda K. Cullum, *Narratives at Work: Women, Men, Unionization, and the Fashioning of Identities* (St. John's: ISER 2003)

HOW WOULD you explore the oral history of a union of which the members have no memory? The Ladies Cold Storage Workers Union (LCSWU) was marginal to the masculine St. John's waterfront union movement of the 1940s and 1950s, and, it seems, marginal in the memories of the women who worked at Job Brothers' fish plant.

This study began with the premise that people's identities shift constantly, not only through the changing material conditions of their lives, but also as they imaginatively recreate their past lives through narrative. So any oral historian who sets out to recover a narrative of the past, Cullum proposes, will generate multiple competing narratives. Many of these narratives are artefacts of the study. They are the result of a dynamic process through which the researcher and the informant influence each other. Cullum's study primarily focuses upon the process of studying how people shape their own identity. She discusses recruiting these informants and how her relationship with them evolved. Even the silences of those who refused to talk to her are grist for the mill. She found that her informants wanted to please her, and shaped their narratives to what they thought she wanted to hear. In a very practical way, the presence of the sociologist and the questions she

posed created narratives that would otherwise have never existed.

There are many interesting observations here. Cullum notes, for example, many informants denied the importance of race when they categorized the union's founding president, a woman of African ancestry and the only woman of colour working at the plant, as nice or hard-working and one of the girls. A literal reading of the transcript would support the conclusion that race was irrelevant in the women's relationships. The interviews even imply that racism did not exist until the arrival of American servicemen during World War II brought in American-style racism, a claim of which Cullum is rightly sceptical. Cullum suggests, in a reading of the interviews based upon American scholarship, that race does matter and her informants created race as a meaningful category by refusing to give a name to it. Had the first president been of English or Irish ancestry, then the informants would likely not have felt the need to explicitly include her as one of them when speaking to the author.

Cullum has other observations to make about the relationship between the male Longshoremen's Protective Union and the LCSWU. The male union helped its fledgling sister organize and win higher pay, but may have undermined the women's cause by assuming that men should be paid at a higher rate for their labour. Gender was central in how people experienced their lives on the waterfront. Men in the plant saw their masculinity as defined by their levels of skill, necessary physical strength, and ability to work in freezing temperatures. Women's work in

the plant required all the same attributes as men's work. Thus the boundaries between men's and women's work were contested. When Cullum examines the material conditions of people's lives, the discussion is strained through the creation of identity.

The narratives Cullum collected reveal little about the institutional history of the union. Many of the members do not remember attending the meetings. Their narratives of their lives at work reveal the stresses of physical labour in the cold plant and memories of socializing with co-workers. Neighbours, friends, and family were more important in the ways these women imagined their lives than their period of wage employment. Cullum confides that she started her project with the intention of recovering the labour history of these women. But she realized that the collection of evidence to support such an authoritative narrative would create something that did not exist in the narratives of the women who had experienced work at Job's fish plant. To put this in a different way, she suggests that constructing a narrative of her own would be to impose an interpretation. So she tries to allow the informants to speak for themselves.

There are moments of the author's autobiography in this book, and substantial passages in which interviews are parsed for the process through which interviewing creates narratives rather than any larger meaning. The author's constant introspection about the role of the sociologist stands as a useful reminder that the narratives we all create are problematic. Many who are about to embark upon an oral history project could profit from some of these observations. Cullum's awareness that narratives are artefacts that undermine each other leads to a study that contributes to the development of a decentred feminist oral history methodology.

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Stefano Harney, *State Work: Public Administration and Mass Intellectuality* (Durham and London: Duke University Press 2002)

STEFANO HARNEY's *State Work* ends with the observation that the state, as an object of Left/social movement strategy, can no longer be either "quarantined" or smashed. "The state," he says, "is with us, in capitalism or revolution." (188) His book explores the implications of the state's continued presence — and, he would say, growth — at a time when discourses of "reinvention" and "reengineering" claim progress in precisely the opposite direction. His approach is innovative, insightful, and at times incomprehensible, but it has produced what is ultimately an important work. For this reader, the book's contributions are most compelling around issues related to the state's relations with social movements, its boundaries and "effects," and what Harney calls the "specter of government as a workplace."

*State Work* takes the form of an extended reflection on the author's three-year experience in the Ontario Antiracism Secretariat under Bob Rae's NDP. Harney is an academic and activist who was drawn into government, he says, to defend the antiracism movement. (28) Not surprisingly, his new role as a manager in a social democratic government proved troubling, and the book traces his efforts to explore it, focusing especially on the meaning of his daily work. Harney finds very little in the public administration literature that speaks to him, so he begins a long trek through a variety of postmodern and neo-Marxist approaches, taking in Al Gore's initiatives under the Clinton Administration, cultural touchstones like *The X-Files*, and theorists like Antonio Negri, Michel Foucault, and Nicos Poulantzas.

Strangely, given the influence of Poulantzas, Harney's engagement with state work is largely undifferentiated with respect to class. His problematic is the na-

ture of state work in general, and his arguments are pitched at that level of abstraction. Although there are some ironic asides about "working managers" when Harney's group is briefed by a management consultant (66-70), he never deals satisfactorily with the structural difference between his position and the position of most frontline workers. A central flaw of public administration lies in its propensity to generalize from the position of managers, and Harney tries to escape this tendency by stressing his ongoing links to the antiracism movement. However even a progressive manager with movement credibility can fall back on the coercive power of the bureaucracy. This latent power is not available to most state workers, except (to varying degrees) as a resource to be used against state clients. *State Work* neglects both the author's relative privilege in this regard, and larger class divisions *inside* the state bureaucracy. This is an unfortunate evasion, for clearly the Rae government foundered largely on its inability to manage such divisions. Despite the pervasive and poisonous effects of Rae's "social contract," it receives no attention in this book.

Harney is obviously more attached to the antiracism movement than the labour movement, and might be forgiven in privileging race over class. But there is much to be learned in how Poulantzas handles similar questions. The essential point for Poulantzas is that subordinate interests (which in his work are too narrowly class-based) must achieve real representation inside the state *in order to be most effectively subordinated*. Harney does not make crude claims about achieving victories by "working on the inside" — in fact he continually underlines the artificiality of the *inside/outside* division. Nonetheless he does claim victory of a sort, despite the absence of all the usual indicators. He says his work "had a real effect on us and others, even though sometimes all we seemed to be doing was talking and acting as if antiracism mattered." (20) Although they were long absorbed in the cre-

ation of an antiracism policy that eventually came to naught, the secretariat made theoretical breakthroughs, seeking not the leveling of race and other identities, but "extension of identities as labors of self-creation." (49) His Secretariat and the NDP were demolished in 1995, but by "acting as if social democracy could accommodate the Left," his work helped discover what the Left could actually do. (30)

Such statements are always couched in an elaborate theoretical framework, but all through the book I could not help wondering whether they were the product of sophistication or naïvete. Was Harney engaged in real struggle, or merely striking a pose? Was the state challenged and disturbed, or did it swallow Harney with just a little more fuss than usual? He and his colleagues are not the first activists to have been propelled by social movements onto the rocky shores of the state, and some comparisons would have been useful. The literature on the Greater London Council is touched upon briefly here, but much more is out there, including some fascinating material on the UFO (United Farmers of Ontario) — the only other third party/movement ever to have achieved government in Ontario.

To be fair, the history of the Antiracism Secretariat is really more of a jumping-off point than a central concern for Harney. But his treatment of that experience raises questions that return later, as he places "immaterial labour" at the centre of state work, and reduces the state's role and existence to an "effect." In the latter he follows Timothy Mitchell and Foucault, who question the presumed existence of the state as a distinct entity. For Mitchell, the state is socially constructed, but "certain novel practices ... create the effect of an enduring structure apparently external to those practices." (cited in Harney, 10) For Harney state work is largely a process of "immaterial labour" aimed at creating this effect, or sustaining a somewhat shaky ideological illusion. The state effect is produced by "repeat-

able practices and techniques that Foucault said can give the impression of a state structure as something solid, even natural." (121)

But like any labour process, this one produces resistance as well as its official product. (53-55) In the case of state work, its "novel" ideological role allows it to sense the possibility of other worlds beyond the status quo, to touch the subterranean streams of "mass intellectuality." (20) And because in this case the immaterial labour process included movement allies as well as state workers, Harney feels that his efforts outlasted both the secretariat and the NDP. (21)

At the centre of this formulation is a very important point: nearly all state work has an ideological function that sets it apart from — but is deeply relevant to — other sorts of work. Consequently there are real possibilities for resistance in this domain that are still largely untapped. Harney's secretariat may very well have pushed the envelope in this regard. However, reducing state work to only this immaterial aspect is simplistic and dangerous — as Harney recognizes in other contexts, but not in his own. It is simplistic because, as he says later in discussing *The X-Files*, "guns must still be drawn and duty called." (98) It is dangerous because a feature of neoconservative politics since its inception has been the attempt to replace material bribes to workers with symbolic forms of legitimation. Remaining immaterial might be the ultimate form of cooption in this regard.

In highlighting the cultural significance of state work, Harney is on stronger ground. He rightly notes the prevalence of state workers on TV, which seems at odds with their poor reputation in political circles. Granted, those who make prime time are overwhelmingly police, but as Harney shows with reference to *The X-Files*, even images of this profession can display hints of "mass intellectuality." Agents Mulder and Scully inhabit a world where the boundaries between work and life are blurred, where work is endless and con-

tinuously monitored. (94-96) Here TV is helping to naturalize the colonization of life by work — a trend otherwise indicated by longer working hours, increasing stress levels, and so on. But the fictional state work being done here is also making "more and more of the vast interconnectedness of the state, economy, and civil society ... visible." (97) The truth that is out there for Mulder and Scully is, according to Harney, a form of sociality that allows escape from daily life in capitalism. Conspiracies are, according to Frederic Jameson, "evidence of the population's sense of a totality beyond the enforced fragmentation of wage labor under capital." (97)

Harney's perspective also allows for an interesting reconsideration of the meaning of "offloading" — the shedding of state activities into the private sector and the private sphere. The Left has generally approached this tendency as either an abandonment of social responsibilities for the sake of private profit, and/or as an unfair redistribution of the burden of caring work that tends to hit women particularly hard. Both perspectives assume that the work is no longer "state" work once it has been offloaded, but Harney makes the opposite assumption. He sees in this process the growth of a new "regulatory citizenship" which asks people "to finish work that has exhausted the state." (106) Even environmental deregulation, where corporations are left to monitor themselves, shows evidence of "an increase in state activity, but activity increased by the labor of workers outside the state." (118) Like IKEA, which has extended its furniture-making to include customers (who assemble the furniture), the state has spread its labour process to citizens who must improve themselves and help others. This means, according to Harney, that the contradictions inherent in state work will also spread, that more people are now involved not only in making the state, but in undermining it as well. More are engaged in immaterial labour, and so more may glimpse another world.

Elsewhere Harney takes a more conventional case-study approach to spotlight the cracks appearing as state work grows. He has a fascinating explanation of police brutality in New York as basically a coping strategy for frontline cops increasingly detached from the communities they patrol. Leaping out of squad cars to bash heads is the way they reconnect, and "the only labor-saving device capable of reconciling management control with the hunt for numbers." (141) But such brutality has fractured the police force on racial lines, and provoked black cops to restore community policing as an after-hours project. (141)

It is public administration, according to Harney, that is "haunted by the specter of government as workplace, and the workplace as government." (12) But his book shows this workplace may produce utopian dreams as well as nightmares, even at the state's coercive heart. For this it is worth the read.

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Yonatan Reshef and Sandra Rastin, *Unions in the Time of Revolution: Government and Restructuring in Alberta and Ontario* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 2003)

IF A PERSON had their choice of occupations during the 1990s, the role of union leader in Alberta or Ontario would likely not top the list. It was a job entailing difficult struggle against an onslaught of right-wing government reform under the leaderships of Ralph Klein and Mike Harris, respectively. The 1990s was clearly a period of unfiltered conflict and historic challenges for unions in those provinces. It was also one of those rarely occurring periods that provide researchers with bountiful material for research into unions and their response to political challenges.

Yonatan Reshef and Sandra Rastin explore this fertile territory in their book, *Unions in the Time of Revolution*. They conduct a comparative study of union responses to neo-conservative political attacks in the two provinces. In particular, they examine the use of collective action by unions to achieve political ends. Their study uncovers significant differences in how unions in each province responded to threats to their membership.

Alberta and Ontario are an appropriate pairing for study. In the 1990s both provinces elected governments with similar ideological outlooks and policy agendas. Their respective periods of aggressive neo-conservative change overlap — Alberta between 1993 and 1997 and Ontario between 1995 and 2001. But despite their similarities, important differences exist in the political cultures and in the policy agendas of the two provinces. It is these differences, Reshef and Rastin find, that explain the divergent choices made by unions in response to neo-conservative threats.

Reshef and Rastin focus on two key differences. The first is that the "Harris and Klein governments operated within different political cultures and industrial-relations environments. Overall, the Alberta political culture and industrial relations scene was more conducive to a neo-conservative upheaval." (193) Second, Ontario and Alberta differed in their policy approach to unions. "Harris set out to inflict lasting damage upon the unions by significantly changing the long-established informal and formal rules of the industrial-relations game." (188) Despite Klein's reputation, Reshef and Rastin build a case that he led a more pragmatic government, at least in terms of labour relations, and neither needed nor chose to challenge unions directly. For Reshef and Rastin it is union leaders' perception that "territorial rights and boundaries" of the union itself are at risk that leads to collective mobilization. This perception was created in Ontario, but not Alberta.

As an account of the "revolutionary" periods in these two provinces, the book is masterful. Reshef and Rastin provide detailed, insightful accounts of key labour relations struggles in the two provinces — including mandatory wage rollbacks and the Calgary laundry workers' strike in Alberta, and the Days of Action and the 1997 teachers' strike in Ontario. They weave the stories with accuracy and ensure the proper political context is included. Their accounts of the evolving relationships between public sector unions and the Conservative governments underscore the complexities of the neo-conservative policy agenda.

However, Reshef and Rastin overstate the inherent conservatism of Alberta, while simultaneously under-estimating Ontario's conservative strains. Alberta unions are perceived as pursuing traditional business unionism, while their Ontario counterparts are cast as more politically attuned. They are correct to point out the weakness of the Alberta industrial relations regime for union activism. Restrictive labour laws, low union density, and an oppressive political culture are important factors to consider. However, they do not provide adequate evidence to suggest that Alberta unions are more conservative than their Ontario counterparts. The lack of collective action from Alberta unions may relate more to the restrictive environment in which they operate than any political predisposition of the leadership within those unions.

Reshef and Rastin adopt an industrial relations model, while folding in collective action theory to fill out their analysis. This is a useful framework, as it allows them to isolate the elements of the employer-union relationship that have the potential to lead to collective action. However, the framework also has inherent limitations.

These limitations are embedded in how they frame the decision to mobilize for collective action: "This decision is a result of a cost-benefit analysis that, in turn is the product of the union leaders'

perception of the degree of the government threat, the leaders' belief about the merit and feasibility of collective action, and contextual contingencies that are internal and external to the union organization." (183)

First, as the quote demonstrates, Reshef and Rastin's hypothesis rests heavily on a rationalist, economic calculation. They argue that unions assess their organizational self-interest and weigh the various advantages and disadvantages to collective action — a cost-benefit analysis. While this theoretical lens is useful in many respects, it neglects many of the richer aspects of how unions operate. Decisions such as these are made in a boiler-room atmosphere under difficult timelines and tense discussions. Factors such as internal union politics, personal psychology, political disposition, leaders' perceptions of the union role in politics, and other factors can play strong roles in shaping the final decision.

The second limitation is their leader-focussed approach. Reshef and Rastin rely heavily on a series of interviews with union leaders in the two provinces. The membership of the unions is relegated to a supporting role.

There is a certain irony in an analysis of collective action and rank-and-file mobilization that centres on union leaders exclusively. Conceptually, if we only look at leaders' decisions, we cannot come to understand why union members act or fail to act collectively. If we wish to understand what motivates a union member to engage in collective action, then we need to explore the rank-and-file in relation to their leadership, as well as the leadership's relationship with political decision-makers.

The tendency to examine elites builds a bias toward conservative explanations. Union leaders in many of the case studies examined believed they could not successfully mobilize their membership. However, this perception is not tested or challenged. Reshef and Rastin are quick to accept the explanations that the mem-



bership is reluctant to act, and many actually supportive of Klein and Harris.

Reshef and Rastin construct a vivid re-telling of how collective mobilization such as the Days of Action came to occur (or not occur), and of their ultimate failure, for the most part, to change government policy (or election results). The explanation of why these actions failed to change political directions was not Reshef and Rastin's primary concern, but their failure to explore the reasons for the ineffectiveness is a missed opportunity. A fuller discussion of why union political mobilization failed to change government policy might shed light on the reasons for labour's recent political impotence, and may offer suggestions for how unions should go about trying to mobilize members more effectively in the future.

Ultimately, *Unions in the Time of Revolution* provides a partial picture of how union collective action arises. It offers a rich analysis of institutional structures and relations during the 1990s in the two provinces. In this respect it is a valuable contribution to understanding the formalized aspects of post-Fordist industrial relations. However, for those wishing to learn more about how and why workers mobilize workers, it offers little insight. For those readers, this book may be more useful for demonstrating the barriers to union collective action, rather than for identifying keys to unlocking the power of unionized workers. For that answer, we need to look elsewhere.

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Maureen G. Reed, *Taking Stands: Gender and the Sustainability of Rural Communities* (Vancouver: UBC Press 2003)

*TAKING STANDS* is a thought-provoking book of great interest to researchers, activists, and policy makers. Focusing on women's political reactions to forest conservation efforts in a northern Vancouver

Island logging community, Reed exposes the multiplicity of women's political positions, embeddedness of these positions in women's diverse social and economic circumstances, and the unifying effect of moral confrontations between these women and environmental non-governmental organizations. She also exemplifies how forestry women's anti-conservationist stands are shaped by the lack of viable alternatives to logging in forestry-dependent communities.

Reed challenges the dichotomy between pro- and anti-environmentalists and the conflation of pro-logging stands with conservative politics. She demonstrates that women who supported forestry were not opposed to environmental preservation. In fact, they participated in a variety of environmental conservation community projects. Reed also illustrates that the women's strong support for forestry was related only in part to their commitment to their partners and other household members employed in the industry. She suggests that to a large extent, women's attachment to forestry came from their own labour experiences in the logging industry and to their involvement in the broader forestry community.

Reed does not idealize the logging industry or the community that women in her study tried to preserve. She discusses disadvantages women faced in a forest community, related to their ghettoization in the labour force, the limited availability of daycare, and various forms of sexism at work and in the larger community. The women interviewed by Reed were fully aware of these disadvantages as well as others, including poor roads, occupational dangers that logging posed to their male partners and household members, lack of educational opportunities, shortage of social services, and lack of political clout. However, despite their understanding of challenges associated with living in a rural resource community, forestry women strongly opposed the provincial government's land use policy and the "wilderness preservation" rhetoric of

the environmental non-governmental organizations. Reed suggests that to a large extent, the fear of losing their rural identities, voices, and respect shaped their political positions.

Reed also challenges the theoretical perspectives that depict rural workers' wives either as passive "victims" or "victors" over their destiny. Finding both positions problematic, Reed presents an alternative approach which emphasizes the multiplicity of women's perspectives. Based on the analysis of 50 in-depth interviews and 3 focus groups, Reed convincingly demonstrates how environmental perspectives and attitudes are embedded within broader social, political, and economic conditions. She relates women's activism towards land use policies to employment in forestry, household dynamics, gender identities, and lifestyles. Reed illustrates that women's identities arose from multiple positions in the labour market, community, and household, and differing interpretations of their circumstances. Women's activism and political views were embedded in these positions and identities. Women interviewed by Reed represented a multiplicity of political positions. Reed characterizes their activism as heterogeneous and contingent, complex, contradictory, and embedded in the social circumstances. Women's activism was continuously shaped and reshaped by the rhetorics and activism of their partners, coworkers, community members, policy-makers, academics, and other women.

Reed demonstrates that despite the multiplicity of political views and positions among the forestry community women, they had a united voice during their confrontation with the environmental non-governmental organizations at the Clayoquot Sound Peace Camp. Reed contends that variations in women's positions towards forestry and land use policies were overcome by the need for solidarity in opposition to both official conservation policy and environmental organizations. All women subscribed to

the idea of the "working forest" that is "farmed," and not "wild." Stereotyping and moral condemnation used both by environmental organizations and rural residents solidified identities on both sides of the political divide and reinforced perceptions of irreconcilable differences.

Reed is critical of the ecofeminists who emphasize the "natural" link between women and the environment. She positions her research in "feminist environmentalism" which locates women's views on environmental protection in the intersection of social relations, gender identities, and public policy.

Reed questions environmentalism which protects the "wilderness" at the expense of the lifestyles, identities, and economic needs of the resident communities. She advocates a holistic understanding of the environment in which concern for people, their communities, and their environments are to be considered equally and simultaneously.

Reed criticizes state "transition" policies for their failure to address women's changing needs. She points out that most efforts to assist communities during transition, such as retraining and employment adjustment programs, targeted male workers. While most assistance programs attempted to compensate for jobs lost in the harvesting and processing sectors, where male workers predominated, losses in jobs in support industries and community services, staffed predominantly by women, were neglected by social planners. Reed also points out that the transition policies failed to address communities' social needs. She points out that while unemployment and economic restructuring created new demands on social services, including health services, counselling, youth programs, education, and affordable housing, these services were discontinued by forest companies and/or governments. Reed attributes these problems to deficiencies in the planning process. First, she questions criteria for participation in the consultation process established by the Vancouver Island

planners. Only organizations with strong regional or corporate networks, such as private sector unions, business corporations, professional associations, and better organized environmental organizations were invited to participate in the planning process, while public sector unions, representing mostly women, were excluded. Second, Reed points out that those who were invited to represent forestry communities lacked bargaining power and influence. The agenda and the negotiating process were firmly controlled by state organizations.

Reed does not merely present criticisms; she also offers solutions. Reed calls for participatory citizenship which opens possibilities for citizens to participate in policy-planning processes by exchanging values and experiences and discussing desired futures. She also recommends a "values"-based, rather than "interest"-based, model to ensure that the values and concerns identified by community members, and not the interests articulated by sectors or coalitions, are well represented. Finally, she underscores that feminist research, with its emphasis on complexity, multiplicity, and embeddedness of people's political positions, can contribute to building an environmental movement that would be open to diverse views. *Taking Stands* makes a significant contribution to feminist, environmental, rural, social justice, and social planning studies.

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Susan Prentice, ed., *Changing Child Care: Five Decades of Child Care Advocacy and Policy in Canada* (Halifax: Fernwood Publishing 2001)

THIS ANTHOLOGY on child care history and practice fills a gap in the literature on the Canadian welfare state. The ten articles featured in the book are drawn from a growing body of research analyzing child

care policy reform in Canada. Many of the book's contributors are also advocates, including parents, early childhood educators, union representatives, government officials, and policy analysts. What unites them is the conviction that child care is a public responsibility and not a private family matter, and the concern that child care services and policies in Canada have failed to keep pace with the growing need. The authors chosen for this anthology all start from the premise that advocacy is effective and has had an impact on how child care is conceptualized, developed, and delivered. The book is part of a larger research project co-sponsored by Human Resources Development (HRD) and the Child Care Advocacy Association of Canada (CCAAC) that includes interviews with child care advocates and a bibliography of archival sources. These can be accessed on line at <[www.childcareadvocacy.ca/history](http://www.childcareadvocacy.ca/history)>.

In the last fifteen years, a new body of research has emerged emphasizing the impact of social policy regimes on women, and critiquing the "gender bias" or "gender blindness" of much of the existing literature on welfare state reform. The first two authors in this anthology belong to this new school. Wendy Atkins chronicles the impact of first-wave feminism, maternalism, and social eugenics on child care in Toronto. Atkins brings the concepts of race/ethnicity, gender, and class into play in her study of how the early 20th-century practices of the women who lead the day nursery movement had moral regulatory and social control overtones. Atkins describes how the female creators of the Toronto Creche were inspired by the ideology of social eugenics to assimilate the children of female immigrant workers into the Canadian cultural fabric. Despite these moralistic beginnings, the work of these female philanthropists set the wheels in motion for the later development of a publicly funded child care system in Toronto. Jane Jensen is well known for her research analyzing how governments preoccupied

with population decline at the beginning of the 20th century gave rise to pronatalist and maternalist social policies in Britain and France. She uses a similar framework here to explain how policies have emerged in support of working mothers as a consequence of Quebec nationalism. Jenson recounts how parent-run child care centers were extended and institutionalized by the Parti Québécois, with the backing of an unusual coalition of women's groups, "femocrats," demographers, and the conservative "family" movement. As most Canadians are aware, the result was a package of comprehensive social policies unparalleled anywhere else in Canada, including a publicly funded child care system where parents paid "five dollars a day," a parental leave policy extending benefits beyond those provided by federal legislation, generous family allowance, housing and health care entitlements, and laws extending benefits to part-time workers, the majority of whom are women.

Many of the authors in this anthology examine the challenges of bringing about welfare reform in the neo-conservative 1990s. Cheryl Collier argues that the determining factor shaping child care policies currently is a government's commitment to a political vision and ideology. Using evidence from a study comparing BC and Ontario, Collier rejects one-dimensional arguments that place economic factors at the forefront of policy change. In her comparison of the New Democratic Party (NDP) and its opposition in BC and in Ontario, she demonstrates that the NDP managed to maintain a publicly funded child care system despite strong pressures to privatize these services; yet, when right wing governments had their turn in office, their predisposition towards neo-liberal ideas caused them to dismantle the public child care system. A more detailed analysis of the impact of neo-liberalism on child care is provided by Vappu Tyyska. In 1995, when the NDP government of Bob Rae was defeated by Mike Harris' Conserva-

tive regime, Ontario had the third highest per capita expenditures on child care in Canada. The incoming government disrupted the care of approximately 60,000 children by canceling early kindergarten, and affected tens of thousands more children by slashing direct funding to child care centres. The NDP's planned conversion of for-profit spaces to the public system was overturned, and in an unprecedented move, municipalities were allowed to channel government subsidies towards private operators. The new government also tried to reverse the decision to include child care workers in the Pay Equity Act, and it clawed back subsidies and funding to low-income parents and special needs children. Syyka concludes that the neo-liberal model offloads the responsibility for and costs of child care onto parents, child care workers and municipalities, leaving many families with no other recourse but to opt for unregulated care.

In addition to the political, sociological, and historical questions tackled above, the book has a second goal of critiquing the child care movement's effectiveness. Towards this end, many of the authors address the questions: what power do advocates have to influence state policies, and how successful have they been? Both Tom Langford and Sheila Campbell take Alberta as a case study of how the structure of political opportunities at different points in time affects policy outcomes. Langford argues that while earlier activism in the 1960s and 1970s was successful, its influence has since waned. He says this is so because the climate then for advocacy was the unique product of a particular set of historical circumstances that would not be repeated; governments, recognizing their own lack of expertise as well as the inadequacies of child care, viewed advocates as their allies during this seminal period. He provides ample evidence that by the late 1970s, the child care movement had moved from "insider" to "outsider" status, with municipal bureaucrats even

being shut out of provincial decision-making. Sheila Campbell pinpoints the moment advocates began to lose ground: it occurred when advocacy passed into the hands of the "professional" daycare stakeholders and the vital involvement of the broader public was lost, including the support of prominent citizens with direct access to decision-makers. In her assessment of the child care movement's progress, Campbell concludes that timing is everything: pressure can be brought to bear on politicians during critical moments by enlisting media attention and generating widespread interest, and advocacy can be effective during election periods; however, in the absence of such opportunities, the child care movement has been stalled. Drawing on their experience lobbying for services for children with special needs, authors Sharon Hope Irwin and Donna Lero find that the pattern of advocacy in Canada has been innovation-driven. When funds were more readily available through the Canada Assistance Plan (CAP), daycare "pioneers" were able to break new ground. They warn us that such social experiments are fragile and unsustainable, though, if they are not subsequently institutionalized by governments.

Many of the authors in this anthology express concern about the changing dynamics of Canadian federalism. Advocacy is tricky in Canada because programs must be broad yet flexible enough for provinces to implement them. With the division of responsibilities among the three levels of government remaining ill-defined and contentious, advocates must target their efforts at all three, draining precious energy and resources. Another aspect of federalism is the fact that policy results are often unintentional; for example, from 1966 to the late 1980s, cost-sharing arrangements under the CAP encouraged many local governments to fund non-profit child care services; however, despite being on the agenda of the federal parties for more than a decade now, no national commitment to child

care has actually materialized. The replacement of CAP by the Canada Health and Social Transfer (CHST) and the Social Union Framework Agreement (SUFA) sets a dangerous precedent by allowing provincial regimes to opt out of support for child care.

Should advocates work for incremental measures or should they insist on sweeping and transformative changes? This is perhaps the most important question raised by the authors in this anthology. Linda White and Judith Martin come down on opposite sides of this issue. The contemporary child care movement was founded on a platform calling for a universally accessible, publicly funded, not-for-profit national child care system. Linda White asks if this utopian vision has operated for or against the movement's long-term interests. White is critical of child care advocates for adopting what she calls a "narrow ideological position" in favour of women's equality and against commercial child care, and she approves of a recent shift in strategy, which puts forth a more "sophisticated" and "palatable" set of demands, linking child care with less controversial issues such as child poverty reduction and crime prevention. Although also critical of some of the strategies child care advocates have used in the past, Judith Martin, by contrast, faults the movement for having a platform that is "too adaptive" to the dominant culture. She argues that a vision for child care should grow out of an emancipatory analysis of gender issues and a critique of what society offers in the way of support for parents. In lieu of focusing on commodifying child care services outside the family, Martin suggests there should be more emphasis on making it possible for both parents to become involved with the care of children by providing a continuum of services to help them balance their family and working lives. In order to achieve this, Martin urges us to reject the current stakeholder model that marginalizes the advocacy movement as a "special interest group."

Instead, she says we should expand the debate to include a broad range of citizens, and only then will a discourse emerge that is capable of influencing our political culture enough to bring about lasting social change.

