

## REVIEWS / COMPTES RENDUS

**Lara Campbell, *Respectable Citizens: Gender, Family, and Unemployment in Ontario's Great Depression*** (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 2009)

THE 1930s STAND OUT as the only period so far in which capitalism experienced a genuinely system-endangering crisis. Besides immense poverty and misery, the near-total collapse of the world economic order spawned social unrest, labour strife, and dramatic changes in thinking about politics and economics. It also led large numbers of men and women in Canada and elsewhere to conclude that other, sometimes dramatically different, modes of social and economic organization were necessary, a conviction that gave rise to, or greatly strengthened support for, political movements on the left and the right. The tumultuousness of the decade has made it a popular period of study among Canadian social, labour, economic, and political historians, as well as popular historians such as Pierre Berton and James Gray. State policy, economic developments, experiences of privation, and protest movements among working people are, of course, important. Lara Campbell argues that they were important elements in a much larger story, and that in Canada most of the tale has yet to be told. Many men and women were not On-to-Ottawa trekkers, were never part of a socialist or labour organization, nor joined an organized resistance movement of any variety. Missing from many histories are the diverse strategies men, women, and children pursued

as they struggled to survive on meagre funds from day to day, and the plethora of ways (for example, through writing letters, making statements in court, through negotiating relief and social service bureaucracies) men and women registered their discontent with prevailing conditions. Campbell helps to flesh out our understanding of these aspects of the Depression years through a case study of (mostly urban) Ontario. The book draws on an impressive array of sources, including the records of social service organizations, government departments, Premiers' papers, court case files, newspapers, memoirs, family papers, novels, plays, and oral histories. Through a careful analysis of this material, Campbell does four main things. She examines the realities with which men and women dealt. She explores an array of sometimes conflicting and/or contradictory strategies women, men, and children pursued as employment income declined or disappeared. She considers the traumatic consequences that persistent unemployment had for men whose masculinity was integrally connected with their role as family providers. Finally, she explores ways in which differently situated actors experienced and made demands on the state through appeals to the category of citizenship. Campbell convincingly argues that ideals of citizenship and of the rights of citizens were at the centre of a deeply patriarchal cultural repertoire, and that the definitions of gender vested in those ideals shaped responses to emerging realities during the Depression. Her

study, then, explores how, even though there were a wide range of reactions to the Depression, ultimately that multiplicity of responses reinforced a patriarchal order.

As a social history of policy Campbell's work is insightful. It also in many ways corroborates and brings together the findings of scholars working on earlier and later periods. Capitalism is a volatile order which has tended toward social polarization and crisis (albeit rarely system-endangering crisis) from early in its history. As such scholars as Alvin Finkel and Mariana Valverde have pointed out, in the 19th and early 20th centuries men and women often embraced ideals of "respectable citizenship." They have also pointed out that this discursive category was invested with mutually-determining notions of race and gender that informed responses to social polarization and the results of exploitation. Moreover, Nancy Christie, Margaret Little, Ann Porter and others who focus on welfare state formation after World War II have also argued convincingly that the same notions were central to the formal state agencies and services that emerged in a later period. Campbell shows that gender and race shaped policy and protest in the Depression years also. One of the real contributions of this work, however, is that it explores the ways in which the unprecedented collapse of the Depression years helped to transform a disparate collection of ad hoc, quasi-formal agencies of the earlier period into formalized state structures after the war.

While in general *Respectable Citizens* is compelling and insightful, greater attention to political economy and the geopolitical context might have made it more so. Part of what makes the Depression era such a fascinating period to study is that it represents an unprecedented situation. Men and women not only witnessed crisis, but they experienced a

near total, transnational collapse of the system of social reproduction that dominated the world order. Campbell is right to suggest that historians ought not to confuse social history with the history of the political left or of populism. Yet, a disjuncture of such an unprecedented scope did lead a large number of men and women in Canada and elsewhere to entertain dramatically different ways of organizing society. In a host of countries (including, for example, Germany, Spain, and Italy) fascist and communist or socialist parties were often the really vital political forces. In Canada CCF candidates could run, with some success, on a political platform that at least ostensibly included the ending of capitalism itself, and even a diehard Tory like R.B. Bennett acknowledged the necessity of "a good deal of pruning" to defend "the fabric of the capitalist system" from the likes of Tim Buck (as quoted in Alvin Finkel, *Business and Social Reform in the Thirties*, 92). Like Bennett, the policy makers about whom Campbell writes were well aware of these tendencies in Canada and the wider world. They did, as Campbell ably demonstrates, embrace, prescribe, and eventually enshrine in law particular gendered and racialized understandings of humanity. At the same time, they were, as Campbell notes, committed to the persistence of a liberal state. Such states were not only gendered and racialized constructs, but they were and are states committed to preserving conditions necessary for private accumulation.

In addition to preserving a racist and patriarchal order, then, policy makers also sought to preserve and defend a particular class order at a time when such bourgeois states were collapsing the world over. Campbell provides an analysis of key aspects of the social history of the Depression in Ontario and of policy in that province in the 1930s. Her study is detailed and nuanced and it deserves to

be read. In avoiding the class issue, however, she also misses an opportunity to place her chosen locality and the policies and other initiatives that emerged within it in the broader transnational history of material, cultural, and social transformation of the period.

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**James N. McCrorie, *The Guy in the Green Truck: A Biography of John St. Amand***  
(Halifax: Fernwood Publishing 2009)

JOHN ST. AMAND, a well-known educator and labour organizer who spent most of his adult life in the Maritimes, died in 2007 at age 66. His death from cancer shocked and saddened his many friends and colleagues across Canada. Over the next several years, they collected stories and reminiscences of St. Amand's full and fruitful life, under the guidance of James McCrorie, professor emeritus at the University of Regina and a long-time friend of St. Amand and his partner, Marilyn Keddy. *The Guy in the Green Truck* is the final result of this collaboration. McCrorie observes that "this book is not as much a biography as it is a memorial to John St. Amand, whose life deserves to be remembered and reflected upon."

St. Amand was born in 1943 in Brantford, Ontario where he was raised with his three sisters and a brother. His father, John Raymond, was a small engine mechanic, tool and die worker, and welder. His mother, Hilda, worked as a telephone operator upon graduation from grade thirteen. The family moved around southwestern Ontario, as John Raymond sought work to support a young family. St. Amand's mother's athleticism, intellectual interests, and appreciation of music all influenced the young St. Amand. He was a violist and clarinetist in high school, playing in the community

bands and orchestras, a practice he would continue throughout his life. St. Amand developed a particularly strong interest in folk music in his adult life and supported local festivals with a passion. It was his healthy athleticism, not his musical interests, however, that led St. Amand to leave southern Ontario after high school and head east to the Maritimes. In 1962, he was recruited to play football at Dalhousie University in Halifax. This proved to be an exciting time for this first-generation university student. He certainly found success on the gridiron in the physically grueling position of a lineman. He followed up his university football career playing for the Halifax Buccaneers. St. Amand did not have comparable success in the classroom and dropped out of university before finishing his degree. He returned to university after a two-year hiatus to pursue his interest in sociology. Dalhousie's politically progressive sociology department with the likes of Herbert Gamberg and James Stolzman significantly influenced St. Amand's political development, especially his interest in Marxism. His interest in Marxism and the New Left, though, was not simply academic but rooted in his family experiences in industrial Ontario. St. Amand decided to pursue these interests in graduate school and enrolled in Dalhousie's M.A. program. He graduated from the program in 1972 upon the completion of his thesis on Marxism and the sociology of religion. A year earlier, St. Amand had returned to Brantford to be near his family and to take up a teaching position at Mohawk College of Applied Arts and Technology in nearby Hamilton.

St. Amand threw himself into his teaching at Mohawk College. He developed a reputation as a committed teacher who did not limit his interest in his students to the classroom. Reflecting the politics of the period and St. Amand's intellectual concerns, he developed courses in labour

studies and collective bargaining. St. Amand also spent much of his time traveling about the countryside in his green pickup truck with a camper fixed to it. In 1971, 300 workers at the Texpack plant in Brantford were locked out by the company in what became a bitter dispute over union recognition, wages, and working conditions. St. Amand attended a rally at which Kent Rowley and Madeleine Parent, leaders of the Canadian Textile and Chemical Workers Union (CTCWU) spoke. The meeting changed St. Amand's life. After listening to Rowley and Parent, Amand recalled later: "I can't remember when I was so fired up about a fight as I was that night. In looking back, my first introduction to Madeleine's struggles—the Texpack strike—thoroughly unforgettable. To this day, I vividly recall making all kinds of connections that wouldn't stop racing through my head... Nothing, absolutely nothing came close to the power and political articulation I heard in Madeleine's and Kent's speeches." (47)

The Texpack workers' struggle propelled St. Amand along a path that would eventually lead him to become a full-time labour organizer. At Mohawk College he became increasingly involved in his local of the Ontario Public Service Employees Union and in the Ontario Federation of Labour and the Canadian Labour Congress. This engagement led St. Amand to become increasingly disillusioned with what he saw as the "Americanization, bureaucratization, and de-democratization" (48) of Canadian unions. St. Amand had by now become good friends with Kent Rowley and Madeline Parent whom he considered to be mentors. He politically aligned himself with their national labour central, the Confederation of Canadian Unions (CCU), that was headquartered in Brantford. Over the next number of years, St. Amand engaged in intense union organizing and support work throughout much of southern

Ontario. In 1981, he took the bold step of resigning his teaching position and moving to the Maritimes to take up the life of a union organizer.

St. Amand's decision to abandon a secure teaching position in Hamilton and move to Halifax reflected his deepening commitment to the labour movement and social justice issues. Madeleine Parent continued to influence significantly St. Amand in these years, especially with her insistence on the need for a rank-and-file-led Canadian union movement. Over the remainder of his life, St. Amand worked tirelessly for the labour movement, sometimes receiving a salary and at other times not. Consequently, he took a number of jobs to supplement his income, including working as a carpenter's helper, fisher, and teaching on a part-time basis at St. Mary's and Dalhousie universities. The move to Halifax did allow St. Amand and Marilyn Keddy, whom he had met on a trip to China in 1975, to live together on a permanent basis (There is considerable reflection in this biography on the St. Amand-Keddy relationship which survived a number of turbulent times in their lives). St. Amand's life over the next several decades was entwined with the history of the CCU. In spring 1982, St. Amand moved to Cape Breton to lead a campaign by a group of militant miners to secede from the United Mine Workers of America and join the CCU. The CCU paid his expenses but had no money to provide him with a salary. As a fellow CCU activist comments, on this occasion and many more to come Keddy "bankrolled him, encouraged him, assisted him." (57) Internal conflicts within the labour movement are often deeply divisive from both institutional and personal perspectives. The intensity of this divide in Cape Breton in the early 1980s is certainly evident in the struggles featured in this biography. Ultimately, the dissident miners and St. Amand lost their battle to

create an independent union, defeated, from their perspective, by a union movement dominated by American unions and conservative leaders.

After the CCU defeat in Cape Breton, St. Amand made his way back to Halifax where he soon responded to a request by childcare workers at Dalhousie University to assist them in forming a union. The campaign's eventual success brought more requests for assistance from women in other educational service industries. Through the 1990s, St. Amand devoted his seemingly limitless energy to organizing communication service workers, including those in the new call centres popping up across the region. St. Amand was a major figure within the CCU and anyone interested in its history should consult this book. In the biography there are many testimonials to the importance of St. Amand's contributions to left-wing labour politics and the cause of social justice.

*The Guy in the Green Truck* is an interesting collective memoir of the life of St. Amand assembled by family and friends and crafted into a very readable narrative by James McCrorie. The book does not pretend to be a critical or definitive biography of St. Amand. The biography does provide us, however, with often moving insights into the ideas, motives, and passions of a dedicated social activist.

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**Benjamin Isitt, *From Victoria to Vladivostok: Canada's Siberian Expedition, 1917-19*** (Vancouver and Toronto: University of British Columbia Press 2010)

THIS GENERALLY engaging volume "draws from military and labor sources to reconstruct the experiences of the Canadians who served in the Russian Far

East as well as the perceptions of those on the Home Front." (9) It tells the story of 4,210 men of the Canadian Expeditionary Force (Siberia) who spent five months in Russia in 1919, as possibly the most toothless yet mutinous contingent of the Allied intervention in the Russian Civil War: most of the men spent their time in barracks around Vladivostok 'Doing Nothing,' as a section of the book on their experience is entitled. They had gymkhanas, tug-of-war contests, and theatrical productions to divert them but other forms of entertainment were strictly off-limits: the prevalence of venereal disease was such that sexual intercourse with a woman was regarded by the authorities as equivalent to a self-inflicted wound and punished accordingly! Only 55 of them ever went 'up country' to Omsk, the capital of anti-Bolshevik Siberia, and there were only a couple of minor skirmishes with Red partisans in the Far East. Indeed, the Canadian Privy Council had decreed on 22 December 1918, just a day after its first ship had embarked from Victoria, that the CEF(s) should not be deployed 'up country;' and in February 1919, just one month after the force's arrival in Vladivostok, the Privy Council decreed that preparations should be made for its evacuation. All but a handful of the men were back in Canada by June.

So, why another study of this brief, aborted effort to combat Bolshevism? Official histories of the Canadian Army may pay it scant regard, but we already have three monographs on the Canadian intervention in Russia, by J. Swettenham (*Allied Intervention in Russia, 1918-1919, and the Part Played by Canada*, 1967), R. Maclaren (*Canadians in Russia, 1918-1919*, 1976) and J.E. Skuce (*Canada's Soldiers in Siberia*, 1990), augmented by many scholarly articles (as attested to by the author's excellent bibliography). Isitt's answer is that his work will "force a rethink" of how the Great War

is remembered and “give voice to soldiers and workers who advocated a different course.” (xi) In this, he has some success. Earlier studies tended to concentrate on Canada’s role within the intervention writ large and dealt in high politics. Isitt makes the odd aside in this regard – intriguingly suggesting, for example, that Borden’s willingness to participate in the intervention reflected not a young dominion asserting itself but “a fundamental streak of subservience” to Britain in Canadian foreign policy (169) – but his emphasis is on history from below: the exploration of the interaction between organized labour and the CEF(s) and how negative reactions to the expedition fed, in 1918–19, into the largest wave of industrial unrest that Canada had ever seen. Thus, the book opens with an enlightening account of how, of the first 78 soldiers of the 259th Battalion to be issued kit for Siberia, 77 refused to accept it; (1) and how a mini-mutiny ensued as the men were marched to the docks in Victoria on 21 December 1918 and herded on board the troop ship *Teesta* at bayonet point (They had also to be disembarked under guard in Vladivostok). The soldiers, it is herein revealed, had been the target of a vigorous campaign against the intervention by Canadian socialist organizations that had caused them to wonder “what the devil self-determination of nations really means,” as a contemporary source put it. (92) Seven hundred members of CEF(s), we are told, attended the inaugural meeting of the Victoria branch of the Federated Labor Party on 8 December 1918 and had loudly applauded socialist speakers opposing intervention in Russia (92) (It was probably not coincidental that many of the French-speaking conscripts were from districts of Quebec and Montreal that had experienced rioting in response to the Military Service Act of June 1917).

These sections dealing with events in Canada and conditions amongst the troops in Vladivostok are certainly the most original and most effective parts of the book (notably Chapter 4, ‘Mobilization,’ and Chapter 6, ‘Vladivostok’), being based on a host of archival materials, memoirs, and, especially, the contemporary press. Isitt is on less sure ground when he strays beyond the home front or the barracks fence and into Russia. Partly this is an issue of the selection and use of sources. I can see the point in quoting *The Colonist* on the October Revolution, if the aim is to give a picture of how contemporary Canada viewed events in Russia (which is done well, throughout), but why quote that same newspaper (25) on the disposition of seats among Russian parties at the Second All-Russian Congress of Soviets – particularly if the figures quoted are inaccurate? Unless, of course, that is the point; but then the reader ought to be informed that they are inaccurate (Isitt does not inform us – perhaps because he does not know that the figures are inaccurate). The use of Russian materials to provide background is also very limited and somewhat careless: for example, the author relies heavily for Far Eastern context on one book edited by B.I. Mukhachev (*Dal’nyi vostok...*, 2003); but when citing chapters from it writes repeatedly “according to Mukhachev.” English-language sources are also used haphazardly: on the Kolchak coup he cites an article by me that barely mentions that event in passing but not my monograph on Kolchak that contains a 100-page chapter on the subject (although the book is in the bibliography); on the Kornilov affair he cites a baffling selection of tangential secondary materials, some of which are quite misleading; and he sows confusion by suggesting (62) that Kerensky’s pleadings to Lloyd George in London in June 1918 had

anything whatsoever to do with the origins of the intervention. The author also adopts the spelling of Russian and other names found in contemporary Canadian sources, which leads to some eye-watering anomalies ("Czecho-Slovaks," "G.W. Tschitcherin," "Georges K. Lvov," etc.), and mis-transliterations appear with monotonous regularity: '*Golos Primor'a*,' (46) '*Narodyi Dom*,' (47) '*Dalny Vostok*,' (48) etc. There are also some outright errors: the Provisional Committee of the State Duma did not declare Russia a republic on 3 March 1917; (19) no bridge 'spans' Nevskii Prospekt in St Petersburg; (24) Denikin was not Kornilov's chief of staff in 1917; (59) Masaryk cannot properly be described as a leader of the Czechoslovak Legion, (60) etc.

Consequently, this volume will probably be of more interest to scholars of Canadian social and military history than it will to historians of the Russian Civil War. Nevertheless, it does go some way towards achieving its stated aim of demonstrating that "Working-class history can and should enter into a closer dialogue with military history."<sup>(10)</sup> Adding to its value is the fact that its 171 pages of text are buttressed by 121 pages of exceptionally detailed notes, appendices, and bibliography, as well as 37 interesting photos.

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**Claire Trépanier, *A Woman of Valour: The Biography of Marie-Louise Bouchard Labelle*, Louise Matha, trans. (Edmonton: Athabasca University Press 2010)**

THE CELIBACY OF Catholic priests has posed personal challenges both for priests themselves and for religious historians who consider the social consequences of their transgressions. Notable in this

regard are recent revelations of recurring homosexual liaisons with young boys in residential schools. Claire Trépanier's biography provides further disclosure of the sexual relations of priests with women through the life of Marie-Louise Bouchard Labelle. From 1906 to 1928 this French-Canadian woman was romantically involved with Father Joseph A. Roy, a priest 33 years her senior. She was forced to raise three children on her own after Roy returned to the priesthood.

Bouchard Labelle left no diary or written correspondence, and as such the book relies on interviews with her children and grandchildren, on photographs, and on church records in order to reveal her strength and determination. This biography combines the author's insightful observations with a laborious treatment of primary documents. Trépanier looks at historical events such as the Riel Rebellions, the Depression, and the First and Second World Wars, and considers how they affected the lives of Marie-Louise and her family.

The original subject of the book has broader implications for a growing feminist historiography on female agency and survival strategies. Taken together with other such narratives, it could form part of a critical analysis of Catholic patriarchy and how it shaped her life and, more widely, the lives of other women in similar situations. The author discusses these possibilities in the Postscript, (181–2) but she could address these points at the start.

Marie-Louise's life is a testimony to prejudicial treatment: limited education, abandonment by a priest, minimal financial support, failed business ventures, and her ultimate dependence on her children in later life. Originally published as *C'est le temps d'en parler* by the same publisher, the English translation begins with her birth in 1891 at Les Escoumins, a small Quebec village at the mouth of the

Saguenay River. Representative of out-migration from these rural regions in this period, the family subsequently moved to the Copper Cliff mines near Sudbury. The death of her father in the mines led to her mother's remarriage and, eventually, pioneer life on a farm in nearby Hanmer.

Chapter 1 gives a brief account of her upbringing which consisted of the modesty, thrift, homemaking skills, and behaviour judged appropriate for Catholic girls at this time. Household chores were her primary responsibility as the eldest daughter in a growing family dominated by an enterprising adoptive father. This explains her limited schooling.

Chapter 2 traces the contrasting situation of Father Joseph A. Roy. Born in 1858 in Berthierville, Quebec, he pursued classical studies in Joliette and theological training at the Grand Séminaire in Montreal. After a brief stint as a Quebec vicar, he was assigned to missions in the Canadian West from 1890 to 1905: in Regina and Wolseley, Saskatchewan, and in Vernon, BC.