One suspects that most of the authors in this anthology would follow Martin's advice and not White's. The evidence mounted within these pages makes a compelling argument that advocacy has been most effective when it emanates from a broad-based coalition of social forces. Activists may have to heed White and temporarily adapt their tactics to these neo-conservative times, but in doing so, they should not lose sight of their vision for a national child care system whose roots originate with the emancipatory movements of the 1960s and 1970s. While we await the turn of the neo-conservative political tide, in the words of Vappu Tyyska, "it is all the more important to get out the strongest possible message. This includes advocating the long-standing vision of child care as a universal service that promotes equality." (146)

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Peter Sawchuk, *Adult Learning and Technology in Working-Class Life* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2003)

IN A BOOK that will surely invite the critical attention of labour educators, as well as researchers from a variety of disciplines, Peter Sawchuk offers an engaging theoretical synthesis and empirical study of working-class computer learning. The author combines his shop floor experience with his background as a sociologist specializing in labour and adult education, to probe uncharted areas of collectively directed and tacit learning found in solidaristic networks of manufacturing

workers in Ontario. From this standpoint, he fashions a lively and provocative analysis that reassesses adult learning theory and underscores the hidden but vital realm of informal learning across the multiple spheres of workplace, home, and community. Sawchuk anchors his critique of educational theory in a materialist perspective and provides theoretical refinement to situated learning and activity theory as an alternative form of analysis. The voyage is clearly marked by outlining his conceptual foundation, proceeding through a series of related discussions on the themes which arise from them, and culminating in some practical advice. In many respects, it is a worthy addition to Cambridge University Press' *Learning in Doing* series.

In the first two chapters Sawchuk situates himself in the Western Marxist tradition with an understanding of class analysis shaped by E.P. Thompson, Georg Lukács, and the young Marx of *The German Ideology*. Drawing out essential aspects of Marx's mature political economy to punctuate crucial points in his account, he also actively incorporates Marxist-feminist standpoint theory and introduces the idea of a "working class technological common sense" that builds on the work of Antonio Gramsci.

Yet, it is his critical appropriation of Pierre Bourdieu's notion of habitus which serves as a focal point in the conceptual basis of Sawchuk's study. His idea of a "working-class learning habitus" acts as a unifying construct in organizing patterned forms of behaviour and dispositions rooted in a working-class standpoint. This informs class practices in the approach to learning. Sawchuk sees the habitus as a "strategy generating mechanism" that structures human agency, but is itself subject to change through the exercise of that agency. Or as he would put it, the habitus "undergoes change or elaboration in a sociocultural process that can be described as learning." (100) Similar to Jean Lave and Etienne Wenger's conclu-

sion that learning and the production of identity are part of the same social process, Sawchuk would view the construction and development of a working-class learning habitus as the formation of "learning identities." (169)

In a subsequent review of the adequacy of theoretical perspectives for investigating working-class learning in its broadest manifestations, Sawchuk detects a "hegemonic bloc of basic class-deficit themes." (23) Features of this dominant view include an over-preoccupation with individualism, abstract rationalism, ahistorical analysis, and the formalized relations of learning between novices and experts. With varying degrees of sympathy, he examines the work of Knowles, Tough, Mezirow, Giroux, and the critical-radical pedagogy school with a coda to Freire, but concludes that different themes found in the dominant view tend to blind "conventional adult learning theory to meaningfully recognize the learning of working-class groups." (25)

Instead, Sawchuk is drawn to sociocultural theories like situated learning and activity theory. The latter becomes a cornerstone of Sawchuk's analysis and he traces its origins from its inception to the third generation of the theory exemplified in the work of Yrjö Engeström. To Engeström, an activity system is comprised of an "individual participant, coparticipants, the material and conceptual tools of the activity system, and the negotiated objects, goals, and motives of the ongoing learning process." (42) Moreover, activity systems are knit together in a multi-dimensional network where they interact with one another.

The point is a crucial one. As the author notes, it is "this arrangement of overlapping activity systems, which shapes and structures working class learning throughout its full range of variation ... that gives rise to particular responses and, over time, elaborates a set of dispositions that define a working-class learning habitus." (109) This is a fascinating syn-

thesis, and taken in concert with the other concepts he has introduced, Sawchuk provides a penetrating presentation of his evidence.

After situating computer technology historically in the third chapter, Sawchuk describes the "contradictory and compelling" working-class attraction to learning aspects of it. In his view, it provided "the means for many workers to discuss some of their deepest fears, hopes, and desires for themselves and their families (60)," particularly on issues surrounding employment. Here Sawchuk develops his Gramscian notion of a working-class common sense and relates it to the motive level in activity theory. In chapters that follow, he brings this together with a compelling sketch of the learning networks that emerge in the "interstitial spaces" of the workplace, household, and community life. The material structures that were forged include a painfully gendered division of labour in the home and acts of workplace resistance that create gaps where learning takes place. It is within these spaces that oral artifacts are produced, the habitus enriched, and the formation of "identities-in-practice" is realized.

Here, his narrative is at its best, describing the "basements of these working-class homes ... [where] we discovered several more or less obsolete computers in various states of disassembly ... a comfortable well worn couch, and children busily searching the internet or blasting space invaders, with the strong odor of hockey equipment mixed with the fresh moisture that hanging laundry adds to the air." (186) It has a familiar ring to it. Nevertheless, Sawchuk allows his interviewees to speak for themselves, and they do so at times with contagious enthusiasm, evident heartbreak, and urgency.

The fourth and the sixth chapters expand on the process of learning and the development of class standpoints with the author performing some novel micro-analysis in the former. In two case studies, Sawchuk demonstrates how learning

can be collectively produced outside of expert-novice relations, and how perforations in the electronic labour process nevertheless create conditions where workers learn by improvising solutions to production problems. The first study is an ingenious application of concepts drawn from ethnomethodology and conversational analysis, but the latter perhaps does more to establish the continuing relevance of Michael Burawoy's *Manufacturing Consent*. Certainly, there is some question as to whether the author's idea of a "key field" corresponds to the way it is commonly understood in relational database management systems. Here, as elsewhere in the book, Sawchuk may have benefited from insights provided by writers like Phil Agre and Sherry Turkle.

The ninth chapter negotiates the difficult terrain of the commodity-form in everyday learning. These controversial observations are followed by the final chapter that contains recommendations Sawchuk makes based on the implications of his research. Broadly speaking, he ultimately sees the production of exchange-values that characterize the activity system of these workers in their quest for computer literacy. Legitimized in terms of its fit with the dominant discourse on human capital production, this everyday activity becomes a fetishized commodity, alienated and separate from the people who produce it. He concludes the final chapter by outlining two possible outcomes that research in informal learning could produce: a knowledge-intensive capitalism or the development of a "proletarian public sphere" sustained by labour and other social movements.

Peter Sawchuk has provided us with a moment in the development of working-class computer learning. The networks he describes have no doubt been supplanted or widened by the emergence of online communities of practice that straddle the virtual and real worlds. This brings with it a new set of analytical chal-

lenges. But, as he has shown us, a lot of the lessons may well be the same.

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Mark Kristmanson, *Plateaus of Freedom: Nationality, Culture, and State Security in Canada, 1940-1960* (Don Mills, Ontario: Oxford University Press 2003)

"GREAT IS TRUTH, but still greater, from a practical point of view, is silence about truth," wrote Aldous Huxley in 1946. The sentiment resonates with William Lyon Mackenzie King's diary entry of 6 August 1945 when he learned that the atomic bomb had been dropped on Hiroshima. After expressing relief that the bomb had been used on the Japanese rather than on the "White races of Europe," King noted: "The whole business has been referred to as the greatest achievement in science. I think it was an equally great achievement in secrecy.... It shows what control by government of publicity can effect." King's insight was sharper than his syntax, as control of publicity, alongside secrecy and silence, were characteristic achievements of the Brave New World of the Cold War state. In *Plateaus of Freedom* Mark Kristmanson confronts the contemporary legacies of the silent and secret architects of Cold War Canada: the selective speech of censored security records and the selective memory of a cultural nationalist historiography. Kristmanson responds by using the analytical tools of cultural studies to interrogate the erasures of the censor and the platitudes of the liberal-progressive narrative of the making of the modern, multi-cultural, tolerant, democratic Canadian state.

The histories of Canadian cultural institutions and security agencies are typically segregated fields of research, but Kristmanson traces a latticework of connections between culture and security during and following World War II that



make it difficult to sustain the division. Kristmanson's case studies point to a co-ordinated network of censorship, intelligence, and propaganda shaping an assertive Canadian national culture. His studies range from a "conspiratorial" rereading of the famous Gouzenko defection to analyses of forgotten cultural/security figures like Tracy Phillipps and Peter Dwyer. In each, Kristmanson blends an analysis of a relevant cultural text — a spy novel, a play, a film, a painting, a concert — with his examination of archival and security sources.

Kristmanson begins with the eccentric character of Tracy Phillipps, the British soldier-adventurer who arrived in war-time Canada to offer his services as a self-described "electrical engineer of culture."<sup>(2)</sup> Through remarkable self-promotion, Phillipps became simultaneously employed by the Canadian government in the Nationalities Branch and by the RCMP as a civilian agent. In the latter role, Phillipps' reactionary imperialism and strident anti-communism were hardly an obstacle, but, within the Ottawa bureaucracy, Phillipps became an ever-increasing source of embarrassment. As a part of the residual culture of Canada's colonial past, Phillipps was out of step with an emergent nationalist cultural project. Kristmanson shows, however, that Phillipps' interaction with Canada's minority nationalities was but a "Britishthinking" variation on a Canadian theme. Though personal and political controversy swirled around him during his brief Canadian career, this should not obscure his rather typical position alongside other special constables, translators, and cultural bureaucrats who acted as intermediaries between ethnocultural minorities and state security agencies. "If these cultural intermediaries are exposed to public scrutiny and discussion," Kristmanson argues, "it would be understood directly how multicultural states are, intrinsically, *security states*."<sup>(48)</sup> Cultural difference, if ostensibly tolerated, attracts the attention and mistrust of

the state's security agencies. For example, Kristmanson notes that the National Library of Canada owes its extensive collection of early minority-language periodicals to the assiduous surveillance and censorship work of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP).

Kristmanson then turns his attention to the strained Cold-War relationship between the National Film Board (NFB) and the RCMP. Much of this section is a reproduction of RCMP files pertaining to the NFB garnered through Access to Information requests — or what remained of these files after they had been expurgated by the CSIS censor. The absent portions of these "shattered" documents reveal a shadowy portrait of the censor in action — in his omissions we may read "the contemporary signature of the state" authorizing a limited and sanitized history of its past security activities. Yet what remains here still provides revelations: Kristmanson has demonstrated the extent, persistence, and duration of the Mounties' surveillance and penetration of the NFB. More painful perhaps is the overt and covert complicity of those within the Film Board in a "clean-out" that far exceeded the three politically-motivated firings that were publicly acknowledged. These particular revelations could easily fit into a general narrative that is well known in Canadian historiography — the Red scare dismantled the progressive/subversive NFB that had made such great and hopeful strides during the war under the leadership of John Grierson. Kristmanson, however, challenges a paradise-lost reading of the post-war NFB. Rather, he suggests, Grierson's dream of "audio-visual citizenship," in which film would "direct men's vision and determine their loyalties," was completely compatible with aims of the cultural nationalist project of the Canadian state.

Griersonian documentary was designed to evoke an emulative desire amongst viewers — the masses should imagine that they *saw themselves* on the screen and identify with the moral and po-

litical choices of their on-screen personae. The elaborate distribution network established by the NFB to deliver these civic-educational messages to millions of Canadians put a very powerful propaganda tool in the hands of the state. To illustrate this point, Kristmanson draws our attention to the transgression of Norman McLaren's Academy Award-winning short film *Neighbours* (1952). This film depicts an ultra-violent and surreal conflict between two suburban home owners over the unexpected blossoming of a marigold between their properties. Contemporaries read the film as an allegory for the Cold War. Certainly, too, it could be read allegorically in reference to the RCMP and the NFB. Kristmanson urges us to notice that this film is a transgression through *medium*. McLaren's pixillation technique causes the movements of his actors to appear unnatural and distorted; the soundtrack, drawn on the film itself, is otherworldly — the combined effect distances the audience from the on-screen action and the result is a viewing experience that breaks decisively with Grierson's aesthetic.

In the hands of less ambitious historians, Kristmanson's first two chapters might have been expanded into stand-alone monographs — but in this book they serve as an extended introduction: acclimatizing the reader to the shadowy theatre of the "state-within-the-state" that Kristmanson views as the hub of the censorship-intelligence-propaganda network. The key players in its cast were not the blinkered, Communist-fixated, watchers of the RCMP Red Squad, but rather those gathered weekly around a table at Sammy's restaurant in Ottawa, where an informal club occupied a liminal zone between culture and security. Foremost amongst these hybrid figures was Peter Dwyer, the British intelligence agent turned Canadian security specialist and then turned Canadian arts administrator. Improbable as it sounds, Dwyer both redesigned the Canadian government's post-Gouzenko security mea-

asures and drafted the legislation that gave birth to the Canada Council. He went on to serve as director of the Council's arts-funding program between 1958 and 1971.

Dwyer destroyed most of his personal records, but Kristmanson uses released documents to shed new light on remaining published works. Dwyer's move from internal security agent to arts administrator was hardly a new beginning but rather a shift in focus, from the background to the foreground, in Canada's Cold-War national project. A major revelation in the chapter is that Dwyer, while working for British intelligence, was the "Canadian" source of a tip to the FBI about the unreliability of American treasury board official Harry Dexter White. Dwyer's role in the White affair provides for a change of focus within Kristmanson's narrative to a different but related set of questions regarding the activities of British Intelligence in Canada. Most importantly, what role did British Intelligence play in the defection of Igor Gouzenko?

"I cannot speak about that," Yvanna Petrowska told Kristmanson regarding the Russian cipher clerk who was her Ottawa neighbour in 1945 and whose "choice of freedom" instigated a dramatic escalation of the Cold War. Petrowska's husband was a Ukrainian-Canadian writer who made his living working as an intelligence officer for the RCMP. Knowing the full extent of the couple's involvement in Gouzenko's defection would be of great historical interest, but Mrs. Petrowska has decided to keep the promise of silence she made to RCMP agents 60 years ago. Kristmanson, like many historians before him, runs into a similar wall of silence when he attempts to investigate the case through historical documents that seem to have systematically disappeared. Some traces remain, however, that Kristmanson puts under his analytical microscope. Gouzenko's own writings and remaining primary documentation (some of which was released to him accidentally) allow him to draw at-

tention to several inconsistencies, improbable accounts, and absolute fabrications in the "official" version of Gouzenko's story. What accounts for these? Unable to find a "smoking gun," Kristmanson proposes a hypothesis that would go some way towards explaining the smoke: Gouzenko had been working covertly for British intelligence and his defection was engineered for the purposes of propaganda. Only the discretion of the Canadian press and the idiosyncratic behaviour of William Lyon Mackenzie King (who astonished British and American counterparts with his hope that the Soviet Union might take the opportunity of "turning over a new leaf" if the defection was covered up) delayed the sensational impact of Gouzenko's revelations. If Kristmanson is correct, former British P.M. Winston Churchill was complicit in this plan and his famous "Iron Curtain" speech was timed to coincide with the media leak that publicized the defection.

Kristmanson would likely admit that his Gouzenko hypothesis is far from empirically proven (a vanishing guest book from the Seignior Club in Montebello and an allegedly symbolic reference to Lord Beaverbrook's chickens in a letter from Churchill to his wife seem to be the flimsiest points), but such speculation has polemical value. Kristmanson's provocation breaks the dictated silence that surrounds the officially-sanctioned Gouzenko myth. Let records be produced that conclusively disprove his allegations and his work will have succeeded.

Even if Kristmanson is wrong about Gouzenko's motivations, the use to which Gouzenko's story and his revelations have been put further reinforces the more general thesis of the book: that the Canadian state engineered a Cold-War cultural nationalism that foreclosed on the progressive culture that had begun to emerge during the 1930s and 1940s. But if this is so, what were the characteristics of this "progressive culture"? What was its reach? What alternate futures did it foretell that were so threatening to the Cana-

dian state? In his final case study, Kristmanson begins to answer these questions through his examination of the Canadian reception of African-American singer and activist Paul Robeson. Robeson shared with Tracy Phillips the difficulties of being unable to change his character to fit changing cultural times — Robeson continued to speak out against racism and for socialism when such sentiments became unspeakable during the Cold War. As a result, his career was tragically cut short. It is far too easy to point retrospectively to the horrors of Stalinism to discount figures like Robeson. Kristmanson uses linguist Gilles Fauconnier's conception of the "analogical counterfactual" to help explain Robeson's public claims for the USSR — the purported tolerance of the Soviet Union encouraged Robeson's audiences in Canada and the USA to imagine alternative realities. Robeson was not simply duped by Soviet propaganda: performing in front of Stalin in Moscow, for instance, he protested Soviet anti-Semitism by singing a song of the Warsaw Ghetto in Yiddish. (202)

Robeson's Canadian career, and his border concerts at the Peace Arch in British Columbia, have been recently discussed in these pages by Laurel Sefton MacDowell ("Paul Robeson in Canada: A Border Story" *Labour/Le Travail*, 51 (Spring 2003) 177-221) but Kristmanson goes further. He not only shows the extent to which the Canadian government supported the US decision to deny Robeson's right to travel, but also uses Robeson's experience as an example of the ways in which the concepts of nationalism and nationality became inseparable during the geopolitical and ideological polarization of the Cold War. For the interrogators of the Kellock-Taschereau Royal Commission, just as for those of the HUAC, left-wing political sympathies amounted to treasonous allegiance to a competing and hostile nation state. Those interrogated were presented with a forced choice between Canada and the USSR — a choice

that did not make space for progressive internationalists like Paul Robeson.

Kristmanson's use of Robeson as a representative of progressive culture indicates his perception of the international character of this movement. This approach, however, risks leaving the impression that this choice was made because of a lack of suitable Canadian examples. Indeed, if Kristmanson had engaged with the Canadian progressive culture, he would have had a wonderful opportunity to distinguish between the nationalism of, for example, Margaret Fairley's collection, *The Spirit of Canadian Democracy* (1946), and the Cold-War cultural nationalism that supplanted it. In this era, as Caren Irr explains in *The Suburb of Dissent* (1998), the nation was a site of "residual political vocabularies" and served as a "sine qua non for leftists — even writers who concerned themselves primarily with narratives of class struggle." (92) But perhaps the use of Robeson as a representative of an internationalist movement in the early stages of the creation of a truly popular culture is Kristmanson's own "analogical counterfactual."

There are other silences in Kristmanson's account. We learn, for example, about the NFB's rural distribution service as an arm of Grierson's audiovisual citizenship training, in which projectionists were to lead discussions with the uneducated masses with the aid of a highly didactic "question and answer" guide. But did these discussions really produce the "correct" answers that the NFB provided? Evidence I have seen indicates that communities were more likely to commandeer these forums for discussions of issues of immediate local concern. Moreover, the film showings often provided an excuse for less controlled forms of community interaction like sporting events and dances. Kristmanson's story of social control neglects the agency of Canadians to resist such control, with the notable exception of the Mine-Mill union members who flooded to the border to hear and support

Paul Robeson. But perhaps such historical agency might be better assessed after the elements of control have been dragged out of the shadowy inner regions of secret state memory into the light of public knowledge.

For historians of security and intelligence, Kristmanson's work is timely — the Arar case is only the most recent illustration of the need for public discourse about the relationship between multiculturalism, nationality, and security/intelligence agencies. For those studying Canada's cultural history, the influence of state security on cultural institutions documented here will be difficult to continue to ignore. Kristmanson's work demands a critical reinterpretation of the nationalist framework shaping much of the current historiography.

By bridging the gap between histories of security and culture, and breaking sharply with the conventions of Canadian historical writing, Kristmanson has demonstrated the potential of interdisciplinary scholarship. *Plateaus of Freedom*, both in content and form, is provocative and controversial: it merits a lively discussion and critique that has not yet surfaced. Given the book's central themes, it will be unhappily ironic if this silence continues.

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Ann Silversides, *AIDS Activist, Michael Lynch and the Politics of Community* (Toronto: Between the Lines 2003)

I FIND IT DIFFICULT to review a book about someone whom I used to know and work with politically who is now dead. But, as Michael Lynch once wrote, "to write history is to write against death" and in this book Anne Silversides has done an important work of historical recovery. Memories flood into my mind as I read the book and I relive the joy of knowing Michael as well as the grief and loss of his

death. So many things left unsaid, so many things left undone. Such was my experience of reading *AIDS Activist*. I knew Michael Lynch as a gay liberation activist in Toronto in the later 1970s and 1980s, when I worked for the AIDS Committee of Toronto (ACT) in the early 1980s and later when I was involved in AIDS ACTION NOW! (AAN!) in the late 1980s.

This book profoundly moved me and captured vital aspects of Michael Lynch as a person and as a gay and AIDS activist. It presents a remarkable entry point into the life of AIDS organizing through the experiences of one often central activist. Silversides' own interviews with those who knew Michael and her research are magnified in this book by her access to Michael's diaries. Powerful and moving excerpts from his diaries help to bring back Michael's life in the pages of this book. This is an important documentation of AIDS activism, especially of Michael's early engagement with and writings about AIDS in *The Body Politic*; his involvement in setting up the first community-based AIDS group in Toronto, the ACT; and his involvement in the initiation and actions of AAN!, an AIDS activist group influenced by the emergence of the AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power (ACT-UP) across the US. Also covered is his intense commitment to remembering those who died of AIDS in his writings and poetry and his involvement in the AIDS Memorial project.

Michael Lynch was a remarkably complex, insightful, diverse, and prolific writer, activist, and intellectual. In the later 1970s and early 1980s he wrote major articles for Canada's leading gay liberation magazine, *The Body Politic*, on gay fathers, the contributions and the limitations of human rights strategies, and, along with his close friend and one-time lover Bill Lewis, some of the earliest critical Canadian articles on AIDS. I remember reading these articles on the politics and social context of AIDS and they had a major impact on me and many others. They were deeply informative and vision-

ary and at the same time very controversial. Michael provided powerful arguments for us against panic and hysteria and for the continuation of gay and sexual liberation politics in our social and political resistance to AIDS. Michael helped to found groups like Gay Fathers of Toronto. He was involved in the Committee to Defend John Damien (Damien was fired from his job with the Ontario Racing Commission because he was gay), the Gay Academic Union in Toronto, the previously mentioned ACT and AAN!, and later the Toronto Centre for Lesbian and Gay Studies. His strength and passion was in starting groups that were badly needed rather than staying around for the work of sustaining them over the years. He was also a gifted poet and university professor, who had a profound interest in the US pre-homosexual Walt Whitman and his New York City with its world of male-male relationships (the "Age of Adhesiveness") and its influence on the emergence of later homosexual cultures.

As Silversides documents, Michael's initial response to the AIDS panic was rooted in his political formation as a gay liberationist which led him to be extremely critical of both the medical profession, which had previously been very involved in labelling queers as sick, and also of the mainstream media framing of gay men. His early involvement in AIDS community organizing and the formation of the AIDS Committee of Toronto (ACT) built on earlier gay community organizing and organizing among gays and lesbians on health questions inspired by the feminist health movement. Michael was very inspired by the emergence of the people living with AIDS movement and their profound affirmation that they were not victims or patients but people living with AIDS. This was based on notions of self-organization and self-empowerment.

Michael's important US connections (he was a transplanted American) led him to be more aware of treatments there that were having an impact in prolonging people's lives and about the development of

the new directions of AIDS activism of ACT-UP with the theme of "Silence=Death." In Canada the contradiction between the knowledge that there were treatments that could extend people's lives at the same time as the Canadian state and the drug companies denied access to these led to the explosion of a new treatment-based activism epitomized by AAN! in Toronto. This was an exciting time of die-ins, sit-ins, disruptions, putting our bodies on the line, and the burning of an effigy of the Health Minister in the streets of Toronto. And Michael was in the thick of much of this with his energy, compassion, and insight. Through these direct actions we won more access to treatments that could and did extend people's lives.

But Michael was never just about a politics of militancy. He combined this in the face of AIDS and its "waves of dying friends" that hit many of us so hard in gay circles in the 1980s and early 1990s with a profound politics of mourning. He understood the political use of anger but also at the same time the importance of remembering. He addressed in his own life and in his politics a way of remembering as he put it in his poem, "Cry." "We ... will not endure these waves of dying friends, without a cry." (106) And for Michael, like so many others, this was tied up with his own personal fears and engagement with dying and death.

At the same time this remarkable recovery of the history and politics of AIDS activism is only partial precisely because of this rather individual entry point. For, despite all the insights of focusing on an individual, history is collective in character and never simply individual. This leads to events and tensions being glossed over or not fully developed or addressed. For instance this is clear when it comes to the history and development of AAN! since Michael was not always centrally involved. Much more work of historical documentation and recovery remains to be done.

The sub-title of the book mentions the "politics of community." Unfortunately the politics of community that are engaged with are largely classless in character in both Silversides' writing and in Michael's world. A middle-class vantage point constructed "community" during these years as somehow removed from class tensions and class struggles. While Michael struggled to deal with differences of race and gender at times in his life, he less often centrally addressed the divisions of class. Unfortunately this was not his limitation alone. This was very common in gay and even AIDS activist circles as well both then and at present. It was later that some AIDS activists would directly confront questions of class and poverty and their impact on AIDS. This ideological notion of a classless community obscured class tensions and separated queer struggles from class struggles, helping to marginalize the concerns of working-class queers and queers living in poverty. It is a bit ironic that someone so fascinated with Walt Whitman and his love for working-class men could not always see the relevance of this to his own life and politics.

While there are limitations to Silversides' account of gay liberation and AIDS activism, she has done an invaluable work of historical recovery. We now need to build on this to make a more profound social history of AIDS in Canada and of AIDS organizing. This is a wonderful example of writing history against death.

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Christopher MacLennan, *Toward the Charter: Canadians and the Demand for a National Bill of Rights, 1929-1960* (Montréal: McGill-Queen's University Press 2003)

IN 1960, ONE OF THE MOST disappointing pieces of legislation ever passed by the federal government was enacted. The Ca-

nadian Bill of Rights has suffered scorn, insults, and disdain from critics since it became law; the Act was used only once by the Supreme Court of Canada to find a law inoperative, and this precedent was quickly set aside four years later. Yet, the importance our society attaches to the symbolic meaning of rights is such that the Bill of Rights has been the subject of several books, the most recent being Christopher MacLennan's *Toward the Charter: Canadians and the Demand for a National Bill of Rights, 1929-1960*.

MacLennan guides us through the history of the 1960 Bill of Rights, beginning with the rise of civil liberties organizations in the 1930s. A nascent civil liberties movement first emerged in reaction to government repression of communists in the form of Section 98 of the Criminal Code and the Padlock Act in Quebec. These organizations had a short lifespan and suffered from the ideological divisions typical of the Left in the 1930s between social democrats and communists. It took the extreme repression of World War II and the deportation of Japanese Canadians, coupled with the tactics employed by the espionage commission in 1946, to stimulate another wave of civil liberties groups. By charting the history of the rights movement, MacLennan presents the history of those activists most dedicated to the creation of a national bill of rights in Canada. While newly organized rights activists clamoured for rights to be entrenched in the constitution at home, international forces added pressure on the federal government to take rights seriously. War rhetoric, the United Nations charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights became powerful symbolic weapons for rights activists in Canada to demand better protections for fundamental freedoms. According to MacLennan, these trends represented a resurgence of the natural rights ideology for which a bill of rights recognizing universal freedoms was the logical culmination. However, these forces were stridently resisted by a Liberal party and bu-

reaucracy determined not to place any limits on parliamentary supremacy and violate British democratic traditions. It would take the defeat of the Liberals by John Diefenbaker in 1957 to set the stage for the passing of a bill of rights. The author provides a thorough examination of each of the parliamentary commissions between 1947 and 1950, and in 1958-9, while reviewing the key themes in the debates over Diefenbaker's proposed bill.

MacLennan's analysis of the debate on the Diefenbaker Bill of Rights between 1957 and 1960 is the most valuable contribution of his book, particularly in the way the author has gained access to Department of Justice files to understand the role of the bureaucracy. It is clear from the author's study that the bureaucracy was a major opponent of entrenching freedoms in the constitution and played a key role in providing both the Liberals and the Conservatives with arguments against constitutional freedoms. Unfortunately, this represents most of the work's original contribution. Since the completion of MacLennan's PhD thesis in 1996 (on which this book is based), a host of new material has arisen in published form and graduate theses. Little of what MacLennan examines, from the history of civil liberties groups to state repression and Canada's role in the United Nations surrounding the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, is not already available in a handful of theses and articles (several of which the author has not cited, in particular William Schabas' piece on the United Nations in *McGill Law Journal*, 1998, and Ross Lambertson's piece in *Labour/LeTravail* in 2001 on the Jewish Labour Committee).

Perhaps the work's greatest weakness is the lack of sensitivity to the ideological and political conflicts of the period which plagued the bill of rights movement. Frank Scott is the perfect example. A social democrat politically, Scott's views on constitutional freedoms were liberal in outlook. He rejected the inclusion of anything but the most rudimentary social and

economic rights in the constitution and his drafting of the Saskatchewan Bill of Rights favoured political and civil rights, with little or no provision for such rights as education or a fair wage. In fact, little is said about the importance of the Saskatchewan Bill of Rights to the movement and there is no mention of the Alberta Bill of Rights of 1946 found *ultra vires* by the Supreme Court of Canada. At the same time, the author fails to note organized labour's opposition in 1948 (although not in 1959) to economic and social rights in the constitution, a position more closely related to Scott's libertarian approach and likely influenced by labour's desire to distance themselves from communist rhetoric at the height of the Cold War. In order to appreciate the complexities behind the positions adopted, the debate over social and economic rights needs to be more fully explored.

Most importantly, the author fails to appreciate the importance of French-Canadian opposition to any constitutional bill of rights in the 1950s. This would have come out more clearly with a thorough study of Arthur Roebuck, the Liberal Senator who is absolutely crucial to the early bill of rights movement. Roebuck's handwritten notations on drafts of his own proposed bill of rights for the 1950 Senate committee clearly demonstrate his frustration with the obstructionism of French-Canadian parliamentarians with regards to any effective bill of rights. Combined with the Liberals' fear of alienating Quebec voters and the lack of any French-Canadian rights organization during this period except for the small Civil Rights Union, French-Canadian opposition represented a central obstacle to the movement.