Roy's early career foreshadows future events. The intervention of his superior, Archbishop Monseigneur Langevin, followed Roy's involvement in the civil matters of his parishioners, such as allowing dances and giving marital advice leading to separation. Roy's liberal views ran counter to the Catholic canon of the time, and could account for his questionable whereabouts from 1905 to 1906. He may have taken a leave of absence to reflect on his vocation. (30) In any event, at age 48 he became the first parish priest in Hanmer. It was at this point in 1906 that he first encountered 15-year-old Marie-Louise.

The years 1906 to 1916 covered in Chapter 3 are a turning point in this saga. At 21, Marie-Louise became Father Roy's presbytery maid; she then followed him to Cache Bay for periodic visits. Their love flourished in discreet cohabitation

and Roy seriously pondered his choices in terms of being part of the clergy. Marie-Louise longed to leave for a city where their sexual relations outside of marriage would attract less attention. The discovery of her pregnancy in 1916 led to the couple's departure for Ottawa. Roy did not acquire a dispensation from the Catholic Church and marry Marie-Louise. "Living in sin" meant that he faced excommunication, and so he maintained the ambiguous status of their relationship. This infuriated her father, who threatened to set out for Ottawa to kill him.

Chapter 4 chronicles how the family settled into a secret life in Rideau Park from 1916 to 1928. Roy baptized his own children and the family did not partake in communal church activities. The Protestant neighbours were not privy to their common-law relationship, one that was surely difficult for both of them, but hardest on Marie-Louise. The family took on the surname Ray to fit in with the anglophone majority of the city. The birth of her first child, Joseph, was followed by that of her daughter, Gertrude, in 1918, and by another son, Lorne, in 1921. In 1928, Roy made a critical decision after meeting with Monseigneur Fabre. His mentor clearly stated that to save his soul he had to leave this woman and his illegitimate children. So, at age 70, he abandoned his family and returned to the priesthood.

Joseph left Marie-Louise with instructions on how to handle the household budget. She was determined to survive and enjoyed some brief spendthrift years after his departure. Joseph then transferred the home to her in 1930 and the family lived on savings, produce from the garden and orchard, and on credit from the corner store. The Church also provided her with "hush money" in return for her silence about her life with Joseph. During the Depression, the family's way of life became much more difficult when



the normal provisions were reduced. As a result, the family lived in abject poverty from 1935 to 1944. Marie-Louise rented the house and tried several business ventures, including operating a lunch counter, a convalescent home, and a kiosk. All of these ended up failing due to her lack of business experience and the general decline in people's incomes during the Depression. The family moved frequently to several locations where Marie-Louise sublet rooms. She sold possessions, eventually went bankrupt, and finally sold the family home

Fortunately, the family's financial situation improved after the death of Roy in 1944. Marie-Louise and the children obtained jobs: she cleaned government offices, Joe worked for the RCMP, Gertrude became a nurse, and Lorne joined the Navy. Marie-Louise left her job in Ottawa in 1946 and began living with her children and their families until 1970. With a new lease on life in her retirement years, she visited her family in Hanmer, moved to an apartment in a seniors' residence, and even made a trip to the Yukon. She enjoyed oil painting and a close relationship with her grandchildren. She died at age 82 in 1973 and took the secret of her love affair with Joseph to the grave. The inscription on her gravestone, "Wife of Joseph Ray," is a telling statement of her lifelong desire.

It is interesting to note that a genealogical and popular approach has revealed these findings. This biography is representative of many efforts on the part of women within the Catholic Church to challenge their traditional roles. The author has observed that to this day there has been no substantive reform regarding the celibacy of Catholic priests. The Church has also failed to consider women who have been gravely mistreated as a result.

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**Becki Ross, *Burlesque West: Showgirls, Sex and Sin in Postwar Vancouver***

(Toronto: University of Toronto Press 2009)

OVER THE PAST few years there has been a little spurt of books dealing with strippers and sex workers in the Canadian context, as Line Chamberland and I outlined in a review essay for *Labour/Le Travail* in 2006. A new book by University of British Columbia sociologist, Becki Ross, about the post-World War II erotic entertainer business in Vancouver, is an excellent addition to this expanding collection. Ross positions herself as a feminist captivated and inspired by the strippers' challenge to traditional femininity and decorum, and by their apparent sexual confidence. Her book is the result of a long period of research that officially got underway when she received a Social Sciences and Humanities Research grant in 1999. Her being awarded this grant sparked outrage among conservative politicians and the media, who deemed the topic of investigation an inappropriate way to spend taxpayer money. At the front end of this negative onslaught, she had to endure hateful mail, phone calls, and faxes. In spite of this, she held her ground and her study progressed. Ross says the thing that most distressed her at the time was the overarching perception that strippers were freaks not worth studying, and that their stories should be swept under the carpet. This made her all the more determined to open a window onto the erotic and fascinating world of showgirls, sex, and sin.

We can all be thankful that Ross persevered and succeeded since she is now able to shed light on an interesting period in Vancouver history in general, and on its large and important postwar erotic entertainment history in particular. The book will have appeal not only for historians, sociologists, labour specialists, and

political scientists, but also for those who study small entrepreneurial and family businesses. The book will also appeal to people who simply want a window into a fascinating underground world that has been little explored by those with other than prurient or condemning objectives.

Ross situates commercial stripping within the larger historical context of "dancing for dollars." She traces an evolutionary line from belly dancers in Africa, Hindu erotic dancers in India, and snake dancers in Brazil, to the rise of burlesque entertainment in North America at the end of the 19th century. In the beginning, dancers were usually part of a chorus line baring legs and occasionally breasts. More and more burlesque and vaudeville-type shows began to feature individual entertainers/strippers. Gradually favourites and then stars began to emerge out of the chorus line, such as the infamous Mae West. Vancouver became a major centre for this type of erotic entertainment, and by the early post-World War II period was second tier only to cities such as Las Vegas and Miami. She estimates that in the mid-1950s, there were at least 21 clubs staging striptease in Vancouver nightclubs, many of them amongst the most profitable small businesses in the city. For example, in its heyday, up to 600 patrons a night, including many couples, paid to witness the spectacle at the Penthouse Cabaret.

In Chapter two, Ross profiles the men who owned and ran the clubs where the strippers performed. She divides what she calls "the men behind the marquee" into two distinct categories: "west-enders" and "east-enders." Men who owned and controlled the strip clubs on the west side were white; those on the east side were primarily men of colour. This racial divide was replicated inside the clubs. In the west, the entertainers were white, the clientele white and usually affluent, and the clubs more upscale. In the east,

the entertainers tended to be of colour, the shows more "exotic," the clubs more rundown, and the clientele less moneyed. While all clubs encountered "selective" policing and patrol, those on the east were subject to closer scrutiny and much more likely to be raided by the police. None of the east side clubs were granted a liquor license until the late 1960s, whereas on the west side liquor licenses were more common. On both sides of the east-west divide, there was a cast of larger-than-life characters, and Ross offers fascinating accounts of these men.

The third chapter provides intimate accounts of the 19 dancers she interviewed for her study. In combination with personal accounts of the women, she weaves an analytical thread that adds hugely to these engaging profiles. She finds the dancers were far from a homogeneous group, crossing race, ethnicity, social class, age, and sexuality boundaries, as well as body size. For instance, she notes one popular act was advertised as "Tons of Fun" and involved "900 pounds, 3 girls at 300 pounds each." (90) Most of the women she talked to seemed to recall their stripping days with fondness and few regrets. Many had a gimmick of some kind to help them stand out. On page 100 for example, there is a great photo of scantily clad Nina Marlene in a burlesque sketch involving boxing gloves. Another dancer, Bonnie Scott, reported having routines ranging from a fan dance, to a *Pink Panther* send-up, to a Mae West show. On the east side, the dancers often played on their racial difference. Miss Love, for instance, entertained at the Club New Delhi decked out in a zebra-skin outfit. Many of the dancers profiled by Ross, especially in the early postwar period, found stripping to be a worthwhile and well-paying occupation. Ross finds that the occupation gave them ample incomes, exercise, chances to travel, flexible work schedules,

and personal satisfaction. This was particularly true when cast against the dominant female occupations of the time such as nurse, switchboard operator, and secretary.

In chapters 4, 5, and 6, Ross sharpens her sociologist pencil and assesses the working conditions and occupational hazards of the industry, including issues of exiting and aging. In Chapter 4 she covers the shifting conditions of selling fantasy during the postwar years, providing insight into a range of things from conditions inside the clubs to wage and benefit patterns. Ross notes that the "most dramatic and irreversible change in dancers' working conditions followed the decriminalization of nudity in British Columbia in September 1972." (182) By the late 1970s, bottomless dancing was commonplace and dancers were being pressured to perform suggestive sexual acts on stage. A particular strength of Ross's book is that she relates these changes in the working conditions of the women to broader social change, not least of which was the growing availability of hardcore pornography, and the advent of VCR technology, which made sexually explicit images readily available. Customers began expecting what they were seeing in these images to be replicated on stage. Some women accommodated these demands, while others did not.

Chapter 5 covers the range of occupational hazards that characterized the industry. Among these hazards is what Ross characterizes as the "stubborn contradiction" of being adored and rebuked at the same time, and appropriately titles the chapter using a quote from one of her subjects: "Everyone wanted to date a dancer, nobody wanted to marry one." The stigma attached to striptease meant that many women led double lives, revealing their true occupation only to a select few. Another challenge Ross highlights is the tension between feminism

and striptease artists. She notes that feminist leaders were inclined to condemn all sex work and included strippers in this category, whereas many of the women involved in the trade did not see themselves as exploited, and rejected the notion they were degraded, powerless victims. Ross suggests that many of the women she interviewed were articulate about their sense of empowerment, and would have been quite prepared to be part of second-wave feminism if they had not been marginalized by the movement.

Another occupational hazard for these workers was being surrounded by alcohol and other drugs. But, as Ross notes, women who became drug-dependent did not last long in the business, and many successfully found ways to modify alcohol use such as having an agreement with bartenders to water down their drinks. A number of the women she talked to remembered sexual harassment by club owners and obnoxious patrons as two of the bigger job hurdles. Most found ways to counteract these problems, not least of which was occasionally hitting a customer over the head if he got out of hand.

In response to occupational shortcomings, some women were prepared to engage in unionizing activities. This was without success largely because provincial legislation did not recognize strippers as legitimate workers, and unions were reluctant to view them as potential unionists and fight for their rights. One of the larger ironies was that male union members were as likely as any other group to be customers, and more than one union convention was known to feature strippers as part of a late evening entertainment package.

As with other occupations involving athletic bodies and a youthful appearance, such as ballet dancing and gymnastics, advancing age signalled the end of a career for most striptease artists. In Chapter 6 Ross traces the invariable

transition from the stage. The women she talked to reported moving on to a wide range of occupations including magician, photographer, professor, and escort agency owner. Most indicated they were glad they had completed their stage careers before the scene changed to lap dancing in private booths.

Ross's book is outstanding. It takes a little documented and little celebrated aspect of Canadian work history – the exotic entertainment business – and enlivens it with moving personal stories and analytical insight. The book is further enlivened with vintage photographs. Ross very effectively uses the erotic entertainment business as a lens through which to view Vancouver history in the post-World War II period – a hugely important period in shaping what the city was to become. A particular strength of Ross's book is that it gives us insight into the entire industry, profiling not only the strippers and the problems they faced, but also the men who owned and ran the clubs. The book is well written, and at 246 pages is a fairly easy read. For those with a nose for detail, there are fifty pages of end notes.

One weakness I found with the book is that all of the exotic entertainment workers' profiles were female. Vancouver has also been a significant destination for erotic male dancing including drag performances. One wonders if the experience of these men is similar to that of the women in this study. I would also have liked more attention to current debates about the status of "sexually-titillating work" as legitimate work. But these are minor quibbles. Overall the book is a testament to a well-researched and executed project.

GERALD HUNT  
Ryerson University

**Sean Mills, *The Empire Within: Postcolonial Thought and Political Activism in Sixties Montreal*** (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press 2010)

IN RECENT YEARS, as the Sixties recedes into increasingly distant memory, a new generation of academics has sought to reexamine and reinterpret the meaning and significance of the period. The work that these scholars have produced, which engages with a variety of methods, approaches, and theoretical frameworks, and focuses on a number of different geographical areas, institutions, and social movements, has offered new insights into the complexities of the era. Sean Mills makes an important contribution to this emerging literature and, despite a few limitations related to his geographical focus and a relative lack of background and contextual information, provides a nuanced and sophisticated exploration of the relationship of postcolonial thought to the political and social activism in Montreal during the Sixties.

Mills sets out three ambitious goals for his monograph: to reframe Quebec and Canadian history by situating the political activism in Montreal within a larger "framework of global dissent;" to elucidate the intellectual and ideological interconnections between various groups and individuals engaged in the political upheavals in the city; and to expand Sixties literature away from its traditional focus on North America and Europe by highlighting "the centrality of Third World decolonization to the development of dissent in Montreal." (9–10) These goals combine to inform his overall argument that, despite divisions and tensions, anti-colonial and anti-imperial thought linked together various groups and individuals within Montreal and contributed to the formation of a shared movement. "Challenging empire in Montreal," he argues, "was not the effort

of a small group of isolated revolutionaries. Rather, it became a mass movement through which countless individuals came to see themselves as historically and politically consequential, providing a framework through which democracy was re-imagined as encompassing individual and collective sovereignty and social solidarity.” (9) The chapters that comprise the text explore the overlapping and interconnected development of various ideas and organizations that contributed to this era of political activism in Montreal. The first part discusses the larger context of the period, including important developments within Quebec and Montreal and the rise of decolonization theory around the world. The second part, broken into chapters that deal separately with race, gender, language, and class, describes the various political actors in the city during the Sixties and their use of a common rhetoric of decolonization. By the end of the monograph, which closes with a brief discussion of the shifting nature of radicalism in Montreal by the early 1970s, Mills has largely achieved his lofty yet laudable goals.

Throughout this work, Mills provides substantial evidence to support his claims that decolonization theory connected various actors and organizations during the Sixties. He successfully explores the central features of anti-colonial and anti-imperial thought and explains how such ideas could be applied to the situation in Montreal. He also adequately illustrates how different groups, including Black Montrealers, women, francophones, and labour unions, sought to decolonize the city and the province. Although the relationships among these diverse movements sometimes appear tenuous, as they are occasionally based solely on particular word choices or individual actors, the monograph nevertheless demonstrates clearly how such ideas linked otherwise disparate movements.

In addition, Mills effectively exposes the limits and contradictions associated with the use of decolonization theory by political activists in Montreal. He frequently highlights the ignorance of many groups and individuals to their own role as colonizers, especially with respect to Aboriginal peoples, and explains in the conclusion how the recognition of such conflicts shifted the movements in a new direction by the 1970s. In doing so, Mills offers an intriguing exploration of the role of decolonization theory by the oppositional movements in Montreal during the Sixties.

One of the limitations of this work is its narrow geographical focus. Although scholars must always make difficult choices regarding the boundaries of their studies, and Mills justifies his decision by explaining that “[n]o North American city was as profoundly affected by Third World theory as Montreal,” (3) comparative analysis might provide even greater insight into the activism of the period. It would be useful to contrast the activism in Montreal with that happening elsewhere in Quebec, in Canada, and around the world. The reader is left wondering whether the story Mills tells is unique to this one city or if it is similar to what unfolded in other geographical locations. While he successfully establishes the distinctive political, historical, social, and cultural context of the city, a broader study might consider the similarities and differences with other settings and provide a more complete understanding of the period and of decolonization theory.

Mills also assumes that readers will recognize the various individuals mentioned throughout the monograph, and he often provides very little information or introduction of these actors. One example is his brief mention of C.L.R. James. (98) Furthermore, Mills refers to the “long history” of particular issues and events, such as struggles over language

and schooling in Montreal, (140–41) but he only describes events in the 1950s and 1960s. Further explanation would highlight the much longer trajectory of these important concerns.

Very little is said in this work about the Front de Libération du Québec (FLQ) or various political parties, despite their importance to the Sixties separatist movement; additional discussion of these organizations would add an important layer to this analysis. It is clear that Mills hopes to minimize the importance of the FLQ, which has often been the focus of studies on the period, (9) but he perhaps marginalizes the organization too much. His choice to include the FLQ and the October Crisis in his chapter on the labour movement is questionable, and it would perhaps be better to provide a separate chapter on this incredibly important topic. In terms of political parties, which were an active part of the broader movements analyzed in this study, one is left to wonder whether or not they employed the same decolonization rhetoric and analysis as the other individuals and groups that are discussed in more detail. If not, does this challenge Mills's argument? If so, why are they not explored further?

Despite these limitations, the author successfully addresses the complexities related to race, gender, language, and class throughout his monograph. His decision to dedicate individual chapters to each of these categories may at first seem problematic; it could have marginalized the different groups and individuals and overstated the divided nature of political activism in Montreal. Yet, Mills continuously demonstrates various connections, including the shared use of the rhetoric of decolonization, as well as important divergences. He quite effectively explores the nuances of each unique interest and identity and highlights the important similarities and differences among the diverse actors in Montreal. Mills has

successfully integrated the various concerns raised by social historians into one interesting and informative narrative.

Overall, this work makes a significant and sophisticated contribution to the literature on the Sixties, on political activism in Montreal and Quebec, and on decolonization theories and movements. Although his focus is quite narrow, Mills nevertheless offers a very nuanced exploration of the interconnected nature of Sixties radicalism in Montreal and demonstrates the ways that internal and external influences contributed to the development of a mass movement focused on challenging empire. This monograph is an excellent read and a tremendous addition to many fields of study.

ROBERTA LEXIER

Mount Allison University

**Emma LaRocque, *When the Other is Me: Native Resistance Discourse, 1850–1990*** (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press 2010)

EMMA LAROCQUE'S *When the Other is Me: Native Resistance Discourse, 1850–1990* examines the tactics that Indigenous writers in Canada have deployed in their struggles for decolonization. The goal of *When the Other is Me* is to highlight how, historically, many Indigenous writers have sought to challenge the “textual techniques” of misrepresentation found in colonial texts that dehumanize and marginalize Indigenous peoples and justify the creation of a colonial society in Canada. (11) Indeed, LaRocque surveys Canada’s “troubled discourse,” (3) or “war of words” (4) between Euro-Canadian colonizers and colonized Indigenous peoples, and looks specifically at how Indigenous authors, as a response, have established a tradition of resistance writing or “talking back.” (158) In seeking to disrupt colonial

representations, Indigenous writers are, according to LaRocque, at once “deconstructing and reconstructing” the world to create spaces of dignity, community, and humanity. *When the Other is Me* will be of interest to those studying the ways in which Indigenous peoples are represented in colonial cultures as well as to people involved in forging strategies for decolonization in Canada.

LaRocque outlines what she calls the “Civilization/Savage” master narrative in Canadian colonial writing. Drawing on the anti-colonial ideas of Albert Memmi and Frantz Fanon, LaRocque argues that it is important to pay attention to how colonizers invent certain discourses to rationalize their rule and justify the subordination of Indigenous peoples. In this way, the “Civ/Sav” framework is, according to LaRocque, “an ideological container for the systemic construction of self-confirming ‘evidence’ that Natives were savages who ‘inevitably’ had to yield to the supreme powers of civilization as carried forward by Euro-Canadian civilizers.” (38) Moreover, Indigenous writings critiquing such representations have often been muffled, contained, or ignored as part of maintaining settler hegemony. LaRocque states that misrepresentations and discourse practices that justify colonialism in Canada constitute “textual warfare.” (38) Indeed, she argues that the degrading, infantilizing, and dehumanizing representations found in colonizer texts have “raged on long enough [...] and have] burned into the hearts and minds of Aboriginal peoples.” (15) As a result, Indigenous writers have had to continually fight to have their voices of resistance heard.