Nonetheless, MacLennan's piece represents a useful addition to the literature. While this short work (160 pages minus notes) could have been expanded to discuss a host of other issues, it brings together a variety of literature to provide the only real history of the bill of rights movement currently in print. The chapter on la-

bour, women, and ethnic groups' views on constitutional freedoms is a particularly valuable contribution and demonstrates the effort made by the author to offer a broad perspective on the bill of rights movement. Given the recent spate of literature on the history of human rights in Canada in the past five years alone, it will likely not be long before this work is complemented by further studies in the field.

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Wendy Mitchinson, *Giving Birth in Canada, 1900-1950* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 2002)

WENDY MITCHINSON's book, *Giving Birth in Canada*, is a wonderfully rich and comprehensive social history of the controversies, practices, and realities of giving birth in Canada from 1900 to 1950, the period in which the "medicalization of childbirth" became a social as well as a legal reality. Mitchinson brings context, texture, and nuance to the professional/medical history of the physicians who supplanted the various midwives and others who had attended most new mothers in the 19th century. She argues convincingly against the romanticization of the midwife/home birth without minimizing its importance, and offers a glimpse into the professional and economic motivations behind the increasingly technologized model of medicine as it applied to childbirth.

In the context of much medical history which stubbornly refuses to recognize any but "professional" birth attendants, Mitchinson's exhaustive and well-researched portrayal of the early 20th-century birthing chamber in which midwives, nurses, and other helpers played a vital role, is a breath of fresh air. With the exception of Newfoundland where the British model of regulated midwifery was in force, the Canadian medical profession had successfully legislated fe-



male midwives out of official existence several decades before the first half of the 20th century. Having been forced underground, this was a disparate group of women. Sometimes the midwife or nurse was a frightened neighbour woman pressed reluctantly into service in an isolated community where no doctors practiced. In some cases she had acquired informal training by watching other births and learning from an older midwife. Often working to the point of exhaustion for Canadian families who could not afford to pay the physician's, or indeed any, fee, these women received scant remuneration. They had a strong presence in poor, isolated, immigrant, and Aboriginal communities. A few were exceptionally well-trained nurse-midwives who had emigrated from Britain or a European country where midwifery training was available. They were employed by agencies such as the Red Cross, Victorian Order of Nurses (VON) and Newfoundland Outport Nursing and Industrial Association (NONIA) and provided the labouring woman with service that was often superior to the physician's. All worked without legal protection of their midwifery work or official recognition.

Examining medical journals and internal disputes, Mitchinson also lets the doctors speak for themselves. She brings some interesting themes to life such as the resiliency of popular beliefs, shared by midwives and physicians alike, surrounding birth. Rather than questioning such folklore as the need for complete bedrest for ten days following delivery, and the belief that maternal impressions could mark a child, physicians used the language of science to validate them. Doctors' faith in the efficacy of science was just that: faith.

Physicians' debates on the nature of childbirth reflected the social ambivalence surrounding birth and medicine, particularly the increasingly technologized approach to medical care, and a heavy measure of economic self-interest. Some obstetricians posited that childbirth

remained a natural function only for "uncivilized" women such as Aboriginals or "peasants" — fictional giants who could apparently work long days in the fields, squat down to have their babies, and be back at work within hours! By contrast, modern, educated, and sedentary women — those living the equally fictional middle-class domestic ideal — experienced childbirth as rife with pain and risk. Glancing jealously at more prestigious and higher-paying specialties such as surgery, physicians were anxious to ride their white horses, clad in shining armour glowing with the aura of science, and rescue womankind. Not all physicians agreed, however. Some saw birth as a natural process best left to follow its own course, and contested the increasing level of intervention. Many also lamented their own lack of hands-on training, and some borrowed heavily from the midwife's practical expertise as they gained ascendancy over the field. Mitchinson reminds us that some midwives, particularly those with formal training, also intervened in difficult births. However, it is equally clear from her case file evidence that physicians resorted to medical intervention much more frequently. These interventions often had a kind of spiral effect, with one intervention leading to another. As well, physicians were particularly keen to "do something" — whether it be forceps, inducing labour, or caesarian-section — for their paying patients.

Due to inadequate sources and its professional focus, the book tells us less about the average Canadian family's experience of childbirth. In her efforts to de-mythologize the home birth, the author sensibly points out that many working-class homes provided rude and inadequate birthing facilities compared with the hospital where a weary mother could get rest and professional care. However, the latter was hardly an option for most Canadian women, especially the geographically and economically disadvantaged who could not even afford the legally sanctioned physician to attend

them, let alone consider going to a hospital — except perhaps as charity cases. Most took their chances with a nurse, midwife, or neighbour who would help them deliver at home and provide nursing services. One of the ironies of this story, as Mitchinson so aptly points out, is that the health and safety, if not the comfort, of these poor mothers was probably in better hands than that of their wealthier urban sisters. Maternal mortality rates remained considerably higher for physician-attended, than for midwife/nurse-attended births, until the 1940s, when other factors, including the introduction of antibiotics came into play.

What was the official response to the news that midwives had a better record? Physicians argued among themselves as to whether their own interventions might be causing the problem, and hospitals stepped up measures to prevent cross-infection. But, in their public face, both tried to explain away and/or suppress the unflattering information. Complicit in this conspiracy of silence were the very same public health authorities, nurses, and middle-class women health reformers who facilitated the many unsanctioned nurse midwife-attended births throughout parts of Canada. These women did indeed share with physicians a belief that science and technology could improve maternal health. However, I found Mitchinson too quick to lump them all together. It is not just a question of science, but of power. Many women reformers did complain about physicians' neglect of maternal health, and some even gave voice in public documents to the disparity in maternal mortality statistics. Like many women's voices, however, they were simply not listened to. Again context is everything. Having tried unsuccessfully, in the decades prior to 1900, to rehabilitate the midwife and improve training, reformers had little choice but to back the medical profession, with its by then well-entrenched medical monopoly. Not until the second wave of Canadian feminism would midwifery re-emerge, giving

birthing women a real choice in their care. Perhaps midwives might yet serve to improve the poor North American maternal health indicators, relative to other industrialized nations where the midwife is not held in such contempt.

Despite an emphasis on the professional side of the debate, I did find *Giving Birth in Canada* a refreshingly comprehensive social history of childbirth. The book provides fascinating insight into the midwife/physician debate and the controversies surrounding birth and the technological model of medicine. It also touches on the social impact of granting a medical monopoly to health care workers who were both economically and geographically inaccessible, and provides background to understanding the mid-20th-century adoption of state-financed health care services, and the re-emergence of the midwife.

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Rae Bridgman, *Safe Haven: The Story of a Shelter for Homeless Women* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 2003)

*SAFE HAVEN* is an important contribution to the literature on strategies to address homelessness. In this anthropological study of the development of Savard's Place, an innovative project designed to serve chronically homeless women, Bridgman analyzes a feminist service and explains why existing sheltering practices do not adequately meet the needs of the most marginalized street-involved women. The book documents the challenge of maintaining a feminist vision for service delivery in the context of limited funding and bureaucratic control. Bridgman's methodology also addresses important issues about the ethics of researching homeless women and feminist initiatives.

Savard's Place, located in Toronto, is a homeless shelter that serves women

who have resisted using shelters or who have been barred from the city's other shelters because of violent or "disruptive" behaviour. The organizers of Savard's Place started from the premise that shelter policies and practices needed to change, not the women who desperately needed these services. Traditional homeless shelters do not work for these women because they expect women to conform to the expectations of government policy. The goal of traditional housing policy is to move homeless people from living on the streets into transitional housing, and ultimately into the private housing market. Savard's Place introduced "a model premised on unlimited stay, a low-demand environment, and high support from staff." (54) The only rules of the house are no weapons, violence, alcohol, or drugs on the premises. It is a radical alternative to the paradigm of shelter provision because it does not link women's housing needs to the expectation that they will seek treatment for their mental health issues or addictions. Staff help the women who want to move into second-stage housing, but the policy is not to pressure the women to do so. Unlike most charitable and state-run social services, this initiative recognizes that some street-involved women with mental illnesses will not become self-sufficient citizens and workers. More important, Savard's Place staff insist that these women deserve to be treated with dignity and respect.

One of the key strengths of this study is its documentation of the tensions between an alternative feminist vision and the reality of implementing that vision, a process that the author names "utopian pragmatics." (8) Bridgman began her research in 1995, one year after a group of women with extensive experience working with street-involved women organized the Women's Street Survivors Project. She followed the project from its planning stages to its third year of operation, when the Ontario Ministry of Health allocated permanent core funding to

Savard's, and conducted follow-up interviews with staff and board members during the first years of stabilized funding. In the eight years that she conducted research, the project changed to adapt to the needs of the women who used the service. When it opened in 1997, the shelter espoused two founding principles. First, no woman would be evicted from Savard's Place. The purpose of the shelter was to provide a safe haven for women who could not be accommodated by the existing system. Organizers believed that the threat of eviction undermined residents' sense of security. Staff could time out a violent resident for hours or days to protect the other residents, but she knew that she would not lose her bed. Second, staff would not intervene in the lives of the women who stayed there. Organizers adopted a non-interventionist policy because they wanted to provide a service that helped homeless women with mental illnesses on their own terms. Thus, the organizers challenged the impetus of housing policy to produce stable tenants. The policy of non-intervention not only resisted the unreasonable expectations placed on women with severe mental illnesses, but also shifted the responsibility for chronic homelessness from individual responsibility to its systemic underpinnings. While the shelter maintained the no-eviction policy, staff revised the principle of non-intervention.

Bridgman argues that both internal and external pressures influenced the "natural progression" toward "soft interventions." Internally, the introduction of new staff members challenged the founding principles. Many argued that in practice the policy of non-intervention masked the power relations between staff and the residents in the shelter. By the end of the third year of operation, none of the original staff worked at Savard's. The modification of the policy also reflected differences between the theoretical expectations of the organizers and the actual experiences of the women in the shelter. Initially, the organizers adopted a

non-interventionist policy because they assumed that there would be a high turnover in the shelter. Instead some women stayed, and made the shelter their home. Staff began to question whether they were actually helping the long-term residents by not introducing life skills programs or encouraging them to seek treatment. While reflexive feminist practice played an important role in modifying the original principles, so too did the pressures of limited funding, lack of job security for the staff, and the provincial government's resistance to the progressive vision of the organizers.

For ethical reasons, Bridgman does not tell us the life stories of the women who lived at the shelter during her research period. The board and staff of Savard's Place granted her access to meetings, minutes of meetings, and logbooks, and permission to interview staff members. They allowed her to engage in extended participant observation, but would not sanction interviews with the residents. Most residents had been interrogated extensively by police and/or mental health workers and were consequently distrustful of the interview process. Bridgman chose to focus on the organization rather than the life stories of the women living and working there in order to avoid sensationalizing their experiences. Nevertheless, she does incorporate the residents into the study, using composite life histories and recording some of the informal discussions she had with the women during her research. Chapter 7, entitled "Come Inside," presents a modified version of one week of entries to the daily logbook in order to capture the rhythm of work at the shelter. Bridgman advises us to read the entries, which she changed to protect the confidentiality of the residents and staff, in the context of the analytical framework presented in the other chapters of the book. For me, this was the least effective part of the book because it is missing Bridgman's cogent analysis. This chapter would have been stronger with an explicit discussion ex-

plaining how understanding the day to day life at Savard's could help to develop progressive services for homeless women and to improve the working conditions for the women who work with them.

Bridgman insists that the baseline question for research about homelessness is "How does the research challenge the conditions it describes?" (14) *Safe Haven* achieves this goal by documenting the inaugural years of Savard's Place so that other organizations can gain insights from its strengths and weaknesses. Bridgman's self-reflexivity about the ethical questions that residents and workers at Savard's raised demonstrates her empathy for their anxieties as well as her deep respect for their knowledge and experience. Bridgman identifies the key shortcomings of current strategies to address homelessness and recommends more empowering and hopeful ways forward. I highly recommend this book to those who want to learn more about the challenges of serving homeless women with mental illnesses. It is also a valuable tool for front-line workers who are struggling to work against oppressive bureaucratic systems that meet government agendas rather than women's needs.

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Kelly Gorkoff and Jane Runner, eds. *Being Heard. The Experiences of Young Women in Prostitution* (Winnipeg: Fernwood Publishing and Winnipeg: RESOLVE (Research and Education for Solutions to Violence and Abuse) 2003)

THIS BOOK is based on 45 interviews with women from Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba who were or had been involved in prostitution before age 18. Almost three quarters entered prostitution at fifteen years old or younger. The chapters address the experience of the women in relation to the exploitation and violence they suffer through prostitution, their en-

try into prostitution and the reasons for it, the way prostitution constructs identity for the youth involved, health issues, experience of confinement, and other responses to youth prostitution in order to work out what should be best practice. The book is directed towards solutions.

Though the experience of what the authors refer to as "Aboriginal" girls and women is not drawn together in one place in this book, it is clear both that Aboriginal women are the majority of prostituted youth in the areas where the research was carried out, and that their experience of exploitation contains some different and particularly worrying elements. Twenty-five or 57.7 per cent of the interviewees were of Aboriginal descent. These Aboriginal girls and women were most likely to see entry into prostitution as ordinary because they lived in areas of the city where prostitution took place and had family members and friends involved. They were most likely still to live at home instead of being homeless. They were twice as likely to face violence from the police. They experienced racism as an extra form of violence in prostitution. Aboriginal women were most likely not to have been able to exit prostitution and to still be working on or off the street. Of the over 50 per cent of all interviewees who took drugs, twice as many were Aboriginal. The numbers and experiences of Aboriginal prostituted women certainly suggest, as the authors point out, that prostituted girls become vulnerable not just because they are female, homeless, and destitute but because they suffer racism and exclusion. The prostitution of these Aboriginal girls might reasonably be considered to be a form of racial discrimination. The percentage of Aboriginal girls suggests, too, that arguments that prostitution can be women's "choice" are seriously flawed. Why would greater numbers of Aboriginal girls "choose" to be prostituted?

The common experiences recorded in research on the lives of adult women in prostitution were very evident in this re-

search. Child sexual abuse was a common experience of the interviewees. Of the 33 who volunteered the information that they had experienced childhood abuse, 91 per cent were victimized sexually. Fifteen had had children while in prostitution and nine had lost custody of their children. The researchers did not ask specific questions about experience of violence but a great deal of information was volunteered on this subject nonetheless, and it confirms other research findings on the sheer weight and variety of extremely serious violence that prostituted women suffer. The women described being close to being murdered or having a partner murdered, and being raped and beaten repeatedly. They were likely to see this violence as normal or to be expected. They described becoming "numb or desensitised to the violence." (73) Twenty-two women reported violence from intimate partners, including in eleven cases being pimped by them. More than half reported violence from "bad dates," i.e. customers. The latter violence included "being stabbed or cut, raped, gang-raped, raped at gun point, forced to engage in degrading sexual acts, choked/strangled, beaten, kidnapped, stalked, gun held to head, tied up, tortured, beaten with objects such as baseball bats or crowbars, and run over." (75) One reported a customer "cut me from asshole to belly button." (75) Women talked about being abused so much that they stopped caring about their bodies or about safety. The researchers argue that the everyday and pervasive nature of the violence these women faced from all the males they had contact with needs to be considered when working out how to help women exit.

The most fascinating chapter is by Pamela Downe with "Ashley-Mika" about the "social identities" of girls in prostitution. This is very helpful for understanding why it is so hard to help girls to get out of prostitution. The girls formed their identities through prostitution. They often had a poorly developed sense of their own worth and turned "to street com-

munities, drugs, pimps and dealers to develop personal identities and an enduring sense of place and belonging." (47) This raises problems for the non-judgmental approach that caregivers tend to adopt which is to "accept the girls for who they are." As Downe points out, we need to know how they have come to be "who they are" and indeed, though Downe does not say this explicitly, it may be necessary that they should be encouraged to become someone else rather than "accepted for who they are." The girls spoke of being "nothing" because of prostitution, of being profoundly dissociated from their bodies. But nonetheless they gained a sense of community in sexual exploitation and "the cultural currency that led them to feel as though they belonged somewhere." (50) The sense of belonging and community filled the emotional gaps they had from abusive childhoods and abandonment and made it difficult to exit despite the terrible losses that these young women suffer in prostitution. As Downe comments in relation to programs designed to help girls to exit, "We are, after all, trying to replace years of social networks that not only functioned as a background to these young women's activities but informed how these women situated themselves in the world." (61)

This chapter led me to consider the problem presented by those pro-prostitution spokeswomen from "sex work" organizations who claim to have experience of prostitution and consider it to be just fine, to be ordinary work and women's 'choice.' Some of the spokeswomen who argue thus will have entered prostitution just as the girls in this book did, and have formed prostitution identities in the same way. Their willingness to be critical of prostitution is likely to be restricted by this identity formation. Their defences of prostitution need to be approached critically when they appear to ignore or downplay the sort of very serious harms recorded in this volume.

In the book's "Dedication," the participants in the study are described as

"proud and formidable." The book's contents do not suggest that this is a suitable description. But these positive terms in the dedication do suggest a contradiction in this volume. The editors say that the research team had different perspectives as to whether youth should be seen as "victims, as agents, or as a combination of both." (24) Thus a mixture of terminology is used in the book. Some researchers use the term "sex trade" while others thought this did not "capture the abusive and exploitive nature of prostitution," and used exploitation. Others thought the term "exploitation" too victimizing. This confusion relates to the problem I describe above, of knowing what weight to give to those who give a relentlessly positive slant to prostitution or seek to downplay the seriousness of the abuse involved. A pro-prostitution perspective requires terms such as "sex trade" and "agents." But it flies in the face of the severity of the experience described here. The young women are in a war zone. To whom are they formidable? Not to the men who cut them up.

The final two chapters are on solutions. One suggests that the negative effects of compulsory detention mean this is not a suitable solution. However this is a controversial issue at present in Canada with various provinces currently introducing legislation allowing compulsory detention in response to arguments from parents of dead children that detention can save lives. The final chapter points to the importance of services directed specifically towards prostituted youth rather than generic services for homeless youth. It argues that housing is fundamental to getting girls out, combined with state financial support, particularly during the crucial years 16-18 when girls tend to fall through the gaps of welfare services.

What is puzzling about the final chapter on solutions is the failure to mention that men can change their prostitution behaviour. There seems to be an implicit assumption behind this research that men's prostitution behaviour is inevitable and

unquestionable. Thus the only solution to the awful violence and degradation of these young women's lives is to seek to help them to exit, one by one. But the gaps will be filled. Though the services designed to facilitate exit are limited to "children," because adult women are considered to "choose," many of the women in adult prostitution started as just the young girls whose stories are contained here. The industry of prostitution creates the harm and creates a need for more women and girls for men to buy. Though the authors say in the conclusion that a social change perspective is needed rather than "piecemeal" solutions, it is not envisaged or recommended that the buyers should change or that their behaviour can be penalized. The book's record of violence and abuse is so strong that it provides powerful evidence for the need to end men's prostitution abuse rather than continuing just to extract girls, one at a time, from the industry.

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Craig Heron, *Booze: A Distilled History* (Toronto: Between the Lines 2003)

DO NOT BE FOOLED by the ambiguous title. *Booze* is a *Canadian* tour de force, a social history of alcohol from New France to the new millennium. It is deftly written, beautifully illustrated, and provocatively argued. While Craig Heron treats the dries, opponents of alcohol, with respect, this book is indeed a wet history of drinking in Canada. As he concludes, with some exceptions, most Canadians have enjoyed alcohol in moderation, more so than "the outcries of shocked moralists might suggest." (380)

For many readers of this journal Craig Heron's name is no doubt familiar, but one linked to more traditional working-class history. And this project began as an exhibition on workers and alcohol for the Ontario Workers' Arts and Heri-

tage Centre in 1998. Class plays a central role in this book, but that is understandable since class is crucial to understanding the battles over booze in Canada, especially prohibition.

As Heron and many others have noted, temperance began as a movement in the early 19th century to persuade people to drink less, particularly less hard liquor or spirits. By the 1830s the movement was becoming more anti-alcohol in general, more bourgeois, and more evangelically Protestant. Temperance became part of a larger agenda "to construct a 'moral dominion' in which all parts of society would learn to self-regulate, ideally in the image of the earnest middle classes." (12) When the dries met resistance, which they did, they turned to the state and demanded the legal prohibition of alcohol.

Resistance to the dries was understandable, especially when one considers the importance of taverns or saloons to working-class life. For wage earners taverns became the "cornerstones of working-class bachelor cultures." (374) By the late 19th century saloons had become the main target of the dries. For them the saloon was anything but a "poor man's club"; it was a centre of working-class excess and debauchery. Yet, as anyone familiar with the Knights of Labor knows, temperance did have some support within the working class, especially among the leadership.

In addition to class, concepts of gender, especially the construction of masculinities, permeate this book. As in other societies, in Canada drinking has been preponderantly a male activity. Men not only drink more than women, but they usually have defined the time and space when it has been acceptable for women to drink. In that sense alcohol reinforced patriarchy, and many women (and many female and some male social historians) have railed against "the damage inflicted on families by male drunkards." (14) Still, for many men, drinking, especially public drinking, was less about consump-

tion than sociability. How men drank and meanings given to drinking have varied by class, ethnicity, and race: there "has never been a single Canadian drinking experience or drinking pattern." (382)

As for the dries, they had some success in restricting public drinking, but their cause only gathered steam once they linked it to progressive reform in the early 20th century and, even more important, to World War I. Patriotism and prohibition became enmeshed, and during the war all provinces (except Quebec) banned the retail sale of alcohol. They were supported by a somewhat reluctant federal government in 1918. With the end of the war support for prohibition waned, as it had always faced stiff opposition from many Canadians. Moreover, according to Heron, the law did not work. Any decline in consumption was more attributable to a poor economy than prohibition. The law was also easy to evade. Beginning in Quebec and British Columbia in 1921, prohibition was replaced with government control of liquor, the most familiar face of which was the government liquor store.

As Heron notes, the dries may have lost the war, but they continued to win battles long after prohibition ended. Many of their assumptions were woven into public policy, especially on public drinking and its regulation. The saloon was a casualty of prohibition, and legal public drinking returned slowly. Most provinces allowed it by the 1930s, but New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island held out until 1961 and 1964 respectively. While public drinking regulations varied, some form of the beer parlour became the norm across the country. These stark facilities, often linked to hotels, offered little else than beer, and often banned women or separated unattached women from unattached men via sections for men only and those for "Ladies and Escorts." Heron wryly comments that public drinking regulations in English Canada contributed to our reputation as a "coldly austere, culturally repressed country whose public cultural life matched its often forbidding cli-

mate." (379) Fortunately, Montréal's nightclubs helped saved us from complete cultural doom.

Yet prohibition had another legacy. It helped to reinforce the ambiguity that Canadians have toward liquor until today. On the one hand, drinking took off after World War II, influenced by higher disposable incomes, falling real liquor prices, an economy more oriented to consumption, and a savvy, increasingly consolidated liquor industry that promoted "national" brands across the country. In a fascinating chapter on "Rediscovering the Alcoholic," Heron shows how, until the 1970s, trends in dealing with alcohol abuse reinforced what was now called social drinking. For 19th-century dries the problem was liquor itself; demon rum could ruin anyone. Yet dealing with problem drinkers went in two related directions in the 20th century. First, the mutual support movement, the best example of which is Alcoholics Anonymous, tended not to blame alcohol itself but the inability of some people to cope with it. Those people had to accept that they were powerless before liquor and needed the support of other former heavy drinkers and God. Second, the medical profession also got involved in treating excessive drinking. Particularly because of the work of E.M. Jellinek, the heavy drinker was diagnosed with the disease of alcoholism. The problem was not the drink but what drove the problem drinker to consume excessively. The rest of us, though, could enjoy our martinis.

On the other hand, though, beginning in the 1970s liquor life became more complex. The disease concept of alcoholism lost favour since little empirical evidence existed to support it. The illness of alcoholism "lacked the clearly identifiable source of other diseases: a germ, or a virus, perhaps." (365) Some researchers shifted "the focus back, onto the alcohol rather than the alcoholic." (366) By the end of the decade some considered heavy drinking the result of "a complex amalgam of socio-cultural and psychological



forces in particular individuals' lives." (10) This shift occurred as people, except for single, young males, began to drink less — even as the number of retail outlets and licensed public places dramatically increased. Many explanations have been offered: aging baby boomers, poor economic conditions, a neo-temperance movement that targeted the social costs of heavy drinking, and, of course, the state's crackdown on drinking and driving. To make matters even more confusing, by the turn of the millennium the scientific evidence increasingly demonstrated that alcohol consumption had a beneficial effect on health, but Heron claims that "public-health officials are still reluctant to proclaim loudly the health benefits of moderate drinking." (387)

*Booze* is an excellent book, written in engaging, accessible prose. Most of my reservations are quibbles, but Heron is a little too dismissive of the positive impact of prohibition. While respectful to the dries, he tends to be a bit impatient with them. Moreover, for a book that places much emphasis on gender and sexuality, I was disappointed that he had little to say about gays and lesbians, especially in light of the growing literature on homosexuality and public life. Still these concerns do not fundamentally detract from a fine piece of social history. So, pour yourself a drink — or not — and enjoy *Booze*.

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Jonathan Swainger and Constance Backhouse, eds., *People and Place: Historical Influences on Legal Culture* (Vancouver: UBC Press 2003)

ACCORDING TO THE UBC Press Marketing Department promotion for *People and Place: Historical Influences on Legal Culture*, this collection contains "path-breaking," "fascinating," "innovative," and "interesting" essays linking people, place, and the law in Canada's

past. Thus it was with great anticipation that this rather expensive (\$85.00 hardcover; \$29.95 paperback) and blandly covered book was opened. After reading slightly over two hundred pages with a prologue, an introduction, and nine articles, the question is: do Swainger and Backhouse deliver? The answer is: somewhat.

The editors have tried to do too much. On one level, according to Swainger in the prologue, the anthology is in honor of Louis Knafla's contribution to English and Canadian legal history plus Knafla's mentorship of graduate students in these respective fields of study. On another level, the introduction by Swainger and Backhouse tries to place Knafla's 30 years of scholarship and the essays in his honour within two themes in legal culture: people and place. Thus each paper must, at some stage, show the relationship between people and location in the formation of law within a historical setting. And while the editors' task is a daunting one, it is unfortunate the People and Place emerge unevenly.

Of the nine articles, the best are by the established and semi-established scholars in the field, namely John McLaren, Constance Backhouse, and Jonathan Swainger. In "The King, the People, the Law ... and the Constitution: Justice Robert Thorpe and the Roots of Irish Whig Ideology in Early Upper Canada," McLaren successfully illustrates how Thorpe's short-lived, two-year career (1805-1807) as a judge of Upper Canada's Court of King's Bench was shaped by the confluence of timing, people, and place. More specifically, McLaren has shown the value of comparative legal history by examining the influence of the immigration of an individual, an Irish lawyer, to a British colony on the legal culture of a community.

The Backhouse article, "'Don't You Bully Me ... Justice I Want If There is Justice to Be Had': The Rape of Mary Ann Burton, London, Ontario, 1907" is a welcome and refreshing change. Instead of

discussing yet another landmark and precedent-setting case in the annals of Canadian legal history, Backhouse, through the use of long buried criminal files in the Ontario Archives, shows how a case study of the "ordinary" reveals much about the relationship between people, place, and the law. And although the Burton rape trial is "not the stuff" of published law reports or criminal law classes, it is noteworthy. According to Backhouse, the case "reveals that there were multiple understandings of justice in early-twentieth Canada." (89)

Jonathan Swainger presents an interesting discussion of how time and place impact the police. In "Police Culture in British Columbia and 'Ordinary Duty' in the Peace River Country, 1910-39," Swainger suggests that due to locale, the British Columbia Provincial Police (BCPP) during this time operated in the midst of a time warp. While police on the Prairies and even within British Columbia itself were changing to meet the times (i.e. urbanization), the BCPP in the Peace River Country continued to operate within the mythology of the "law marches west" syndrome. In fact, Swainger stipulates that the police in Northern British Columbia saw their role as maintaining law and order in a rugged, isolated frontier environment long after other police agencies had redefined their function in Canadian society.

Of the remaining six articles, two came close to the standard set by McLaren, Backhouse, and Swainger. Lesley Erickson's essay, "Murdered Women and Mythic Villains: The Criminal Case and Imaginary Criminal in the Canadian West, 1886-1930," explores how the creation of the mythic villain influenced the police and the legal process in the "creation of race, class, and gender inequalities in the larger cultural community." (97) Through the use of three criminal cases, the Rosalie Murder Trials of 1889 in Calgary, the 1907 Gowland Trial of Morden (Manitoba) and the "Dark Strangler" case of 1927 in Winnipeg, Erickson

shows how race and class influenced decision making and legal culture in Western Canada. In addition, these cases illustrate the patriarchy of a Prairie society where every race, class, and gender was to limit their interactions and relationships to their own group. Otherwise, Erickson asserts, unpleasant consequences would result.

Complementing Erickson's essay is "'Imagine that! A Lady Going to an Office!': Janet Kathleen Gilley" by Joan Brockman and Dorothy E. Chunn. Janet Gilley is important for a number of reasons. First, she was the fifteenth woman to be called to the bar in British Columbia in 1924. Second, she was one of only 7 women from a group of 23 who entered the legal profession in the province from 1912 to 1930 who practiced law for a long period of time (1924-1972). And third, the Gilley story is part of a much larger oral history project which focuses on the life and times of the 23 female pioneer lawyers. Thanks to Brockman and Chunn, this case study reveals much about the relationship between a person, a place, and legal culture. One can only hope that the other twenty-two case studies are of similar quality.

Unfortunately, Roderick G. Martin's essay "MacLeod at Law: A Judicial Biography of James Farquharson MacLeod, 1874-94" is a bit of a disappointment. Instead of placing MacLeod's tenure on the bench in the North West Territories within the context of the two themes for the collection, Martin lambastes historians for ignoring MacLeod's contribution to Western legal history. Hoping to rectify this injustice, the author provides an overview of MacLeod's involvement in the North West Mounted Police courts system. From this Martin attempts to draw two rather weighty conclusions. Not only can MacLeod be credited with the foundation of the criminal justice system in the North West Territories, but his unique life and times were crucial "to the evolution, life, and growth of law and order in the prairie west." (54) Though such

statements may prove to be correct, Martin's judicial biography, as it stands, does not prove them sufficiently.