The strength of *When the Other is Me* is LaRocque’s examination of the emergence of an Indigenous writing tradition of resistance. Impressively, she puts the voices of such writers and thinkers as George Copway, Catherine Songeegoh

Sutton, Chief Dan George, Ruby Slipperjack, Tompson Highway, Thomas King, and Eden Robinson – among others – into conversation with one another as producers of resistance discourse. While at times the idea of a “resistance tradition” seems forced, LaRocque does showcase the similar ways in which Indigenous writers have recorded “historical and personal incursions, social upheavals, a range of emotions, and unique individual and cultural backgrounds, and struggle for hope and determination” in their works. (18) LaRocque proclaims that Indigenous intellectuals also suffer: “Our vocations do not protect us either from dispossession, social inequality, poverty, or the daily indecencies of racism in stores and streets or in our places of play and work.” (95) In short, LaRocque looks at how Indigenous writers are challenging colonial constructs and pushing alternative paradigms in their works by talking back to discourses that marginalize their voices. LaRocque proclaims that Indigenous resistance writing is simultaneously a part of the reconstruction of many Indigenous communities and ways of life. (120)

*When the Other is Me* is an important, though limited, work. The title of the book is misleading, claiming to examine resistance discourse from 1850 to 1990; however the text largely focuses on writing from 1970 to 1990, which significantly restricts the scope of the book. Also, while making attempts to be “interdisciplinary,” LaRocque overwhelmingly focuses on literary works at the expense of a more detailed examination of the importance of other political writings by Chief Dan George and, especially, Harold Cardinal. More concerning, though, is LaRocque’s lack of attention to the dialectic relationship between textual and material worlds and discursive and political strategies of resistance. LaRocque seeks only to “expose textual

constructions instrumental to racism” and does not go further to illustrate the ways in which racial discourses are used as weapons to establish, defend, and perpetuate colonial and capitalist privilege in relation to changing historical circumstances. Thus, LaRocque’s suggestions for moving forward necessarily fall short of calling for Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples to organize and build political alliances for radical attacks on the asymmetrical social relations of Canada’s settler, capitalist society that racist discourses ultimately defend as natural and inevitable. Nevertheless, *When the Other is Me* offers many important insights and analytical tools to continue the struggle for decolonization in Canada and the fight for a more humane, just world.

SEAN CARLETON  
Trent University

**Ivana Caccia, *Managing the Canadian Mosaic in Wartime: Shaping Citizenship Policy, 1939–1945*** (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queens University Press 2010)

THIS WELL WRITTEN, concise, and thoroughly researched book, a recently minted University of Ottawa history PhD dissertation, has a narrow subject, but a very wide theme. It focuses on intellectual voices that shaped wartime government approaches to ethnic groups in Canada. But its theme is much larger, nothing less than identifying the moment of the cultural birth of modern Canada. In this respect the book offers both a new and an old paradigm. It is old in identifying the causes that led to an effect: wartime concerns about enemy aliens and insular ethnicity. It begins unequivocally: “the war effort brought to light the political significance...of the country’s population...of non-British or non-French cultural origin,” (3) it ends, claiming with

equal certainty, “an optimistic...view of an all-inclusive Canadian citizenship thus emerged at the end of the war...” (212) Indeed a certain teleology, a narrative of ‘before’ and ‘after,’ intertwines itself in the text: from small steps of “setting up government machinery” in order to maintain contact with ethnic groups, to the eventual embrace of the “long term objective” of “effectual integration of... ethnic communities...” ;(67) from government officials’ “patronizing tactics” to the moment when immigrant groups were able to speak “publicly on their own behalf.” (159) It was all progress, however “gradual and hesitant.” (183) And its ultimate winners were those who held similar “classical liberal precepts of individual freedom, human perfectibility, progress, tolerance and the role of the modern state in the formation of a unified nation.” (113)

As Caccia projects it, these policies were almost inevitable and had to do with the confluence of a number of variables. There was a reason that Canada’s multicultural nature was born not with the coming of European ‘ethnics’ in the early part of the 20th century, nor with the 1970s and 1980s with their federal policies and legislation. The time of World War II was a particular moment in Canadian history that went far beyond a military exercise. The war, it is true, created the initial catalyst, for it required a unified populace and it in turn required respect and a way for Canada to find unity in a modicum of heterogeneity. But at the very moment, too, came new views of citizenship, bolstered by a Marshall-esque entitlement in a state increasingly willing to offer its citizens a social safety net. At that time too, race was reconceptualized from biological to social difference. Then, too, the state itself moved into the business of culture and citizenship, increasingly seeing its role as arbiter among people and fashioner of national culture. And the 1940s marked a communications



revolution of sorts, offering the state and other cultural architects an array of old and new tools. The old media included books of nonfiction such as Kirkconnell's 1941 *Canadians All* and John Murray Gibson's 1939 *Canadian Mosaic*, newspapers such as the *Winnipeg Free Press* and *The Globe and Mail*, and magazines that included *Saturday Night*. They in turn were embellished with public radio and public film, the National Film Board of Canada in particular. In short the book accounts for a paradigm shift, one from seeing immigrants as problematic to one in which they become the core strength of a nation.

The book itself offers a discussion of the rise of a set of ideas, but it also tells a story of people and institutions. It sets out quite simply to offer a biography of those "concrete measures (that) were implemented." (4) In fact the book develops a tight chronology, describing specific events or introducing an array of personalities, and often with more than enough minutiae. The book may be about an intellectual debate among principal actors, but it allows for the effects of personality, for personality conflicts, even for personal upheaval, divorce, or illness. An array of fascinating individuals are introduced: Tracy Philipps (British anthropologist and head of the Nationalities Branch of NWS), Thomas C. Davis (deputy minister of National War Services), Robert England (adult educator), John B. Grierson (filmmaker/propagandist), Watson Kirkconnell (Baptist, McMaster professor), John Murray Gibson (CPR cultural worker), John B. Brebner (president of CHA), and so on. Each is presented with reference to his life experiences and ideology. In addition there are a plethora of politicians from across Canada, but from Prairie Canada in particular – James G. Gardiner, Joseph T. Thorson, and Thomas C. Davis. (90) Then there is much on the Bureau of Public Information, the

Committee on Co-operation in Canadian Citizenship, Department of National War Services, Foreign Language Information Service, Nationalities Branch (later, Citizenship Division), Wartime Information Bureau, and the Canadian Council of Education for Citizenship (CCEC). This is the story of how these men in these institutions sought to recast the very foundation of a nation.

The most interesting aspects of the book to me are those dealing with the fundamental shift in the idea of citizenship. The theoretical work of Stuart Hall, David Theo Goldberg, and Zygmunt Bauman, among others, is employed to good effect. Caccia argues that "self identification process," "binary juxtaposition," (41) "bureaucratic power," (179) and a "normalize(d)...racial profile" (40) explain this shift. She presents a fascinating record of a complex cultural process, one that could be traced from old imperial and religious ideas of justice, to a multicultural, secular nation. In 1939 Conservative party leader R.J. Manion could still announce publicly that in fighting Hitler, Canada was "fighting for Christianity,...for religion,... for democracy," and mean by it a more inclusive and just nation. (14) In 1940 A.R.M. Lower could still conceptualize "liberty" within a cultural understanding that did not consider the "fundamental rights of freedom of speech" as among the "universal human rights." (36) In the same era, Tracy Phillips, British anthropologist and key advisor to the CCCC, could define "Canadianization" as "building... into a very distinctive British-American edifice..." (97)

It is perhaps too easy to criticize a book for not drawing in yet more scholarship. Still there are works that I wish Caccia had considered and engaged. Franca Iacovetta's award-winning *Gatekeepers* which focuses on "public debate" on immigrants coming in the 1950s seems an oversight;

surely a comparative analysis of the Canadian “cultural” after the war might have helped illuminate what happened during it. Robert Adamoski, Dorothy Chun, and Robert Menzies’s edited volume *Contesting Citizenship: Historical Readings* might well have helped contextualize and shape the manner in which some key terms were employed. Ninette Kelley and Michael J. Trebilcock’s *The Making of the Mosaic: A History of Canadian Immigration Policy* so nearly embraces the title of the book under review that its omission seems glaring.

The book might also have benefited from a different title. Certainly the book positions itself within a rather crowded historiography by focusing “on public debate and the process of political decision-making...” (5) Its claim could have been larger: it is really a study of “creating” or “engineering” a mosaic, not “managing” it. And it is about power and fear, about gate-keeping and cultural worry. It pits hope against fear. It prods the culture of war, the time of increased paranoia, intersected by exhilaration and entrenchment. In this respect the book is more than it claims.

ROYDEN LOEWEN  
University of Winnipeg

**R. Douglas Francis, *The Technological Imperative in Canada: An Intellectual History* (Vancouver: UBC Press 2009)**

THIS USEFUL if not scintillating book traces over a century of thinking about technology through the ideas of leading Anglo-Canadian intellectuals. After an overstretched first chapter, which strains to summarize the worldwide evolution of ideas about technology from Karl Marx to Norbert Wiener, the book’s structure is chronological and clear. Each chapter examines one or more prominent Canadians with important thoughts about

technology, from 19th-century railroad promoters like Thomas Keefer and Sandford Fleming, through the seminal communication theorists Harold Innis and Marshall McLuhan, to the late 20th-century philosopher George Grant and the poet Dennis Lee. Brief biographical sketches put each individual in context. Then Francis reports his protagonists’ theories on technology and generally stays out of their way.

There is a deeper thesis threaded quietly through the book. Francis names and describes a “technological imperative,” a mindset or philosophy in dialogue and competition with the “moral imperative” in Canadian thought identified by Brian McKillop and others. Francis’s thinkers and theorists are almost all moralists, and their views on technology flow directly from its perceived relation to morality. His 19th-century subjects embrace technology, by and large, as an engine for the advancement of Western civilization; his 20th-century subjects accuse it of corroding moral and spiritual values. Ironically, Francis argues, Canadian intellectuals helped to create the very imperative they came to fear. Over time, these thinkers inflated the meaning of the once-obscure word “technology”: from a description of discrete objects (railway locomotives or telephone receivers) to a field of study (technical science and education) to an irresistible, all-pervasive force (in George Grant’s words, “the metaphysics of our age”). Leo Marx calls technology “a hazardous concept.” The very vagueness of the term, he says, makes it peculiarly susceptible to reification. We endow technology with unlimited powers of historical agency, embracing our seeming impotence and ignoring our own obligation to make decisions. *The Technological Imperative in Canada* finds many Canadians complicit in this process.

But this organizing argument is only lightly sketched and modestly advanced.

It probably had to be this way, in order to accommodate the book's varied cast of characters and long chronological sweep. Had Francis insisted too strenuously on his argument, the threads connecting poet to prime minister, educator to engineer, might well have snapped.

Because the connecting threads are slender, the individual case studies of this book are often more interesting than the whole. My favourite chapters concerned the interwar period, a hinge between the uncomplicated boosterism of the Victorian era and the techno-pessimism of more recent years. Francis illuminates the impressive intellectual biography of William Lyon Mackenzie King, taught by William Ashley and James Mavor in Toronto, Jane Addams and Thorstein Veblen in Chicago, and William Cunningham at Harvard. He makes a case for King's 1918 book, *Industry and Humanity*, as a turning point in Canada's intellectual engagement with technology. And he reintroduces readers to other interwar intellectuals – Stephen Leacock, Archibald Lampman, George Sidney Brett, and Frederick Philip Grove – who also wrestled with the technological imperative in this in-between era, when it was not at all clear whether to celebrate or lament the advances of industry and mechanization.

Is there, or has there been, a particularly Canadian way of thinking about technology? Francis does not make a strenuous case for the “Canadian-ness” of this discourse. As his chapter on King suggests, in almost every case Francis's subjects were engaged in transnational conversations with American, British, or German theorists of technology, or at least responding to international ideas. It is not clear that there is anything distinctive or essentially Canadian about the ideas collected here, other than the frequency with which ideas about technology get conscripted in the defence of

national identity. One quick and dirty way of summarizing the intellectual evolution that Francis traces with such care is that Canadians saw technology as good when it came from Britain, bad when it came from the United States, and almost never saw it as coming from Canada.

One cannot read a book of this kind without second-guessing the author's decisions about whom to include. Francis's conclusion is idiosyncratic in its choices and does not seem adequate to all the material that has gone before. It reports on a small handful of contemporary academics; they seem sensible enough, but narrow in their interests and are hardly household names. In earlier chapters, Francis makes good use of poets and literary figures like Dennis Lee, Northrop Frye, and E.J. Pratt. Why not engage the ideas of modern authors like William Gibson, Douglas Coupland, or Cory Doctorow? All three think deeply on technology and all three have reached a broad audience in Canada and beyond.

Francis admits to some more serious omissions in the opening pages of his book: all of the theorists examined in *The Technological Imperative* are Anglo-Canadians, and all those named in the table of contents are men (The social reformer Adelaide Hoodless appears without title billing in a chapter on technical education, and two female academics are discussed in the conclusion). One must at least credit Francis for original, and polite, explanations of these absences. It was, he says, the plethora of French-Canadian intellectuals and the richness of their perspectives on technology that convinced him not to include them in his study, lest he do an inadequate job. Likewise, the very significance of gender in shaping ideas about technology convinced him to leave this topic to others.

Second-guessing aside, *The Technological Imperative in Canada* draws a

wider circle than any comparable work on the subject. Its focus is broader than Robert Babe's *Canadian Communication Thought*, and the book is more suitable for undergraduates and general readers than Arthur Kroker's *Technology and the Canadian Mind*. By including literary figures like Frye, politician-intellectuals like King, and poets like Pratt and Lee, along with essential intellectuals like Innis and McLuhan, Francis makes plain a pervasive Canadian engagement with technology. Given the breadth of his topic, Francis's central argument is necessarily loose-fitting, but his writing is always lucid and his analysis assured. *The Technological Imperative in Canada* is not flashy, but it is intelligently constructed and eminently worthwhile.

ROBERT MACDOUGALL

University of Western Ontario

**Michael G. Tyshenko with Cathy Paterson, *SARS Unmasked: Risk Communication of Pandemics and Influenza in Canada*** (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press 2010)

*SARS UNMASKED* presents a detailed analysis of the responses to the SARS crisis in Canada and internationally in the spring and summer of 2003, with a focus on the experiences of healthcare workers (particularly nurses) during the crisis as well as public health responses and lessons for risk communication.

The book begins with a detailed timeline of how the SARS crisis unfolded in Canada, including descriptions of responses by public health and healthcare officials. The second chapter, co-authored by nurse Cathy Paterson, provides a powerful description of how healthcare workers in a Toronto-area hospital experienced the SARS crisis. This little-known

story is shocking, disturbing, and eye-opening. From ill-fitting masks, lengthy self-imposed quarantines, and experiences of unending stress and uncertainty, nurses and healthcare workers watched helplessly as patients and colleagues became infected, and fell extremely ill, with some ultimately succumbing to SARS. This chapter reveals the uniquely stressful work environment of the hospital during a pandemic. Many of the victims of SARS were healthcare workers in Canada, China, and other countries, infected by contagious patients. In light of the threat posed, many workers feared bringing home an infectious and deadly virus that could sicken, or even kill, their family members. This chapter also reveals some of the ways that the SARS epidemic caught Toronto-area hospitals unprepared, and stretched the human and physical capacity of an already strained system.

While Chapter 3 details the specific characteristics of the corona virus that caused SARS and the epidemiology of its spread, the next chapter describes how infected patients experienced SARS, including how they were diagnosed and treated in Canadian hospitals, their symptoms, and their recovery. It also presents the long-term physical and psychological challenges facing patients, including healthcare workers, who survived being infected by SARS.

Chapters 5 and 6 describe the way that the SARS crisis became amplified in the mass media, utilizing the Social Amplification of Risk framework. They also explore the way this amplification of risk stigmatized healthcare workers in Toronto and other hotspot cities, even when the actual risk of infection to the general population was, in fact, very low. After the crisis ended, Toronto enacted societal "purification rituals," such as the Rolling Stones concert, in an effort to

remove stigma (but these unfortunately also failed to address the heroic efforts of healthcare workers dealing with the crisis).

With multiple co-authors, Chapter 7 outlines the gendered nature of the consequences of the outbreak, with female nurses on the front-lines being most at risk of infection, especially during patient intubation. Despite working on the front-line, power hierarchies in the hospital and healthcare setting meant that nurses' concerns about improper protective equipment, supports, resources, etc. were marginalized, and resulted in several rallies outside hospitals during the crisis demanding that their concerns, particularly with respect to the ability to protect their families, be heard and addressed. Nurses also felt that their important work—as well as the risks, stigma, and isolation they endured during the SARS crisis—were devalued by the healthcare system and the public. Female nurses experienced severe stress around their multiple roles as workers required to work extra hours, and frequently under quarantine, and their care work obligations for children and ill relatives. The authors argue that gender-sensitive and family-friendly policies and supports would have helped reduce the strain on female healthcare workers, especially nurses, during the crisis.

Chapters 8 and 9 focus on policy lessons from the SARS crisis. These lessons are based on a detailed comparison of how the different hospitals and their administrators reacted to the SARS crisis. Overall, hospitals were poorly prepared for the crisis because of chronic underfunding and disinvestment, including a failure to fully implement infection control programs and measures. Transfers of ill patients and healthcare workers between facilities accelerated the spread of SARS between hospitals. Facing these

challenges, hospital administrators and staff demonstrated impressive organizational flexibility and reactivity during the crisis as it unfolded. By presenting the responses of five of the major hospitals centrally involved in the SARS outbreak in Toronto, the book offers important lessons for hospital administrators on how to prepare for and react to infectious disease outbreaks. In addition, it distills additional lessons learned from the SARS crisis based on the results of six independent expert panel reports completed after the outbreak. These reports reveal shortcomings in the ways that the healthcare system manages and reduces risk, especially for front-line healthcare workers, and inadequacies in risk communication. The consequences of these weaknesses made it more challenging to confront the SARS crisis, and a persuasive case is made that better planning, preparation, and resources targeted at infection control, for example, could help the healthcare system be better-prepared for the next SARS-like epidemic.

Chapters 10 and 11 return to the process by which the SARS crisis resulted in an inappropriate amplification of risk relative to the minimal infection risk actually posed to the general public by SARS. This risk amplification created public panic which had negative consequences for healthcare workers, such as nurses, many of whom had to cope with the challenge of voluntary quarantine and the stigma of working in a hospital during the crisis; the risk amplification also negatively affected the broader Toronto economy. The contrast to other more serious infectious disease risks, such as the seasonal flu and hospital-acquired infections, is stark. The risk management and communication strategies also differed in other countries experiencing the outbreak, such as Singapore. Improved infectious disease risk communication

planning could have facilitated more effective responses by hospitals and healthcare systems.

The book ends with a chilling introduction to the next potential pandemic. It may be possible that we will look back at the SARS and later H1N1 crises as a preview for the coming, potentially much more deadly, Avian flu (H5N1) epidemic. The active World Health Organization (WHO) monitoring of avian flu may help provide warning time if human-to-human transmissibility of an avian flu strain develops; but only limited tools, such as massive poultry culls, are available to mitigate the pandemic. The book outlines the methodologies used to predict the number of deaths potentially caused by this next epidemic. It presents some additional lessons from the SARS crisis, including important implications for protecting the health and well-being of healthcare workers. It also describes ways that individuals can protect themselves during an outbreak, including self-monitoring for symptoms, and explores some systemic issues such as setting priority-ordering for vaccine inoculations during an unfolding pandemic crisis. The book concludes with a call for individuals, organizations, and institutions to develop and implement pandemic preparedness plans, and then presents detailed timelines of the SARS crisis for seven countries and the WHO.

Overall, *SARS Unmasked* presents a wealth of knowledge and insights from a range of stakeholders involved in the SARS crisis, with an emphasis on the experience of hospitals and the healthcare system in Toronto and Canada. From the detailed epidemiological, biological, organizational, and policy background provided on SARS and other infectious diseases, the book provides important information for healthcare workers, administrators, policy makers, epidemiologists, and public health scholars interested in infectious

disease pandemics. One contribution is the telling of a largely untold story about how healthcare workers experienced the SARS crisis in Toronto, and Tyshenko's collaboration with nurse Cathy Pater-son enlivened and enriched these chapters with her insider perspective. The risk-communication chapters reflect the expertise of the primary author, and help illuminate why SARS generated panic in Canada and internationally in contrast to the less novel, but much more deadly, annual toll taken by the seasonal flu and healthcare-associated infections. The consequences of communication failures and panic crippled the capacity of the healthcare system at the moment it needed all the resources it could handle. One poignant contrast presented in the book is the way that Vancouver's hospital system's proactive approach to infection control, which resulted in the immediate isolation of SARS patients before they could infect healthcare workers and others, fortunately prevented a similar crisis from unfolding (despite similarities in global flows of people from hotspots) to the one in Toronto. The creativity and flexibility of healthcare workers within an open-ended situation of high stress and uncertainty is also recorded in impressive detail.