One paper that is both uneven and misleading is "Boomtown Brothels in the Kootenays, 1895-1905" by Charleen P. Smith. Ostensibly studying the complex relationship between prostitutes, their clients, and the police in the southern interior of British Columbia during a limited ten-year time period, Smith repeatedly goes beyond the time line set for analysis. Part of the problem stems from Smith's admission that much of the source material in the article is from her Masters thesis, "Regulating Prostitution in British Columbia, 1895-1930." Overall, her study of boomtown brothels in the Kootenay Region does not fit adequately in the agenda set for *People and Place*.

Two papers, one by David Philips entitled "William Augustus Miles (1796-1851): Crime, Policing and Moral Entrepreneurship in England and Australia," and "Incarcerating Holiness: Religious Enthusiasm and the Law in Oregon, 1904" by Jim Phillips, Rosemary Gartner, and Kelly De Luca, serve as examples of round pegs in square holes. For example, Philips acknowledges that his essay is merely a summary of a book by the same name published a few years earlier. Thus, little to no attempt is made to place the work within the framework established by Swanger and Backhouse. And the second, rather long paper is well beyond the scope of the collection as the three authors proudly announce that their purpose is to "assess the role of the asylum ... as a tool of social control in early twentieth-century Oregon." Both papers seem to be included as an afterthought. This is not to say they are poor; they are not. But they would be better served in a volume more conducive to the strengths of their respective arguments.

Overall, despite some drawbacks and a lack of conclusion to the collection, Swanger and Backhouse have produced a welcome addition to legal historiography. And while it might not always be

"path-breaking," "fascinating," "innovative," and "interesting," it should be read by historians and lawyers alike.

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Ken Moffat, *A Poetics of Social Work: Personal Agency and Social Transformation in Canada, 1920-1939* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 2001)

WHY SHOULD social workers help the poor? With what aims? In the name of which principles? What is the basis of their legitimacy? Should they engage personally and emotionally with the people they are helping? During the inter-war years, several Canadian social workers believed that a strong philosophical, moral, scientific, and practical basis was needed for their profession to survive and to develop.

Eight decades later, the openness and the depth of their discussions come as a surprise. As the historian of British social policy, Jose Harris, has observed, by the 1970s, lawmakers and practitioners rarely discussed the moral foundations of their actions. She suggests that, after three decades of relative consensus over the institutions of the welfare state and of consolidation of a technical jargon within the profession, many thought that they could dispense with references to philosophical principles. This stance, adds Harris, made the social policies of the Depression and the post-war years especially vulnerable to critics from the right who, for a while in the 1970s and the 1980s, could present themselves as the only bearers of the true principles of liberal democracy. The challenge, in turn, has prompted many historians of the last two decades to study the intellectual and political traditions of the pioneers of philanthropy and social work.

Ken Moffat has devoted an inspiring, knowledgeable, and concise little book to a reflection on four Canadian social work-

ers, namely Edward Johns Urwick, the British-born and trained director of the University of Toronto's School of Social Work; the Prairie-born poet and communist activist Dorothy Livesay; the McGill sociologist and administrator Carl Dawson; and the Ontarian director of the Canadian Council of Child Welfare, Charlotte Whitton. The four middle chapters of the monograph represent as many portraits of the four individuals. The word "poetics" in the title indicates how personal Moffat found their engagement to be with the surrounding political and social events, and how earnest their attempts were to make their thought universal. The readers will find, for instance, inviting considerations, in Livesay's work, on the relation between the "act of creation" and "social welfare concerns." (67) She was also the clearest on the differences of social and economic status between social workers and clients.

The project of this book is informed by the program for the recovery of "patterns of thinking" of the French philosopher of language, Michel Foucault, exposed in *The Order of Things*. Moffat presents this theory in an introduction and a solid historiographical chapter on "Concepts of Social Service and Social Change." He locates his work within the ongoing research on the history of the epistemology of social work that has been the project of a group of fellow scholars centred around Allan Irving and the Faculty of Social Work of the University of Toronto. Finally, the author underlines the 'modern' nature of social workers' wish "to reconstruct both the individual and the society" (29) with the help of Charles Taylor's and Marshall Berman's reflections.

In the final chapter, a comparative analysis of the four 'archetypes' shows that the same problems mobilized writers across political, religious, and gender divides. All questioned the premises of the techniques of social work and their moral limits, the importance of the experience of working with the poor in contrast with

the place of ideal thought and social research, the role of religious, ethical, and subjective considerations in relation to the place of neutral intervention, and the nature of desirable social relations.

Within this shared agenda, Dawson and Whitton advocated a scientific approach to social work, closer to the American tradition of social sciences, whereas Livesay and Urwick privileged the ideals and methods of the humanities, which were generally dearer to British academics. Both deplored the individualistic understandings of freedom of their contemporaries which, they thought, led to emotional self-absorption at the expense of social engagements.

Then again, the alignments change when one considers that the two women of the group converged in their promotion of practical experience and of the moral and emotional commitment of individuals against the more detached propositions of the two men. Together with recent historians of gender, Moffat suggests that, for them, the secularization of social work did not mean the disappearance of religion, but its reinvestment in the idea of the profession as a mission. Moreover, Whitton did not see the rise of scientific truths in opposition to the sacred, but as a way to approach the wonders of nature.

The traditions of social thought in which Carl Dawson and Charlotte Whitton placed themselves have been less studied than Livesay's and Urwick's, mainly because their principles, such as Whitton's belief in the virtues of community solidarity, are less thoroughly discussed in their own writings. But, as Moffat suggests, Whitton's objections to the detrimental impact of bureaucratic states on individual autonomy and resourcefulness referred to ideas of "rights and responsibilities" of citizens and of "stewardship" of professionals. (87-88). They cannot be dismissed as the useful pretext to reduce public spending they also became in the 1930s. Of the four Canadian social workers, Carl Dawson's "organic" idea of the "stability" of a "normal soci-

ety" may have most clearly anticipated the shape of the future. Studies of the professional ethos of later social work would probably gain much from the examination of the philosophical reference points of Dawson.

*The Poetics of Social Work* demonstrates that the study of the debates over social work at a time before it was fully professionalized and therefore remained "everyone's business" (25) sheds light on the beginnings of the discipline, and raises questions about the meaning of social work.

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Jean Barman, *Sojourning Sisters: The Lives and Letters of Jessie and Annie McQueen* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 2003)

*SOJOURNING SISTERS* is a vivid biographical portrait of the lives of Jessie and Annie McQueen, two Presbyterian Scots sisters from Sutherland's River, Pictou County, Nova Scotia, whose experiences as teachers played a critical role in domesticating the British Columbia frontier and in making British Columbia a part of Canada. In this regard, Jean Barman has taken up the call, articulated most recently by Gerald Friesen's *Citizens and Nations*, that documenting and analyzing the lives of "common Canadians" has much to teach historians about our country, its people, and its ideological perspective. Barman's central thesis is that "British Columbia's absorption into Canada in the years following the completion of the transcontinental railroad derived far more from inconspicuous women like Jessie and Annie McQueen than it did from the public pronouncements of fellow Nova Scotians like George Monro Grant." (129) Thanks to the fact that the sisters were "inveterate scribblers" who wrote numerous letters to each other, and to

their siblings and parents, Barman has considerable raw material to permit us entry into their world.

The story that Barman deftly reconstructs from those letters is not a page-turner in the sense of conventional histories of nation-building where the tropes of great men and great deeds still reign supreme. However, in her skillful, wry, and witty style, Barman has produced an important, often extremely engrossing story, with two interesting protagonists at its core. The work opens with descriptions of the Scots Presbyterian world of Pictou County, NS, and histories of the McQueen family — a farming family that valued literacy, education, the church, and a strong moral code. Although firmly middle-class in their ideals and values, the McQueen family was never financially secure and this instability was the key determinant of their fates. Time and again, letters describe their attempts to juggle a variety of ventures to keep solvent, and the ways in which adult children, particularly single daughters, were the key to family financial stability. Of the six children, five daughters and one son, four of the daughters (one was infirm and never self-supporting) were at various times called upon to supplement the family coffers with their earnings as teachers. The son, the parent's favoured child, played his role of the prodigal well, decamping for New York and a series of fruitless attempts to make his way in the world. As the older sisters married, it fell to the younger ones, Jessie and Annie, to help support the family. When in 1887 a letter arrived from Rev. John Chisholm, a Presbyterian minister, former family friend, and then resident of British Columbia inviting Annie McQueen to journey west for a job position in Nicola Valley, BC, the die was cast. The key lure was wages. In comparison to the \$45-\$75 per term that Annie McQueen would earn teaching in Nova Scotia, the starting wage in British Columbia was \$50-\$60 per month. The family matriarch, Catherine McQueen, was loath to see her go, but in a

province that viewed sojourning as an important economic strategy, and in a family where the men had failed to provide secure financial support, her departure was viewed as inevitable. Eventually, Annie's older sister Jessie also ventured west, to a nearby school. Both sisters embarked on their trips west with the clear intention that they would teach in BC for three years before returning to the familiar world of Pictou County.

The remainder of the book details the sisters' negotiations with the settler society of BC and the ways in which their Nova Scotia worldview informed their interactions with the people they met. Barman makes a compelling case for the importance of the Nova Scotia values that they transmitted — both to the children they taught (via imported readers from "home" and ideals of society and settlement based upon Nova Scotian norms) and to the people they lived amongst. This is true despite the fact that the youngest daughter, Annie, married within two years of arriving in the west and that she and her Ontarian husband never returned to Nova Scotia to live. Annie's experiences as a wife and mother, first in Ontario, but primarily in BC in a number of boomtowns in the interior of the province and eventually in the provincial capital were no doubt illustrative of the pattern for many newcomers to the region. No longer able to work as a teacher, Annie's economic fate was in the hands of her husband and they moved repeatedly in search of better opportunities and jobs before arriving in Victoria shortly before James' death. It is only after his death that Annie was able to return to paid work, and she threw herself into volunteer and paid work with gusto, clearly relishing the opportunity for agency that widowhood afforded.

Jessie's path was different. Although the older sister, Jessie never did marry or commit to life in the west. Instead she worked for approximately twelve years in BC before returning, permanently, to Nova Scotia. In part, this was due to her

ill-fated choice in men, but also to the ways in which the family matriarch was loath to let Jessie McQueen, the last of the single, financially supporting daughters, slip off the family economic ties which bound her to her birth family. However, the sisters' ties to their Nova Scotia world were more than just economic and dutiful. The letters and news of home were shared and circulated among their entire family. Family members sent them newspapers from home, described community events, kept them updated on the births, deaths, and marriages in the community and thus routinely involved them in the life of the McQueens even though they were thousands of miles away. Particularly in the early years, they ordered an assortment of products and cloth from Nova Scotia because they viewed it as superior to what was available locally. Finally, though Barman emphasizes that Nova Scotians accounted for a small percentage of BC residents, Jessie and Annie were well-integrated in this expatriate community of teachers and ministers, and routinely socialized and networked within this community. It was only later in life, living in Victoria, that Annie considered herself more a resident of BC than of Nova Scotia. Jessie remained a Nova Scotian in outlook and identity to the end.

The story of the McQueen sisters of Pictou is, in many respects, the story of a large number of average 19th and early 20th-century Canadians. Propelled by economic circumstances, they ventured forth from comfortable, established homes and communities in the eastern and central parts of the country and headed west in search of better opportunities. That part of the story is not so astonishing, but in Barman's capable hands, we are left with a compelling micro-study that highlights some key features of the world of sojourners and settlers on the western frontier. "The lives of Annie and Jessie McQueen argue that the freedom the frontier gave was illusory. Congruent with colonialism, the frontier was highly racialized, intended to be experienced by

persons of pale skin tones at the expense of the Aboriginal people, hybrids, and, in the case of British Columbia, persons from China. The frontier's freedom was also gendered. The sisters domesticated within a set of imperatives designed to control women's lives far more than they were ever encouraged to participate in events equitably with their male counterparts." (243) Thanks to the archival cache of McQueen letters, and Barman's painstaking reconstruction work, we are left with a noteworthy biography that illuminates small-scale nation-building. *Journing Sisters* demonstrates both the economic and familial need that drove western re-settlement and the ways in which two "inconspicuous" women alternatively embraced, resisted, and less frequently adapted to the frontier and in so doing made British Columbia Canadian.

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Phillip Hansen, *Taxing Illusions: Taxation, Democracy and Embedded Political Theory* (Halifax: Fernwood Publishing 2003)

IN THIS ENGAGING little book, Phillip Hansen attempts two interrelated assignments. On the one hand the book is an exploration of the competing value assumptions underlying a pair of taxation policies in Saskatchewan in a period when neo-liberalism displaced Keynesianism as the dominant economic paradigm. But it is equally a meditation on how to deliberate about public policy normatively, which for the author means among other things how to apprehend the relationship between the market and democracy. On his own account the book emerged from Hansen's intuition that an examination of two tax studies conducted for provincial NDP governments three decades apart, the McLeod Royal Commission in the mid-1960s and the Vicq Tax Report undertaken in the late 1990s, could illustrate

the degree to which public policy discourse has been transformed in recent decades, while also prompting fundamental questions about how one should conceive of community and collective action.

The explicit normative concerns of this book set it apart from typical policy studies not because the author assiduously raises value questions, but rather because he rejects the conventional understanding of policy as technique in the service of politically-chosen goals. Whereas students of politics are often directed to regard public policies as just so many technical instruments, distinct from the preferences and values which inform political decision-making, Hansen insists that they in fact are suffused with claims and judgements about our collective lives and are thus inescapably normative. The author coins the term "embedded political theory" to indicate that public policies, and the institutions and processes of government in general, comprise value judgements and commitments, and are accordingly fitting subjects for philosophical inquiry into the nature of self and society.

The chapters given over to an analysis of the two tax studies do demonstrate quite distinctly the changes in value commitments which governments (in this case, social-democratic), and supposedly society at large, entertained in the latter part of the 20th century. For instance, the McLeod Royal Commission in 1965 relied on presuppositions variously associated with Keynesianism in which the goal of tax policy was presumed to be to provide for those public goods desired by the community and which a steadily expanding state could be reasonably expected to provide. The McLeod Commission was relatively unconcerned with questions of the impact of taxation rates on investment, observing that these were largely matters of political culture rather than subject to any precise economic calculation. By contrast, the Vicq Tax Review Committee some 30 years later was consumed by precisely these questions of the

marginal disutility to investment and growth reputedly associated with different tax loads, especially in light of diverging tax structures in other jurisdictions. According to Hansen, this shift in emphasis from a complex appreciation of the well-being of the community to a narrow actuarial understanding of economic behaviour reveals starkly the emergent neo-liberal understanding of the self and community.

While the author quite skillfully teases out the value suppositions and implications of these two tax studies, this interpretive labour is preliminary to a larger theoretical engagement with what might be termed the social ontology of neo-liberalism. This latter venture is not always easy to follow because Hansen alternates between trying to discredit the methodology underlying the instrumentalist view of public policy, and decrying neo-liberal hyper-individualism which he thinks is as incoherent conceptually as it is calamitous politically. Insofar as methodology is concerned, the author argues for a fully interpretive or hermeneutical attitude in which policy is always and forever regarded as a contingent, contested domain through which we collectively constitute our shared world. Enlisting at various times the authority of Hegel, Charles Taylor, Heidegger, and Merleau-Ponty, among others, Hansen covers territory made quite familiar by contemporary critics of vulgar scientism and rational choice theory. There is a problem, however, in this extended discussion of knowledge claims and the foundation of identity and intersubjectivity, for when all is said and done, conceding the situational and purposive foundations of social life still does not tell us how "meaning production" actually takes place. In the absence of such an explanation, we are left with rather more questions than answers, particularly with respect to the central political concern of this book to subvert the spurious individualism which the author (rightly, in my view) attributes to neo-liberalism.

The extent of this problem can be gathered by observing what Hansen notes as a simultaneous conceptual and practical dilemma in the neo-liberal consecration of individualism, a consecration which has cashed out in recent years in a dedicated commitment to reduce public expenditures and cut taxes. Advocates of this type of fiscal regime are fond of appealing to the self-interested calculations of tax-payers, effectively transforming the discourse (and identity) of citizenship from one which stresses the active contribution to and participation in a shared public good to one which emphasizes a ceaseless individual cost-benefit analyses of collective action. The virtuous citizen has become the prudent personal accountant. Hansen is critical of this neo-liberal "common sense," partly because he claims the image of the calculating individual attentively weighing the relative costs and benefits of personally defined choices is faulty in its conception. The reason is simply that there is no such thing as a self-construing individual whose preferences and commitments can be identified independently from the community of which he or she is a part. Interdependence in a meaning-producing community is the condition under which individual identities are formed, and it is only in the context of our commitments to the community of which we are a part that we can sensibly speak of what counts as goods much less what figures as benefits or costs.

But there is another interdependence that also needs to be acknowledged. Commenting on the McLeod Commission's deliberations during an era when Keynesianism still held sway, Hansen notes that the commissioners were of the view that public provisioning through a progressive tax system was not only desirable but rationally necessary precisely because of the degree of social interdependence brought about by modern industrial capitalist society. That this view is no longer shared by contemporary tax-cutters is obvious. Less obvious is



why this has happened. "How did a reinvigorated individualism," asks Hansen, "come to the fore in the face of such interdependence?" His book, unfortunately, provides no real answer because it does not speculate directly on how meaning-production actually takes place. And without making more vivid what is involved in meaning-production, the author leaves the reader wondering how the two types of interdependence described above affect the prospects of the neo-liberal political agenda. For example, in a jurisdiction like present-day Ontario where principled neo-liberals held office for nearly a decade, the social interdependence generated by industrial capitalism proved to be a stubborn fact that no amount of fantasizing about the rational self-interested individual could dispel, with the result that deep tax reductions were complemented by an entirely predictable deficit. Does this episode portend crises in the political domain as the exigencies of social interdependence in the realm of production come into conflict with the antediluvian ideology and policies of neo-liberalism? Or are citizens so fully constituted in their identities by the "common sense" of their community that the specter of neo-liberal governments generating deficits likely will produce only a discomfiting case of cognitive dissonance?

Naturally there is no absolutely reliable way of answering questions like these. But a more fully-developed theory of the social production of meaning could at least furnish us with material for hypotheses about the operation of the political process in contemporary capitalism. What Hansen provides us instead are normative arguments about how the impoverished view of the individual and community can be confuted. The conceptual site for a challenge to neo-liberalism, Hansen contends, is the notion of democracy. If informed by ethical commitments to self-development as described by thinkers like C.B. Macpherson, and constituted by genuine discursive pluralism as advocated by theorists of deliberative

democracy, it can attract conceptions of self and community more convivial than that on offer by current neo-liberalism. While this last argument has something of the air of a wish, it is not a wayward wish but entirely in keeping with the overall normative structure of Hansen's policy study. More successful in his analysis and critique of the value components of discrete policies than in working out a well-developed theory of the production of meaning, Hansen nonetheless has accomplished something very important in this book by illustrating how seemingly technical policy reports are replete with a rich array of philosophical, political, and cultural representations. Students of public policy are encouraged to read this study.

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Jean Lamarre, *The French Canadians of Michigan: Their Contribution to the Development of the Saginaw Valley and the Keweenaw Peninsula, 1840-1914* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press 2003)

"[T]HE MOBILITY of the French Canadians was a fundamental trait that demands examination if the continuity of the Quebec identity is to be fully understood." (7) Jean Lamarre examines this mobility in his study of the migration of French-Canadians from Quebec to the lumber and mining industries of Michigan during the second half of the 19th century, bringing to light a migration story that differs from the classic Quebec — New England model. He provides evidence that a triangular migration pattern existed among Quebec, New England, and the Midwest, and that the French-Canadians who followed this route "were rarely the powerless victims of a shifting economic context, but that they always, with varying degrees of success, attempted to adapt by using their life and work experience and their sense of

family solidarity to the best of their ability." (160)

*The French Canadians of Michigan* is a compact and well-organized volume in four chapters. The opening chapter provides the backdrop against which French Canadians made the choice to immigrate to the United States. The second chapter informs the reader about the Saginaw Valley, a lumber region, and the Keweenaw Peninsula, with its mining industry. The final two chapters discuss the French Canadian migration to these two regions and the impact of these immigrants in both the lumber and mining industries. To supplement his narrative Lamarre includes tables providing statistics on population growth, socioeconomic profiles, employment trends, birth origins, ethnic profiles, and lumber and copper productivity.

The early 19th century in Quebec was marked by economic hardship. Lack of enough arable land in the St. Lawrence Valley to meet the needs of a large rural population as well as declining wheat production forced many farmers who had been self-sufficient to sell their farms and move. Some bought land in the Eastern Townships, while others migrated to the United States, settling in the agricultural regions of the northeast. When the agricultural sector in Quebec and the American northeast could no longer support them, they migrated to the Midwest where fertile farmland could be found. French-Canadians who were unable to buy land sought local employment as farm labourers or lumbermen. As this growing proletariat found it difficult to find work in Quebec, they migrated to the textile and shoe factories of New England, or to the lumber industry, where they already had experience. Later, as pine stands were depleted and the lumber industry moved west, French-Canadians followed the westward migration pattern to Michigan. This migration to Michigan was not an unusual choice. The fur trade that had built up Quebec in the 17th and 18th centuries had gradually extended west to the Great Lakes, and French-Canadians

had followed, establishing semi-permanent settlements to sustain the trade. As Lamarre explains, "Migration to this region was therefore never considered an expatriation, but rather a relocation within a French Canadian sphere — to which the territory of Michigan belonged." (27)

Large French-Canadian communities grew up in the Saginaw Valley and the Keweenaw Peninsula of Michigan over the second half of the 19th century. Both regions were developed by entrepreneurs, exploiting the lumber resources in the Saginaw Valley and the copper ore on the Keweenaw Peninsula. French-Canadian farmers had already been migrating to the Saginaw Valley. They were joined by lumber workers from Quebec and the Northeast who had been recruited because of their experience. At about this time, copper was discovered in northern Michigan. Mining and lumbering went hand in hand, as mining regions had to be cleared of timber before the land could be mined, and lumber was used to build the mining infrastructure and company settlements. French-Canadians worked in the lumber sector of the mining industry and later directly in the mines. Both these industries grew after the Civil War, then slumped during the depression of 1874, and once more gained momentum until they were hit by workers' strikes in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

These two French-Canadian regions followed different acculturation patterns. The French Canadians who followed the lumber industry to the Saginaw Valley were confident in their skills and easily integrated into that industry as well as the sociopolitical framework of the valley. The weak leadership of the Church and the divisive issue of the annexation movement turned the French Canadians away from traditional authority to seek out other ways of improving their lives, notably through obtaining citizenship and becoming involved in political life. On the Keweenaw Peninsula, however, French Canadians remained more culturally in-

sulated. They initially worked in the service and skilled-labour sectors that supported the mining industry, and later worked in the mines. They preferred small company villages rather than larger mining towns. They were less integrated into the social structure of the peninsula than their Saginaw Valley counterparts, and when economic and social conditions declined following the depression of the late-19th century and the nine-month strike in 1913, many returned to Canada.

Lamarre examines different migration models to Michigan: from Quebec to New England then west toward the Midwest; from French-Canadian enclaves already established in the Great Lakes region further north to Michigan; and from Quebec directly to Michigan. These were not one-way routes. Using marriage and birth records, Lamarre follows French-Canadian families in their travels as they sought farmland and employment opportunities, sometimes backtracking and even returning to Quebec. He analyzes the changing demographics, the substantial increase in the French-Canadian population relative to the rest of the population in the latter part of the 19th century, the number of French-Canadians seeking United States citizenship, and the increase in second-generation French-Canadians in the United States who lived in Michigan.

In addition to providing a close study of population and economic changes, Lamarre offers a look at the growth of French-Canadian political and social institutions in Michigan, particularly the role of the Church and social service organizations. Some of the subjects that he touches upon would be interesting to see developed further. He discusses the French-language press, although he states in his notes that this is an area in which research is limited. Nevertheless, he offers an interesting glimpse of this industry and of the many French-Canadian newspapers that were established, then quickly went out of business. These papers dealt primarily with single political issues and Ca-

nadian news; "[c]haracterized by short lives and limited circulation, such papers often kept their readers better informed about news in their home country than about the life of the community they ostensibly served." (87)

Lamarre supports his migration hypothesis with demographic tables of population patterns as well as thumbnail sketches of French-Canadian migrants and the routes they followed. In his conclusion he states that the triangular migration route needs more study. But he has done an excellent job establishing a firm basis for further research. This concise history is not lacking in research and careful attention to detail. A bit of fleshing out of the immigrants beyond their statistical description would enhance the narrative, but it stands firmly on its own. Whether one is interested in labour, migration patterns, French-Canadians, or Michigan, *The French Canadians of Michigan* is a history that offers a detailed look at two specific regions and will appeal to many.

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Nelson Lichtenstein, *State of the Union: A Century of American Labor* (Princeton: Princeton University Press 2002)

NELSON LICHTENSTEIN's book combines a survey of American labour history since the 1930s with an assessment of what went wrong, specifically why since the 1970s the union movement has plummeted in power, prestige, and numbers. Here labour history becomes a story of the rise and fall of union power with a straightforward moral: to rise again organized labour must readopt the tactics that worked so well in the 1930s and it must avoid the mistakes made in the subsequent decades. This is narrative history with a mission and with an undisguised interpretive framework, but it is also a highly readable and persuasive account of

## 300 LABOUR/LE TRAVAIL

a significant chapter in modern US history.

Lichtenstein begins with an explanation of the larger social implications of what a turn-of-the-20th-century commentator referred to as "the labor question." He notes that the question involved both concerns about workplace conditions and the social dangers posed by economic inequality. While the ideal of industrial democracy addressed the former, a generous "social wage," meaning the range of services and safeguards offered by the state, has helped ameliorate the latter. Thus, for Lichtenstein, unions have played an invaluable role in modern US history because they promoted industrial democracy and fought for improvements in the social wage.

Having established why a strong union movement matters, Lichtenstein proceeds to offer his version of its rise in the 1930s and subsequent slow slide into senescent impotence. During the Great Depression unions won public support for the goal of creating an economy where workers enjoyed a measure of security. That support led to acceptance of the legal protections for union membership enshrined in the Wagner Act (1935). At the same time, Lichtenstein writes, a new-born CIO shook off the cautious, exclusive characteristics of the AFL and welcomed radical organizers and left-wing supporters who helped the new labour federation score dramatic gains among workers in the mass production industries. These victories overcame longstanding divisions within the American working class along lines of race, ethnicity, and gender. Such organizing achievements went hand in hand with a broad political mobilization of the American working class which spurred on the New Deal reform program. According to Lichtenstein, by the early years of World War II the US appeared ready to create a European-style social democracy.

For Lichtenstein that was organized labour's high water mark. Although unions continued to grow into the late 1950s,

their decline had already begun by the 1940s. The villains here include a distinctively conservative US business community which allied with the white power structure of the Southern states. And although he might not label them villains, Lichtenstein also blames labour's decline on those union leaders whose well-intentioned actions served only to lead organized labour down a blind alley. Beginning in the early 1940s business leaders and Southern politicians conspired to turn back the tide of New Deal reform. With the Taft-Hartley Act of 1947 they began the work of limiting organized labour's organizing tactics and constraining its field of operation to a narrower range of workplace-related questions. Although union membership numbers remained strong in the industrial heartland, the new legal climate doomed attempts to organize either the South or the growing white-collar segment of the workforce. At the same time, labour leaders like Walter Reuther of the United Auto Workers (UAW) accepted the fact that they could no longer hope to use collective bargaining to address fundamental economic issues such as corporate investment strategies or pricing decisions. Instead they focused on a narrower field of action, winning their members steady wage increases, health insurance, and pensions. In so doing, Lichtenstein argues, Reuther and his colleagues changed unions from a social movement to a special interest, one which Americans in the 1950s increasingly saw as selfish and corrupt.

For much of the 1950s and 1960s, the rotting condition of organized labour's foundations remained largely hidden from sight. Although Lichtenstein criticizes the long-held notion of a post-war accord between management and labour, he still depicts the dramatic decline of organized labour as beginning only in the late 1970s. A corporate counter-offensive at that time combined with deregulation in the transportation industry (railroads, trucking, and airlines) and the deindus-

trialization of the Rust Belt to devastate what had become the isolated islands of union strength in America. The Reagan administration's destruction of the air traffic controllers' union highlighted both the vulnerability of labour and the respectability of this anti-union offensive. By the 1990s, global competition offered union opponents one more source of strength; employers faced with a union organizing effort readily brandished the threat of moving operations to an offshore location.

The larger outlines of this argument will be familiar to those who have read Lichtenstein's earlier works, especially his biography of Walter Reuther. But in this account he adds a distinctive emphasis on the role of the Civil Rights Movement. For Lichtenstein, the Civil Rights Movement offers a counter-example of committed activists who achieved sweeping social change during the same era when an older generation of labour leaders were slipping into complacency and irrelevance. The Civil Rights Movement also created a new rights conscious legal environment that has achieved dominance in the US at the same time as the collective bargaining protections embodied in the Wagner Act have been steadily watered down. Thus, for Lichtenstein, a measure of labour's current weakness can be found in the fact that a worker today is likely to get meaningful workplace protections only by turning to civil rights law.

As a new overview of recent American labour history there is much to commend in this work. Lichtenstein writes with style and conviction, and he takes pains to connect this history with current issues that will resonate with a range of readers. As he moves through the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s, Lichtenstein explains the potent issues at stake in seemingly mundane developments, such as the seniority clauses in union contracts or the role of the shop steward. Anyone who has struggled to make students see the significance of the Taft-Hartley Act (1947) or to

understand the chasm dividing craft and industrial unions, will appreciate Lichtenstein's treatment of these subjects. In lively prose he brushes the cobwebs off these topics and a range of others.