While preparedness is clearly important, the book begins to explore an important theme that I hope is further developed by other scholars. The problem is clear: healthcare systems in advanced industrialized countries, already stretched to capacity by limited resources, and coping with the consequences of disinvestment and other structural issues, such as overcrowding, lack the capacity to cope with infectious disease threats and outbreaks. In fact, these conditions directly increase the risk of outbreaks and the risk to patients. The broader picture and the requirement to build greater capacity in hospitals and the healthcare

system in neo-liberal times, for what are inevitable spikes and surges in demand resulting from outbreaks and pandemics, is crucially important. It is much easier to contain infectious outbreaks in hospitals operating at 75 per cent capacity than 95 per cent capacity, for example. Systems running in crisis mode due to shortages and underfunding during regular operations are much more vulnerable to complete (and disastrous) collapse in the face of unpredictable, but inevitable, crises. As the Canada Customs commercial on international airline flights urges, “We don’t know where the next pandemic is going to come from.” While we should do what we can to prevent these outbreaks, we know they are coming, and what is clearly highlighted in *SARS Unmasked* is that it is important that individuals, hospitals, healthcare system administrators, corporations, and governments are prepared. Part of this preparation means investing in protecting the health, safety, and well-being of the front-line healthcare workers who will be some of the most important people standing up to the pandemic challenge and determining its outcome.

DAN ZUBERI

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**Norman Caulfield, *NAFTA and Labor in North America*** (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press 2010)

THIS BOOK EXPLORES the relationship between neoliberal economic restructuring and organized labour in North America. All of the chapters are richly detailed and well documented, but some of the interpretations of the situations described are overly simple, and thus problematic. But the book is still well worth reading, providing a good overview of key developments and thought-provoking arguments.

Chapter 1 offers an historical overview of 120 years of history for three national economies and labour movements in 32 pages. The chapter’s partially realized and very laudable ambition is to tell this story at a continental level, looking at how the three North American economies became ever more tightly linked by networks of US-based transnational corporations and, to a lesser but still important degree, the international unions that followed them north and south of the US border. Caulfield’s understanding of the three national cases is, inevitably, uneven: he knows the most about Mexico, the focus of his first book, and the least about Canada, especially Quebec. He does not see a significant difference in the character or culture of the dominant tendencies within the US and Canadian union movements after the Cold War purges: business unionism rules in both places, Caulfield thinks. To this reader, the Mexican section of the chapter was the most rewarding, but the attempt to compare and contrast the three movements—even when not entirely successful—was also stimulating.

Chapter 2 focuses on the politics of the Mexican labour movement from the economic crises that began in the 1970s to the present. Caulfield does an excellent job of sorting through the new labour federations that have sought to break the corporatist mould represented by the CTM federation. Caulfield shows how some of these relied on state support to protect them from the CTM, and in return supported the Salinas administration’s attempt to reforge Mexican labour relations along non-adversarial lines; others, notably the miners’ union, sought to increase their independence from the state, and found themselves in head-to-head confrontation with both employers and governments. No strand of this increasingly complex movement has made much headway, though the

miners' three year (and counting) struggle in the copper mines of Cananea could be a turning point if the union, supported in a number of important ways by the United Steelworkers, is able to win. This chapter is wide-ranging, informative, and accurate.

Chapter 3 offers an overview of the labour side-deal to NAFTA. There is a brief discussion of its key provisions, followed by short summaries of each of the challenges to employer and state practices that unions from one or more of the three NAFTA countries have brought under its auspices. Caulfield spent some time as Acting Director of Research for the Secretariat of the labour side-deal's Commission for Labour Cooperation, so he is well placed to write on this topic. He finds that, while none of the cases resulted in direct gains for the workers whose rights were violated, the process of working together to bring the cases before the National Administrative Organization of one or two countries did promote international labour solidarity – a fair assessment.

Chapter 4 examines what NAFTA and neoliberal restructuring in Mexico meant for continental labour mobility. NAFTA included provisions to make it easier for middle-class professionals to get extended visas to work in another NAFTA country, but was silent about the mobility rights of everyone else—a striking omission in a document otherwise dedicated to maximizing continental capital mobility and property rights. But, legal provisions or no, the economic devastation wrought by neoliberal policies in Mexico resulted in the migration of at least eight million undocumented Mexicans to the United States over the last 20 years—a greater number than all the African Americans who participated in the Great Migration from the South to the industrial cities of the North between 1910 and 1970. This chapter examines US unions' responses

to this migration, noting the growing commitment to organizing (as opposed to excluding) the migrants—a marked improvement over the responses of many unions to earlier migrations—but also the lack of consensus among unions on what immigration reform proposals to support.

Chapter 5 does for Canada and the United States what Chapter 2 did for Mexico, offering an overview of the decline of labour movement power as measured by declining union density, declining strike levels and volumes, the declining union wage premium, declining real wage gains, the divergence of wages and labour productivity, and the declining share of wages in national income. Particularly spectacular cases of concession bargaining and two-tiered wage schemes in the United States are highlighted.

Chapters 6 and 7 continue this exercise, now focused solely on the auto industries of the three countries, understood as the extreme case of the general trend to concessionary bargaining. In depressing detail, we follow the long chain of concessions in all three countries. Despite 25 years of this, the unionized component of the industry has continued to shrink—the Big Three now represent only half of all cars made in the US—and two of the Big Three have been driven into bankruptcy. While Caulfield acknowledges that the CAW was a temporary exception, he argues that its capacity to resist two-tiered wage agreements and deals of the sort signed with Magna has also ended, thanks to the end of Canada's exchange rate advantage and the off-loading of health care costs in the United States. In Mexico, despite billions of dollars of new auto assembly and parts plant investments, plant-level unions – there is no industrial union in Mexico's auto sector – are also acceding to demands for wage cuts and other concessions, which they are told are necessary to stay competitive with Asian exports.



The scale of the losses incurred in the last quarter century can be summed up in this way: despite the enormous labour productivity and quality gains of the last 100 years, the starting wage for new employees in the Big Three today is about \$15/hour, very close to the 1914 purchasing power of Henry Ford's \$5 day! However, Caulfield goes too far in claiming that the auto unions in all three countries no longer seek to advance the interests of their members. (146, 163) To support this charge against the UAW, Caulfield argues that the UAW-controlled Voluntary Employee Benefit Association (VEBA), funded in part through stock in GM and Ford, means that "The financial incentive for the union is now to help the companies slash the jobs, wages and benefits of its dues-paying members." (166)

But union leaders – and members! – always have incentives to sell out. Demonstrating the existence of new incentives of this sort does not prove that that is what they've done. Nor does concession bargaining. The key question is whether union leaders have viable alternatives. On this question, Caulfield himself seems ambivalent. On the one hand, he argues that capital is inexorably driven toward globalizing its activities, something that unions and national governments cannot stop. This shift, in turn, is bound to undermine union economic and political power. But, on the other hand, he blames union leaders for the concessions that reflect that shift. How does that make sense? Of course, unions could still handle a structural situation requiring orderly retreat more or less well; they could make needless and costly mistakes. But that is a different critique from the one that Caulfield offers. Caulfield's limitations notwithstanding, this is a useful book, well worth reading and pondering.

IAN ROBINSON  
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**Sean T. Cadigan, *Newfoundland and Labrador: A History*** (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 2009)

SEAN T. CADIGAN'S *Newfoundland and Labrador: A History* is an excellent survey and provocative interpretation of the province's history. Drawing on extensive scholarship, much of it completed over the last generation, Cadigan argues that a cold-ocean environment and rich maritime resources have played a key role in the province's history. The men and women of Newfoundland and Labrador "made" their own history but the nature of the resources restricted their options and provided limited margin for error. Following Cadigan's argument, maritime resources deeply affected the history of the first peoples, the early European adventurers and settlers, and early British policy towards Newfoundland and Labrador. However, by the early 19th century a clear view had emerged within the developing colonial society as to how best to make use of the colony's resources to support its people. Influenced by a nascent nationalism, many of Newfoundland's political leaders came to favour the development of landward resources as a way to reduce dependence on the resources of the sea. As the colony's leaders had greater control over landward resources, they believed that their development would lead to "national" prosperity and independence. Influenced by similar policies throughout the western world, the focus on landward development and "modernization" and the neglect of the fisheries continued through the 20th century including during the period of the Commission of Government in the 1930s and 1940s and the postwar governments of Joey Smallwood.

Since the 1970s, a new generation of "neo-nationalist" provincial politicians have followed similar development policies which exploited now degraded fish,

mineral, and forest resources and new ones such as offshore oil. In Cadigan's view, Newfoundland and Labrador's nationalist development policies, based on a mythic Newfoundland national identity invented by political elites, which long neglected the resources of the sea, have had a ruinous impact on the province and its peoples. In Newfoundland and Labrador, nationalism is often closely connected with a deep pride in the province's unique cultures and identities. Cadigan does not deny that these cultures and identities exist; he simply states that Newfoundlanders and Labradorians are too divided along class, gender, and ethnic lines to constitute a nation. This persuasive argument will make for lively discussion in Newfoundland and Labrador history courses at Memorial University and at watering holes in downtown St. John's.

In a broad way, Cadigan gives attention to the active role that diverse peoples have played in their own and in the province's history. In particular, Cadigan gives extensive coverage to the often neglected and romanticized history of the province's First Nations. In support of his argument regarding the paramount importance of maritime resources, Cadigan details the ways that Newfoundland and Labrador's first peoples made the products of the sea the central focus of their lives. By the 18th century, the Beothuk were clearly affected by the loss of access to maritime resources as European settlement expanded. However, rather than fleeing, as is commonly thought, they made a choice to retreat into the interior and focus their lives around the caribou hunt. Cadigan also shows that the Innu of Labrador, while affected by a long history of oppression and racism, were far from helpless and demoralized. They fought hard to protect their interests and traditional territories when threatened by low-level flying and the development of the Voisey's Bay nickel deposits.

The lives and experiences of the ordinary people who made the province are also well covered in Cadigan's survey. Whether it is a Basque whale hunter writing his will, a fishing crew drinking cider to lighten their burden, wives of fishers defending their property, or loggers seeking solace at Methodist services, we see the active role that people took in their lives as well as the dangerous and onerous work that made Newfoundland and Labrador. Cadigan acknowledges the danger and hardship of work in the history of Newfoundland and Labrador in his reference to Cassie Brown's vivid *Death on the Ice*, an account of the 1914 Newfoundland sealing disaster. Brown is the only contemporary historian Cadigan mentions by name in the entire text, which suggests the tragic importance of the event and the hold that *Death on the Ice* has had on the imagination of the people of the province.

Cadigan integrates the lives and work of ordinary people into his analysis of the development of the province's resources. The nationalist development policies of the 19th and 20th centuries led to the creation of an urban working class in centres such as St. John's, Grand Falls, and Corner Brook. These workers supported the National Policy which created and protected their jobs. Cadigan also shows that fishers often supported landward economic diversification policies as a way to reduce the overwhelming power of the merchants. In the long run, however, landward development, with its focus on the railway, pulp and paper mills, and mines, led to the neglect of the fisheries and a divide between the cities and the outports. As a result, there was little support among urban workers for the fisheries regulations proposed by William Ford Coaker, who headed the great populist movement of outport fishers, the Fishermen's Protective Union, in the early 20th century. The government's

eventual repeal of the Coaker regulations in 1921 was part of the neglect of the fisheries which continued throughout the 20th century.

Finally, it is worth considering Cadigan's emphasis on the role that nationalism has played in shaping the province's history and development policies. According to Cadigan, early 19th century reformers who desired colonial self-rule and wanted to appeal to the Catholic fishing community founded the nationalist myth that Protestant Britain was holding the colony back. By the late 19th century, "optimistic" nationalist political leaders undertook the financially ruinous National Policy of railway construction and interior development. Newfoundland nationalism intensified during the Cabot anniversary celebrations of 1897, and as a result of Newfoundland and Labrador's heroic and bloody participation in the First World War. Financial collapse and the loss of self-government during the Depression of the 1930s brutally revealed the calamitous nature of the National Policy. Nonetheless, the Commission of Government and Smallwood's post-war governments continued to focus on landward economic development at the expense of the fisheries. As part of this, confederation with an industrialized and urbanized Canada in 1949 offered a model and the possibility of similar prosperity for the new province. By the 1970s, the failures of Smallwood's modernization and industrialization policies, his resource "giveaways" to foreign capitalists, and the apparent failure of the social and economic policies of the federal government, contributed to the rise of a negative neo-nationalism in the province. Neo-nationalist politicians followed similar economic policies as the "optimistic" nationalists of the late 19th century but gained popular support by blaming the federal government and foreign corporations for the province's economic and

social problems. The origins of these problems, Cadigan points out, though, have their roots in Newfoundland's own early nationalist economic policies which neglected the province's one great resource, its fisheries.

This may seem like a negative and pessimistic conclusion since the province's "paramount" resource, its fisheries, reached a crisis of overcapacity in the 1980s and collapsed in the 1990s. However, Cadigan's rejection of the nationalist myth in favour of a dynamic and diverse provincial society is cause for hope for the future. Although recent events point to the ecological dangers of the exploitation of offshore oil, Cadigan concludes with the hope that offshore oil revenues might be invested in people and communities.

A critique of this excellent work is that, at times, for a provincial survey, it tends to be overly polemical, which inhibits the reader's ability to enter fully into lives and cultures of the province's people in the past. Cadigan's staunch and effective rejection of Newfoundland nationalism appears to make him reluctant to develop in detail the evolving and fascinating cultural and social life of the people in the outports, logging camps, mines, and cities. As noted above, the people of the province certainly play a central role in Cadigan's history – more so than in any survey ever written of the province's history. I would have liked to hear them speak, move, and breathe a little more.

All in all, though, *Newfoundland and Labrador: A History* is a remarkable book which deserves wide readership and discussion in the province and beyond.

DUFF SUTHERLAND  
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Lara Vapnek, *Breadwinners: Working Women and Economic Independence, 1865–1920* (Champaign, IL: University of Illinois Press 2009)

IN *BREADWINNERS*, Lara Vapnek examines the efforts of women in three industrialized northern cities to organize around their rights as economic citizens in late 19th and early 20th century America; in doing so, she strikes a nice balance between exploring the political and ideological barriers to women's organizing and women's concerted efforts to challenge those barriers. She begins with an unprepossessing historiographical statement that does not make grandiose methodological claims, yet carefully positions her work in the gaps and silences of women's labour history. And she delivers well, altering our picture of labour feminism by rescuing and reassessing a group of women activists who focused their organizing efforts on working women, arguing that these women deserved the same rights and entitlements as wage-earning men. Her emphasis on this particular group of activists provides a counterweight to studies that have examined how successfully trade unions, particularly the skilled ones, promoted the ideal of the male breadwinner at this time. Not all female labour reformers, she argues, accepted this ideal, including women who saw first-hand that it was unachievable, and also more politicized activists who understood that making women second-class economic citizens made them vulnerable 'dependents,' not only in the workforce but also within the family.

Vapnek begins her story with lesser known post-Civil War era women from Boston such as Jennie Collins and Aurora Phelps, whose short-lived Working Women's League advocated for all women's right to be self-supporting. Democratic ideals of "leveling out all

distinctions" among citizens, and removing the "artificial barriers against individuals exercising their full range of talents" (28) often framed their political imaginary, rather than socialist ideology. One of Phelps's projects was the provision of land, or 'Garden Homesteads' for women outside Boston; while the scheme did not successfully survive, its premise was quite radical, "upending" (21) existing Republican ideology that stressed the provision of land only to male heads of household.

Vapnek then explores the writing of four social investigators who examined aspects of women's work in Boston, New York, and Chicago. Although other historians have delved into the writing of experts, particularly for the early 20th century, Vapnek adds a new dimension by reaching back to the 1880s, and by comparing and contrasting four different kinds of investigations, including the government-sponsored survey of Boston's Carroll D. Wright, the writing of Knights of Labor organizer Leonora Barry, middle-class reformer Helen Campbell's book, *Prisoners of Poverty*, and the more sensational *Chicago Times* exposé of working women by journalist Nell Cusak. While claiming to use scientific categories, many surveyors were in fact creating those categories, which were inevitably shaped by their own ideological assumptions, and these four examples, sometimes overlapping, but also distinctive, are interesting precisely for that reason. Also, rather than presenting women only as objects of surveillance, Vapnek uses these sources to make the case that these investigations could lead to the emergence of "counter narratives" (60) from women workers themselves. By dissecting the rhetoric of these investigators, she is also able to analyze their repeated use of the 'wage slavery' metaphor to describe white women's work. Although African-American women were a small minority

in many of these cities in the late 19th century, race was nonetheless ever present in social thought and commentary. By referring to white women's labour as wage slavery, she argues, writers not only "erased the differences in ethnicity that divided" working women, but also "subtly combined sympathy for the enslaved with the racist insistence that whiteness should ensure entitlement to better treatment." (57)

Vapnek's chapter on Gender, Class and Consumption introduces us to Leonora O'Reilly, whose presence is an important theme throughout the book, as well as the New York Working Women's Society, founded in 1886, and dedicated to improving the working conditions of women. Many of these early organizations, it is clear, drew on ideas and personnel from the Knights of Labor after its demise, though they also assumed their own political agendas. The issue of consumption, first raised by working women, became a political bone of contention between working-class women and middle-class reformers. While consumption was first used by women workers as a way of addressing bad conditions in the workplace, in the hands of middle-class reformers it became a means of monitoring buying power to 'protect' working women and the health of the nation, with middle-class women playing the role of "mediators" (4) between capital and labour. This complex, difficult, and sometimes fractured relationship between working-class and middle-class women is a recurring and important theme throughout the book. Vapnek makes clear the benefits, but also the very real perils, in this alliance for working-class women, whose organizing efforts sometimes relied on the fund-raising done by middle-class women, in part because they found more support (however problematic) from these allies than from trade union men.

A second theme that Vapnek develops is the domestic labour question, the 'Achilles heel' of the 19th century women's reform movement. While the servant question is the focus of a separate chapter, Vapnek also circles back to the conundrum of domestic labour in other chapters, showing how paid and unpaid work were different sides of a related coin, rather than completely distinct issues, even if reformers at the time tried to make them that. On the one hand, she shows how domestic labour was erased, forgotten, as a non-issue or 'non work,' not the least because many white women workers were trying to flee conditions of labour they saw as 'unfree' and limiting. The servant issue was also a perfect symbol of the inability of middle-class women to really come to terms with the lives of working-class women. Reformers were inclined to study, quantify, and especially try to 'upgrade' and professionalize domestic labour, setting up employment bureaus that supposedly created better contracts and conditions for women. Yet, because their own households also ran on hired domestic labour, they could never really come to terms with the exploitation involved; their ability to do reform work was premised on the low-paid and undervalued domestic labour that other women could not escape, and often saw as the most demeaning and constricting work available.

Returning to Leonora O'Reilly in the final chapter, Vapnek explores her pursuit of suffrage as a goal for working women. Without the ballot, O'Reilly did not believe women could hope to assert their rights, or improve their lives as workers and providers for their families. Her distinctive working-class approach to suffrage led her through a number of different suffrage organizations, including the Equality League for Self Supporting Women, and the Wage Earners Suffrage League, though she was also connected

to cross-class organizations like the Women's Trade Union League. By using O'Reilly's compelling story as her focus, Vapnek is able to remind us that working-class women played an important, and neglected role in the suffrage struggle, which was hardly an ideologically homogeneous movement; again, suffrage politics often exposed the tensions and differences between working-class and middle-class women's goals, strategies, and politics.

Vapnek makes a compelling argument that not all working-class women activists accepted a male breadwinner ideal, and that many lobbied instead for their own individual economic right to survival. Given that some working-class women, even the more politicized, did embrace a somewhat different ideal, of women retiring from the workforce on marriage, one wonders if there were any tensions among working-class women activists on this issue, and if so, were those women influenced by socialism more likely to embrace an ideal of female independence, or not? A conclusion to the book would also have been welcome; the author could then return to some of the historiographical issues she alludes to in her introduction, developing them in light of her previous chapters. There are some differences between the assumptions of earlier historians like Meredith Tax and Sarah Eisenstein, whom Vapnek cites positively, and later historians who were more interested in working-class women's subjectivity, articulated through consumptive display. Vapnek gives us a clue to O'Reilly's view on this issue, but a conclusion might have drawn out these issues very productively.

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**Jennifer Guglielmo, *Living the Revolution: Italian Women's Resistance and Radicalism in New York City, 1880–1940*** (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press 2010)

THE SECOND INDUSTRIAL revolution, starting in the latter part of the 19th century, had a profound impact on the demographic contours of the globe. The displacement of agricultural populations and the overcrowding of sprawling urban areas remapped nations, restructured household economies, redefined family relations, and extended the many movements that sought to alter and overturn the capitalist system and its reach. Italian immigrants who hurdled the globe and their kin who stayed behind in their communities were caught up in these systematic transformations. Immigration and labour historians have been reconstructing this historical narrative for the past quarter century and have shown that Italians became pivotal actors in how the changes played out in the Western world. Jennifer Guglielmo's *Living the Revolution: Italian Women's Resistance and Radicalism in New York City, 1880–1945* is a critically important addition to the field. The author is expansively original in her understanding of the subject and the accomplished integrative analysis of primary and secondary research is of the first order.

Guglielmo centres *Living the Revolution* around the ways that transnational ties fostered women's relationships over four generations. Her argument follows three intersecting trajectories which each emphasize the importance of geographical location, transmission of radical ideologies, and lived experience. First, Guglielmo establishes that the ways that women resisted the oppressive conditions of capitalism and patriarchy changed as a result of mass migration; second she argues that Italian women's industrial

labour had economic, political, and social ramifications in public and private lives; and third, she shows that assimilation and the embrace of national identity were distinct though intersecting processes which continued to be connected to conditions in Italy and the US throughout the 65 years of her study.

Italian women, made radical by the living and working conditions in Italy after unification and in the US as industrial labourers, envisioned revolution at the same time they themselves were living through unprecedented revolutionary changes. The shifts began in Italy where women headed the transatlantic households while their husbands, fathers, and brothers became “birds of passage” labourers in the transatlantic economy that spread from cities in Europe and the Americas. Women survived through collective forms of solidarity and “counterideology” which brought them closer together to each other and more able to mobilize to reshape private spaces into political ones, to formulate power through traditional ceremonial and religious practices, and to mobilize protest campaigns. Major Italian peasant and labour revolts began in the 1890s and spanned multiple regions of the country. While scholars have highlighted the importance of, for example, the 1892–1894 Sicilian uprising and the 1898 *fatti di maggio* in Milan, they have remained blinded to the importance of women’s activism in these movements. Guglielmo shows, through painstaking attention to the details of her sources, that women were key actors in these (and other) events and they brought their experiences with them in the next phase of migration history in which they became part of the labour stream that crossed Europe and the Atlantic.

Italian women became part of the factory system in the 1890s and were pulled to Northern Italy to work in the textile,

cigar, pottery, paper, glass, pasta, and other trades. A very small minority of southern Italian women worked in commercial agriculture and most continued the traditional subsistence farming that was a major part of household economies. It was not until the World War I period that female and male migration patterns were equal in number. Though Italian women, like men, went to Argentina and Brazil in large numbers, “New York City was the preferred destination for Italian women by the early twentieth century,” (67) with the majority entering the fashion industry as homeworkers and factory labourers. In each case, they worked in horribly grueling conditions which enhanced their radicalism and provided new outlets for its growth, even as it often went –and continued to be–unnoticed.

Anarchism, socialism, and trade unionism were part of Italian women’s lives and they carried strategy, tactics, and ideology through space and time. As Guglielmo points out, by seeing the world through the male gaze (which even female contemporaries, like Elizabeth Gurley Flynn, often did), historians have failed to notice how, where, and why Italian women radicalized. “[S]ocial reformers, journalists, and labor leaders... argue[d] that Italian women were distinct from other European immigrant women in their curious absence from politics. Yet...Italian women established anarchist women’s groups in the same cities and movements where Flynn organized workers. Sometimes those same women were preparing the meals for Flynn and her comrades.” (134)

Kitchens became crucial to organizing but the “hearth” did not necessarily limit their activism in public. *Living the Revolution* tweaks labour history’s periodization regarding the rise of garment unionism. For example, Guglielmo complicates the legacy of the Uprising of 20,000 by

including Italian workers and extending the chronology to include the years 1910 (the peak year of Italian migration as well as a major strike moment) and the 1913 textile industry revolts which pitted the IWW and the ILGWU against each other. She convincingly shows that, though they behaved differently than radical women from other ethnic groups and ideological traditions, "Italian immigrant women's many interventions in working-class politics between 1880–1919" steered the course of working-class history. (140)

The pre-World War I watershed moment in Italian immigrant women's history was followed by a period which shifted a trajectory that had been launched in Italy in the 1880s. While Italian radicalism had an antinationalist bent from its inception, the 1920s backlash which saw the rise of organized racism and witnessed fascist victories around the world shifted the movement. In addition, women in the American-born generation analyzed class and gender oppression in different ways than their mothers and grandmothers had. By the 1930s, a pan-white ethnic unity was part of industrial union culture (albeit not universally and with important caveats and interruptions) and neighbourhood politics. Italian women found new opportunities for power in the commanding ILGWU and as part of the Popular Front's Harlem Legislative Conference which each offered possibilities for interracial movements. But, as Guglielmo shows, Italian women "most often chose to align with their co-ethnic men around the practice of racialized exclusion" rather than a working-class feminism. (250)

One short review cannot do justice to the depth and breadth of *Living the Revolution*. The book's multiple layers and its incorporation of both well-worn and brand new sources means this work is sure to become one of the fundamental historiographical classics of our era.

Guglielmo and the University of North Carolina Press must also be commended for the inclusion of so many phenomenal photographs (to this author's knowledge, some previously unpublished) which give the nuanced narrative even more profound strength.

CAROLINE WALDRON MERITHEW  
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**Kim Scipes, *AFL-CIO's Secret War against Developing Country Workers: Solidarity or Sabotage?* (Lanham, Maryland: Lexington Books 2010)**

MANY UNION activists in the US and Canada know at least vaguely about the sinister nature of the AFL-CIO's foreign policy record. Under its agency for Latin America established in the early 1960's, the AFL-CIO was involved in the overthrow of democratically elected governments in Brazil and Chile, and participated in interventions in Guyana, Dominican Republic, Trinidad and Tobago, El Salvador, Guatemala, and Nicaragua. (35) The actions of the AFL-CIO internationally have led to countless murders of trade unionists and the destruction of labour and socialist movements via support for authoritarian and repressive regimes and the undemocratic unions linked to these regimes. Scipes notes that these actions, pursued in the name of US workers, have occurred without their knowledge or consent. While Scipes demonstrates that these activities have long been supported and funded almost entirely by the state, he breaks from the idea that the AFL-CIO's work in support of US imperialism was state-led and argues that this imperialist orientation emerged from within the labour movement itself. Scipes refers to this as labour imperialism, a policy whereby the AFL-CIO has worked to dominate foreign labour movements especially in developing countries in an



effort to advance the interests of the US Empire. (xxiv)

Scipes's approach to this history and the issues arising from it is very clearly linked to and revealing of his many years as a union activist engaged in struggles to build grassroots international solidarity within the US labour movement. *AFL-CIO's Secret War against Developing Country Workers: Solidarity or Sabotage?* draws from decades of activist work and scholarship that emerged from a number of international solidarity movements within US labour that challenged the AFL-CIO's participation in American imperialist projects. It is foremost a damning critique of the AFL-CIO leadership's development of labour imperialism and a call to action. Scipes's accounting of this history dates the emergence of labour imperialism prior to the Cold War and as continuing through the post-Sweeney era, making a strong case against efforts to dismiss these activities as simply outgrowths of the Cold War that have now been abandoned. The importance and urgency in challenging the AFL-CIO's past and present collaboration with US imperialism arises from the threat it poses to trade unionists globally and the obstacle it creates for those who are working to transform the labour movement locally.

While much has been written on this issue over the past 30 years, this work is an important contribution in a number of ways. It offers to current and future labour activists a compendium of the vast array of writing on labour imperialism, as well as the debates on the AFL-CIO's historical record. The endnotes alone provide a rich resource for future activists and scholars who want to explore these histories further or take them on politically in their union. Scipes sorts through this literature, periodizing the various approaches to the question of why labour imperialism emerged, from the early accounts that understood it as

being externally imposed by the state and state agencies like the CIA to more recent accounts that see it as emerging from within the labour movement and linked to the rise of business unionism. He also categorizes the various labour imperialist projects into three types. First, the AFL-CIO directly operated to challenge democratically elected governments and contributed to the rise of military dictatorships that cost thousands their lives and destroyed their respective labour movements, for example Chile in 1973. (xxxi) Second, they supported reactionary regimes and the labour organizations that backed them against workers' movements struggling for democratic change, as in the Philippines in the 1980s. And third, they indirectly operated with local right-wing labour organizations to attack pro-labour progressive governments, as in Venezuela in the late 1990s and during 2002–03. (xxxii)

While quite briefly and mostly with a focus on the post-Sweeney era, Scipes includes a history of resistance to labour imperialism. In the third chapter he outlines some of the efforts by activists to build worker-to-worker international solidarity, providing a landscape of the current organizing as well as some of the challenges to expect. This is an area that could be a site for future work if trade unionists do take up the call posed by Scipes. Particularly, a more detailed history of the organizing, approaches, and strategies of resistance would be a real contribution to thinking through how we build grassroots worker- to-worker international solidarity movements.

Scipes's chapter on the role of the state includes much important new information that is quite incriminating of the staff and leadership in the post-Sweeney era, especially in light of their promises and proclamations of establishing a new direction for international solidarity with the replacement of the International

Affair Department and the labour institutes with the solidarity centres. The most glaring contradiction identified by Scipes is the involvement of staff and leaders in the State Department's Advisory Committee on Labor and Diplomacy throughout the Bush Administration and the role of the National Endowment for Democracy in continuing to serve as the primary funding source for the solidarity centres. (105)

Rather than provide a country-by-country accounting of the AFL-CIO's operations, Scipes's endeavour is to map out the how and why of labour imperialism. Scipes covers the role of the AFL-CIO in Chile, the Philippines, and Venezuela in detail and points to several others through his analysis of the origins of labour imperialism and via his notes. The book points to the unevenness of the existing scholarship geographically and the need to deepen our understanding of the history of labour imperialism in the Near East, and much of Asia and Africa outside of the well-documented case of South Africa.

While Scipes ends by indicating that the answer to the question of why labour imperialism emerged is still unknown, the question shapes the text and clues to the answer are considered in the account of the origins of labour imperialism in the AFL. In particular the role of white supremacy and the emergence of alliances based on race rather than class in the growth of business unionism are touched on in Scipes's discussion of the AFL's championing of the Chinese Exclusion Act. (12–15) Scipes provides a more explicit consideration of this question and its significance in his more recent piece in *WorkingUSA* in December 2010 where he develops an analysis of how the ideological framework of American nationalism, intimately tied to white supremacy, empire, and capitalism,

serves to maintain labour imperialism. It is a useful addendum to this text.

I agree with Fred Hirsch's review of this text in *Monthly Review* that it is a great resource that should be made accessible to trade union activists and rank-and-file members. If, for instance, the Worker-to-Worker Solidarity Committee takes up the challenge and produces a pamphlet based on this text, I think it would be useful to include a more explicit accounting of why challenging labour imperialism and building worker-to-worker solidarity is so critical to the broader struggle to transform organized labour.

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**Harvey Schwartz, *Solidarity Stories: An Oral History of the ILWU*** (Seattle: University of Washington Press 2009)

OVER A PERIOD of 75 years, the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) has earned an enviable reputation – certainly on the Pacific Coast of the United States and Canada – as an exemplary union, one that fights for the rights and interests of its own members while joining in concrete expressions of solidarity with embattled trade unionists worldwide. The ILWU was founded in 1937, but its roots are in the “Big Strike” of 1934, a coastwide walkout of maritime workers that won union recognition, and much more, for the longshoremen. In 1934 they were members of the AFL International Longshoremen's Association (ILA), but three years later they left the ILA and affiliated with the new and dynamic Committee for Industrial Organization (CIO), which was evolving into a rival trade union federation. In San Francisco, in particular, the leadership of the ILWU was proudly left wing; the union's key founder and long-time president, the

Australian immigrant Harry Bridges, was widely known as “Red Harry.”

There have been many studies of the West Coast longshoremen, but few if any comprehensive studies of the ILWU’s diverse workforce and its role in founding and shaping the union. In *Solidarity Stories*, Harvey Schwartz tries to remedy this gap in the literature. An oral historian who has been a close observer and warm supporter of the ILWU since his days as a graduate student at the University of California Davis, Schwartz’s first book, *The March Inland: Origins of the ILWU Warehouse Division, 1934–1938*, was published in 1978 (and reissued by the union in 2000). For decades thereafter, Schwartz has collected the stories of men and women who played a key role in the ILWU’s development. *Solidarity Stories* is their testament.

Nearly half of the book’s 300 pages of text focus on the recollections of longshoremen. But there are substantial sections on warehouse organizing, on the emergence of unionism among cotton compress workers in California’s Great Central Valley, even on white-collar workers at Powell’s Books in Portland who joined the union in the late 1990s. Appropriately enough, there is also a long section on Hawaii, where the ILWU became a kind of one big union, organizing not only the longshoremen, but also agricultural workers on the islands’ vast sugar and pineapple plantations and hotel and other service workers in the burgeoning tourism industry. There appear to be three overarching themes in the oral history testimony: first, the union’s long record of success in winning good wages, benefits, and job security for its membership; second, the left-wing politics of many of the union’s leaders; and finally, a strong and consistent commitment to racial equality. This commitment served the union especially

well – on the San Francisco waterfront, among warehousemen in the San Francisco Bay Area and Los Angeles, among cotton compress workers in rural California, and in Hawaii, where the black-white racial divide was largely absent but the employers tried to exploit and magnify divisions among a plantation workforce that included Japanese, Filipino, Native Hawaiian, Puerto Rican, and Portuguese workers.

*Solidarity Stories* does not include a systematic analysis of any of these issues; and throughout the book the tone is mostly uncritical, even celebratory (often rightly so). But what gives the book its undeniable power is the colloquial eloquence of the rank-and-file voices that fill its pages. Thus, San Pedro longshoreman Al Langley recalled that “after the [’34] strike there wasn’t a job in the world to equal longshoring, although it was hard, hard work.” Thousands of miles to the North, in the port of Seattle, Jerry Tyler declared, “I guess I was one of the luckiest guys that ever pulled on a pair of pants when I joined the ILWU.” Now, as a pensioner, Tyler affirms that “every time I go to the hospital, or up to the clinic, or have to get some medicine, I think, ‘Thank God for Harry Bridges and the ILWU.’” (125) Charles (Brother) Hackett worked in a San Francisco warehouse in the 1930s. Recalling the power the union exercised on the shop floor, he claimed that by the end of the decade “our stewards ran the place. They were more important than the foreman. . . . If you were a foreman, you *asked* your union men to do things.” (185, 186) As for “your union women,” warehouse worker Billie Roberts Hendricks recalled that “it was our dream to be unionized. Imagine belonging to a group like the longshoremen that stuck up for your rights, saw that you had seniority, and saw that the boss couldn’t harass you or sleep with you.” (189) Perhaps no one

put it more eloquently than Isaac "Ike" Morrow, a pioneering African-American longshoreman in Tacoma. "Looking back," he declared, "this waterfront has been good to me. It's given all [four of] my sons a job. And the waterfront is about the only place I know where a man, especially a black man, can be as much of a man as he wants to be. That's worth its weight in gold." (141)

Morrow reflected on the issue of race a number of times in his oral history interview. His summary: "Sure, there are racists on the waterfront, but the union is not racist." (141) Schwartz goes out of his way to underscore the ILWU's commitment to racial equality, as do many of the union's black leaders in their own oral histories. But the issue remains a sensitive one, especially with regard to the longshore division, which has always been the jewel in the crown of ILWU unionism. The longshoremen became the "Lords of the Docks" – proud symbols of what unions could achieve in American society and larger-than-life symbols of working-class masculinity as well. But in a democratic union, which respected the autonomy of its affiliated local organizations, democracy and racial equality did not always mix well. There were four major ports on the West Coast of the United States – San Pedro (port of Los Angeles), San Francisco, Portland, and Seattle – and four major longshore locals. Portland was, and remained for many years, a bastion of unashamed white privilege and racial exclusion. Morrow put it simply: "Portland . . . was racist." (140) As I have documented at length in *Divided We Stand* (Princeton University Press 2001), San Pedro's rank-and-file members, and their leaders, also proved reluctant to bring black workers into full membership in the local. In fact, at the end of World War II they were determined to get rid of them. To his credit, Schwartz includes a long interview with Walter Williams,

a black longshoreman who became the most active and articulate critic of the San Pedro local and its policies.

That leaves Seattle and San Francisco among the major ports. Unfortunately, we know relatively little about Seattle's record in this regard, but it would be reasonable to assume that it was somewhere in between San Pedro's record and San Francisco's. For among the longshoremen San Francisco's Local 10 was *sui generis*. Its exemplary record of fighting for racial equality over a long period of time emerged from several interrelated factors. First was the large influx of black workers on the waterfront during World War II; they quickly became a critical mass, at a time when rights consciousness among African Americans was accelerating rapidly. Second, the fact that the international union had its headquarters in San Francisco meant that Harry Bridges was a constant presence. To be sure, individual longshoremen – even local union members – did not hesitate to tell Bridges, or anyone else, to go to hell. But in important respects "Harry" (as everyone called him) was the founder of the San Francisco local. He had a unique authority and an unusually strong commitment to the rights of black workers. Cleophas (Bill) Williams, the first black president of Local 10, recalled that Bridges spoke at most of the local's meetings; and he once said that "if things reached a point where only two men were left on the waterfront, if he had anything to say about it, one would be a black man." (48) The Communists and Party sympathizers who were an important part of the union leadership – especially in the warehouse division – pushed equally hard to bring blacks into the union, and when the opportunity presented itself blacks not only joined up but also emerged as a vitally important component of the leadership's political base.

However complex the issue of race was on the West Coast waterfront, the

ILWU had much to be proud of, not only in San Francisco, but throughout most of its jurisdiction and above all in Hawaii, where the union's organizers succeeded brilliantly in overcoming ethnic and racial divisions and building a united front that won major gains for a workforce that had known little but deprivation and exploitation. Perhaps the last word should belong to union activist Ah Quon McElrath, whose parents came from China as contract labourers in the early years of the 20th century. "It is clear," she recalls, that "what the ILWU accomplished in Hawaii was truly remarkable. In a short time we raised wages two and three times what the workers had received before, and we gave them a measure of control over their working lives. The Republicans and the sugar and pineapple growers had held unchecked power for decades. Then along came this little union," (268) and the rest is history – a history recounted with great evocative power, and perhaps many lessons for the present and future, in *Solidarity Stories*.

BRUCE NELSON

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**Michael Dennis, *The New Economy of the Modern South*** (Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida 2009)

HISTORICALLY, the American South was integrally linked to a global economy. Tobacco growers in the 18th century and cotton planters in the early 19th century relied on European markets for economic prosperity. In this powerfully argued book, historian Michael Dennis makes a strong case that political and economic elites in the late 20th-century South embraced a new version of globalization. The new southern globalizers promoted unregulated markets, pushed policies that helped deindustrialize older industries, and at the same

time, provided lucrative incentives in recruiting Asian and European companies to southern states. This is the "New Economy," according to Dennis, one that owed much to the dominant political and economic ideology of the Reagan Revolution of the 1980s and that matured at the state level in the Sunbelt South in the 1990s. The market-oriented policies of southern states ultimately had devastating consequences in the 1990s, namely massive job losses, wage declines, racial inequalities, weakened labour protection, minimal environmental regulation, and a worsening social infrastructure in education and health care. Touted by conservative politicians and businessmen as a rational response to changing global markets, the new southern economy, in Dennis's analysis, produced disastrous results for working-class and middle-class southerners.