Whether admiration of the writing will be accompanied by an agreement with the author's prescription for what ails the labour movement is more open to question. Labour leaders, he asserts in the book's final chapter, need to return to the tactics and organizational élan of the 1930s. The radicals, who Lichtenstein described as playing such a pivotal role in the organizing victories of the 1930s, need to be invited back into the unions and the left-wing coalition of that period needs to be rebuilt. A reenergized labour movement, one marked by internal democracy and playing a strong, independent political role, offers the best hope, he argues, of addressing the "labor question" of the 21st century. Some readers will find Lichtenstein's proposals a bit optimistic, especially if they have followed the more skeptical interpretation of the CIO's rise offered by Robert Zieger. Few, however, are likely to disagree with his earnest aims.

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Dan Clawson, *The Next Upsurge: Labor and the New Social Movements* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press 2003)

MOST CANADIAN trade unionists know just how weak the American labour movement is. We usually respond with concerns about the power it gives employers, along with a kind of smugness, that at least "we" are stronger.

But adversity can force activists to try new and creative strategies — experiments that can become a rich source of strength and renewal. Dan Clawson's book is about efforts in the US to create new ways of doing union work. These in-

clude efforts to democratize unions and expand the participation and initiative of rank-and-file members, transform union activity and organizing into more of a mobilizational effort, and, most importantly, build new relationships between unions and sectors of the working class — mostly women and workers of colour — that neoliberal capitalism has brought into the service sector in its aggressive restructuring in the last 25 years. These relationships go beyond merely trying to organize new people into unions: they involve efforts to link up with and create social movements that “fuse” union and community work in new and creative ways.

These strategies potentially contribute to a necessary shift in the paradigm underlying American labour itself. In spite of the Sweeney-era leadership changes in the AFL-CIO and key affiliates, Clawson argues that only such a move away from the New Deal era model of unionism can assure the survival of the US union movement. But this shift can only happen, he argues, as part of a mass upsurge — analogous to previous periods of mass struggle that gave rise to craft unions in the late 19th century, industrial unions in the 1930s, and key social movements, such as civil rights, second-wave feminism, gay and lesbian liberation, and anti-war activities in the 1960s. The new union experiments mentioned in the book are seen as contributing to and serving as harbingers of the kind of social change that can develop through a new upsurge.

Clawson places much of the blame for the sorry state of today’s American union movement on its continued reliance on the outdated paradigm established in the 1930s and further modified by the Taft-Hartley Act of the 1940s. Under it, union activity tends towards servicing individual bargaining units through juridical procedures that encourage rank-and-file passivity and reduce the mobilization of members. It reinforces a culture of expertise and staff power and directs unions away from building links

with surrounding communities and other key social movements. It relies on the sanctioning and protections of a state regulatory environment. In the present era of corporate aggressiveness and state sponsorship of the neo-liberal agenda, even the safeguards built into the traditional National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) model no longer provide a way for labour to survive, much less grow.

Clawson brings together a rather impressive list of varied experiences from across the union movement, showing some of the exciting efforts to move beyond this paradigm. In the process, he assesses their strengths, and potential to contribute to greater membership and worker participation, militant action, and more lasting and deeper change. Some of the areas he looks at are:

- Different organizing strategies.
- Ways of building close links between union struggles (for ongoing battles with employers, contract struggles, and organizing) and communities. The AFL-CIO funded multi-union effort to organize minority workers in Stamford, Connecticut, stands out. Organizers built deep community links, and established a movement for affordable housing as part of organizing workers into unions.
- Efforts to address the oppression of women, through challenging macho/male paradigms of union leadership and activism.
- New kinds of labour struggles that bring together different elements of the working class and allied social movements, into workplace, community, and union-building campaigns.
- Forms of union-based international solidarity.

He also suggests that unions need to provide space for workers to talk about their concerns, aggressively engage the media (and do so in a participatory way), and to create a new paradigm for their operation via mass civil disobedience, or ignoring NLRB procedures and organizing independently.

Throughout the book, Clawson identifies some of the contradictions unions face in trying to change themselves. He points out that leadership and strong organizations can stifle workers' self-activity, if workers are not given the space and resources to learn from their own efforts and failures to move forward. While organizing and building outward is key, this must not come at the expense of the union's ability to provide militant leadership for and develop the capacities of the existing membership.

This is an interesting and provocative book, but it also suffers from a number of weaknesses. Clawson makes no reference to building on the political terrain. Nor is there any discussion about how to create political forms to push the new agendas forward in the short or long term. We get no sense of transforming political understanding or fostering political learning. Certainly, workers' experiences in direct struggles with employers and community movements can teach all kinds of political lessons, but where are the political organizational forms to summarize and pull together these lessons?

Even more, there is no discussion about bigger political questions or ideas — things like the need for an alternative to neoliberalism, a challenge to the ideology of competitiveness, or a critique of capitalism and the possibility of a different social system. It is difficult to conceive of building a sustained movement to transform unions into democratic, militant, and class-oriented instruments of social change without looking for ways to move beyond what Americans call "liberalism," and the continued ties to the business-dominated Democratic Party.

In Canada (even with a social democratic party), as well as in the US, the lack of political reference points that point beyond capitalism means that most workers accept our dependence on the private market success of employers (or accommodation to the logic of the marketplace in the public sector) as a fixed limitation. This

political weakness cripples our ability to make organizational breakthroughs.

The lack of concern with ideology raises all sorts of problems in Clawson's fascinating discussion about the nature of upsurges. His contention that real change in the labour movement requires an upsurge makes a lot of sense. But if you consider upsurges as a series of large waves that social movements can either take advantage of or miss, it is hard to argue that the existence of political reference points that question the social system not critical.

The foundations for the gains of the 1930s were laid by radicals of various stripes. The lack of a strong tradition of a class-based socialist politics was one of the key reasons that the 1960s social upheavals in the US failed to move in the radical directions of the student and worker movements of France and Italy. Surely, when new upsurges happen (and they always do), a lack of political and ideological challenges to US capital from within will limit their intensity, as well as reduce the ability of activist experiments to serve as a potential base for new democratic and participatory alternatives.

There are other problems with this book. Clawson does not deal with the manufacturing sector or the unions there. His disappointing and unimaginative section on globalization inexplicably ignores the exciting anti-capitalist component of the movement, mostly concentrates on the weakest and least effective alternative strategies, and does not identify the enormous challenges that activists face in trying to address the deep wellsprings of pro-imperialist ideology that persist in the US labour movement. His glowing assessment of the Harvard University clerical workers' brand of unionism, and its relationship to management is highly contentious and seems more like wishful than solid thinking.

Overall, this is an interesting and thought-provoking book. Canadian trade unionists would do well to look seriously at and learn from the experiences of our

American brothers and sisters in their efforts to rebuild and renew their movement.

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Stephen H. Norwood, *Strikebreaking and Intimidation: Mercenaries and Masculinity in Twentieth-Century America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press 2002)

OVER THE PAST 30 years or so, American social historians have directed much deserved attention to understanding subaltern groups. Important as these studies have been in coming to grips with American history, there have been comparatively few efforts to provide similarly oriented analyses of the equally important history of the bourgeoisie. Stephen Norwood's *Strike-breaking and Intimidation* is in some respects a useful contribution to our understanding of that history. Focussing primarily on private strike-breaking agencies between the late 19th century and the middle of the 20th century, Norwood argues that strike-breaking concerns were lucrative, uniquely American businesses that developed extensive networks of well-equipped men who could be quickly deployed to deal with crisis situations. (3, 12) Whether in the employ of Pinkerton, Burns, or Felts, men found this line of work appealing primarily because it provided them with a means of living out ideals of masculinity wherein "manliness" was conflated with physicality and aggression.

In Norwood's view the desire to live up to this ideal of masculinity was a common thread that linked those with such vastly different positions within the social order as privileged college students and impoverished African Americans, even if the reasons behind and nature of the ways in which members of each group worked to achieve the same end diverged. African American men, for example, en-

gaged in combat on America's industrial battlefields as a means of challenging "white society's image of them as obsequious, cowardly, and lacking the ability to perform well under pressure." (80) According to Norwood, they chose strike-breaking as a means of mounting this challenge because other avenues were blocked by Jim Crow and a more diffuse racism which pervaded American society. On the other hand, despite their different social existence, college students also found that strike-breaking could serve as a way to prove their manliness in the face of perceived threats to it. According to Norwood, these students, often the sons of the American bourgeoisie, were, like their fathers, faced with a "crisis of masculinity" rooted in the increasing bureaucratization of early 20th-century corporate America. Norwood posits that strike-breaking closely approximated military combat, and thus provided these men with an opportunity to undergo "intense, violent experiences that provided feelings of power and mastery." (23)

The war-like atmosphere of early 20th-century American industrial relations abated as a result of shifting social and cultural realities — in particular, the "increasingly bureaucratized workplace" of the post-World War II period, and the fact that "the conflation of masculinity with physicality and aggression was less pronounced than in the early twentieth century, even in the working class." Norwood believes that bureaucratized workplaces "required individuals to suppress their intense feelings in the interest of group harmony." The emphasis of management, he contends, thus shifted to "restraining anger on the job." Norwood provides little analysis as to the reasons for the shift. Rather, he asserts that such a shift took place and, as evidence for this claim, he notes both the decreasing tolerance of aggressive behaviour in American public schools and the post-1960 disappearance of the Western, a genre of film and print which "glamorized male courage and righteous anger and climaxed in a



dramatic walk-down confrontation.” (229)

The bulk of Norwood's study centres on the early part of the 20th century and includes useful, albeit sometimes disjointed, explorations of cultural representations of strike-breakers and strike-breaking agencies that most historians of labour and the working class will have encountered at some point. The accounts of the agencies themselves — including Pinkerton, Felts, Burns, and others — as well as many of their leading figures and owners, including men like James Farley, Pearl Berghoff, James Waddell, and Archie Mahon — are carefully researched. Norwood's account of these actors and agencies provides insights as to why working-class men offered their services as the foot soldiers for what were anti-worker organizations. Drawing on examples from around the country — he discusses strikes in Arizona, Arkansas, the Upper Peninsula of Michigan, and Chicago, among others — he affirms that well-organized, privately funded vigilantism was an integral part of the early 20th-century American industrial relations system.

Nevertheless, this study falls short in a number of areas. Despite his assertions to the contrary in the opening chapter of the book, private strike-breaking and anti-union agencies like the Burns detective agency were not a uniquely American phenomenon. Indeed, it will come as no surprise to students of Canadian labour history that American agencies such as the Thiel Detective Agency were used to break (or to attempt to break) Canadian strikes. In addition to what might be termed “branch plant thuggery,” there were also Canadian agencies like the Macdonald Detective Agency in Winnipeg that were willing to act similarly.

More generally speaking, it is apparent that Norwood's lack of interest in placing strike-breaking within a politico-economic setting leads him to leave important questions unanswered. After reading Norwood's 247 pages on strike-

breaking agencies and strike-breakers, it is not clear, for example, how strike-breakers were recruited, who constituted the bulk of the “private armies” of anti-labour mercenaries, approximately how many strike-breakers actually existed, or how much agencies paid their employees. Beyond this lack of information about the particulars of strike-breaking in early 20th-century liberal-capitalist America, the author's hesitancy to direct attention to political economy tends to preclude the exploration of other potential causal factors underlying the willingness of working-class men to break strikes. While, for example, Norwood mentions from time to time that “lumpenproletarians” constituted a considerable portion of the foot soldiers of strike-breaking agencies, the reader is left to wonder whether sheer desperation amongst impoverished men, rather than a desire to demonstrate masculinity, may have motivated a majority of strike-breakers to place themselves in harm's way.

Finally, as to Norwood's conclusions, even if we accept the validity of his drawing on vague developments in popular culture (in this case Westerns) to demonstrate causality, his examples do little to evidence a decline in the conflation of masculinity and physicality that allegedly was central to the appeal of strike-breaking. Though John Wayne and his ilk may well have declined in popularity by 1960, they were replaced by the toughguy cops played by Charles Bronson and Clint Eastwood, and later by the boxers, soldiers, and paramilitary figures whom Sylvester Stallone and Arnold Schwarzenegger helped to make mainstream.

In any event, while there is much about this book that readers will likely find wanting, as a socio-cultural analysis of a little studied aspect of America social history, it will hopefully be of some interest as a starting point for future studies.

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David W. Noble, *Death of a Nation: American Culture and the End of Exceptionalism* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press 2002)

IT IS NOT AN OVERSTATEMENT to say that this book is David W. Noble's magnum opus. Between the covers is a 301-page narrative filled with the provocative ideas, insightful and honest self-reflection, and breadth of knowledge that mark this historian's more than half-century career as a scholar and teacher of the cultural and intellectual history of the United States. *Death of a Nation* represents the intellectual life cycle of an influential scholar and teacher. For Noble both expands on ideas he has developed throughout his career and incorporates into this broad cultural history some of the research of former graduate students he has influenced at the University of Minnesota. Noble's scholarship, like his life, is rooted in connections.

The argument is familiar to those of us who know and have been influenced by Noble's work. The intellectual crisis of the 1940s that, in *The End of American History* (Minnesota 1985), Noble demonstrated had caused postwar "consensus" historians to separate themselves from their Progressive mentors, takes central stage again here. In *Death of a Nation*, however, Noble expands his analysis to include novelists and literary critics, painters, architects, and musicians, as well as his traditional subject, historians. These various artists and intellectuals participated in a cultural reorientation in the 1940s when their assumptions about an isolated national culture bounded by the geographic space of the United States were shattered. Artists, musicians, writers, and intellectuals had illustrated, composed, and written of an exceptional national landscape rooted in the provincialism of the New England Romantics of the 1830s and 1840s. This WASP nationalism was thought to keep at bay the destructive "Old World" and, therefore, un-American features of the trans-Atlantic capitalism

out of which the United States developed. In the postwar years, 20th-century artists and intellectuals confronted the reality that the United States was and always had been an expanding capitalist country, one that contained many cultures, and one for which an exceptional and homogeneous national story could not be composed without a major dose of self-delusion. (The delusion persists, of course, in public discourse.) Hence the abstract expressionism of Jackson Pollack replaced the regionalism of his mentor, Thomas Hart Benton; the cultural pluralism of Richard Hofstadter replaced the cultural homogeneity of Charles Beard; and the universal internationalism of postwar architects replaced the universal nationalism of Louis Sullivan and the organic nationalism of Frank Lloyd Wright.

Strains of the postwar reorientation had appeared in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Noble does not try to claim otherwise. European styles and techniques had influenced photographers and the Ash Can School painters. Architects who had hated the architecture of capitalist cities in New England developed new and what they assumed to be democratic and American designs for the just-as-capitalist cities of the Midwest. Novelists had created characters who lived unfulfilled lives of despair, characters for whom the American promise was, in Theodore Dreiser's words, an "American tragedy."

Noble therefore does not posit that everyone shared an uncontested set of assumptions before World War II and then embraced an equally uncontested and different set of assumptions after the war. Rather, he demonstrates that following the internationalism associated with World War I, American exceptionalists were elated when the United States failed to join the League of Nations. Then, at the onset of the Great Depression, they hoped for the final victory of the producers' democracy they had coveted for so long. They now awaited the death of international capitalism. Consequently, Thomas

Hart Benton's paintings of the 1930s celebrate the productivity of a virtuous, industrious, and homogeneous national citizenry. Frank Lloyd Wright hoped that international capitalism would collapse and Americans would be virtuous producers rather than greedy profiteers. The proletarian fiction of the Depression decade pits virtuous workers against the agents of distant capitalist employers whom they never see. And literary critics openly defined themselves as Marxists. World War II, however, shattered these hopes and assumptions.

Consequently, the Holy Trinity (Henry Nash Smith, R.W.B. Lewis, and Leo Marx) of the postwar symbol-myth-image school of the 1950s and 1960s could write only about the 19th century. They could not write about a romantic national landscape rooted in New England provincialism if they studied 20th-century literature, for 20th-century literature does not represent that provincialism. Their books, then, were "Elegies for the National Landscape" (the title of chapter four). Smith, Lewis, and Marx mourned the cultural landscape's demise. They also quit teaching graduate students, students who wanted to study authors who commented on and increasingly represented the multicultural reality of the United States. Marx accepted positions at institutions where teaching undergraduates became his primary responsibility, Smith went to Berkeley to work with the Mark Twain papers, and Lewis remained at Yale but his new work represented traditional literary criticism rather than the type of broad cultural study he attempted in *The American Adam*.

For most intellectuals, writers, and artists, the idea of a universal national cultural landscape died on the altar of international capitalism. They now realized that a multicultural society had emerged from the conflicts between profit-seeking Euro-Americans and the ethnic and racial minorities who refused to melt in the national pot. The Cold War that pitted international capitalism against international

communism, the bloody struggles for civil rights and Black Power, the women's movement: the various aspects of the social and cultural crises of the 1950s and 1960s made it clear to all but the most diehard ideological advocates of a universal national cultural landscape that the nation had always been diverse and the economy had always been capitalist.

While the "death of a nation" (the death of the idea of a universal national landscape) has been accepted, for the most part, in the academy and in the arts, it is of course alive and well in public discourse. Those who defend narratives of the national landscape assume that such narratives are the only legitimate narratives, the only ones that have meaning. To them, the only true meaning is to be found in the universal national. That position, Noble proclaims, "has always been the position of bourgeois nationalists." (285-286) George W. Bush, for example, would hate this book if he could read it. Those who want to claim the name "American" still want to own the term for a particular people in a specific national landscape.

Two central ironies pervade these pages. The first is that bourgeois nationalists have and do evoke the metaphor of a universal national landscape while they simultaneously have and do embrace an expansive capitalist economic system that transcends national boundaries. The second is that the international capitalist system that emerged with the growth of the colonial Atlantic economy, that ripped Africans from their homes to produce profitable New World crops for their Euro-American masters, and that tried its damndest to destroy indigenous people, created, through blood and conquest, the multicultural societies despised by the advocates of homogeneous national landscapes and applauded by David W. Noble.

This is a highly readable and informative book that is a must read for students of the cultural history of the United States and for people interested in the intellec-

tual connections between historiography and other areas of cultural studies.

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Susanna Delfino and Michele Gillespie, eds. *Neither Lady Nor Slave: Working Women of the Old South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press 2002)

WITH THIS VOLUME, editors Susanna Delfino and Michele Gillespie have furthered the laudable goal of recovering the history of the vast majority of Old South women who, some may be surprised to learn, were neither plantation mistresses nor slaves. As the introduction explains, "sandwiched between the tangled worlds of mistresses and slaves lived hundreds of thousands of women in the Old South."

(3) The essays that follow demonstrate that these thousands included a wide array of women distinguished by class, cultural, and ethnic differences as well as by type of employment. "Work" is broadly defined to include the occupations of the wealthiest and poorest of women, which in turn provides an eclectic series of snapshots of a complex and diverse Old South. Through gendered lenses, readers encounter Native American traders and weavers, white Jewish teachers, free black and white Catholic nuns.

The book is divided into four parts. The first section, "The Rural World and the Coming of the Market Economy," challenges earlier works that assumed that women's (primarily domestic) tasks placed them outside the public world of commerce. The second section offers essays on domestic nurses and various urban wage-earning women. The third section, entitled "Women as Unacknowledged Professionals," includes essays on prostitutes, teachers, and nuns. The fourth section features women who worked in the antebellum South's mills and mines. This grouping of individual essays according to a sub-theme or topic is a good

idea, but unfortunately does not work very well in this collection. For example, Sarah Hill's Cherokee basket weavers and traders are combined with Stephanie McCurry's white yeoman farm wives in Part One. True, both essays concern women's economic role in the emerging market economy, but so, more or less, do the essays that appear in other sections. What ultimately connects Hill and McCurry's subjects is simply being Southern and rural. Equally unsatisfactory as a theme is Part Three's combining of E. Susan Barber's study of prostitution with two studies of nuns under the vague designation, "unacknowledged professionals." The book's remaining sections, Part Two's "Wage-Earning Women in the Urban South" and Part Four's "Working Women in the Industrial South," are so similar in focus that several of their essays could have appeared in either section. In fairness to the editors, there is no easy solution to organizing such disparate stories. Still, greater thematic coherence would have better facilitated classroom use of the book.

Issues of organization aside, the essays are well researched and written; indeed, several are outstanding, including the two opening essays on Native American women. Sarah Hill skillfully traces the rise and fall of Cherokee women's important economic role as basket weavers and traders within the changes brought by the American Revolution, the mixing of Cherokees with whites, and the growing influence of European patriarchal traditions upon Cherokee society. More broadly, James Taylor Carson traces the impact of the expanding US market economy on the lives of Cherokee, Chickasaw, and Choctaw women before 1830.

Although this collection focuses on working women, a number of essays take us into the world of elite white families. Stephanie Cole provides a nuanced study of emerging notions of "moral motherhood" as reflected in the employment of children's nurses in the decades leading up to the Civil War. She locates the devel-

oping stereotype of "Mammy" among whites who sought to justify the use of slaves as nurses amid a trend that deemed older white women more appropriate caretakers for refined, impressionable white children. Emily Bingham and Penny Richards demonstrate that elite tenets of True Womanhood likewise shaped the lives of Rachel, Ellen, and Caroline Mordecai of North Carolina. Although the sisters enjoyed the status of ladies, they were not the indolent, indulged ladies suggested in the book's title. Rather, the daughters of Jacob Mordecai struggled to meet the demands of family while teaching at their father's female academy. Their efforts to reconcile personal and professional responsibilities required their unending flexibility and sacrifice. Precisely because ladies were not expected to work for a living, the Mordecai sisters did not parade their careers before the public and thus received little credit—and sometimes no pay—for their work.

Two studies of Catholic nuns take us beyond the religious activities of Southern women. Emily Clark's fascinating study of the Ursuline nuns of New Orleans reveals how this group combined exalted status with professional success. Displaying "masculine" business acumen as financial managers, slaveholders, and planters, the nuns simultaneously displayed distinctly "feminine" values by insisting that slave women's chastity be protected and their right to marriage honoured. Diane Batts Morrow's study of the Oblate Sisters of Providence demonstrates how free African-American women achieved unusual economic solvency and respectability in the antebellum South within the confines of the Catholic Church.

Focusing on working-class women, Elizabeth Howe, Bess Beatty, and Michelle Gillespie provide tantalizing analyses of women millworkers. Howe studies the mostly white women employed in western Virginia's sewing, clothing, and textile industries. Although

skills, working conditions, and wages varied substantially among women employed in the textile industry, she notes that greater numbers of women were exploited as pieceworkers by labour contractors, manufacturers, and merchant tailors. Beatty similarly finds women of varying class backgrounds working in the textile mills of North Carolina, although most, she emphasizes, were poor. She further shows that women's responses to the circumstances of the workplace varied. In contrast to the common stereotype of "docile" female workers, some women protested oppressive conditions, forcing owners to address worker grievances. Michele Gillespie's essay on Georgia textile workers reveals that manufacturers used gender, race, and class stereotypes to justify the employment of rural white women long before the industrial boom of the late nineteenth century. To exploit the cheap labour of young, single women and children, employers trumpeted millwork as a suitable way for economically-stressed families to escape poverty.

Enormous energy and excellent research went into the writing of this collection of essays, and no doubt several fine books from its various authors will follow. For now, students of Southern women's history are fortunate to have such wide-ranging scholarship contained within the pages of one book.

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Matt Garcia, *A World of its Own: Race, Labour and Citrus in the Making of Greater Los Angeles, 1900-1970* (Chapel Hill and London: The University of North Carolina Press 2001)

TO UNDERSTAND the history and culture of southern California and much of the southwest of the United States, it is necessary to understand the Mexican heritage which underlies and supports it. Matt Garcia's book is a strong contribution to

bringing that heritage alive in economic, cultural, and human terms. In his discussion of the citrus industry of southern California, Garcia, half-Mexican and half-Anglo himself, brings to light an often hidden world of Mexican immigration and labour in the area's once-premier industry, the growing and harvesting of citrus crops in areas now pimpled with tract housing. Chicano cultural development is mixed with the study of community-building to show how the physical layout of Greater Los Angeles — a landscape of Chicano barrios, suburbs, and strip malls — developed.

Garcia, who teaches ethnic studies and history at the University of Oregon, discusses the racism that led white growers to select workers they believed more easily exploited, immigrant Mexicans and Asians, and the deliberate segmentation of the work force by race, language, gender, generation, and citizenship to combat unionization.

While discussing strikes, boycotts, and political organizing as responses to exploitation, Garcia also looks at the alternative cultural expressions that challenged the discrimination which permeated the Los Angeles area. While his seeming digression into the worlds of little theater and dance halls may not seem immediately relevant to his discussion, a blended, and therefore more complete, history emerges, one that sees people not just from the viewpoint of their economic roles, but from their artistic and playful sides as well. With that approach the reader sees a world of human beings, not just statistics.

The highly-profitable southern California citrus industry began in the 1870s, promoted by state and local governments and by the economically dominant Southern Pacific Railroad, creating townships where citrus groves often came right to the doorsteps of the growers' homes, melding urban and rural landscapes. By the early 1900s crops were worked by Chinese, Sikh, Japanese, Mexican, Filipino, and white employees on farms aver-

aging 10 to 30 acres in size. Despite ethnic and wage differences, workers attempted to organize but were thwarted in 1919 when alleged organizers were physically removed from the area by white growers, one of numerous vigilante anti-union actions in the citrus groves.

After World War I growers began favouring immigrant Mexican workers for the year-round (as opposed to seasonal) labour required. Company towns or segregated labour camps were built. Fear of Filipino intermarriage with whites spurred the shift to Mexican labour, and by 1940 the 22,000 Mexican men working in the orchards represented almost 100 per cent of the labour force. In the 1920s a state Commission of Immigration and Housing began pressuring growers to provide more decent housing, aided by local white educators and social workers whose Americanization programs were not readily accepted by the growing numbers of Mexicans. Workers resisted employer efforts to control their physical space by establishing colonias, communities which were Mexican-centred, some of which grew into large and complex communities on the edges of Southern California's citrus suburbs.

Immigration restrictions were favoured by white growers, except for their Mexican work force, which caused debate in Congress on how best to protect a "white man's country." Growers argued that they did not have much use for Mexicans, but "we take him because there is nothing else available." With the advent of the Great Depression, however, government visa policies effectively cut off Mexican immigration into the United States. Both the American and Mexican governments supported repatriation of Mexicans to their native country. But those who stayed participated in union battles during the Depression decade and began shaping a culture independent of their immigrant parents. The Padua Hills Theater in Claremont, founded in 1931 and surviving into the 1970s, drew white audiences to Mexican-themed plays with

Mexican performers, bridging a cultural gap and bringing awareness of Mexican-American social conditions to a larger community. That continued in later years with the growth of dance halls and concert venues for traditional Mexican music and an emerging Mexican-influenced rock and roll. That expansion into the larger, Anglo community led to the development of social and political organizations to combat de facto segregation.

Passage of the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA) in 1935 excluded agricultural workers from union organizing protections and employers continued to resist employee organization, often with violence. World War II, which brought stability to unions organized into the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO), saw the birth of the bracero guest worker program, which lasted from 1942 through 1964. Mexican contract workers were brought into the United States to plant and harvest, and many Mexican women were hired in packinghouses, creating a new women's work culture. Packinghouse workers were covered by the NLRA, but employer-imposed divisions of the workforce combined with fear of losing the best jobs — however low-paid and dangerous — they ever had kept unions out. Tensions developed between Mexican nationals and Mexican-Americans, leading to the murder of a bracero in 1952 which stirred their communities into heated discussion and led Mexico to recall some 500 contract workers from southern California. The end of the bracero program in 1964 opened the floodgates of illegal immigration, which is an issue on the front pages today.

Matt Garcia does an excellent job of interpreting the past, including the recent past and the anti-immigrant backlash in California. Exploring the issues of illegal immigration may be beyond the scope of his book, but demands addressing. The Mexican-American community itself, Garcia notes, is divided on the issue. A larger perspective would have been use-

ful. In a simplified nutshell, Mexico has large oil reserves, and in the 1970s borrowed heavily in an effort to enter the First World. Oil prices dropped, however, and Mexico found itself deeply in debt. The World Bank and International Monetary Fund agreed to lend Mexico the money to pay the interest on what it owed, in exchange for creating an "investment-friendly" climate — reduced government services, opposition to free trade unions, low wages, non-enforcement of environmental laws, and the like. Hundreds of American-owned factories known as maquiladoras opened on the other side of the border, and employed large numbers of young women. Unemployed young men sought work where they could find it, mainly by crossing the border illegally, and often at great risk (some 2,000 migrants have died in southern Arizona's deserts over the last decade) into the United States. Jobs await them from employers looking for cheap and docile labour, even though hiring undocumented workers is illegal. The problem of "illegal aliens" in the United States is a creation of the US's own policies and employer greed. And immigrants have always been useful scapegoats when the economy is awry, especially if they are darker and speak a foreign language. *A World of Its Own* urges us to look beyond a world of our own to see how race and class play out not just in Greater Los Angeles, but in the larger world.

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Susan M. Sterett, *Public Pensions: Gender and Civic Service in the States, 1850-1937* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press 2003)

*PUBLIC PENSIONS* provides a fascinating exploration of the history of pensions paid by American state and local governments. The atypicality of the United

States, which differed dramatically from countries in Europe, is particularly well documented in this very impressive monograph. As Sterett notes, "what in other countries [was] a social right of citizenship" was, in the United States, "a return for work." (102) The civic reluctance that surrounded the extension of pensions, and the debates that attended their introduction, help to explain the anomalous paucity of social welfare benefits in the United States historically and today. *Public Pensions* also exhibits a well-developed sensitivity to issues of gender, race, and class that adds greatly to its analysis.

Sterett explains that it was firefighters and soldiers who first received governmental pensions in recognition of their "service" in dangerous and important work. The courage and daring involved in such activity, and the protection of those who were weak and vulnerable allowed proponents of these pensions to characterize such work as "manly" and "independent." The masculine work of fire-fighting and military combat set the framework for the expansion of pensions to the police in the late 19th century, although legislators initially balked over extending pensions to police matrons or female police telegraph officers, who were described as "noncombatant employees."