Dennis's book provides a detailed analysis of the new economy in Virginia, a case study of the origins and consequences of the wider free-market revolution that brought new forms of globalization to the Sunbelt South. Dennis argues that Virginia exemplified the larger trends shaping the southern economy at the end of the twentieth century. These trends ranged from rapid population growth, a diversified economy, business favouritism, and conservative politics to anti-union traditions, reduced government regulation, and racial disparities between whites and blacks. The "social contract" implicit in the regulated economy established during the New Deal years was under attack. As these changes took place, Virginia's economy was shifting from traditional manufacturing, such as textiles, to computer and information technology industries, especially in the northern counties near Washington, D.C. Business leaders throughout the state were adapting to new technology in order to lower labour costs, speed up production,

and increase output and profit. Business restructuring, downsizing, outsourcing, job losses, and reduced benefits often resulted. Along the way, companies sought to undermine union power and curb government economic regulation. They established a business trade organization, the Virginia Initiative, in 1990 to promote public policies favourable to the business community. Business leaders and economic development professionals crafted a strategy to attract high-tech companies and overseas manufacturers, especially in the auto industry, to the state. Ironically, while Virginian business elites opposed state regulation and intervention, they also sought government subsidies and incentives to promote economic growth. In part, Dennis traces the success of Virginia's pro-business agenda laden with tax breaks and corporate incentives to the dominant conservatism of the state's politicians, both Democrats and Republicans. Even as far back as the New Deal era, Virginia's Democratic leaders pursued conservative policies, and they never felt entirely comfortable with the social liberalism of the party in the Kennedy and Johnson years. In the 1980s, Democratic governors funded popular transportation and education programs, but ignored progressive social programs. Douglas Wilder, elected in 1989 as Virginia's first black governor, embraced the neo-liberal program, advocating fiscal conservatism, law and order legislation, cuts in welfare, and privatization of public entities such as highways and prisons, as well as incentives to attract European companies to Virginia. By the 1990s, Dennis writes, as Virginia elected Republican governors George Allen and Jim Gilmore, the two parties were "converging on common ideological terrain." (209) The new Republican governors pushed ahead on pro-business, anti-labour, anti-liberal programs that were popular with the state's voters, especially

the more than 500,000 mostly middle-class people who moved to Virginia in the 1990s, settling mostly in northern counties such as Fairfax, Loudoun, and Arlington, and the city of Alexandria. Republican politicians incorporated elements of the Religious Right into their political appeals, as well, thus fusing economic and cultural conservatism. They courted business, weakened labour, and cut environmental legislation, arguing that these were the economic policies that would combat deindustrialization and restore jobs to the state. Essentially, Virginia Democratic leaders embraced the "business-first agenda" of the Republicans.

The mantra of globalization dominated the business agenda in the 1990s. Voices of opposition challenged Virginia's new economic policy, but rarely successfully. The weakness of organized labour became glaringly evident during the mid-1990s debate over US support for the North American Free Trade Act (NAFTA). The neoliberal argument for free trade won out at that time, but labour predictions about future job losses became reality a decade later. A state-wide progressive labour group, the Virginia Organizing Project (VOP), representing working people at the grassroots level spoke out against the business community's "free-market triumphalism" and pushed for economic and racial justice. Through a newsletter and local discussion groups, VOP articulated a critique of globalization and its promoters in Virginia, but it was not a direct action group. Reflecting the huge migration of Latinos to Virginia in the 1990s, a direct action group called Tenants' and Workers' Support Committee (TWSC) organized in Alexandria. Relying on women organizers, TWSC worked with African Americans on common grievances such as housing and wage discrimination and held a few Labour Day rallies. Challenges

to mainstream economic thinking in Virginia also emerged in the relatively small anti-globalization movement that came in the wake of NAFTA and the growing global importance of the World Trade Organization (WTO). Challengers to neoliberal economic policy offered a rational critique, but their voices were smothered by business, government, and media apologists for globalization.

Dennis has written a deep and complex book that explains much about the recent economic history of the Sunbelt South. However, it is a case study, thus raising questions about how far one can extrapolate its results to the economic experience of other southern states. In many ways, Virginia is different from most other southern states. Located on the northern fringe of the region and close to the nation's capital, the most populous northern part of the state is an integral part of the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area and overly populated by relatively high-paid federal government workers not harmed by the vagaries of global downsizing. If anything, federal employment has been expanding, which may account for much of the half-million population increase in Fairfax and Loudoun counties during the 1990s. Can the Virginia experience parallel that of Florida, for example, where the economy traditionally has been based on tourism, recreation, retirement, real estate and construction, and Latin American trade, but not much in the way of manufacturing or industrialization? Florida has some high-tech industry, but more important to the economy may be service industries such as education and health care.

With no income tax, Florida has always been a low-tax state. Politically, Democrats have mostly dominated in Florida until recently, and governors have often been progressive Democrats. In two presidential elections in the 1990s, Bill Clinton took Florida's electoral votes

(and the election of 2000 remains contested by many political analysts, as well). The Sunshine State has also been powerfully shaped demographically by waves of Latin and Caribbean immigrants, not just Cubans and not just in Miami, but by a wide variety of nationality groups in every metropolitan area of the state. Comparisons with Virginia might be equally difficult for such Deep South states as Alabama, Mississippi, and Louisiana, which have their own distinctive characteristics. So Dennis has provided a sharp economic portrait of Virginia in the last decades of the 20th century, but the book remains what it is – a single state case study.

The book deeply engages the economic agenda of the globalizers, but another aspect of globalization is all but omitted. For Dennis, globalization is variously about off-shoring production and jobs, or recruiting technology and foreign manufacturing firms to Virginia. However, an often ignored aspect of this same process is the migration of workers, especially Latino workers, to the United States to fill low-pay jobs with few benefits. In Virginia, the Latino population rose from 160,000 in 1990 to 330,000 in 2000. Dennis devotes a mere three or four pages scattered throughout almost 300 pages of text to the Latino labor force. In Virginia, and throughout the South, Latinos were heavily employed in meat and poultry production, but Dennis barely acknowledges this segment of the working-class labour force. This seems surprising, since this migration is an essential part of the globalization process that cuts across national borders in varied ways. Incorporating the Latino labour force in the discussion beyond the single page devoted to *twsc* might actually have strengthened the larger analysis about globalization in Virginia's new economy.

Although the book has a powerful interpretation condemning the business

globalizers and the political and economic conservatism that enabled them, the argument, ultimately, seems overstated. Dennis is not a fence-sitter; he has strong opinions about what happened and restates them often. Occasionally, some alternative evidence creeps in, such as the statement that in the 1990s "Virginians, like most Americans, did make real income gains in the last few years of the decade." (88) Finally, the original research reflected in the endnotes suggests a heavy emphasis on newspaper reporting and business journalism, with not much in the way of archival research or interviews with key actors who articulated or opposed Virginia's new economic policies. Nevertheless, this is an important book on the recent economic history of the United States, one that subsequent scholars of economic development policy will find eminently useful.

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**Jennifer Sherman, *Those Who Work, Those Who Don't: Poverty, Morality and Family in Rural America*** (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press 2009)

THIS BOOK EXAMINES the social impact of rural economic decline in a rural northern California lumber town. Based on a year of ethnographic field work, Sherman documents in rich detail the various ways in which individuals and families respond to the closure of the town's principal employer, a lumber mill. The main theme of the book is that moral values and discourses play vital roles, both negative and positive, in shaping individual, family, and collective adaptations to the loss of traditional male employment and the community's dominant source of economic activity.

The book is divided into four main chapters plus a conclusion. The first

chapter introduces the reader to the town and its recent history, including an account of the environmental and conservation issues that lay behind the mill closure. Sherman shows that although the town's population and economy were devastated by the mill closure, a significant contingent of "survivors" continued to live in the community despite the lack of secure full-time employment. While she notes there is also a contingent of newcomers seeking to take advantage of the environment and the rock-bottom land and housing prices, the book focuses on the struggles and adaptations of longer-term residents, some of whom had returned to insecure low-paying employment despite having had some success in finding good jobs elsewhere.

In Chapter 2, Sherman documents the various strategies that workers and families use to survive, including a reliance on lower-wage, female-based employment, assistance from older parents, males commuting long distances for employment, subsistence fishing and hunting, and use of various government assistance programs. As she shows, the work ethic is alive and well as a central basis for moral judgements and what she refers to as 'moral capital.' Accordingly, even within a context of widespread unemployment, there is a definite stigma attached to welfare use with a hierarchy of more respectable forms of government assistance including disability and unemployment insurance. Since most families are living well below the state poverty line, social differentiation and self-respect are constructed less around income and more around a continuum of moral judgements with respect to self-reliance and the work ethic. Sherman puts considerable emphasis on alcohol and drug use as major factors in this moral differentiation, arguing that alcohol use in particular is now less accepted than it was when the mill and economy were doing well.



In Chapter 3, Sherman pursues the same theme with reference to the central significance of the family, arguing that the moral significance of family values, having children, and being a 'good' parent are intensified in the context of economic failure, unemployment, and poverty. Providing a good family home and a safe environment are identified as central rationales underlying decisions to stay in the community despite the poverty and lack of work. However, as she shows, what constitutes a good parent for residents in this context varies quite significantly from the views of urban and suburban Americans, focusing on very basic needs with few precise goals for their children's futures. As in the previous chapter, Sherman identifies alcohol and drug use as the key moral indicators of poor family values and negative practices such as abuse.

The fourth and final chapter examines the changes in the construction of masculinity which arise from the loss of employment and the role of men as the principal family wage earners. As other studies have found, men are affected quite profoundly when they lose their paid labour and breadwinning capacity, but as she also shows, women's roles also shift quite dramatically, with particular reference to wage-earning. At the same time, Sherman argues that women often report increased freedom and power as a consequence of their importance as the principal wage earner. While men have developed a greater readiness to accept their changed wage-earning status, there are also considerable tensions associated with males who fail to pitch in around the house and in childcare even when they are unemployed. Among the men, she identifies two ideal types with regard to responses to these changes. "Rigid" males are those who seek to retain male dominance by limiting female access to employment, segregating household and

childcare duties, and restricting female access to money, while 'flexible' men shift their definition of masculinity away from breadwinning and construct their identity around shared power and household and childcare duties. Sherman argues that the marriages with rigid males are less likely to survive, and represent a source of the increase in single-parent families despite the heavy moral weight placed on the traditional two-parent family.

One of the more interesting and unique contributions of this book is the author's effort to link morality-based adaptations to the failure of liberal and left politicians and policies to resonate with the rural poor. As Sherman puts it in her conclusion, "the liberal agenda has generally tried to sidestep morality as a policy issue, while the conservatives continually exploit moral issues to gain popularity and power, which they then use to quietly enact economic measures that ultimately favour corporate interests and the wealthy." (183) The irony is that the rural population most negatively affected by right-wing corporate policies continues to give its support to politicians and political parties responsible for those very policies. Another significant point made by Sherman is that family values don't just serve to differentiate people in the community, they also play critical roles in shaping behaviours and choices, and in that sense, police the way people respond to their current life conditions. I would go further than the author to suggest that these adjustments and adaptations are politically important in the sense that they encourage internalization of responsibility and deflect attention from the role of political and economic power structures in determining people's situations. Although the author hints at these points, this theoretical aspect of the argument could be developed much more fully, perhaps by drawing on Burawoy's

concept of consent and/or Gramsci's concept of hegemony. Indeed, my main concern regarding this book is that the level of theorization is quite shallow, with relatively limited efforts to go beyond the central theme that morality and culture guide adaptations to social change. There is also a certain sense that this world is read by the author as a very closed system with a limited range of pre-existing cultural norms and values that seem to almost determine certain outcomes, the consequence being that the sense of social dynamism and variety that makes other outcomes possible is lost.

The author seems to dismiss the behaviours and ideas that don't fit into this adaptation model, and I wonder if this is because they are not all that important or because they simply don't fit the argument. Perhaps the liberal values and political orientation of the author are revealed most by her refusal to engage more fully with the political economy foundations of culture and morality. It is less than surprising then to find that the book concludes with conventional policy implications which speak in only a limited way to questions of power, resistance, and interests. While community-based economic development is an important policy implication, it would have been helpful to see some discussion about whether and how rural poor communities can resist and mobilize around such policies. By focusing narrowly on morality as if this is the only way in which people construct their world, and by seeing morality strictly in terms of social differentiation and self-identification as if these were the most fundamental features of social relations, there is very little room left in the analysis for recognizing areas of potential politicization or collectivization.

Accordingly, we have not gained insights into how the rural poor might develop the political capacity to fight for

fair employment, and quite the contrary, we are left with the impression that they are incapable of doing so, given their moral adherence and adaptations. This means ultimately that outsiders, presumably the policy makers, are the ones who it is hoped will read this book and see the error of their ways. This seems naïve at best, but more importantly it means that the book does not use the rich ethnographic data to its full potential benefit to sketch out ways in which morality and other social discourses and ideas can be used to mobilize resistance and support for substantive community development. While this book seeks to challenge many myths about the rural poor, especially with reference to their work ethic, and does an effective job of doing so, its transformative value would be greatly enhanced through more interpretation of the political at the ground level.

ALAN HALL

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**Paul Michael Taillon, *Good, Reliable, White Men: Railroad Brotherhoods, 1877–1917*** (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press 2009)

IN APRIL 1909 the management of the Georgia Railroad triggered a bitter and violent strike by complying with the firemen brotherhood's hard-won seniority rules. Barred from progressing to become engineers, long-service black firemen had acquired so much seniority in the occupation that they were eligible for the more desirable assignments to the exclusion of whites. A federal arbitration board sustained the seniority system and the employment of black firemen but ordered equal pay for blacks and whites. This in turn spurred renewed efforts by the railroad brotherhoods to drive black workers from running trades employment, efforts that were most successful in the 1930s

after the Railway Labor Act introduced the apparatus of New Deal-style compulsory collective bargaining.

Exclusive bargaining agency by majority vote “came as nothing less than a disaster for black railwaymen,” as Paul Taillon explains: “Because whites constituted the majority in the operating crafts, the provision deprived black railwaymen of effective representation, killing many of their independent unions and clearing the way for the brotherhoods to contractually eliminate them.” (206)

This image of the running trades brotherhoods – the Engineers, Firemen, Conductors, and Trainmen – as the conservative racist craft unions of the labour aristocracy in the vanguard sector of American industrial and financial capitalism, too exclusive even for membership in Samuel Gompers’s AFL, has become iconic in labour history. Academics have generally preferred the Knights of Labor, Eugene Debs’s American Railway Union (formed after he split with the firemen’s brotherhood over its exclusivism), and the Industrial Workers of the World, all of which struggled with the brotherhoods for organizational supremacy in the running trades and failed. Taillon’s study acknowledges the truths in the conventional image, but goes on to show that they are only partial truths, and that the brotherhoods played a much larger and more complex part in the shaping of American labour relations in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries than the conventional view allows.

This more comprehensive narrative is full of profound ironies, as the Georgia Railroad strike suggests. Taillon is most persuasive in setting out a ‘new institutionalist’ account of the brotherhoods’ changing organizational forms, and strategic and political engagements, against the transformation of the US political economy between the Civil War and World War I. The brotherhoods were

dynamic trade unions that took on the largest and most powerful corporations in the country, learned from their failures as well as their successes, and led the way not only in their collective bargaining policies and practices but also in their encounters with the state. From effective lobbying for industrial safety legislation to tripartite involvement in mediation and arbitration to direct political action to ensure Woodrow Wilson’s reelection and the acquisition of the eight-hour day, the brotherhoods dealt directly with legislatures and state agencies on behalf of their members. Although at first they shared Gompers’s distrust of state activism, they came to favour legislative and bureaucratic intervention and to use it in their interests. This occurred first in the series of legislative schemes for federal intervention in labour disputes and later, when the interest arbitration system foundered under the shipper-driven downward pressure of freight rate regulation, in the Progressive-era corporatism of the National Civic Federation in the lead-up to compulsory collective bargaining.

Taillon is also very good on the ways in which the development of the railroad industry, its increasing concentration and interchange, and the emergence and organization of professional management interacted with and shaped the brotherhoods institutionally, strategically, and politically. However, there is little in the way of a close analysis of grievance-handling, bargaining, mediation, or arbitration from which to draw conclusions about the emergence or elaboration of labour relations techniques.

Taillon’s account of the culture of railwaymen and their families, while generally interesting and at points fascinating, is not quite so successful. He gives an informative account of the quasi-Masonic fraternalism of the early brotherhoods, which withered away as the

organizations became more centralized and bureaucratic, but has little to add to the existing literature about work rules and safety. His account of the evolution of 'manliness' into 'masculinity' seems to this reviewer to confound lived experience with the public rhetoric of organizations that had an excellent grasp of how to manage their own publicity. While he goes to some lengths to describe the ladies' auxiliaries and the women's pages of the brotherhood magazines, it is not clear what difference, if any, these institutions made. And while race and racism play an important role in the narrative, more attention to the recruitment, regional distribution, numbers, and working conditions of non-whites in the running trades would have strengthened the analysis.

From a Canadian labour historian's point of view, the lack of any discussion of the brotherhoods in this country is frustrating. While Taillon occasionally quotes letters from Canadian members in the brotherhood journals, he does not appear to recognize them as such. With one exception, he makes no use of published research on the history of railway work and the running trades unions in Canada. The exception is Mark Rosenfeld's 1990 PhD dissertation about the railway community in Allandale (Barrie), Ontario. Taillon relies heavily on Rosenfeld's work for his depiction of running trades' culture, but seems not to recognize that he is writing about a different country. This is important because a significant strand in Taillon's explanation of the culture and its institutional expression in the brotherhoods depends on the exceptionalism of the Civil War experience, a factor which is deployed to make sense not only of racism and political attitudes, but of fraternalism, mutual insurance, and manliness as well. This set of arguments is badly corroded by the realization that much of the cultural

evidence relied upon is from a noncombatant community with different social origins and institutions in another country.

Taillon makes the occasional passing comparison to railway unions and railway labour relations in Britain and Europe, and to legislative initiatives there and in Australia. It is a shame and a lost opportunity to have utterly neglected the Canadian comparison. The Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers entered Canada in 1865, less than two years after its founding in Detroit, so that the history of the brotherhoods on Canadian railways was almost coextensive with the American. Because the Canadian experience sometimes anticipated and sometimes lagged behind the American; because the political economy of the industry in Canada, while extensively interconnected with the American, depended on different capital markets, ownership structures and state policies; because the brotherhoods' organization and policies, as well as their reception and political involvement, was not identical on both sides of the border; and because Canada is not the United States, a greater awareness of these unions' Canadian experience would seem to me to have offered a test of some of the explanatory underpinnings of this work, and likely a corrective as well.

Nevertheless, this is an accomplished and welcome treatment of the brotherhoods, which have been neglected in recent labour historical writing. It recovers their centrality to the emergence of modern labour relations in the United States as both exemplars of progressivism and sink-holes of racism and nativism. The book is attractively produced on good paper and shows evidence of careful copy-editing (although Brandeis appears as Brandies on page 166).

PAUL CRAVEN  
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**Francine A. Moccio, *Live Wire: Women and Brotherhood in the Electrical Industry*** (Philadelphia: Temple University Press 2009)

ANYONE WALKING PAST construction sites will sense the reality that today, relatively few women hold skilled trades jobs. Francine Moccio seeks to understand why the electricians' occupation remains 98 per cent male, despite decades of legislative measures and feminist campaigns for change. *Live Wire* presents a case study of New York's powerful Local 3 of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, especially Division A, the elite construction unit. Moccio's analysis incorporates aspects of interview-based ethnographic participant observation, quantitative labour studies, political economy, sociology, and history of the skilled trades, civil rights, and the feminist movement.

"Building skyscrapers and building the construction brotherhoods went hand in hand, and masculinity was embedded in both," Moccio explains. (23) Union leadership, access to apprenticeships, and a sense of solidarity were literally passed father to son, for generations. Moccio pays particular attention to the complex evolution of the local's male social clubs, defining members' fraternal power networks as a central factor in resisting women's incorporation into the trade.

"Arguments for female inequality are vital to the preservation of the brotherhood," (89) Moccio writes. To discourage would-be female entrants and command respect, male electricians overemphasize macho dangers of the job, even as fibre optics and other new technologies reduce strength and skill requirements. Seasonal and cyclical insecurity of construction employment fuel hostility toward women, Moccio notes. Men fear that female co-workers might challenge established leadership and demand

better working conditions, compromising union competitiveness by raising issues such as pregnancy and childcare. Employers have a vested interest in promoting labour brotherhood, with its hostility to women and change, as key to workplace stability and productivity. "By wiring together formal and informal cultural forms of male bonding and gender solidarity for purposes of organizational efficiency and commercial expansion, the electrical brotherhood and its joint industry board provide the nexus that privileges white male workers, unionists, and employers to the exclusion of women." (18)

Informed by her first-hand experience as a daughter and teacher of blue-collar workers, Moccio contends that workers' patriarchal beliefs shape dynamics not just at work, but in family life. "Men resent women entering the high-paying blue-collar positions because they lose a monopoly on two precious commodities – their high-wage jobs and their gender privilege at home." (78) Moccio shows how man-breadwinner/woman-housewife assumptions were literally built into Electchester, the union's co-op housing. Moccio's link between workplace and family hierarchy is intriguing, but not explored in real depth. Wanting to be "king of the castle" is not always the same as getting; private-life dynamics exhibit complicated twists. Moccio's argument would have benefited by interviewing electricians' spouses and explicitly engaging more literature on working-class family relationships.

A particularly valuable chapter contrasts the union's resistance to female workers with its historical progressiveness in accepting minority males. Moccio explains this irony by focusing on 1963 as a vital year, when union leader Harry Van Arsdale Jr. agreed to make new apprentice classes at least one-third minority, in exchange for laws increasing

use of apprentices in skyscraper construction. This deal made the Kennedy administration look good on civil rights, pleased business by containing costs, and strengthened the union. "Van Arsdale legitimized the entrance of racial minorities.... He confronted resistant journeymen by relying on the rhetoric of... brotherhood: a commitment to bringing racial minorities into the trade, but only through the time-honored path of apprenticeship.... The entry of minority men into the union never had the same smell of outside interference that accompanied later efforts by agencies to pressure Local 3 to accept women." (113)

Between 1970 and 2000, New York construction employment doubled for African Americans and more than tripled for Hispanics. Moccio interprets these gains to "prove that it is much more than prejudice that impedes women's way, and suggest that the Sisyphean task of changing culture is not the only possible route to achieving redress." (102) Yet Moccio herself indicates that construction-world culture makes gender barriers more impenetrable than racial boundaries. "Minority men pose no threat to... manliness of the trades, or a male-dominated domestic gender hierarchy." (125) Indeed, Moccio suggests, "racially-mixed male crews may bond through mutual scorn for female construction workers.

Moccio also traces the decisions and difficulties of women themselves, starting from the 1970s generation of entrants. College-educated feminists sought to revolutionize the climate of construction work, pressuring union leadership to admit more women and end inequities. Their group, "Women Electricians" (WE), stayed separate from the established union structure, to avoid being co-opted. That decision was crucial; while social clubs for black and Hispanic men gave those minorities legitimization and

access to union clout, the women's independence "left them with few options to promote gender equality in the trade; instead, they had to rely on outside organizations such as governmental regulatory agencies to enforce compliance or to sue for the redress of grievances." (140)

More than that, internal divisions over class, race, and sexuality reduced the potential strength of female electricians. Women with male relatives in the trade hesitated to defy union loyalties. Poor and minority women perceived the battle against sexual harassment as unrealistic, preferring to fight for better training and economic opportunity. African-American women and later entrants preferred compromise to confrontation. After the WE disbanded in 1999, its successor chose to come under official jurisdiction and concentrate on philanthropic and social activities, a move that only emphasized women's powerlessness. Members complain that "their problems in the Local go unheard... [and] find it hard to raise issues of gender equality and still appear as loyal unionists." (150)

After painting such a sobering picture of how female construction workers wound up in a no-win situation, Moccio concludes that aggressive federal and legal action still holds the potential to change the trade's gender dynamics. More than that, she urges union leaders to finally realize that they could gain power by accepting women. Noting that a few localities outside New York did temporarily manage to raise the numbers of women in construction work, Moccio declares that "under the right circumstances, tradesmen can expand paternalistic notions of 'unselfish' brotherhood to include craft sisters on a level playing field." (177) But such hints of small success stories prove unconvincing, coming without detail or analysis, at the end of a whole book explaining how the union's

long history of fraternalism deterred it from welcoming women.

*Live Wire* raises, then drops, a number of other promising points, such as the observation that some men in construction approach female colleagues to converse on birth control, child-rearing, and the feminist movement. Two female workers draw intriguing analogies between wiring buildings and nurturing children, but instead of following through, this book simply repeats thoughts too often, sometimes word-for-word. Despite such frustrations, Moccio's exploration of the historical patterns of union organization, fraternalism, race, and gender makes her book a very valuable contribution to labour studies. The appendices include useful tables and extensive charts tracing changing demographics in construction trades, along with a basic glossary of construction and labour history terms. *Live Wire* represents worthwhile reading for anyone interested in issues of women and work, the social meaning of union structure, and the construction trade, past and present.

AMY BIX

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**Donald Rogers, *Making Capitalism Safe: Work Safety and Health Regulation in America, 1880–1940*** (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press 2009)

*MAKING CAPITALISM SAFE* examines the development of state safety agencies in America during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. These agencies provide an important intermediary step between the common law of the 19th century and the federal Occupational Health and Safety Administration (OHSA) model of the late 20th century, and careful examination of their political and institutional history complements John Witt's 2004 *The*

*Accidental Republic* (with its focus on legal change) and Mark Aldrich's 1997 *Safety First* (with its emphasis on the business-driven safety first movement).

While the book does address developments in Alabama, California, Illinois, New York, and Ohio, Rogers's primary focus is the creation and operation of Wisconsin's industrial commission. This focus is a strength because it allows the author to conduct a detailed examination of the political, legal, and economic factors that influenced perhaps the fullest manifestation of Progressive approaches to safety regulation. Cataloguing and contrasting developments in other states could provide useful national context, but the comparisons here lack depth. So although the book's title promises a national picture, it does not quite deliver. This limits the book's utility as an introduction of American OHS for undergraduates. At the same time, the frequent state-by-state comparisons distract from the book's primary focus. A separate chapter considering developments in different states might have been a more accessible way to contextualize Wisconsin's development.

This hardback book contains 188 pages of text (broken into four main sections) and an additional 94 pages of appendices, notes, and references. The first section comprises a chapter narrating the common law approach to workplace safety as well as the shortcomings of American factory acts and pressure to shift safety policy from the courts to the legislature. A second chapter describes Wisconsin's 1911 legislation that created an industrial commission and workers' compensation scheme as well as raised the standard of care owed by employers to workers. In this change, we see the beginnings of administrative regulation and Rogers provides a nicely nuanced discussion of how local politics interacted with broader

national trends. He also nicely teases out the corporatist aspects of Wisconsin's commission, which were designed to manage class antagonisms.

The second section comprises three chapters that respectively examine safety campaigns, the development of safety codes, and the enforcement of those codes between 1910 and 1919. A theme introduced in the chapter on safety campaigns is the ways that safety efforts implicitly supported some methods of organizing work (in this case, large-scale industrial work) over others, such as small shops. Explicating the factors driving such choices is a useful contribution. This theme recurs in subsequent chapters discussing the establishment of safety codes and their enforcement.

Also of interest in this section is discussion of political intervention in the work of safety commissions. Students raised in a neoliberal environment commonly view the operation of government bureaucracies as resistant to lawmakers. The direct and indirect political manipulation chronicled by Rogers provides a useful point of departure for discussing more contemporary examples of the political dimension of OHS and workers' compensation. It also nicely summarizes the partial nature of labour participation in the establishment of safety codes.

Chapter 5's discussion of safety enforcement provides useful historical context when considering the impact of contemporary suggestions to privatize workers' compensation. Rogers documents how the unregulated insurance market allowed employers to substitute rate shopping for safety improvements as a way to reduce firm injury costs. Similarly, Rogers's account of Wisconsin's reluctance to embrace (now ubiquitous) experience-rating schemes raises questions about whether workplace safety might be better improved by replacing financial incentives (that can induce

gaming behaviour) with another mechanism, such as publicizing firms' inspection and/or injury data.

These topics of safety campaigns, codes, and enforcement are reprised for the 1920s and 1930s in a third section. This section provides an interesting discussion of how legal challenges, the growing use of personnel management in the wake of industrial concentration, and the accommodation of labour unrest through industrial pluralism undermined Wisconsin's approach to workplace safety. Chapter 6 adds nuance to the common belief that the state simply began deferring to business in matters of safety education by exploring how corporate consolidation, the creation of business associations, and changing management practices exacerbated waning political and financial support and ultimately displaced the state's educational role.

The discussion of spray painting regulation in Chapter 7 provides interesting insight into how setting standards through stakeholder consultation can obscure the state choosing sides through the structuring of the consultation. This includes both differentially advantaging labour and capital as well as preferential treatment of some business sectors. In several places, Rogers nicely draws attention to the difficult choices worker advocates must sometimes make: support an agency with sub-optimal policies or withdraw support and risk an even worse regulatory regime. These dynamics – although now informed by a pluralist rather than corporatist model – continue to operate in the field of OHS regulation but are clearer and easier to discuss when seen from a distance.

Chapter 8 concludes the third section of the book and considers how state safety enforcement continued to focus on physical safeguarding while new engineering meant corporate safety efforts increasingly emphasized personnel



management. This disjunction contributed to the marginalization of public enforcement efforts. The fourth section is an examination of occupational disease that challenges the conventional account wherein states paid no attention to occupational disease until the silicosis crisis of the late 1920s. Here, Rogers paints a clear picture of long-standing state intervention in occupational health focusing first on workplace hygiene and sanitation and thereafter on lead and dust issues, although the significance of these efforts is unclear.

The final chapter considers the transition from state to federal responsibility for OHS. This concluding chapter was dissatisfying. It largely ignored developments between the 1940s and the 1970s (a common gap in the OHS literature) in order to suggest that the federal OHS Act has not lived up to its potential. This may be true but it didn't seem like a particularly salient conclusion given the focus of Rogers's book on the institutional and political history of Wisconsin's industrial commission.

Overall, *Making Capitalism Safe* is a useful case study of the development of state safety regulation during the first half of the 20th century. The scope of the book is narrower than the title promises but its emphasis on state regulatory agencies provides a useful addition to the history of American occupational health and safety.

BOB BARNETSON  
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**Si Kahn, *Creative Community Organizing: A Guide for Rabble Rousers, Activists & Quiet Lovers of Justice*** (San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler Publishers 2010)

SOMETIMES THE moment arises when the educators must be re-educated. Too often

both political and scholastic discourse reinforce an artificial classification and compartmentalization of subject material to the extent that the links between and the unifying core of political, economic, legal, and cultural ideas are lost. Likewise, individuals are narrowly labelled and rigidly stereotyped. Educators are "scholars." Artists are "cultural workers." Long-term activist commitment is judged inferior to academic study. The cultural is secondary to politics.

In the cultural milieu and folk music world many people recognize Si Kahn as "simply" a folksinger, songwriter, storyteller, and balladeer of union songs and songs for social justice. He is viewed as an "entertainer" (though one admittedly with social consciousness) and it is often overlooked that this role as a "performer" is a deep and vital part of his method of work as an educator, activist, and organizer. His lifelong love of folk music and belief in the power of such music is central to his career as an activist that began as a young volunteer with the Student Nonviolent Co-ordinating Committee during the civil rights/freedom movement and continued with his involvement with key labour battles for the United Mine Workers in Harlan County, Kentucky, and with J.P. Stevens textile workers fighting deadly cotton dust work hazards. He is the founder and executive director of Grassroots Leadership.

*Community Organizing*, Kahn's second book, is not a primer about how to get things done or how to hone organizational skills and techniques. The title is significant. Its central concern is re-examining creative and critical possibilities of organizing, recognizing that the organizational road to reach desired goals (like history itself) rarely follows a straight path and that activists/educators must learn "to feel as well as to think." Creative organizing is not a recipe; it's a process. In his own words, "I'm also

concerned with what people learn on the way to that victory; about themselves, each other, history, justice, community, friendship. I want them to love the struggle for justice, not endure it." (5)

Si Kahn makes the point that the organizers are indeed, in many ways, outside agitators, sometimes isolated, viewed with suspicion precisely because they are "from away," outside the community or group. As the outsider, Kahn charges the organizer with ethical responsibilities, especially when he or she might have that final luxury of leaving a community behind, thus not suffering the direct personal, sometimes painful or damaging repercussions of a campaign that fails. Community organizing can change people's lives in unexpected ways. Organizational commitments are not only time-consuming and difficult. The complex issues may split communities and families and play havoc with personal relationships that crumble from the stresses. Si Kahn is blunt:

"People become organizers because they want to help other people make their lives better. . . . No matter how well we do our work, however continuously and carefully, even the best organizers occasionally make people's lives worse – sometimes for a while, sometimes forever." (61)

The best organizers do not come armed with answers. It is more important that they ask the right questions so that the individuals from the community who comprise the movement control the movement. Si Kahn asks those very questions of the reader as he tells vignettes of his own experiences. What is the responsibility of the organizer to others? What is their responsibility to themselves? When is it time to be militant and raise the stakes? When is it time to step back? When does one speak out and when does one remain silent? How does one act when confronted by racist

or anti-Semitic remarks? How does one overcome stereotypes and expose "soft racism"? How does one attempt to bring together people of diverse backgrounds when they have been influenced by generations of division on the basis of colour, language, customs, and religious beliefs? Is there a time to compromise principle in order to achieve a victory? And what is the meaning and measure of victory?

Kahn weaves essential historical background of real struggles (union, civil rights, human rights struggles, workplace health and safety) into the almost semi-autobiographical account of his own work. Each of the fourteen chapters begins with lyrics from his songs, poetry, historical lessons, and commentary, serious and humorous personal stories of confrontations and reflections on human foibles.

To Kahn history is made from below by the collective work of many individuals with their own personal histories and values and the struggles today are intrinsically linked to a constant series of struggles from the past. Those who wish to organize must know their history and be able to impart that knowledge in order to give present work historical and personal meaning.

Since the 1980s and the rise of neo-liberalism in North America, the global shift of economies, and the wave of wage concession bargaining forced initially upon the private industrial sector unions and later upon public sector unions, more and more labour organizations have turned to the concept of social unionism linking their particular struggles within a broader framework of community struggles. Networks and alliances have been advanced with women's organizations, environmentalists, human rights and peace activists, the gay and lesbian communities, First Nation peoples, and those organizations which can be described as movements for social justice. It is a

strategic answer to dramatically falling union densities (especially for private-sector unionism and especially in the US) and the realization that unions at the international, national, and local levels cannot simply go it alone.

Certainly the idea of directly linking the larger community with particular labour struggles is not a new one. The wave of industrial unrest in the 1930s and 1940s points to substantial victories achieved by organized labour when there was direct community support. Today, with the numerous protests against various world leader summits (the G8, WTO, IMF), community organizations see the advantage of support from organized labour even though that alliance is not always an easy one. The rise of global neo-liberalism has been challenged with a growing social justice movement often organized by those who do not have direct and immediate ties to organized labour. Kahn links these struggles as one, and no movement is too small or insignificant.

Through the increasing involvement of people at the local level, even the smallest issues grow more complex and can become springboards to a movement for social change. Kahn writes about how citizens from the poor inner neighbourhoods gain a sense of community empowerment when they organize to demand stop signs for the protection of their children, using that example as a means to jump into a description of the Southern US Civil Rights movement, a short history of abolitionism, the Underground Railroad, the NAACP, the anti-segregation movement, and the fight against apartheid in South Africa.

Si Kahn's approach and language may appear to be "folksy," but it is far from simplistic and this is precisely its strength. He brings history to a very personal level, free of overused ideological buzzwords, jargon, or heavy academic verbiage. It is

a refreshingly honest account with little romanticizing of organizational struggles and their participants. While he describes personal and organizational triumphs, he is not adverse to self-criticism, sharing his mistakes, rethinking judgements, even drawing in the reader as participant to consider and draw his or her own conclusions to difficult ethical issues.

Issues of principle and empowerment must be addressed. Principles are not merely abstract notions but have to be integrated into daily work. Empowerment is not only about changing power but about understanding the nature and dynamics of power through the prisms of class, gender, race, and sexual orientation and recognizing how these affect our daily lives and relationships with others. Importantly, people must "feel a sense of ownership over what they have created. At its best, this is not just a political, but a cultural process."

This is why "traditional organizing by itself isn't enough to create a transformative process." Breaking down the barriers that divide people "requires velocity, momentum, torque, acceleration of the spirit as well as mind." It is both "an emotional and intellectual process." (86)

In Si Kahn's view, culture (music, poetry, dance, storytelling, etc.) is not simply a tool to gather people around, and provide entertainment. Organizers must seriously consider going beyond paying mere lip service to cultural elements, relegating them to a sideshow and window dressing for "real" discussion (for example, having songs of social justice sung as people walk into a noisy conference room, or the gesture of a song before the major speech or at the close of a rally as people walk away).

Not only is culture a method and a natural part of rational discourse, it reaches into spirit, allows freedom of imagination, desire, inspiration, and empowerment by allowing participants to find and

develop their own voices. At this level of emotion and mind and in its combination of individual and collective voice it allows new ways of thinking and expression about complex issues. It is a life-affirming element that draws people inward and raises the individual's voice within the collective voice and creates community in moments that are emotionally electrified. Songs, for example, serve to record historical moments or new visions. They are remembered, built upon, reviewed, considered, communicated, and passed on.

I would suggest that Si Kahn's book would be a valuable tool not only for novice activists and seasoned veteran organizers, but for those who teach Labour Studies and courses in Social Justice. Educators in Labour Studies often discuss the need to develop a critical pedagogy to develop a "labour perspective" that is new to students whose worldviews have been shaped by a top-down perspective on labour-management relations.

Emphasis of scholarly discourse on the elements of labour policy, law, economics, politics, historical events, and struggles much too often loses sight of the real human dimension that constitutes the subject material. Not only does Kahn present a work that reviews historical struggles of workers and the movements they developed, he relates the issues of work, home, neighbourhood, and community facing them as individuals and as a social class as they become empowered to speak for themselves for the first time. By focussing on this personal dimension Kahn makes it a living history in which the reader is asked to be a participant.

By bringing the cultural dimension to the fore we hear working people speak in their own voices. Kahn indicates that the organizer does not have to become an artist in order to appreciate and utilize the valuable tools of cultural methods. The same holds true for educators. By utilizing these cultural elements as

teaching methods educators can then in turn reach their students at a deeper level and provide them with newer ways of understanding. It's for this reason that Si Kahn's new work might prove exceptionally useful as a course text.

LEN WALLACE

University of Windsor

**Miguel Tinker Salas, *The Enduring Legacy: Oil, Culture, and Society in Venezuela*** (Durham: Duke University Press 2009)

THERE ARE MANY studies of the effect of resource dependence on national political economies, but most focus on the relation of commodity booms to economic growth and good governance. Miguel Tinker Salas's *The Enduring Legacy* offers a different approach: a cultural history of the Venezuelan oil industry. Venezuelan society, he argues, was shaped through much of the 20th century by the broad cultural influence of the oil companies and through it by the values and lifestyle habits of their foreign, mostly North American, employees and their families. The privileged sites of this influence were the oil camps, the company towns built by the transnational subsidiaries near their production facilities. He concentrates on the western oil-producing region around Lake Maracaibo.