By the early 20th century, private corporations began to install their own version of pensions in the United States, but offered them only to the sector of the workforce that was skilled, white, native-born, and male. Governments, in turn, extended pensions to teachers, who were also predominantly white and native-born, but mostly female. Offering peculiar analogies to military service, proponents of teachers' pensions tried to equate female teachers to "privates in the army ... who were most likely to wear out in the service." The analogy fit awkwardly with the "feminine qualities considered so valuable for teaching," (96) but the image of privates enlisted in an educa-

tional army apparently outweighed the image of substitute mothers. Thus "masculinized," teachers' pensions received strong and growing support. The argument that teachers had "earned" their pensions accorded with the dominant belief that white, native-born individuals were independent and had earned their pay. The extension of pensions to all public servants eventually followed, and by the time of the New Deal, even ordinary waged labour was included. A pension system meant that employees were no longer dependent upon the state. They possessed something more akin to a property entitlement and could be "proud of their service and of a pension they had earned and their dependents and heirs deserved." (78)

Sterett's fine historical research examines how recalcitrant American taxpayers tried to stem the tide of expanding public pensions. The pension programs that successfully passed through state legislatures were challenged in the courts, which regulated state spending under the "public purpose" doctrine, and slowed down the introduction of workers' compensation and pensions for the blind and the elderly. American legislatures could tax and spend only for a public purpose, could not take property without just compensation, and were prohibited from enacting "class" legislation that benefited one class at the expense of others. Spending for private benefit or special privilege, as distinct from compensation for service, was prohibited under many state constitutions. The thinking was that pensions ought not to be distributed to those who had not "served," that such individuals should instead be directed to private charities that would screen them according to their moral worth. All of these principles were dissected and enforced through the courts, as disgruntled taxpayers waged litigation to dispute the expenditure of public funds.

Some sense of the approach taken by the courts is provided in a 1906 decision of the Ohio Supreme Court, which



struck down pensions for the blind, explaining that this was a chilling precedent upon a slippery slope:

If a bounty may be conferred upon individuals of one class, then it may be upon individuals of another class, and if upon two, then upon all. And if upon those who have physical infirmities, then why not upon other classes who for various reasons may be unable to support themselves? And if these things may be done, why may not all property be distributed by the state? (130)

The class implications of such litigation were stark. Among the many remarkable cases that Sterett draws upon is the 1899 *Bush v. County of Orange* in which pension legislation was struck down as unconstitutional because it did not serve the public purpose. The lawyer who successfully argued the case, William D. Guthrie, was a nationally prominent railroad attorney and partner in the law firm that later became Cravath, Swaine, and Moore, who, when not "reorganizing railroads," was "crusading in courts against taxes and government regulation."

Pensions for indigent mothers, introduced in the second decade of the 20th century, were constructed on an entirely separate ideological basis. The recipients were never viewed as having provided "service," the work they had done was not seen as dangerous, and their pensions were understood to be charitable largesse issued to dependents, rather than honourable work meriting reward. The dangerousness of childbirth and the risk of maternal morbidity were completely disregarded. If pensions were deemed to be a return for service completed, mothering did not qualify on this count either. As Sterett notes, "child rearing is work in progress and work to come, not work past." (165) Sterett emphasizes that the provision of good child care was deemed an insufficient reason to pay women, and that courts and local officials tenaciously refused to recognize the *work* of mothering. "Only destitute and desperate mothers appeared...deserving of public support," (125) and child rearing was seen as

"more worthy of pity than of gratitude." (128) Each new pension eventually judged constitutional sheltered its recipients from the poorhouse. Firemen, soldiers, police, teachers, public servants, the blind, injured workers ... all eventually received their due in turn. The outsiders were women with children, who were resolutely restricted to the stigmatization of poor relief.

*Public Pensions* illustrates how substantially state constitutions shaped the evolution of American social welfare. Judicial decisions struck down many pension plans before the ink was dry on the new programs. And the shadow of the law loomed large, causing many state legislators and commissioners to modify or drop pension programs before irate taxpayers could even issue a writ. Sterett brings her history through to the era of the New Deal, when constitutionality finally became a non-issue as states enacted constitutional provisions that would allow them to legislate old-age and unemployment relief. The carrot of federally-funded social security grants appears to have been a major motivation here.

To understand the history of poor relief in the United States, which as Sterett so convincingly shows was unlike any other country in the world, one has to understand state constitutions. This excellent book adds immensely to our understanding of pensions, work, dependency, and American constitutional culture. It constitutes an extraordinary contribution to the scholarship on this very important topic.

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Paul Buhle and Dave Wagner, *A Very Dangerous Citizen, Abraham Lincoln Polonsky and the Hollywood Left* (Berkeley: University of California Press 2001)

A LIFE AS INTERESTING as that of Abraham Polonsky, the American writer and sometime film director, is revealing of an entire historical landscape, radiating shafts of light into the shifting political fortunes of the Left over decades, the place of Jews in America, the role of the media in shaping popular assumptions and thinking, the state of union organization and above all the shameful repression and huge cultural loss which the McCarthyite witch hunts of the late 1940s and early 1950s brought. Paul Buhle and Dave Wagner's biography is a rich, historically contextualized account of the times which shaped Polonsky, who was born around 1910 (the exact date appears to be unavailable) and died in 1999.

Biographies are somewhat marginalized as an academic resource in film studies programmes and this is to be regretted. Film studies often show a relative indifference or hostility to questions of authorship. The late 1960s and 1970s saw attempts to critique the romantic bourgeois view of artists transcending their social and historical context and producing seamlessly unified texts. After a brief attempt to marry authorship with structuralism, the question of cultural labour and creative agency working within institutional and cultural determinants has largely dropped off the agenda of film theory. The difficulty is compounded by a battery of sophisticated reading strategies that work to link the text to a wider culture, often forgetting the active and conscious cultural labour that mediates the relationship between text and context. Buhle and Wagner's biography necessarily reminds us that authorship matters, especially when a cultural worker is as articulate, reflexive, and politically informed as Polonsky was.

Polonsky spent his early years growing up in the Bronx, New York. His father

was a struggling pharmacist from a secular Jewish/Yiddish culture that effectively dislocated the Polonsky family, as with most Jews, from the dominant American culture. This combination of an educated family living in close proximity to the working class and never themselves particularly financially secure sowed the seeds of a later political radicalism that would flower in the collective struggles of the 1930s. Polonsky's family spoke Yiddish as well as English. Buhle and Wagner note that Yiddish is the vernacular hybrid language of the Jewish working class: it is musical, ironic, and skilled in storytelling.

Polonsky studied at New York College in the early 1930s where he mixed in left-wing circles. He later taught English literature night classes there to help pay his way at Columbia Law School. During the 1930s Polonsky was working in a law firm with show business connections that included the radio producer, writer, and star Gertrude Berg. Polonsky ended up writing scripts for her radio shows and had a first trip to Hollywood on a screenwriting project for Berg in 1937.

In 1935 the Soviet Comintern that fixed policy for Communist Parties around the world delivered a volte face. Where previously social democracy and fascism had been seen as virtually the same thing, both to be swept away by the coming revolution, the new policy formulated the Popular Front. Now social democracy was to be protected against fascism and alliances between the Left and progressive liberals and even bourgeois political forces, were to be encouraged. In the context of F.D. Roosevelt's New Deal, this gave a tremendous opportunity for the American Left to increase their political and cultural reach. Polonsky joined the Communist Party in 1936 and married Sylvia Marrow, a militant fellow Communist, in 1937.

Polonsky began writing pulp fiction in the early 1940s. His book, *The Enemy Sea* (1942), was serialized in a magazine. A wartime adventure story, it has the

usual Polonsky proto-feminist female lead and a three-dimensional black proletarian character who heroically aids the white detective/journalist lead protagonist. When America joined the World War in late 1941, Polonsky, then in his thirties, enlisted in the OSS (forerunner to the CIA) and was sent to London where he later joined the D-Day invasion force. After the war he returned to Hollywood to pick up his career. The period from 1945 to the late 1940s provided a moment pregnant with possibilities, but also a moment when the forces of reaction were beginning to consolidate themselves, readying to go on the attack. The Cold War gave them the opportunity to attack progressive forces inside America.

The significance of Polonsky's contribution to film culture for the authors is that he developed a new form of film, drawn from popular generic material but given artistic expressiveness and grounded in political critique. This made Polonsky an anticipatory figure in the 1940s for a new form of political filmmaking that would flower, in an American context, in the 1960s and early 1970s. Polonsky contributed essays to *Hollywood Quarterly*, America's first serious film journal. He wrote a detailed analysis of William Wyler's *The Best Years of Our Lives* (1946), considered by many as a breakthrough in cinematic realism. Polonsky argued that the film "indicates for every director and writer that the struggle for content, for social reality, no matter how limited the point of view, is a necessary atmosphere for growth in the American film." (105) Polonsky argued that Wyler's film "smashes the stereotypes, around the edges," (105) but that it is also ultimately unable to deal with class or show the limits of merely individual solutions to collective problems.

Polonsky's next major contribution to the growth in American film was as screenwriter for *Body and Soul* (1947) starring John Garfield and directed by Robert Rossen with whom Polonsky worked closely. It was produced by Enter-

prise, one of the small independent production companies that were beginning to emerge in the wake of growing anti-trust action against the big studios. The film was a proletarian boxing movie that targeted the capitalist fetishism of money and its corruption of personal and class ties. Buhle and Wagner map out the basic template of a Polonsky narrative: "The broad...arc of the Polonsky story encompasses anyone who has left behind a family (or a lover who holds out the promise of a family), or co workers, neighbours, political colleagues, or even a class or tribe — in short his community of human beings — to pursue a goal that alienates him from them and makes him yearn for a reunion." (112)

The success of *Body and Soul* allowed Polonsky to direct *Force of Evil* (1948), again starring John Garfield, a film that Martin Scorsese was later to describe as a significant influence on him as a young filmmaker. Buhle and Wagner identify the film's steely thematic and ideological innovations, as well as the self-censorship institutionalized by the studio system: "In one sense or another, everyone in *Force of Evil* is a cheap hood. Here is a world unlike anything ever seen in Hollywood. No colourful, redemptive poor people hold out hope for humanity with swelling speeches, no grandfatherly voices resound with reassuring clichés. Only illusion and disillusion exist for a gaunt population.... This hopelessness, which emphatically includes the world of law enforcement, destined *Force of Evil's* production for interference. The Breen office literally rejected the original script, and Polonsky had to rewrite the ending and add some dialogue before shooting could begin." (119)

But the McCarthyite witch-hunts were now to sweep through Hollywood (as elsewhere) and bring Polonsky's promising career to an end. Other Left screenwriters such as Walter Bernstein, Dalton Trumbo, Lillian Helman, Carl Foreman, and Waldo Salt suffered a similar fate. However, despite the closure on

aesthetic and ideological progressiveness which the Red-baiting years brought, McCarthyism could not achieve a total closure on the progressive pedagogic influence of the Left in popular culture. Thus Polonsky, with fellow blacklisted Walter Bernstein, worked in the new medium of television in the 1950s. They did this by getting non-blacklisted writers to put their names to the scripts they wrote ("fronts" as they were called). Bernstein and Polonsky wrote for a television history programme that brought modern televisual techniques to the representation of history. Starring Walter Cronkite, *You Are There* was a landmark innovation in televisual historiography.

Polonsky returned to screenwriting for films in 1959, writing the script for *Odds Against Tomorrow* pseudonymously. Directed by Robert Wise and starring Harry Belafonte (who produced it), Ed Begley and Robert Ryan, this little B-movie is a hard-as-diamond heist movie and a brilliant antidote to the kind of liberal films about black and white relations starring Sidney Poitier of the same period. The film ends apocalyptically with Belafonte and Ryan blowing themselves up on top of gas storage tanks. The Watts riots and the rise of the Black Panthers were only a few years away.

Polonsky returned to film directing in 1969 with his revisionist contemporary western, *Tell Them Willie Boy Is Here*, starring Robert Redford as the white sheriff and Robert Blake as a Piute Indian. This film, with its critical stance on the values and assumptions of white America, fit very well with this period in American cinema which, in the context of the Vietnam War and the crisis in the Hollywood studios, saw some of the finest critical interrogations of genre cinema that American filmmakers have ever been allowed to produce. Ill health cut short Polonsky's second bite of the cherry in terms of film directing, but he remained a lucid and witty raconteur on his life and times right up until his death. On making films he once noted: "Nothing is better;

perhaps revolution, but there you have to succeed and be right, dangers which never attach themselves to making movies, and dreaming." (212) Buhle and Wagner have also succeeded in bringing Polonsky's history back to life: both he and the book deserve the attention.

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Lawrence Mishel, Jared Bernstein, and Heather Boushey, *The State of Working America 2002/2003* (Ithaca, NY: ILR Press 2003)

ON THE DEDICATION page of this latest biennial update of the Economic Policy Institute's analysis of income and wealth trends in the United States, Lawrence Mishel and Heather Boushey each offer the heart-felt but conventional tributes to family members. Co-author Jared Bernstein, on the other hand, signals the methodological basis of the book by saluting "the men and women who make up the statistical infrastructure at the Bureau of the Census, Labor Statistics, and Economic Analysis. Without their work, ours would be impossible." Indeed, this portrait of "working America" comes almost entirely from statistics about employment, earnings, wealth, debt, unionization rates, and similar data, with government-generated statistics supplemented by those from financial newspapers, magazines, and think-tanks. The overwhelming reliance on this source material constitutes both the greatest strength and weakness of this type of study.

The three authors also dedicate the book to the late US Senator Paul Wellstone, "a tireless fighter for economic justice," a clear indication that the 400-plus pages to come will marshal the statistics to argue for public policy recommendations that place a high priority on full employment, on economic equality, and on a strong government-supported

"safety net" in the face of recession and other structural economic problems working people face. Mishel, Bernstein, and Boushey carefully evaluate long-term trends as well as the latest figures available at the time of compilation, in mid-2002, to warn that a "jobless recovery" from the recession of 2001 would not restore prosperity or fairness to US workers. Their warnings, and predictions, appear for the most part to be borne out at the time of writing this review (late 2003), even as mainstream commentators trumpet the revival of the stock market and some corporate profits.

The title, one must say at the outset, is somewhat of a misnomer. There is virtually no discussion in this book of what Americans actually do at work. While the authors argue that capital has benefitted disproportionately over labour from increases in productivity over the past decade, they do not explain how such changes have affected how Americans experience their working lives. They detail the decline in manufacturing jobs, but do not give a single specific portrait of how this decline affects real workers, communities, or unions. Reliance on government statisticians in this case came at the exclusion of such "qualitative" data as reports on strikes, unemployment, and jobs.

Even the charts and graphs at times portray only a partial picture. Mishel, Bernstein, and Boushey demonstrate the increased hours many Americans work, and comment briefly on how this affects family life, but readers will find nothing on commuting time or on relocation to find work. Moreover, some readers may be confused by the inclusion in a book on "working America" of a lengthy analysis of trends in the net worth among the very wealthiest Americans.

Those familiar with previous editions of this compendium will recognize that many sections are reprinted verbatim. The concluding paragraphs, for example, are almost identical to those in the 1998-1999 edition. Given that the basic thesis and format of the handbook has

been set, this reviewer wishes that the updated edition had added the more human dimension, illuminating the impact of the statistics on individuals.

Geared as it is toward influencing public policy, *The State of Working America* is organized around an "executive summary," and whole series of sentences appear in more than one section. Most readers will browse through the detailed chapters, looking at graphs and charts, and consult the text as necessary to explain particularly intriguing statistics.

With these caveats, Mishel, Bernstein, and Boushey present an important and compelling case, much of it familiar, but with authoritative documentation and argumentation based on the government-produced data. Workers' real wages increased, and income inequality declined between 1947 and 1973, followed by wage stagnation throughout the 1970s and then a pronounced increase in income inequality during the 1980s. The economic recovery of the early Clinton years did not do much for workers, but the last half of the 1990s, with its low unemployment rate, finally allowed strong gains in wages for working families, especially among the lower-income groups. Here, too, income inequality remained high.

The recession of 2001, which is too often noted mainly for its impact on the stock market, is here discussed primarily with respect to the rise in unemployment, which threatened to reverse the long-delayed gains of low-income Americans. Mishel, Bernstein, and Boushey suggest that while this recent recession was not that harsh in light of some previous downturns, it hit low-wage and other workers hard because the Clinton-era prosperity masked long-term trends detrimental to workers. These trends include the loss of manufacturing jobs, the decline in long-term job security and in job-linked pension and health benefits, the retraction of union membership, and an increase in personal debt.

This analysis leads the authors to advocate public policy solutions, by the

Federal Reserve Bank among others, that place an alleviation of unemployment as the top priority in order to restore workers' purchasing power and to reverse the growing trend toward income and wealth inequality. Expanded tax credits, subsidized child care, and a restored "safety net" are more essential than ever, they argue, to reduce the high rates of poverty in the US.

Among the strengths of *The State of Working America* is the authors' willingness to confront alternative perspectives head on. Thus, their final chapter on international comparisons between the US and other advanced industrial nations on wage rates, poverty, and inequality leads Mishel, Bernstein, and Boushey to conclude that the US record over the past twenty years does not make it a model for other nations, as some conservative Americans claim. A detailed discussion of the uses of computer technology, both in the workplace and as consumption goods, allows the authors to refute — successfully, in my view — the common argument that increased income inequality has been fueled by the growing gap in skills between workers in the "new technology" sectors of the economy and others. Their discussion of the impact of taxes on income and inequality is another careful analysis which takes a wide range of variables into account before making a judgement. At several points, the authors present different calculations of statistical data, in order to avoid reliance on a measurement that some might consider to be biased in favor of their perspective.

Some readers may be disconcerted by the authors' discussion of the increased participation of women in the work force. At times Mishel, Bernstein, and Boushey appear to imply that the growth in the number of hours that women work is important mainly as a contributor to the "time crunch" for married couples with children, and as an indicator of the difficulties that working people face in keeping up their economic status. The preference for the old family wage of a pre-

sumptively male breadwinner is never stated, but lingers just below the surface of the analysis.

This handbook should find wide use as a reference tool among the staffs of sympathetic politicians, unions, and public interest groups preparing speeches, testimony, articles, and lobbying campaigns. The heavy reliance on statistical analysis makes it unsuitable as a course text in all but the most specialized classes. Nevertheless, labour educators, economists, sociologists, and historians will find it an invaluable resource for graphs, charts, and discussions of economic trends, as they relate to working people, to use in classes or workshops.

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John McMillian and Paul Buhle, eds., *The New Left Revisited* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press 2003)

JOHN McMILLIAN launches *New Left Revisited* on a political note. "[C]onservatives have taken the New Left both too seriously and not seriously enough," (2) he says. They have given the movement too much responsibility for cultural changes and too little credit for what it accomplished. Sympathetic historians — themselves often participants in the movement — have inadvertently strengthened the conservative reading by oversimplifying the New Left's history as "a tragic rise-and-fall story." (6) Now, a new generation of historians is attempting to create a more "nuanced and comprehensive understanding of the New Left." (3) This volume is part of that effort.

*New Left Revisited* succeeds admirably in suggesting the complexity of what contributor Doug Rossinow describes as this "messy agglomeration of national and local groups and initiatives." (241) The collection of twelve essays blends events at the ground level with thoughtful larger views. Part I ("Local Studies, Local

Stories") focuses on institutions and places inadequately explored in the past — for instance, Peter B. Levy's account of the civil rights movement in Cambridge, Maryland; Gregg L. Michel's chapter on the Southern Student Organizing Committee, and Jennifer Front's on the Economic Research and Action Project of the Students for a Democratic Society (SDS). Part II presents "Reconsiderations," in which analysis predominates, supported by dense detail with an iconoclastic goal: to challenge past oversimplifications.

Francesca Polletta, for instance, takes up the role that conflicts over participatory democracy played in the end games of both the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) and the SDS. Drawing on archival sources and interviews, she dismantles the idea that participatory decision-making was an idealistic goal that foundered on the rocks of reality. To the contrary, as she demonstrates, consensus building was a practical necessity for SNCC, which was trying to develop local leadership and was, besides, facing such danger that activists had to participate fully in the decisions they were putting their lives on the line for. Participatory decision-making came under fire in SNCC's later days, not so much because it had proved impractical, she argues, as because arguments over organization arose out of conflicts over goals and tension between white newcomers and African Americans, who thought greater centralization might allow them to retain control of the organization. Similarly (and inversely), the argument over centralization in SDS's later days was a conflict between the "old guard" and newcomers out of the west, who attacked centralization because they felt excluded by it.

Polletta is not the only contributor to consider the New Left in relation to other political sectors. Andrew Hunt, for instance, places the New Left in the stream of time, taking up its kinship with older versions of the Left. David McBride explores the relationship of political radi-

cals to hippies in Los Angeles. Similarly, Robbie Lieberman and David Cochran describe the interlocking party and political cultures at Southern Illinois University. These explorations rightly imply the hazard of defining the New Left narrowly; its roots and branches extended in many directions.

For labour historians, the most interesting comment on the relationship of the New Left to other sectors often defined as progressive is likely to be co-editor Paul Buhle's Afterword, in which he takes up the relationship between labour and the New Left. The only contributor who belonged to the New Left generation, Buhle brings considerable passion to his critique of philosopher Richard Rorty, who has blamed bad student behavior for labour's lukewarm participation in movements on the Left during this period. Buhle argues that the blame for that defection lies, not with the students, but with labour bureaucrats, led by George Meany, who "blocked assorted progressive movements, including the New Left, from mobilizing labor on a massive scale." (260) What a different path the 1960s story would have taken, Buhle suggests, if labour and the students had joined forces. That they did not, he says, had little to do with student flamboyance and more to do with labour's participation in the Cold War liberal alliance. Summing up recent scholarship on the relationship between Cold War intellectuals and the CIA, Buhle says, provocatively, "we have far to go in understanding the connected systems of power underlying intellectual life and the labor movement." (260)

Some significant relationships between the New Left and other sectors go unexplored or are touched on lightly — for instance, the relationship of the New Left to the Democratic Party or the relationship of the New Left in the United States to its counterparts in Canada and Europe. But the editors make no claim to offering a comprehensive account of the New Left. Rather, they are filling in gaps

and bringing new perspectives, and that they do abundantly well. Several bring fresh perspectives: for instance, a "queer" reading of the Chicago 7 trial or Michael S. Foley's study of gender dynamics in the draft resistance. Jeremy Varon analyzes the evolution of "revolution" as an organizing idea in the 1960s, raising the question: why, by the late 1960s, did so many Americans believe that revolution was possible? Believing that revolution was "morally and politically necessary" and witnessing chaos all around, they took a leap of faith "into the mistaken sense that revolution was therefore likely or even inevitable." (230)

Those who lived through the events of the 1960s, and perhaps others as well, are likely to respond to these essays with mixed feelings of regret and admiration. The political energy of those times inspires — although there is no reason to feel nostalgia: in many arenas today we are seeing a new wave of political energy. Indeed, the weakest aspect of this volume is contributors' passing attempts to link the New Wave to present progressive movements. They cannot begin to do justice to the complexity of the present. In fact, their "present" is already the past. Who would recognize our post-September 11 sense of the future in Russell Jacoby's 1990s comment quoted by Jeremy Varon: "We have entered the era of acquiescence, in which we build our lives, families and careers with little expectation the future will diverge from the present." (233)

Still, activist readers will find in these excursions into the past much useful food for thought. Authors manage to be both sympathetic and critical at the same time, creating at least the illusion of objectivity that academic writing demands while inviting respect for their subjects. This is not a line that is easy to walk. As Kevin Mattson points out in his chapter on the New Left journal, *Studies on the Left*, "The editors at *Studies* understood that the academic virtue of "objectivity" might conflict with their radical predilec-

tions." (40) Favouring "objectivity," few of these writers attempt the scene-setting and characterization of individuals that would help readers imagine themselves back into this dramatic time. We get a glimpse of the kind of imaginative creation that would be possible when Ian Lekus describes the trial of the Chicago Seven, capturing the drama of Allen Ginsberg's appearance on the witness stand, "bringing the defendants to tears as he recited fragments of 'Howl'." (200) Although such moments are perhaps too rare in these accounts, the volume as a whole is a rich repast, for professional historians and lay readers alike.

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Michael Newman, *Ralph Miliband and the Politics of the New Left* (London: Merlin Press 2002)

THIS THOROUGH BOOK provides a fascinating account of the life, political concerns and involvements, and intellectual output of Ralph Miliband. It is based on access to Miliband's own archive of material, ranging from his youthful literary endeavours through his diaries and private correspondence to unpublished articles, drafts of later work, lectures, and, of course, published work; on interviews with his wife and sons, close friends, academic colleagues, political activists, and former students; on contemporary records and publications relating to Miliband and socialist politics; and on broader research into the changing national and international situation in which Miliband lived, worked, and struggled. As such it is not only the sole book devoted to Miliband's life and work but also a work that aims to provide a distinctive perspective, as the title indicates, on the politics of the New Left in Britain, Europe, and North America.

The book begins with Miliband's family history, his childhood background



as a Polish Jew living in Belgium, his flight to Britain as a refugee from Fascism just before the Belgian defeat, his wartime career as a student, worker, and naval intelligence officer, and his immediate postwar experience as a student and political activist at the London School of Economics (LSE). This provides valuable insights into the ambiguities and complexities in his search for a personal and political identity as a socialist and secular Jew who was committed to developing an independent socialist and, later more explicit and elaborated, Marxist approach.

Based on Miliband's comments on the work of Laski, his mentor and early role model at the LSE, and other leading intellectual figures, Newman argues that his early political position can be described as left-wing democratic socialist. Its three defining features were: (a) political action must be grounded in working-class needs and demands; (b) agitation, demands, and protest are necessary for change to be accomplished; and (c) political organization is also required to provide focus and leadership for these struggles. Miliband's political activities initially developed in sympathetic parallel with his Laskian academic interests as a specialist in the history of ideas but the two strands became more closely integrated, if not fully convergent, as he began to ask whether ideas were more than a simple "reflection" of the era in which they were produced. Thus his PhD, which dealt with the marginalization of the menu people in the course of the French Revolution, emphasized that ideas had to be related to political forces and interests and that political programmes had to address economic interests, especially the system of private property. The Jacobins' failure to deal with the question of private property made life harder for the masses and this in turn made it harder to consolidate the basis for a real social revolution. This shift away from Laski's independent socialism towards historical materialism was shaped not only by his own studies but also by the deep influence of C.

Wright Mills, who became a close friend and reinforced his interest in the political sociology of power, and his involvement in the rise of the New Left in Britain.

It is with this last influence that Newman's book begins to focus on his primary subject matter: Miliband's complex, ambivalent, evolving, often disenchanting, and sometimes mildly paranoid relationship to the New Left. Thus we read much about the personal, intellectual, political, and practical tensions and conflicts among the leading figures involved in the *New Reasoner*, the *Left Review*, the *New Left Review*, the *Socialist Register*, and many subsequent intellectual, educational, and political initiatives; about the politics of academic freedom and freedom of speech, the student movement at the LSE and in Britain more generally; about Miliband's growing disquiet and alienation from many of his colleagues (but not his many students) in the Department of Government at the LSE; about the continuing disputes in his immediate personal circle and on the Left more generally over Zionism, Israel, Palestine, and the Middle East; about Vietnam and American imperialism; about his underestimation of the importance of new social movements compared to the fundamental role of class conflict; about his views on the economic and political failures of communism and the collapse of actually existing socialism in the Soviet Union; about his distrust of alternative models of socialism in China and Cuba; about his personal troubles and worries about teaching in the USA; about his views on Reaganism and Thatcherism; and about much else besides. We also learn much about the research that went into Miliband's influential analysis of the limits of the parliamentary road to socialism in Britain; his subsequent growing interest in Marxist theory and the centrality of class, class conflict, and political organization; the background to his decision to write — and methodological approach to — *The State in Capitalist Society* (1969); the increasingly angry dispute be-

tween himself and Nicos Poulantzas (whom he never met); and his subsequent work on *Marxism and Politics*, *Capitalist Democracy in Britain*, *Divided Societies*, and *Socialism for a Sceptical Age*. Nonetheless the primary emphasis in these respects falls on the dynamics of the interaction between the personal and the political rather than on Miliband's academic and theoretical contributions for their own sake.

Thus Newman tends to be less instructive about the substance of Miliband's theoretical arguments than his difficulties in writing them — the main exception being in the chapter devoted to Miliband's timely, challenging, and cathartic work on *The State in Capitalist Society* and the ensuing debate with Poulantzas; less instructive about the effectiveness of his many educational and political initiatives than the difficulties he had in following them through — with the partial exception of the continuing story of the *Socialist Register*; less instructive about the substance of his teaching than the disjunction between the time and energy Miliband invested in his courses and his low estimation of the value of a purely university career; and less instructive about the positive themes in his later theoretical work than the increasingly negative reactions he received from friends, colleagues, and, eventually, sons for their "dinosaur"-like qualities. In part this reflects the nature of Newman's source material. For, given that he had unparalleled access to personal material, he has chosen to focus on Miliband as *mensch* and Miliband as *homo politicus* rather than on the broader political context of Miliband's postwar political and intellectual practice.

Thus Newman's study is inevitably Miliband-centred. It presents not only Miliband's personal and political history from a position highly sympathetic to his subject, but also the broader history of the Left from a Milibandian perspective. This is both the enormous merit and the basic weakness of the book. As someone who

never met Miliband, I finished this book with a much better sense of what made him "tick" personally, politically, and theoretically. But I was also left with the impression of an incestuous political world shaped by personalities more than broad macro-political trends — and of a political world in which people appear with whom one is already assumed to be familiar personally, politically, and intellectually (which may be hard for those readers who did not live through the same political events). On the one hand, then, we learn less about the nature and significance of the New Left than of Miliband's problematic personal, political, and theoretical relationship to some selected aspects of a complex, heterogeneous, wide-ranging, and changing movement. On the other hand, as a work on Miliband himself, the book is unique. Thus, although Newman seems to leave much unstated, he still succeeds in giving us a unique insight into Miliband's complex personality. So read this book to learn about Miliband, but be prepared to lose sight of the New Left forest for the trees planted, nurtured, or uprooted by Miliband.

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Priscilla Metscher, *James Connolly and the Reconquest of Ireland*, Special Issue, *Nature, Society and Thought: A Journal of Dialectical and Historical Materialism* (University of Minnesota 2001)

JAMES CONNOLLY, born in the slums of Edinburgh, a child of Irish immigrant parents, remains a significant figure in Irish, British, and US labour history and women's history. As a feminist historian engaged in researching the contribution made by women involved in Irish nationalist, labour, and feminist movements in the early years of the 20th century, I see Connolly as crucial to understanding the political development of most of the

women activists of that period. He was a close friend, an inspiration, a loyal support. He was prepared to travel from Belfast to Dublin to speak on behalf of suffragettes tyrannized by the organized mobs in the Ancient Order of Hibernians, a gesture always appreciated and never forgotten. He organized mill workers in Belfast and encouraged their self-development. It is doubtful that the Proclamation of the Republic would have guaranteed equal citizenship for women, were it not for his influence over his fellow rebels. Priscilla Metscher's exposition of the key aspects in the development of the political thinking of Connolly, the Irish socialist and iconographic hero of Irish republicans, is for those who like their analysis unadorned with any biographical gloss. For those who believe that "the personal is political," it helps to have read a biography of Connolly to appreciate the connections between his life experiences and his politics. However, Metscher's judicious use of quotations, stripped away from extraneous biographical details, has the merit of facilitating her discussion of his development as a political writer and activist.

As a riposte to the plethora of revisionist historians who have gathered over the past decades to damn the socialist republican legacy of Connolly, it is highly effective, although some assessment of the latest crop of texts on Connolly would have been welcome. Metscher is an exacting critic, but the impression is that this is a work researched and written some time ago.

She maintains a strong central thesis throughout, as she assesses the extent to which Connolly's support for national liberation was based on his understanding of historical materialism and the importance of class struggle. Her assessment of Irish politics at the time of the 1898 centenary celebration of the United Irish rising and Connolly's pivotal role in linking republican socialists and younger nationalists to challenge the Home Rule parliamentarians is well informed and gives

Maud Gonne due recognition for her work.

Disillusionment with the lack of commitment by Irish labour and an inability to provide for his growing family led Connolly to the United States, where he spent the years 1903-1910, an organizer for the *Industrial Workers of the World*. Elizabeth Gurley Flynn provides some touching vignettes of those miserable times, of Connolly tirelessly attempting to educate the working-class Irish in America in socialist principles, preparatory to the unification of all workers in the cause of emancipation. The Wobblies' stress on industrial action rather than political action had a major influence on Connolly, who became an organizer for the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union after his return to Ireland. A mere six years of life remained before the sacrifice of the Easter Rising.

Metscher devotes two thirds of the book to the rapid maturing of his political thought in these last years. She sums up his major work, *Labour in Irish History*, published in 1910, in which Connolly's elaboration of the principles of historical materialism provides a framework for understanding the course of Irish history, as "a document of its time and a tremendous contribution." (83-4) Yet that acknowledgement fails to convey the real significance of this work and its absolute originality. Connolly's picture of Irish history was certainly "radically different from the conventional view." More than that, it is revolutionary in its impact, linking the national and labour struggles and providing a coherent understanding of the materialist underpinnings of centuries of resistance. For those of us who came to political consciousness in the 1960s, the excitement of discovering the political intelligence of *Labour in Irish History* remains an abiding memory. Its final chapter, relating the rise of the Fenian movement to the social struggles of the Irish working class, substantiates his thesis that "every attempt at political rebellion in Ireland was always preceded by a re-

markable development of unrest, discontent and class consciousness.”(80) As we live through more than 30 years of nationalist unrest, of political rebellion that could be said to have been preceded by the class unrest articulated by the civil rights movement of the 1960s, Connolly’s analysis continues to have relevance.

The chapter on the “Woman Question” is too brief, although it recognizes, in Connolly’s use of non-gender-specific language, his progressive nature and strong feminist instincts. Some discussion of the differences between Larkin and Connolly, particularly on Connolly’s insistence on integrating women with men, both in the labour movement and in the Citizen Army (Larkin preferred separate spheres), would have helped in terms of deeper assessment of the Connolly legacy. Austen Morgan’s study of Connolly, while deserving of the criticism that Morgan judges “from the high chair of academia,” (viii) is well researched on Connolly’s Belfast years, providing empirical information that could have informed Metscher’s analysis of the woman question.

Connolly’s warning that the partition of Ireland would lead to a “carnival of reaction” was prophetic. Metscher provides a useful and pertinent riposte to revisionists like Henry Patterson, who accuses Connolly for his failure to understand the strength of “Unionist ideological hegemony.” (123) Connolly warned the working class of the north of their fate if they found themselves cut off from Ireland “left at the tender mercies of a class that knows no mercy, of a mob poisoned by ignorant hatred of everything national and democratic.” (123) For Metscher, events in the years since “all testify to and justify Connolly’s fears of the consequences of partition.” (123)

The reasons behind Connolly’s acceptance of the last rites in the moments before his execution have caused heated debate at many a conference. Metscher puts forward an ingenious but persuasive explanation: it was a gesture of solidarity

with the Irish people, not an acceptance of the religious tenets of the Catholic Church. Maud Gonne and Constance Markievicz were two other converts motivated more by politics than religion. It is a topic that merits serious research. Of interest too must be Connolly’s articles on war. He lived at a time, as he said when writing about the Boer War (1899-1902), when “Every war now is a capitalist move for new markets, and it is a move capitalism must make or perish.” (50) On this topic, as on so many, the life and writings of James Connolly retain their immediacy.

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Paul B. Miller, *From Revolutionaries to Citizens: Antimilitarism in France, 1870-1914* (Durham and London: Duke University Press 2002)

THE ROLE of the French antimilitarist Left in the years before World War I and its apparent “collapse” in the face of the nationalist surge in 1914 has for decades been widely debated by historians. Drawing on a wide variety of primary and secondary sources, Paul B. Miller provides a fascinating new departure on the role of antimilitarism in French political culture and society. In addition to a thorough study of newspapers and journals associated with the antimilitarist Left, Miller consulted military, police, municipal, and governmental administration archives to answer this central question: “How was it that the French left, which succeeded in creating the most antimilitarist culture and society in pre-World War I Europe, came to accept and, in many instances, support war in 1914?” (2) The French antimilitarist Left, placing itself as the primary force standing against militarism, and, by extension, the Third Republic after 1870, had by 1914 found itself defending the Republic and the humanist strain of the French revolutionary tradi-

tion. The overarching theme of the book, therefore, is the journey that the antimilitarist Left followed from "revolutionaries to citizens" during this period.

To answer this central question and chart the transformation of the antimilitarist Left from the fringes of the political culture of the Third Republic to its mainstream, Miller provides a useful context for antimilitarism within France and Europe generally. France was unique in that its "combination of republican government, military tradition, and revolutionary political culture" (5) created a complex and variegated antimilitarist Left that included anarchist, syndicalist, and socialist characteristics. In uniquely French fashion, the antimilitarists benefited from the democratic political culture of the period that led to a proliferation of journals and newspapers that transmitted the antimilitarist message to the public, while enduring government surveillance and repression that was mild compared to the situation in Germany, Russia, and Austria-Hungary, where antimilitarist activity was severely punished.

Miller's argument that the anti-militarists journeyed down the road from *revolutionaries to citizens* is best expressed by his insistence that high-profile events (the Dreyfus Affair being only one of many) fixed public attention on the antimilitarist message and placed the antimilitarists as the defenders of the revolutionary tradition of social and political justice. However, he resists falling into the trap of taking the antimilitarist rhetoric at face value. Instead, he makes a convincing case that perception was more powerful than reality. This is clear when he discusses the tendency of the police to overestimate the cohesiveness of the antimilitarists, while the antimilitarists themselves more often than not misunderstood their own influence on French society. Nevertheless, the antimilitarists were able to capitalize on events to a surprising degree. The most persuasive examples Miller uses surround the *affiche rouge* affair and the revolt of the 17th Infantry.

The *affiche rouge* affair of 7 October 1905 surrounded the activities of members of the *Association Internationale Antimilitariste* (AIA) who littered Paris with an antimilitarist *affiche* aimed at army conscripts. The contents of the document called on conscripts to disobey orders and fire on their superiors in defense of their exploited brethren, the workers. Most disturbing to many observers was the call for soldiers to strike and carry out an insurrection in the event of mobilization for war. Miller skillfully uses this event to illustrate the response of the government, the military authorities, and conservative press and their fear that antimilitarism was a significant threat to the security of the nation. On the flip side, the defendants in the ensuing trial drew support from even moderate socialists, including Jean Jaurès, who argued that the AIA had taken a daring stand against the use of soldiers to suppress strikes (despite Jaurès' condemnation of the language of the *affiche* calling for the murder of officers). The level of strike activity was so high in France by 1905 that the anti-militarists, no matter how violent their message, "were at their most persuasive when protesting the use of troops to suppress strikes, an issue viewed universally as an immoral affront to their basic rights as French citizens." (77)

Miller employs the mutiny of the 17th Infantry during the winegrowers' revolt in the Midi in 1907 to demonstrate that soldiers themselves were often active participants in events that reflected public perceptions of the military. Economic hardships in the Midi caused widespread demonstrations, and the bloody response of the army on 19 and 20 June led to violence and the death of six civilians at Narbonne. The response of the 17th regiment, filled with local soldiers and garrisoned nearby, was telling; the soldiers joined with the civilian population against their officers to protest the Narbonne massacre. Although Miller admits that no clear link between the soldiers and the antimilitarist propaganda

existed, the antimilitarists were successful in presenting the mutiny to the public as a defense of the civil rights of the protesters against an irresponsible military establishment. Concomitantly, they presented this as a sign that they were acting freely as "citizens" and as the social conscience of the Republic.

By 1914, as Europe stood on the brink of war, the antimilitarist Left had completed its journey. In Miller's view, they had taken the correct stance that the war would be a great blow to humanity, and many feverishly embarked on a last ditch effort to stop mobilization. Whereas in the decades after 1870 the antimilitarists had stood on the fringes of French political culture and society through their sharply antipatriotic and revolutionary propaganda, by 1914 they were now focusing on war itself and "its cruelty, its indifference to human life, and its capacity to reverse the 'progress' of European civilization, which included the bourgeoisie." (207) The antimilitarist acceptance of the war occurred not because of a broad "collapse" of this variegated movement in the face of nationalism but rather a realization that its members now identified with the democratic values of the Republic, no matter how flawed. Finally, the defense of France and its democratic tradition against an aggressive Germany is what propelled the antimilitarist enthusiasm for the war. In order to demonstrate this point, Miller introduces the reader to antimilitarists such as Gustave Hervé, who had spent time in prison for his radical antimilitarism. By the feverish summer of 1914, however, Hervé was a staunch supporter of war against Germany in defense of the Republic.

Miller's thesis is solidly argued. The book's shortcomings are minor and do not detract from the validity of the author's conclusions. The Epilogue is a bit forced and gives the reader the impression that the author is rushing to restate his thesis, when it is often stated effectively in the previous chapters. Also, the interesting graphics from the syndicalist publication

*La Voix du Peuple* leave the reader looking for more visual material from the plethora of antimilitarist publications and public documents that the author effectively analyzes throughout the book.

Overall, Miller has written a compelling study of antimilitarism in France that will no doubt rank as an important contribution to the field. The style of writing is clear, and the compelling narrative kept this reviewer anxiously turning pages, a rare feat in a scholarly monograph.

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Paul G. Buchanan and Kate Nicholls, *Labour Politics in Small Open Democracies: Australia, Chile, Ireland, New Zealand and Uruguay* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan 2003)

MARKET-ORIENTED reforms have swept much of the world over the past two decades. Designed to improve economic competitiveness, a core aspect of the reforms is to increase labour market flexibility in order to reduce unit labour costs. These changes are particularly dramatic for workers in small, vulnerable states. In most of these countries, union density has declined, wage disparities have increased, and collective bargaining coverage rates have dropped. Yet this does not imply convergence toward one model of labour relations where unions are marginalized. In some cases, unions and workers have fared far better than others. What accounts for the variation?

Paul Buchanan and Kate Nicholls argue that the explanation lies in how a country is integrated into global markets, labour's ideological unity and organizational strategies, and national institutional frameworks. Countries with strong mining sectors tended to develop stronger union movements earlier than countries that lacked a mining sector. Ideologically unified labour unions that are independent of state and party control have a better

chance of more successfully softening the impact of neoliberal market reforms. And the organization of collective bargaining, rules governing strikes, tripartite structures, and the institutions of conciliation and arbitration all influence labour's efforts to respond to market reform. That is, labour politics do not converge because they are not solely determined by external market pressure, but also by domestic economic structures, union strategies, and national institutions.

To make their argument, Buchanan and Nicholls explore two paired comparisons and one atypical case. A unique aspect of the book is their decision to pair Australia with Chile and New Zealand with Uruguay as sets of most similar cases. Here, the similarity is based on market location and not on political, historical, or cultural factors. Australia and Chile inserted themselves into world markets as small economies with developed manufacturing sectors and strong mining industries. New Zealand and Uruguay inserted themselves as smaller "boutique" economies, that is, economies with agricultural or primary product export niches. Ireland, the outlier case, is also a small, dependent economy, but — to its advantage — it formed a part of the European Union and benefited from market relations and institutional influences.

In Australia the relatively strong and united union movement, and a history of tripartite institutions and compulsory arbitration meant that market reforms were not as abrupt or extreme as elsewhere. While the union movement's dependence on the Labour Party lessened its ability to effectively respond to the reforms, organized labour was able to retain much of its role in the labour-relations regime. In Chile, a divided labour movement that was subordinated to several political parties was further weakened by institutional factors such as decentralized collective bargaining and limits on the right to strike, as well as the brutality of the Pinochet dictatorship (1973-1990). As a result, labour was largely unable to re-

spond to the market-oriented reforms and adopted a survivalist strategy.

New Zealand's more rural economy and lack of a strong mining sector engendered a weaker labour movement than in Australia and Chile. The labour movement was also decentralized, politically moderate, and subordinated to the Labour Party. As a result, the union movement was only able to very modestly alter the market-oriented reforms and, similar to the Chilean case, remained very marginal in the labour-relations regime. Labour in Uruguay faced many of the same economic limitations as labour in New Zealand, but the union movement was ideologically united, controlled by members (i.e., not encumbered by a bureaucratic union leadership), and independent of both state and Labour Party control. As a result — and despite years of military dictatorship — the union movement maintained its active participation in the labour-relations regime while defending real wages and, to a degree, protecting members from job loss. Ireland, which began with many of the same economic challenges faced by the other countries and several institutional obstacles, was positively influenced by its incorporation into the European Union, which compelled it to improve its labour relations regime through "Europeanization."

Buchanan and Nicholls provide new insights as to why economic globalization has not led to a convergence of labour politics. Yet, methodologically it is not entirely clear that the combinations of Australia and Chile, and New Zealand and Uruguay, are the most appropriate paired comparisons. The most similar approach combines cases on as many variables as possible in order to single out the key variable that accounts for a different outcome. But in their comparisons, almost everything varies among these cases except how they were inserted into the global market. Whether one accepts the paired comparisons or not, the real contribution of the book lies in the broader comparison of these five cases of small open

democracies in which labour had varying degrees of success in responding to market liberalization. Their insightful exploration of the cases illuminates the importance of institutions, actor strategies, and ideology.

At the same time, the ideational variable could have been better developed. The authors note that structural adjustment programmes included a market-oriented ideological project that sought to secure working-class consent to bourgeois rule. At the same time, they argue that labour's ability to defend its members was tied to ideological unity "regardless of the substantive basis of union ideologies." This is a bit puzzling. It seems that the ideological orientation of unions would matter. The pragmatism of the Uruguayan unionists kept them unified, but their mostly Left orientation helped them resist the manufacturing of consent, whereas the moderation of the trade unions in New Zealand contributed to their more limited success. Outside their case studies, there are a number of labour centrals that embrace market-oriented reforms (Força Sindical in Brazil is one example). In these cases, the strength of the unions is not used to contest the dominant ideological project but rather to reinforce it. While it is true that dogmatic Marxist unions cannot resist neoliberal reforms because their dogmatism engenders divisions and thus weakness, it is not true that all unified unions are effective sources of resistance, especially if success is measured not only in terms of defence of wages and union membership, but also in terms of resistance to neoliberal ideological hegemony.

Despite these concerns, the book's strengths far outweigh its weaknesses. Its historical focus allows us to discern how institutional configurations that were helpful to labour at one point in time can become extremely detrimental in another. In Latin America, corporatist institutions may have produced positive outcomes for labour when populists were in government, but in the hands of the military, they

had a devastating impact. In the era of democratization and market reforms, the different legacies of corporatism continue to engender a variety of outcomes. The case of Ireland illustrates that external political influences can sometimes improve labour-relations practices. Most importantly, in contrast to the varieties of capitalism approach which limits its focus to national institutional configurations, Buchanan and Nicholls rightly incorporate labour movement history, ideology, and strategy into the centre of the analysis.

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Donna R. Gabaccia and Franca Iacovetta, eds., *Women, Gender, and Transnational Lives: Italian Workers of the World* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 2002)

GABACCIA AND IACOVETTA have organized a volume that demonstrates the benefits of scholarly collaboration for transnational history. The book springs from a project on Italian migration crossing national borders, a project that allowed researchers from several countries to compare the experiences of migrants in different settings and to question the national historiographies that have pushed researchers to frame scholarship in specific ways. The project produced another volume primarily on male labourers: *Italian Workers of the World* (edited by Gabaccia and Fraser M. Ottanelli). The relative absence of women or gender concerns from that book inspired Gabaccia and Iacovetta to provide some balance, both about women who remained in the homeland when men migrated and about women workers and activists. They wanted to incorporate the history of women and gender into labour history. Though it remains a separate volume, the results are noteworthy.

After a lengthy and extremely useful introduction by the editors, the volume di-



vides into four parts. Part One examines the experiences of women who remained behind when men migrated. Linda Reeder's piece, "When the Men Left Sutura: Sicilian Women and Mass Migration, 1880-1920," parses some of the material found in her book *White Widows*, which studies a region where agricultural work for women was taboo. Reeder argues convincingly that women took on new roles in relationship to the state, gained more education, and changed their consumption patterns in large measure related to migration of men. Her litany of female power, as in describing women who refused to migrate to join husbands and of equality in familial decision-making, perhaps overemphasizes this role, though it acts as an important corrective to previous literature. Likewise Maddalena Tirabassi challenges older literature on both domestic work and morality, showing the centrality of negative portrayals of women's waged-work by bourgeois commentators both in Italy and the United States as one of the key reasons for later stress on women's homemaking. Here one can discern the power of national and class narratives interweaving to shape history.

Andreina De Clementi examines the situation of the continental sections of southern Italy — excluding Sicily. When the Italian state pushed all communities towards inheritance for all children, De Clementi argues, it forced many who had relied on subsistence and reciprocity to move towards wage-earning. More male sojourning abroad was one response, as well as increased reliance on women to carry on subsistence production and agricultural work. De Clementi illustrates how the migration of young men often unintentionally shifted gender roles and generational relationships, providing more power to younger men who could earn wages, and to their wives, who better represented the nuclear families' interests in the context of extended family demands and hence received the cash. In this De Clementi supports Reeder's conclusions about the role of international capi-

tal flow among working-class individuals in reshaping women's relationship to the state and to consumption.

Part Two focuses on Italian migrant women wage-earners. Paola Corti looks at women crossing the border from northern Italy to France. In the northern migration, women were much more prominent than in overseas migration. Women agricultural workers, domestics, and wet nurses fit into general labour migration patterns, with temporary work common. In the case of silk workers, women also were organizers for skilled female chain migration to specific jobs, not a category typically associated with women. Diane Vecchio complicates the image of Italian immigrant workers in the United States through a study of Milwaukee's Italian businesswomen and midwives. She shows that women were not simply involved in family business endeavours led by men, and she stresses that midwives, professionally trained in Italy, devoted themselves to careers.

In Part Three, the authors concentrate on radical activism. José Moya examines gender ideology in Buenos Aires, noting that anarchism was more attuned to women's interests and their domestic situations than other labour ideologies, and hence drew greater female participation, particularly in the rent strike of 1907. Caroline Waldron Merithew reinforces this with a study of the coal-mining town of Spring Valley, Illinois, an arena with few wage-earning opportunities for women. Merithew suggests that women sought to promote anarchist goals in various ways, most notably with anarchist motherhood — reproducing radical cultures that many brought from Italy as well as linking to anarchism elsewhere, as in translating children's books. As Merithew describes it, anarchist motherhood included educating children and others in a critique of both capitalism and patriarchy.

Jennifer Guglielmo, in "Italian Women's Proletarian Feminism in the New York City Garment Trades,

1890s-1940s," challenges the portrayal of Italian women as less radical than Jewish immigrant women. Rather, Guglielmo suggests, Italian women did not join the ILGWU 1909 strike extensively because the union did not reach out to them or represent their concerns at that time. Taking the story further into the 20th century, Guglielmo shows much greater Italian labour participation, and introduces an argument she has elaborated more recently in a collection on whiteness, that Italian women began distancing themselves racially from other garment workers in the 1930s and 1940s, at a time when they gained power numerically and politically in the unions.

Robert Ventresca and Franca Iacovetta provide a brief biography of Virgilia D'Andrea, an anarchist exile moving through Europe and North America in the early years of the 20th century, living in expatriate communities of political radicals, writing and organizing along the way when health permitted. As the partner of Armando Borghi, she lived a non-conventional life in many ways. Yet Ventresca and Iacovetta stress the continuities of D'Andrea's poetry to Italian cultural nationalism of the 19th century and to maternal images. This contrasted rather sharply with the style and substance of many male radical leaders of the time. Unlike D'Andrea, Enza Rotella, the subject of Anne Morelli's chapter, was not inclined towards radical causes until after she married Nestore Rotella and moved to Belgium, where she joined in communist organizing. Morelli points to the relationship of home and family life to different organizing strategies. She also demonstrates how Rotella transferred the more gender egalitarian activism she knew from Belgium back to Italy after the fall of fascism.

Part Four briefly examines how national issues play into identity. Angelo Principe examines early 20th-century Canada, with particular attention to the role of fascist ideology in the interwar years. His work also points to the biases of

sources in finding Italian women activists. The final essay, from Roslyn Pesman, begins a story of Italian migrant women in Australia in the post-World War II era. The history of Italians in Australia remains largely unwritten, she notes. Because those who did study Italians there had particular agendas in mind — primarily related to social problems — material tended to portray women as victims. Pesman correlates the image of Italian immigrant women to prevailing gender ideology in Australia in different time periods.

In all, the collection offers much for those interested in transnationalism: the role of migration and remittances in shifting class patterns; political ideology, familial roles, and medical practice (re-) crossing borders for a working-class group; and the way in which scholars from various countries can bring insights to one another. Like previous studies, this one sometimes overstates particular points in hopes of countering earlier positions to the contrary. Hence there is more on women radicals than their numbers might warrant. Further, the emphasis on women's emancipation over-corrects for studies which portrayed women's "passive" home roles. The study overall, however, remains one of the best in bringing together scholarship on women and migration from the perspective of labour history.

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Jan Kok, ed., *Rebellious Families: Household Strategies and Collective Action in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (New York: Berghahn Books 2002)

THE TITLE of this collection is somewhat misleading. One of its two main goals is to make the question of why people did "not engage in collective action" as important as why they did. This, the author of the introduction and conclusion, Marcel van

der Linden argues, is a principal weakness of much labour history. (1) The second goal is to explore the relationship among family strategies, union involvement, and militancy. Most of the eleven essays were delivered at a workshop organized by researchers in the research department of the International Institute of Social History in Amsterdam on "living strategies." Participation in several workshops threads some coherence through the collection, though the authors approach their subjects from different ideological and theoretical perspectives and through a range of subjects. Several deal with workers and their families in specific industries — weavers in Silesia in 1844 (Christina von Hodenberg), bricklayers in turn-of-the-twentieth-century Madrid (Justin Byrne), silk workers in early 20th century Pennsylvania (Bonnie Stepenoff), construction workers in early 20th-century Amsterdam (Henk Wals) and plantation families in 20th-century Philippines (Rosanne Rutten). Eileen Janes Yeo looks more broadly at the early British labour movement, Bruce Scates and Theresa Moriarty study particular crisis moments in 19th-century Melbourne and 1913 Dublin respectively, while Mark Pittaway examines the retreat from collective protest in Stalinist Hungary. The introduction and conclusion, both written by van der Linden, seek to tie the collection together and to set up a shared framework by thinking through the issues the authors all address and by providing clear definitions of such terms as families, households, household strategies, and collective action. As a socialist-feminist historian, I found the overall framework proposed by van der Linden, with its taxonomies, typologies, and a tendency to treat households as collective units, rather mechanical and disappointing. There are only occasional muted reminders about differences of age and gender within households in these two chapters, and they draw from arguments in other articles in the collection rather than any systematic integration of a gender analysis.

Other readers of *Labour/Le Travail* may also be uncomfortable with his typologies of types of workers' organizations according to whether they pose high or low risks financially, or in terms of repression or the "freerider problem," and a tendency to make very broad and simplistic characterizations of Marxist scholarship, without providing references.

These essays explore links between families and militancy in a range of ways. Eileen Janes Yeo's brief chapter on "Early British Labour Movements in Relation to Family Need" moves masterfully across the 19th century identifying institutions and practices that working people created for themselves to respond to their own needs for dignity, security, and pleasure. In looking at institutions like co-operative stores she counters the tendency of some of the other articles to treat unions as if they were foreign to the workers who join them or "risks" that had to be rationally assessed. Like Wals and Byrne she highlights the attraction of institutions like friendly societies and unions that offered workers and their families a decent burial or security in times of unemployment. Widespread unemployment in Melbourne during the 1890s is the context of Bruce Scates' study. Facing starvation for herself and her four children, Clarina Stringer, the widow whose case he uses to explore "strategic options and the household economy in late nineteenth-century Australia," went to the Melbourne Trades Hall for help. The support given her by "the Salvage Corps," unemployed men who had organized to prevent bailiffs confiscating goods for non-payment of rent, turned into a full-scale riot. In this excellent article, Scates explores the diverse ways single mothers like Clarina Stringer made ends meet and makes a cogent argument for the importance of studying the politics of the street as well as those of "union or parliament" (68) and of exploring women's militancy and the moral economy and citizenship claims that sustained it. In a similar way, Christine von Hodenberg re-assesses the well

known Silesian weavers' revolt in 1844, by arguing that this protest was only a last resort. The proto-industrial weavers did not target all entrepreneurs. Rather, their violent protest was against particular manufacturers who violated a shared set of norms around prices, respectful relations, levels of wealth, and who should receive work. Thus the protest, she argues, was not an articulation of working-class consciousness or Luddite behaviour. Rather it was a stand by men who considered themselves self-employed artisans and feared losing not only that status, but the respect that went with it.

Justin Byrne also explores a moral economy rooted in gender, family, and class relations within communities and households that he sees as supporting the massive upsurge in support for the socialist-led union federation, *El Trabajo*, among bricklayers in late 1890s Madrid. He too stresses the attraction of the union's ability to provide benefits in times of accidents, incapacity, death, and, after 1913, old age. In Madrid, he argues, support for the union built on existing solidarity, social networks, and household survival strategies rooted in the cramped areas of the city where the bricklayers lived. Bricklayers agreed to bargain for shorter hours and hence lower pay, so that work could be spread around more evenly because so many wives and other family members were already making major contributions to family incomes. Wals paints a very different picture of the situation among construction workers in Amsterdam in the first quarter of the century, where costs seem to be the major factor influencing their decisions. There, construction workers appear to have been able to choose between syndicalist and social democratic unions. The numbers who were unionized never exceeded 50 per cent, and increases in membership, he argues, all occurred when attractive unemployment benefits were instituted. In attempting to explore union membership explicitly as a family strategy, and to consider it through family budgets, he con-

cludes, in part, that a major source of opposition to union membership came from wives as the managers of the family budget. The evidence for this is thin. The union press is read without any sensitivity to how gender differences were represented and why, and workplace-based issues and moral economies disappear completely.

Stepenoff, in contrast, is sensitive to the ways unionized males and reformers in the hard-coal-mining areas of Pennsylvania portrayed women in the silk industry as young, dependent, and secondary wage earners so that only too often they were denied support in strikes and union drives. In other regions the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) succeeded in organizing silk workers, but, Stepenoff argues, the strength of the United Mine Workers of America in the coal region, many of whose members were fathers of workers, and the condemnations of the IWW by community and church leaders, prevented success there. This in turn meant that production continued during the 1913 Paterson silk strike, ultimately contributing to its failure. One strategy deployed during that 1913 strike and the Lawrence textile strike of 1912 is the focus of Theresa Moriarty's article, "Who will look after the kiddies?" Two months into Dublin's six-month-long 1913 lock-out, London socialist feminists offered to shelter Dublin children in sympathizers' homes for as long as the dispute lasted as had been done in Belgium and during the two American strikes. Moriarty points out that such plans built on long-established habits of informal fostering in working-class households. Many wives of the locked-out male workers, already actively involved in collective cultural activities at Liberty Hall, were anxious to have their offspring sent to places where they would be safe and well-fed. The scheme provoked extreme reactions, fracturing Dubliners along lines of class, gender, religion, and nation. Departing children had to be protected from crowds of noisy demonstrators. Under a barrage of written and material assault from in and

outside the labour movement, the scheme ground to a halt. It was replaced by programmes distributing food and clothing to the wives and children of strikers.

The strengths of most of these essays lie in the ways the authors clearly root their studies of the decisions made by family members about collective action within the social and cultural dynamics of specific times and places. Changing contexts are the critical elements in Rosanne Rutten's study of the situation in the Philippine province of Negros Occidental. She explores reasons for the growing acceptance among parents of sons and daughters becoming full-time revolutionaries working for the NPA in the 1970s and early 1980s, then charts the decline in such support as the NPA moved from securing material advantages for the poor to armed struggle. Changing contexts are equally important to Pittaway's demonstration of the ways workers in Stalinist Hungary dealt with increasingly low wages, poor work conditions, and terrible food shortages. They rejected public, collective protest, he argues, and focused instead on family, the home, and self-sufficiency. Women became critical to the informal economic activities that increased household autonomy from the state. This focus on private household survival in turn led to a decline in social solidarity, and to a public/private split along gender lines countering the Stalinist advocacy of gender equality in the workplace.

Together the articles in this collection reveal the complex and diverse ways individual men and women struggled to ensure they had food and clothing for themselves and their children in a range of places and times. Individually and collectively they contribute to building bridges between studies of the workplace and the home. The richness of human behaviour and the range of choices that they reveal transcend the limits of approaches framed through the lenses of risk analysis or "household strategic repertoires" as pro-

posed in the collection's introduction and conclusion.

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Gisela Bock, *Women in European History* (Oxford: Blackwell 2002)

GISELA BOCK's book is a welcome addition to the growing number of texts that take a comparative approach to women's history in Europe. Bock's contribution is a distinctive one. She sets out to explore the debate "about what or how women and men are, should be, could be." (1) Known as the "querelle des femmes" or "des sexes," this debate, Bock claims, shaped European culture more than any other. She includes comparisons between countries but the central focus is on "common, transnational developments" from the late 18th century to the present day. (x) A number of themes are considered throughout: the complex relationship between concepts of equality and difference; debates over whether women could be women and fully human; competing versions of women's citizenship and the question of whether tradition or innovation had greater weight across the centuries in influencing ideas about women's social roles.

Drawing on a wide range of literary texts, Bock begins by exploring the history of the "querelle," stretching back to the Middle Ages. In contrast to those who see the debate over sex differences as just a literary one, she claims that writers such as Christine de Pizan were aware that humour and satire could help to shape the relationship between men and women and contribute to creating a new world. The second chapter highlights the significance of the French Revolution in providing a space in which women's political citizenship could be raised. As might be expected, the ideas of Mary Wollstonecraft are given a prominent position, but attention is also drawn to less well-known

figures such as Olympe de Gouges. In an interesting discussion of her ideas, Bock examines the "traditional" and "modern" features of the arguments made by De Gouges and suggests that her ideas are far too complex to categorize as radical, moderate, or conservative. Bock suggests that women involved in the counterrevolution were also at the interface between tradition and innovation. They defined revolutionary freedom according to their own needs, such as the freedom to practice their religion. Nonetheless, ultimately the French Revolution failed for women and was to have repercussions that affected them throughout the nineteenth century. The exercise of political citizenship was identified as a masculine activity, while the Napoleonic Code emphasized women's subordinate status within the family and confirmed that their private virtue underpinned the stability of the state.

The next two chapters trace women's attempts to contest these definitions of their role through the development of organized women's movements from the 1860s. Bock suggests that whether they were demanding economic, social, or political change, women did not want to switch gender roles but sought liberation from subordination and the freedom to be themselves. The suffrage movement in particular combined arguments that women needed an equal human status with the notion that women had special virtues. In attempting to explain why women achieved the vote in some countries after World War I but not in others, Bock joins many recent authors in questioning the conventional wisdom that enfranchisement was a reward for participation in the war. Instead she suggests that where class was a barrier to male suffrage, as in Britain and Germany, women gained the vote soon after universal male suffrage had been won, whereas the vote came late to France and Switzerland where there was republican anti-clericalism and where universal male suffrage had been achieved long before.

Chapter Five has a different focus than the rest. It deals with the extent to which women used their voices as citizens to improve the lives of working-class women and the family through social welfare reforms. There is also a key section on the inter-war dictatorships, their attitudes towards women, and their effect on women's lives. Bock makes the point that all of these regimes sought to break down the barriers between public and private life, but that this was taken to extremes in Nazi Germany. Bock argues that while the history of women was always diverse in respect to their affiliation to "imagined communities" such as class, religion and nation, in the 20th century this could become a matter of life and death. Thus in Nazi Germany Jewish women found that race was of far greater significance for them than their sex. Overall, Bock provides a subtle discussion of the benefits and drawbacks of state welfare and population/family policies for women in the inter-war years and draws attention to the differential ways in which women gained advantages from these. In the final chapter there is a discussion of the "querelle" in the period after 1945. This includes an analysis of the impact of war and also of "second wave feminism." Bock suggests that the goals of women's liberationists were different from those of earlier women's rights campaigners since they attempted to speak for all women while emphasizing individual subjectivity. Reflecting on the changes in women's lives she concludes that, although women are better off compared to men than previous generations, there is a lot to be desired. She notes that the querelle des sexes is ongoing as women seek not only equality but freedom.

Overall this is a stimulating book. The discussion of the "querelle" is always a subtle one, attuned to the complexities of the arguments made by contemporaries themselves and avoiding the temptation to present ideas such as equality and difference as if they were binary opposites. Cultural history has been associated with

a post-modernist perspective in which emphasis has been placed on language rather than "lived reality" and on a questioning of whether the broad analytical category of women still makes analytical sense. Gisela Bock rejects that view, claiming that "women are women (and human beings)" whose state of being fluctuates over time and place. She is careful throughout to examine the relationship between debates on the Woman Question and changes within the economic, social, and political context, although there are times when the emphasis on discourse can obscure the importance of material change in women's lives. The wide scope of the book is both a strength and a weakness. The reader can end up frustrated when interesting observations, such as the contradictory effects of welfare policies on women, or the extent to which an emphasis on women as consumers of ready-made goods could undermine concepts of the housewife as homemaker in the inter-war years, are not discussed in any depth. From the outset Bock claims that the size of the book makes it difficult to look at links with women outside Europe. This is surely an important omission at a time when feminist ideas were closely intertwined with questions of imperialism, nationalism, and internationalism and when there was a complex interaction between women in the colonies and imperial nations.

Nonetheless, readers will find a great deal to interest them in the ideas presented here and will be stimulated to explore the issues raised in greater depth. Although the book is about women in Europe, Gisela Bock makes clear throughout that their history cannot be separated from that of men. She concludes that within a global framework the issue of women's rights and human rights has taken on a new significance and in the 21st century will be crucial to answering the question, "Are women human?"

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Estelle B. Freedman, *No Turning Back: The History of Feminism and the Future of Women* (New York: Ballantine Books 2002)

WITH GREAT SKILL, historian Estelle B. Freedman synthesizes an enormous amount of interdisciplinary scholarship in this deceptively easy-to-read study of principal themes in contemporary feminist studies. Author of several books in US women's history and co-author with John D'Emilio of the frequently cited, *Intimate Matters: A History of Sexuality in America*, her latest work, the dramatically titled, *No Turning Back: The History of Feminism and the Future of Women*, originated in feminist studies courses she created in the Feminist Studies program at Stanford University. This reasonably priced paperback edition promises to find an audience amongst students not only of feminist studies, gender studies, and women's studies, but across a host of academic disciplines. Freedman invokes an historical approach to her history of feminism, bringing together recent works from disciplines of sociology, economics, politics, history, sexology, literature, and the arts, to name a few. As a work of synthesis, with appeal to a popular as well as academic audience, the breadth of material and scholarship which the author presents in a readily accessible narrative, works, in some ways, against an analysis in depth of some themes which are briefly discussed in the work. A discursive bibliography, footnotes, and index, however, will aid the reader in further pursuing sources cited in the text.

The book is divided into five parts, offering discussion of the "historical emergence of feminisms," "the politics of work and family," "the politics of health and sexuality," and "feminist visions and strategies," including present and future prospects. Following both chronological and thematic strategies, the book opens with two principal concepts which serve to unify the structure of the book: the idea and critique of patriarchy, and the histori-

cal emergence of feminisms throughout history.

Elaborating upon the history of the term “feminism,” which first appeared in print in the late 19th century, Freedman describes the changing political goals of feminism as a social movement in different times and locations. Centering her argument in the early modern and contemporary periods, she provides a working definition of feminism as applied in this study, “Feminism is a belief that women and men are inherently of equal worth. Because most societies privilege men as a group, social movements are necessary to achieve equality between women and men, with the understanding that gender always intersects with other social hierarchies.”(7)

Following a brief discussion of ancient representations of women deities and their powers, Freedman introduces the idea of patriarchy and its historical impact upon women’s economic, cultural, and reproductive labours. Offering a critique of patriarchy first argued by historian Gerda Lerner in her book, *The Creation of Patriarchy* (1986), Freedman emphasizes the role and impact of modern capitalism, markets, and trade upon family, society, and politics. She deftly moves the discussion from 17th- and 18th-century discussions of political right and sovereignty as expressed in the “democratic” revolutions of the 18th-century, to 19th-century liberal-feminist arguments for socio-political rights as an emerging *political* goal of feminism as a social movement.

Those already familiar with recent historiography of Western feminism will readily understand Freedman’s periodization of feminist activism with her reference to First-Wave, Second-Wave, and Third-Wave Feminisms. The metaphor of “the wave” signifies the ebb and flow of political argument, with First-Wave feminism referring to the movements for socio-political rights in the 19th and early 20th centuries; Second-Wave feminism identified with social and

political arguments of the second half of the 20th century, and contemporary Third-Wave feminism expressing global, international feminisms. Leaps sometimes occur in this sort of periodization; issues such as feminist political activism in the inter-war period, evident in feminist-internationalist arguments for *peace* considered as an issue of social justice, tend to be submerged by issues already identified with established categories of First and Second-Wave feminisms. A more inclusive metaphor, which may better serve discussions of historic feminisms, was recently described by historian Karen Offen, in her study of European feminisms from 1700 to 1950, as geologic, marking the changing eruptions, flows, and movements of feminist activities — sometimes more visibly in motion in time and place, than at others.

Freedman insists that feminisms have been continually refined in different periods and cultures. She offers a lively discussion of the “politics of identity” in 20th-century US feminism, ranging from racialist and eugenic overtones of some early 20th-century argument, to the contemporary anti-racist workshops, and collective actions and struggles expressed in the poetry and writings of Barbara Smith, Cherie Moraga, Audre Lorde, the Combahee River Collective, and others.

Freedman offers an interesting synthesis of global and international feminisms in her discussion of the “politics of location” — a phrase invoked by poet Adrienne Rich in a 1984 essay on the historical context of white Western women’s privileged location in systems of colonial slavery and exploitation. In a chapter entitled, “Re-thinking Feminism in the Postcolonial World,” there is a convincing analysis of the gender gap in the dissemination of technological knowledge and skills — part of a historic attempt to confine women by limiting prospects not only for education, but for mobility in physical, intellectual, and economic terms.



Freedman is particularly engaging in her discussion of the body, sexuality, and health. She describes the "sexualization of women's bodies in popular culture," ranging in description from the later Victorian representations of female gender on the vaudeville stage, as "voluptuous British bombshell," to the boyish figure (elsewhere referred to as 'la garçonne'), in the literature of the 1920s, to contemporary commercial trends toward homogenizing body sizes and shapes. There are a growing number of secondary sources available to students of this period which variously discuss the sexual and colonial politics of gender representations of the later 19th and opening decades of the 20th century, which might be further explored in a less-condensed format. (Recent publications by historians Lesley Hall, Lucy Bland, Angela Woollacott, Philippa Levine, and Antoinette Burton as well as recent studies of the "new woman" and the "new man" of the later 19th and early 20th centuries, come to mind.)

Reviewing the contexts within which sexuality and the labeling of homo- and hetero-sexualities arose, in the chapter entitled "Sexualities, Identities and Self-Determination," Freedman elaborates upon Eastern and Western notions of sexualities, and the creation of homosexual and lesbian identities and "taboos." A subsequent chapter vigorously analyzes the various forms of violence perpetrated as assertions of power and domination — rape, domestic violence, sexual abuse of children, and incest. Freedman, citing theorist Nancy Hartsock, offers an alternate, feminist vision of the power of citizenship as self-determination rather than as power-over-others.

A recurring theme in this book is the political nature of power and the struggle of women to not only resist violence and exclusion, but to engage the positive powers of acting together, in community and social movements, in different times and places. "No turning back" is both the title of this book and of a concluding chapter on women and politics considered in a

global and internationalist framework. Contemporary feminisms are global and thriving, concludes Freedman. Against the nay-sayers, this book offers a spirited call to action as well as an intelligent reply to critics of feminism, past and present.

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Lynn M. Thomas, *Politics of the Womb: Women, Reproduction, and the State in Kenya* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press 2003)

*POLITICS OF THE WOMB* presents a unique and convincing narrative of an "uneven entanglement" of indigenous and colonial concerns regarding sexuality and reproduction in 20th-century Kenya. Employing the womb, figuratively and literally, Thomas discusses the role of women's bodies and sexuality in colonial and post-colonial political and social discourse. Departing from conventional emphases on the breakdown of tradition or colonial indoctrination, Thomas uses a wealth of primary sources (interviews, court and missionary documents, and private papers) to persuasively argue that the history of reproduction in the Meru area of Kenya is layered with contestation, negotiation, and collaboration. She demonstrates that colonial actors had no choice but to take into account "local interests," and that these interests were far from uniform. Rather they were configured by gender, generation, and wealth-power dynamics. The book sets out to make three contributions to African historiography, showing how the politics of the womb: 1) can not be disentangled from attempts to gain material resources and fulfill moral ambitions; 2) reorganized traditional gender, generation, and kinship hierarchies and helped create new hierarchies of racial difference and "civilized" status; and 3) connected intimate issues to public debates in such a way that these micro-level

processes are as important to understanding African history as trade, imperialism, and international aid. (4)

Thomas' expressive prose and well-presented documentation bring to life the ways in which white male colonial power and emerging black post-colonial politics felt the need to control women and their bodies in order to formalize their power bases. In each period, however, the path was contested by others who had an interest in maintaining or establishing control over young women's sexuality. Local actors struggled with the colonial system *and* with each other in order to maintain authority over young women's sexuality and reproductive capabilities. Thomas reveals power contests within the Meru community between young and old, men and women, between those vying for upward mobility and those who were seen as trying to hold them back or get a free ride; post-colonial debates also expose controversy connected to young women's sexuality — preserving the "African way" of life versus moving Kenya into the "civilized" and "modern" world. Young and older women often took aggressive positions to retain and garner power, showing that historically they were not without agency, and did not shy away from resisting men's attempts to supplant their power or control their bodies. The politics of the womb in 20th-century Kenya is a visible story of struggle and negotiation, rather than one of simple control and domination by those, whether white or black, men or women, with the power of the government behind them.

Thomas gives many examples of colonial and local jockeying for control over young woman's sexuality. In the 1920s and 30s pro-natalist colonial policies attempted to stimulate population growth by reducing premarital non-procreative sexual relations. They sought to do this by redefining the age and stage at which a woman was marriageable. After meeting significant local resistance to prohibiting female initiation and circumcision, colonial actors reformulated their approach

and collaborated with local male elders to lower the age of initiation. Thus, together, they were able to reduce the time during which a girl might be sexually active but not yet a candidate for marriage. As male elders working with the colonial government restructured the initiation process, they acquired control over areas that had previously been the domain of female elders — determining the timing for young girls' initiation and entrance into the world of reproductive sexuality. Thomas' narrative elucidates how these changes and challenges were neither uncontested nor smoothly implemented.

The "politics of the womb" continued to order hierarchies in the post-colonial period. Thomas examines the ways in which single mothers, no longer a unique urban phenomenon, challenged "traditional" notions of errant sexuality, as well as "proper channels" for transferring wealth and reaping the rewards of fertility. A short-lived bill in the 1950s-60s allowed young unmarried women to sue their children's fathers for support. This broke from customary law, which gave the power to sue to the father of a pregnant unmarried girl. According to customary law, the father would sue a young man for compensation for "ruining his daughter" and collect the money himself; the new bill allowed the young woman to sue and keep the money herself, enabling her to support herself and her child without having to marry in the future. Attempts to repeal the bill entailed arguments juxtaposing modern with traditional, and accusing women of betraying African culture and misusing funds meant for their children. The debates here, as with colonial disputes reconstructed in Thomas' narrative, and future deliberations over abortion and contraception, need to be understood in the light of the power attained by controlling the reproductive capabilities of young women.

Thomas argues persuasively that the Meru community perceived the nature of young women's sexuality as precarious. Rules and supervision were necessary

protectors for their sexuality and reproductive capacity. Without these in place, young girls were easily corruptible. Who controlled young women's sexuality and how it was formulated, however, was far from static. As with discourses of sexuality in many settings, despite the fact that men clearly played a role in the "corruption" of young women, rarely did Thomas uncover instances where men's sexuality was scrutinized or challenged. One of the few areas in which I felt unsatisfied as a reader, was in understanding in what ways men's sexuality was changed, challenged, and reformulated during the colonial and post-colonial period. Perhaps it was not as important to control young men's sexuality, but the substantial transformation of young women's sexuality must have impacted male sexuality in ways left unexplored by Thomas.

In her concluding chapter, Thomas touches upon how the entangled history of reproduction has influenced current issues like HIV/AIDS and the movement to end Female Genital Mutilation (FGM). This book brings into new light the ways in which the West discusses African "indigenous" sexual practices fueling the HIV/AIDS scourge. The strength of Thomas' "uneven entanglement" argument should be taken into account in the context of current HIV/AIDS research. Neither a complete breakdown of traditional practices, nor a replacement with Western notions of sexuality are to "blame" for the epidemic. Understanding the interaction of the two, however, and capturing the continuous construction and reconstruction of sexuality and reproduction during the pre-colonial, colonial, and post-colonial periods throughout Africa can lead to richer insights into contemporary notions of sexuality and power. Given the gendered nature of the epidemic, researchers cannot ignore the entangled nature of the histories of men's and women's sexuality. Nor should researchers separate the history of sexuality from that of reproductive capabilities and consequences. With such a lens, a clearer

portrait of the construction of the current perilous HIV/AIDS environment in Eastern and Southern Africa will emerge. It is incumbent on HIV/AIDS researchers to follow Thomas' lead and expose narratives of "uneven entanglements" and "politics of the womb."

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Phyllis Moen, ed., *It's About Time: Couples and Careers* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press 2003)

THIS BOOK demolishes some myths as well as reinforcing a number of widespread assumptions. The major myth that is demolished is that women have to "choose" between a successful career and a successful family life. Rather, this study demonstrates that feeling successful at work predicted feeling successful in respect of family life (indeed, women reported more success in "balancing" the two than men). The major assumption that is reinforced is that couples' employment arrangements, despite the recent and rapid changes in women's employment behaviour, reflect well-defined gender-based work and family roles. Thus the most frequently occurring (practically 40 per cent) couple arrangement found in this study is the "neo-traditionalist," where the husband works long (more than 45) paid hours, but the wife works shorter paid hours.

These findings are outcomes of the *Cornell Couples and Careers* study, on which all of the chapters in this substantial book are based. Seven organizations in upstate New York (representing manufacturing, utilities, healthcare, and higher education) facilitated the sampling of employees in two-earner families. Almost 1,000 dual-earner couples (both partners) were interviewed by telephone, using a structured questionnaire. All of the initial

contacts were middle-class (i.e., salaried). This quantitative data gathering was complemented by qualitative data derived from 14 focus groups and 150 in-depth (telephone) interviews, together with face-to-face interviews with human resources managers in the participating organizations.

The 19 substantive chapters (involving 33 contributors) are organized around 3 broad areas: Time Strategies; Strains, Successes and Subjective Assessments; and Community, Organizational, and Policy Contexts. A central theme of the book is that of linked lives, that is, the importance of the couple, rather than the individual, to social analysis. This emphasis, it should be noted, has implications for wider questions relating to individual level data. For example, whether, in aggregate, hours worked by individuals in the USA have increased or not may be a matter of debate, but what cannot be disputed is that the hours worked by couples, and the consequent pressures on families, have increased. Another central theme of the book is the importance of the life course perspective, and a classification of seven different life stages.

Moen notes the paradox that while dual-earner couples have become the norm, jobs, career paths, community services, and family life reflect structures common to a period when most workers counted on another individual to care for households, children, relatives requiring care, and personal affairs. All of the chapters in this book bear, to a greater or lesser extent, upon this 21st-century conundrum. In a review of this length it is impossible to deal with all of the many issues relating to work-life integration (thus I am not discussing leisure, commuting, household management, new technology, religion, alternative employment, retirement, or same-sex couples, all of which are the focus of specific chapters).

Not surprisingly, couples' work-hour strategies vary by life stage (Moen and Sweet). "High commitment" strategies (both partners working more than 45

hours a week) are most frequent amongst younger and older childless couples, "neotraditionalism" (husband working more than 45, wife shorter hours) is most frequent amongst couples with children (of all ages) at home. This neotraditional strategy represents a modification, rather than a transformation, of the breadwinner-homemaker template and has negative consequences for wives' careers and earnings — although these women reported the highest family satisfaction and most free time. Couples work longer hours than they would prefer, largely because of the requirements of their jobs (Merola and Clarkberg). A third of the couples reported limiting their family size due to the difficulty of combining work with raising children (Altucher and Williams).

Half of the respondents had experienced careers based on a norm of stability, half on a norm of instability (delayed, intermittent, or volatile career pathways). As anticipated, career paths are gendered in that men are more likely to have stable career paths than women. However, a significant minority of women had stable pathways, and conversely, a minority of men unstable pathways (Williams and Han). Younger respondents were not necessarily more "unstable" than older — indeed, educational attainment (and gender) were strong invariant determining forces of career paths. Just over half of the respondents said that the husbands' career had priority (Pixley and Moen), but both education level and gender role attitudes affect decision-making, and the more educated spouse tends to have the prioritized career.

The breadwinner-homemaker model of the articulation of work and family life approached employment and the family as "separate spheres" and indeed, the relationship between the two is still often seen as one of conflict and tension. However, 60 per cent of respondents reported high levels of positive family-to-work "spillover," that is, family life enhances more than it hinders an individual's work

life, and the benefits of combining work and family outweigh any drawbacks (Roehling, Moen and Batt). Nevertheless, negative work-to-family spillover is higher among women than men, and associated (for women and men) with long hours working, high workloads, and a lack of autonomy at work.

Indeed, as well as work-life stress, long hours, together with jobs that are pressured and less autonomous, also contribute to a lack of a sense of well-being — although the family tends to “buffer” women more against work pressures than men (Kim, Moen and Min). In three of the organizations generating the sample (in the manufacturing and utility sectors), the employees were experiencing downsizing and layoffs. As the chapter by Valcour and Batt argues, an important dimension of family-responsive workplaces (besides formal policies and their application) is adequate employment and income security, and employees experiencing these insecurities expressed more work-family conflict. Ironically, “family-friendly” policies were being developed in these high-profile companies (two had received public recognition for their excellence) in parallel with downsizing and job losses. As other studies have suggested, in many companies one important strand of contemporary managerialism (“high commitment” management, of which “family-friendly” policies are but one aspect) is at odds with another, that of the “lean organization.”

At the workplace, support from supervisors was crucial — particularly in implementing informal flexible scheduling. Organizationally institutionalized (i.e. formal) work-life benefits varied to a considerable extent among the different companies (Strang and Still). Interestingly, the majority of respondents (71 per cent) held inaccurate views about whether or not work-life policies were available — some respondents claimed to use policies that were not in fact in place, and many were unaware of policies. Not only is there a widespread misapprehension as to

the nature and extent of formal policies, but men, in particular, were reluctant to negotiate them in the absence of strong organizational signals as to their legitimacy.

This book has all of the virtues, and some of the vices, of leading edge empirical research. The research design and methodology are impeccable. But the sheer volume of data presented makes for a dense and complex read (efforts have been made not to overload the text by making many of the findings discussed in the book available electronically, rather than in the book itself). Despite the use of core ideas and concepts in common, the disparate topics addressed in the many chapters mean that the book does not entirely come together as a whole. Nevertheless, this book is a major work of reference, and stands as an exemplar for future research into this important topic. Indeed, the authors point the way for future directions in empirical research. In particular, as this study focused only on middle-class couples, as many of the contributors argue, research is badly needed on couples at other points on the social spectrum. However, if the level of difficulties in achieving work-life integration reported by the couples taking part in this study is anything to go by (remember, they are well-educated as well as in relatively high paid and prestige jobs), one cannot but anticipate that the actual extent of work-life disjunction in the USA will be found to be even higher. As Moen concludes, serious policy developments are required if any kind of “balance” in the still gendered, but changing, worlds of work and family life is to be achieved.

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Christopher J. Arthur, *The New Dialectic and Marx's Capital* (Leiden: Brill 2002)

CHRISTOPHER ARTHUR has devoted much of his scholarly life to studying the relation between Marx's *Capital* and Hegel's *Logic*. This is a collection of essays, all of which (except the introductory and concluding chapters) have been published elsewhere, but are here revised to varying extents.

For those interested in *Capital*, this is an important book to read, for it concentrates the mind on the meaning and sequence of the categories in Marx's great work. It suggests a rigorously dialectical way of reading the interconnection of categories in *Capital* volume one, chapters 1-6, a way that parallels Hegel's *Logic*. He makes the important claim that these chapters should be read strictly as a theory of the commodity, money, and capital as circulation forms. It follows that the content of these forms, which requires a labour theory of value, can only be well grounded dialectically after the logics of the value forms have been grounded.

Arthur masterfully presents the basic elements of dialectical reasoning and its appropriateness in studying an object which is self-abstracting in the sense that it is self-expanding value (capital) itself that, through its own motions, homogenizes the actuality that the theory aims to grasp. To an extent, then, in its historical unfolding, capital helps the theorist by developing a commodity-economic logic that attempts to subsume all fundamental economic categories to its self-expanding motion. It becomes possible for the theorist to complete the abstracting precisely because capital has already taken the lead in history, such that the theorist must simply learn to follow it. This means that while "the systematic dialectic of capital" is rooted in history, its completion occurs only in thought. It follows that the logic of capital and the history of capitalism are distinct, forcing upon us the necessity of always thinking the ways in which and the degree to which capital's logic impacts on

particular historical contexts. As Arthur points out, actual historical prices are always "hugely overdetermined" relative to the abstract law of value. (14)

According to Arthur, the fruitfulness of the starting point of a dialectic is demonstrated by its ability to absorb more and more concrete moments of a totality until it comes full circle. It is this circle that makes capital a self-subsistent subject or a totality able to reproduce and expand itself from within itself. But this means that all inputs and outputs of production must be securely commodified, so that capital can achieve the indifference to use-value that is required by its single-minded focus on profit expansion.

While there is much more in Arthur's collection of essays that I agree with, I think that it will be of interest to the reader, if I briefly mention some of my disagreements. I will condense this discussion down to two fundamental points. First, I think his understanding of the dialectic of capital is flawed by an inadequate understanding of the relation between value and use-value. Second, while Arthur distinguishes systematic dialectics from historical dialectics, by not theorizing both their separateness and connectedness, he sometimes inadequately distinguishes them.

Arthur claims that *Capital* volume one, chapters 1-6, is strictly a theory of forms without content, and that use-value is strictly absent. (150) Thus, it follows that the dialectic unfolds from value as presence relating to itself as value as absence. The resulting value form theory is "the prime determinant of the capitalist economy," (11) or, in other words, the "form of capital is the overriding moment" (88) in the entire system.

The dialectic of circulation comes to an end when it is confronted by the use-value obstacles of production, or when form is confronted by content. If the remainder of the theory of capital's inner logic does not parallel Hegel's *Logic*, then it is unclear just how it is to be theorized. The basic problem is that in *Capital*

the basic contradiction is between value and use-value from the beginning. By pushing use-value into the background, Arthur makes capital into pure form, which in turn leads him to overemphasize the role of pure form determination in the entire theory.

This leads to incoherence because he then wavers between emphasizing the preeminence of value form theory, on the one hand, and the claim that "value is the outcome of class struggle at the point of production" (57) on the other. If we take this latter claim seriously, then the laws of motion of capital disappear altogether, since we cannot generalize about value beyond saying that it varies with the balance of class forces in each factory. The problem is that he defeats his own dialectic by first evacuating use-value and then returning to it with such a vengeance. It is fine to claim that "labour is in and against capital;" but at the level of systematic dialectics, we cannot give the "against" any specific content, precisely because at this level the labour market, periodic crises, etc. regulate wages and the supply of labour. Again, it is not a question of denying labourers all subjectivity, but of seeing capital's commodification of labour-power as successfully channelling that subjectivity into channels supportive of profit maximization. For example, workers are free to quit any job, but at this level of abstraction, we assume that any other job will have similar wages and working conditions. Workers are free to bargain for the highest wages possible, but this bargaining power is undermined by the fact that in pure capitalism we cannot assume the existence of trade unions and by periodic crises that produce high unemployment.

Arthur again falls towards incoherence when he argues that the systematic dialectic of capital has two subjects — capital and labour. If labour is outside capital, then the dialectic must be of capital and labour — two totalities and their interrelations. Arthur tries to say that there is really one totality, but labour is

relatively autonomous within this totality. But if labour is even relatively outside, it can continually disrupt the dialectic in unpredictable ways thus preventing it having any coherence. In order to have a coherent theory of capital's inner logic, we must assume that labour power has been securely commodified. The reason Arthur has a problem with this is that he wrongly thinks that such an assumption must deny all subjectivity to workers, and because he thinks that the class struggle that is so present in history must for some reason be diminished if it is not also given a central position in systematic dialectics. This latter concern, I believe, stems from inadequate attention to articulating the relations between systematic and historical dialectics as distinct levels of analysis. In other words, Arthur at times gets sucked into the very logical-historical method that he explicitly rejects. For if the levels are distinct, the reification at the level of systematic dialectics that subsumes labour to capital can, at the level of historical analysis, always be resisted and even radically transformed.

My recommendation would be to see the entire three volumes of *Capital* as a single dialectic in which value generates successive categories by gradually overcoming the fundamental use-value obstacles present in all capitalist economies. The use-value of commodities is an obstacle to exchange until we dialectically generate the money form from the commodity form. But even with the money form, the exchange of one use-value for another is an obstacle unless we generate the capital form that uses money to make more money. In turn this becomes inexplicable unless labour and production processes are subsumed to the capital form, and so forth. At the level of systematic dialectics we study how variations in the length of the working day impact on the extraction of surplus value, but we do not have a working day of a given length. For that we need to turn to historical analysis where numerous causal factors may play a role,

though we would expect that among these class struggle would always be important. What systematic dialectics shows is that there is necessarily an antagonistic relationship between capital and labour, but it cannot show how this is translated into historically specific forms of class struggle. Thus instead of making the gratuitous claim that class struggle is the primary determinant of systematic dialectics, we should claim instead that systematic dialectics presents a clear structural theory of class and shows why class antagonism is likely to be the constant companion of capitalism in history. And if our dialectic encompasses all three volumes we will also understand how capital achieves not

only indifference to land, but also, in the form of interest, indifference to itself. Indeed in the present age of finance capital, we are being made painfully aware of possible consequences of such indifference.

By focusing on the dialectic of capital, Arthur's book is a real gift. For while a strictly dialectical theory may be impossible, even to approach such a theory is to construct a theory with great epistemological strength, strength that should help us immensely to clarify our historical love/hate relation with capital and finally to separate ourselves from it.

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