The term 'camp' applies equally to the frontier towns that sprang up during the early production phase and to two later developments, the project-like housing for Venezuelan and foreign manual workers, and the gated communities for foreign professionals and their families. In one of the latter, resembling American suburbs, the author himself grew up, the son of an American engineer and a Venezuelan lab technician who met at work. In these camps, American families attempted to recreate the middle-class

life they had left at home, with schools, churches, Scouts, baseball teams, cocktail parties, and imported goods for sale in the company commissary. The camps were also home to Venezuelan professionals hired increasingly over the course of the 20th century, who were socialized to American corporate values. Tinker Salas's argument is that the oil industry "broadly influenced the formation of social and political values evident among [Venezuelan] oil workers, intellectuals, and members of the middle class. The industry's residential complexes were a social laboratory." (xiii)

He shows that new consumption patterns and new corporate values were transmitted in the camps. But his argument is broader: for most of the 20th century, many people in and out of the oil industry viewed it as the key to modernization: adopting its mentality and investing its revenues, Venezuela would develop its infrastructure, diversify the economy, and provide social benefits to the poor population.

Underlying this vision were several hidden agendas. The oil industry's practices reinforced the prevailing racial divisions within Venezuelan society, offering opportunities for upward mobility to light-skinned people with higher education while keeping the largely dark-skinned, whether Venezuelan or immigrant, manual labour force down. They imposed a gender and family division of labour imported from the middle class of the United States that prescribed traditional roles for women. So did Venezuelan customs, but the imported norms broke with the traditional Venezuelan pattern by relying on the nuclear family rather than an extended family of supportive relatives. The oil companies also relied on the nuclear family for social control. As the single men who were the earliest immigrants to the oil industry drank, gambled, and consorted

with prostitutes copiously, the companies decided to build facilities for married men and their families. Wives who formed social networks in the camps offered a source of stability.

Most important, the companies promoted a particular vision of modernization. They presented themselves as essential to assure the efficient management of oil production. Their vision was of capitalist modernization tied to the work ethic and the companies' profit margins. The premium placed on individual responsibility meant that neither social justice nor the welfare of the majority of the population was ever an important consideration.

In claiming that the oil camps had such a broad cultural influence, the author does not examine other possible sources. It is true that in the postwar period new consumption patterns and, even more, consumption ideals spread through the upper and middle strata of Venezuela, but this may have been due as much to closer commercial relations with the US and, even more, television, as to the direct influence of the companies. He does not offer evidence that the camps were the main source.

The companies, in close collaboration with the State Department, challenged nationalist threats of expropriation, mobilizing an army of public relations officers and taking care to practice "enlightened industrialism" by promoting Venezuelans within company ranks, providing services to local communities, and coopting elements of Venezuelan culture in their promotional material. Though Venezuelan politics went through cycles alternating between nationalist democracy and authoritarian regimes that cultivated the favour of the United States, Tinker Salas argues that there was an essential continuity in policies toward the oil industry until nationalization in 1976, and that even when the

oil holdings were merged into the new, nationally owned company, Petr6leos de Venezuela Sociedad An6nima (PDVSA), it was managed according to the same capitalist principles.

Based on interviews and a wide range of documents (company papers, memoirs, newspapers for the English-speaking community, and cookbooks [!], among others) Tinker Salas provides ethnographic detail not only about social relations in the camps but also about the companies' internal deliberations regarding both personnel and political influence. With sometimes superabundant detail, he seems reluctant to discard a single anecdote. But the result is a vivid account of both daily life and corporate politics.

His analysis of the place of the industry in Venezuelan politics leaves some important questions unanswered. He makes frequent, but brief, references to the power of leftist unions, and shows that the companies opposed them (or, later, tried to coopt them). He gives no detail about their activities, however. The lack of an account of their success or failure as a counterweight to US cultural influence is a big omission.

His discussion of nationalization in 1976 is surprisingly cursory. He details the efforts of the major foreign oil companies from the 1930s to the 1970s to forestall nationalization by conciliating the Venezuelan government, adopting relatively enlightened labour relations, and invoking pressure from the State Department. The companies appear to be omnipotent, so that nationalization in 1976 despite all their efforts appears as a big surprise. Nor does he discuss at all how the oil companies or the US government reacted to nationalization when it came.

He does make clear that the nationalized company was managed according to the same capitalist principles during the

next two decades. It operated essentially as an independent, private company—a state within the state. Only after the election of Hugo Ch6vez as president did the state recover control and use PDVSA's organization and revenues to implement its egalitarian social policies. Under Ch6vez oil is no longer the vehicle for the Americanization of Venezuelan culture; instead it fuels Ch6vez's drive for national independence..

If Ch6vez's assertion of national control over the oil industry has displaced the hegemonic influence of US culture in Venezuela, the new independent vision is equally sustained by oil. It is hard to accept Tinker Salas's concluding sentence, that "oil no longer functions as an irrational symbol of [the country's] identity." (250) Whether or not irrationally, oil nevertheless remains central to Venezuelan economy, politics, and society.

But the goal of the book is to emphasize the cultural influence of the oil industry, not the politics, and on that score it succeeds. In this regard Tinker Salas's book stands alongside of Fernando Coronil's *The Magical State* in conveying the dominant position of oil in Venezuelan culture. Whereas Coronil emphasizes the illusions of national grandeur that oil aroused, Tinker Salas shows that it was the bearer of foreign influences on popular culture, filtered through transnational corporations' domination of the industry during most of the 20th century.

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**Thomas N Bisson, *The Crisis of the Twelfth Century: Power, Lordship, and the Origins of European Government*** (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press 2009)

THIS BOOK REINFORCES Thomas Bisson's position as one of the most important

contemporary historians of the Middle Ages. Its origins lie in a course Bisson began teaching at Harvard in 1988, and some of its themes were tested in a lively debate in *Past and Present* in the mid-1990s. Like all good history, it is informed by issues current during its gestation. Bisson's central concern lies with government: its origins, and its claims to be an essential good in any civilized society. The latter may not have seemed in the least controversial in most of Western Europe at the end of the 20th century, but from the era of Reagan and Thatcher onwards, this has not necessarily been a self-evident truth in the USA and UK.

Bisson's title reflects his attempt to see the period in a different light from that still cast by Haskins's classic *Renaissance of the Twelfth Century* of 1928. Without denying that great intellectual achievements distinguished the century, Bisson contends that beyond the scriptorium and cloister darker realities characterized the experience of the mass of the European population. Well aware of the conceptual traps into which the use of the word 'crisis' can topple the unwary, he is careful to restrict this term to a crisis of 'lordship.' For Bisson, 'lordship,' defined as "personal commands over dependent people," (3) is primarily about personal rule, the exercise of power by an individual; it is *affective* power, based on personal loyalty owed to a lord, or calculations of self-interest made by those who place themselves under his sway. As such, it is associated with private power and advantage, and so to be distinguished from the public good or bureaucratized administration. By the end of the first millennium there was little room for the *res publica* expressed and honoured in words, if not consistently in deeds, under the Roman Empire and, diminishingly, within its successor states in the Frankish West. Bisson does not treat 'politics' as simply equivalent to 'power,' but uses

the term in its classical sense, as relating to discourse about, and actions framed within, the concept of 'government,' and as such, he concludes that both 'politics' and 'government' were rare in the period from the ninth to the thirteenth centuries. He points out that, John of Salisbury notwithstanding, contemporaries regularly spoke of 'lordship' and 'power,' but rarely of 'politics' and 'government.' The slow adoption of such terms, while doubtless reflecting the changing realities of power consequent upon the resolution of Bisson's 'crisis,' might also have resulted from Haskins's 'renaissance,' with growing scholarly awareness of classical notions of the *res publica*.

The twelfth century is now rarely seen as a period of political as well as cultural renaissance. Bisson's original scepticism about such an early appearance of the 'state,' with its associated phenomena of government and politics, is now the historical consensus. Parts of this book might therefore be seen as needlessly refighting old battles, but Bisson does give these arguments a new twist. He contends that the transition from lordship to government/politics/rational administration was less straightforward than is commonly assumed: 'lordship' long survived the twelfth century. Another characteristic of Bisson's approach is his concern for the plight of the underdog; his perspective is as likely to be from the hovels of the peasantry as from the lofty eyres of the mighty. His unapologetic humanity is refreshing, and is substantiated by reference to voluminous contemporary testimony. He is rather more inclined than some others to give credence to the innumerable atrocity stories.

The result is a portrayal of daily life as every bit as 'nasty, brutish and short' as Hobbes could have imagined. As such, Bisson might be accused of simply turning the historiographical clock back to the

Middle Ages of 1066 and *All That*, but, however uncomfortable to modern sensibilities it may be, his case is convincing, and it is central to his wider argument. The usual experience of power by ordinary people in the long twelfth century was that of being on the receiving end of exploitative violence perpetrated by parasitic castle-dwellers. From the ninth to the mid-twelfth century, across western and central Europe, this was the ubiquitous accompaniment to the structuring of authority. Such a culture of power, based on the violent exploitation of the peasantry, and largely innocent of concepts of government and administration for the public good, was shared by aristocrats and monarchs alike: in essence, the 'lord kings,' for all that they might clothe themselves with the trappings of Divine approbation, differed from their vassals only in their greater command of resources, including the ability to utilize violence to attain their ends.

This was an intensely competitive environment. Life at the bottom of the heap was deeply unattractive. Those who had any hope of escaping it would adopt whatever means necessary to do so, including perpetrating the same kind of enormities that they were attempting to avoid experiencing themselves. Lesser men sought social standing and a modicum of security by aping the behaviour of their superiors. Instability was inevitable when his sword arm contained all the right that a man was able, or felt the need, to claim in order to justify his position. Hence, for Bisson, the familiar grand 'constitutional' crises of the period, when barons and kings faced off against each other, were at one extreme of a continuum at whose other pole were the innumerable confrontations between downtrodden peasants and rapacious knights. The peasantry were the universal victims of such strife, whoever emerged at the top of the seigneurial heap.

Bisson's 'crisis' was compounded of a knot of conflicts, these skeins tangling ever more tightly around the struggles of lesser elites to better themselves at their superiors' expense. The potential rewards increased with the growth of the economy and population. There was more to win and lose, but as society and economy grew richer and more sophisticated it was becoming increasingly difficult to hold on to what one had: the exercise of power over men and resources began to depend on effective and rational administration. Lords who did not manage this failed. The resolution of this crisis came in the generations following the mid-twelfth century, as something recognizable as 'government,' founded on laws, rational administration, and principles of representative politics, began to emerge as the norm, even if these principles were seldom enunciated by contemporaries. What prompted this transition was not, Bisson insists, any new-found concern of rulers for the well-being of their subjects, but a realization that thereby lay the best means by which power and profit could be realized. Far from subverting 'lordship,' 'government' emerged as its servant. Later, key characteristics of 'lordship,' such as power exercised largely for private gain, promotion to office because of personal connection or as a reward for loyalty, rather than for competence, and the arbitrary exercise of violence, would be regarded as constitutive of political corruption, and therefore corrosive of good governance. The vast distance travelled between the end of the first and second millennia is manifest not least in the development of civil society.

Books like this are still needed to explain the central part that the growth of government has played in that journey. As such, it is a pity that this is written very much for the specialist. Few have the knowledge of the period enjoyed by Bisson, and he is perhaps prone to forget



this. His style, while often elegant, is equally prone to opacity. That said, this sophisticated, nuanced and subtle book will amply reward the reader's effort.

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**Elisa Camiscioli, *Reproducing the French Race: Immigrants, Intimacy, and Embodiment in the Early Twentieth Century*** (Durham and London: Duke University Press 2009)

WHEN HISTORIANS of France probe the intersection of race and immigration, they tend to do so with reference to the period after 1945. In the three postwar decades, the percentage of immigrants who came from countries outside Europe increased dramatically as a proportion of the total immigrant population, while the number of foreigners in France doubled. The experiences of the first postwar generation of immigrants, who were often North African male workers relegated to low-skilled jobs and segregated, low-quality housing, and of their French-born offspring, called into question the universal applicability of the French Republican values of liberty, equality, and fraternity. The issue of immigration gradually bled into one of race, and this has had profound consequences for French political, cultural, and social life in the last 35 years.

In her *Reproducing the French Race*, Elisa Camiscioli challenges this periodization by arguing that race was crucial to understandings of and debates about immigration in the four decades preceding the Second World War. During this period of mass migrations, France became (in the mid-1920s) the leading destination of immigrants in the industrialized world, the majority of whom were white Europeans. Drawing on recent scholarship on race, Camiscioli

argues that foreigners, including white Europeans, were evaluated in racialized ways during the early 20th century and "assigned race" in a manner pointing to the Vichy regime, which emerged out of defeat in 1940 and persecuted Jews. Employing the latest scholarship on gender, sexuality, the body, biopolitics, and national identity, she further urges historians to recognize that immigrant workers were evaluated not simply for their productive value to the French economy but also for their reproductive value to a nation consumed with the spectre of demographic decline. In *Reproducing the French Race*, bodies and bodily practices and the intimate acts of the private realm, including childbearing and childrearing, become central to racemaking, nation-building, and the construction of national identity.

The book situates the discussion within the interdisciplinary literatures mentioned above, dispatching historical discussions of immigration in France in two sentences. Five intricate, linked chapters analyze discourses reflecting anxieties about immigration and the presence of foreigners in France during the early decades of the 20th century. The first chapter focuses on pronatalist debates over the consequences of immigration. Camiscioli illustrates how fears over demographic decline, which began to haunt French life in the last third of the 19th century, prompted a diverse group of pronatalists to look to foreigners to replenish the French population and regenerate the "French race," a term she traces to the late 19th century. In this effort, only white Europeans were suitable for immigration and assimilation, and they were positioned in an elaborate racial hierarchy which rewarded the top spots to Italians and Spaniards, who were viewed as Latin, white, and highly fertile.

The second chapter, which maps the shifting ways foreign workers and their

labour were evaluated and categorized, will be of particular interest to labour historians. In contrast to earlier periods, when European immigrant workers were commonly associated with certain skills or trades depending on their nation of origin, Camiscioli illustrates how early 20th-century work scientists, industrialists, and investigators from the Ministry of Labour produced studies establishing clear, racialized hierarchies of workers that always drew clear distinctions between workers who were deemed white and those who were not. These studies, which began in the decade before the First World War and expanded after the wartime arrival of 660,000 foreign (male) workers from across the globe, ranked these workers according to place of origin and, especially, race. This pseudo-scientific research was saturated with bias. Thus Indochinese workers were portrayed as docile, submissive, and feminine; workers “of the Arab race” were seen as suitable for agricultural labour; and Africans and Asians were deemed unfit for factory labour. Camiscioli uses this material to argue that the labouring body was not a neutral, unmarked subject, as some historians have argued, but a “racially embodied entity endowed with a variable capacity for work.” (60) Chapter 3 examines how physicians, scientists, and racial anthropologists evaluated race mixing, arguing that Republican France was home to essentialist notions of community that complicate distinctions between German and French conceptions of citizenship often drawn by French scholars.

*Reproducing the French Race* skillfully incorporates gender analysis throughout (the pronatalists featured in chapter 1 looked to foreigners partly because they believed that overly independent and individualistic French women were not doing enough to repopulate France), but the attention to gender (and women) is

at its most sustained and interesting in the book’s last two chapters. Building on the analysis in Chapter 3, Chapter 4 illustrates how anxieties about race and race-mixing were especially acute when sex was involved. This is not necessarily a fresh insight, but Camiscioli comes at the issue from a new angle. Unusually, the women who feature most prominently in the debates analyzed here are French prostitutes who had commercial sex with colonial men in both the colonial setting and in metropolitan France. The inconceivability of French women doing this of their own volition helped fuel elaborate narratives of “white slavery,” whose characters were helpless French women believed to be desired the world over and traffickers depicted in racialized ways not borne out by police statistics. These narratives, as well as the accompanying campaigns to abolish “white slavery,” are analyzed for what they reveal about anxieties over national health, racial hygiene, and gendered notions of respectability. The chapter also tracks the effort to bring France’s particular version of regulated prostitution to its empire and to provide race-specific prostitutes for colonial men serving in the French military. The final chapter provides a nuanced analysis of debates involved in the successful post-World War I campaign to revoke the article in the Napoleonic Code that stripped French women of their citizenship when they married foreigners. What is most interesting here is how little impact feminist concerns or arguments had in the granting of independent nationality to women in 1927. In the years following the slaughter of 1914–1918, the issue became implicated in the fight against population decline, and this brought unlikely allies to the cause.

By bringing together anxieties about race, gender, and immigration into one analytic field and analyzing their sometimes surprising interplay, Camiscioli

makes an important contribution to the history of 20th-century France. Readers who come to the book with an awareness of recent scholarly discussions on French citizenship and the limits of French universalism and a firm command of French Republican history will be most rewarded, but it is not clear whether these specialists will be convinced by Camiscioli's implicit challenge to rethink the way that they periodize the years 1900–1939. Although studying these decades as one period offers fresh perspectives on continuities in Republican approaches to population, immigration, race, and gender, the use of “early twentieth century” to refer to 1907, the war years, *and* the 1920s and 1930s can be jarring since French historians have long, and with reason, regarded the pre-war years, the First World War, and the interwar years as related but discrete periods, especially where the history of labour and immigration are concerned. I wonder, moreover, whether Camiscioli sometimes overstates her case in the effort to establish continuities between her period and the Vichy regime. To say, for example, that both the Vichy state and the Third Republic were “racial regimes based on gender complementarity” may be technically true, but it masks serious differences of intention and outcome. That said, future participants in the ongoing discussions of the relationship between the Republican 1930s and the Vichy regime and of the tensions between universalism and particularism in Republican France will need to take account of Camiscioli's contribution.

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**Jürgen Kocka, ed., *Work in a Modern Society – The German Historical Experience in Comparative Perspective***  
(New York, Oxford: Berghahn Books  
2010)

KOCKA, ARGUABLY the doyen of social history in Germany, introduces this volume with a succinct overview of the changing meanings of work from European antiquity to the present. In ancient Greece, the upper classes had nothing but disdain for work, which Kocka defines as the “purposeful application of physical and mental forces to fulfill needs.” (2) In their view, the world was split between inferiors who were barely good enough to perform manual work and superiors who engaged in more fulfilling activities. Enlightenment philosophy replaced this dualism with a universal praise of work that was increasingly seen as the source of all human wealth, but also as a commodity that could be bought and sold in the marketplace. Socialists, who began to voice their ideas in the second half of the 19th century, agreed with Enlightenment philosophers that work is the ultimate source of wealth but insisted that market exchange is a veil that covers up the exploitation of workers in the capitalist production process. In this regard they were closer, analytically that is, to antique ideas about a strict division between honourable upper classes and labouring lower classes or, as Marxists would say, wage slaves. Since they were at the heart of the labour process, socialists suggested that workers might as well take over the means of production and thus replace capitalist class rule and exploitation by a classless society of equals. Kocka doesn't raise the question of what happened to those ideas, though they inspired some of the strongest social movements in the late 19th and 20th centuries. Instead he leapfrogs to the late 20th century's thesis that work has become obsolete due to

technological processes that, supposedly, relegated human labour power to the sidelines of economic development.

Subsequent chapters of the book pick up Kocka's narrative in the Middle Ages and follow it to present-day debates about globalization. Josef Ehmer demonstrates that, aristocrats' disdain for manual work notwithstanding, craftsmen and peasants took pride in their work and also found ways to express themselves. Yet, the chapter also shows the difficulties of writing social histories. While craftsmen were organized in guilds whose records are an important source for today's researchers, no such written records exist about medieval peasant life. Such problems are avoided by Gerd Splittler who carries Kocka's development of work narrative into the 19th century but, instead of looking for self-expressions of the labouring classes, focuses on intellectual discourse about work, notably the writings of Karl Marx and Max Weber. What is interesting about this discourse is that it developed, without using that term, ethnographies of work that reflect upon work experiences from outside of Europe. Thomas Welskopp looks at work as a key factor of self-identification for the German labour movement. It becomes obvious that the disdain of work that the European aristocracy had inherited from ancient Greek rulers was completely turned on its head within the labour movement whose activists regarded dismissively everyone who either really didn't work or whose work was considered unproductive. Notions of unproductive work are the link to Karin Hausen's chapter on gender and work in which she traces the origins of the male breadwinner model and its underlying division of labour between men and women. The development of this division, Hausen demonstrates, went hand in hand with an increasingly strict separation of a male-dominated public sphere and a private

sphere in which women were performing allegedly unproductive work.

The next chapter, by Ute Frevert, analyzes trust as an indispensable resource of cohesion in modern society. Without trust, Frevert argues, costs of control are rampant and may still not suffice to guarantee cohesion. She also suggests that in modern societies with their constantly changing relations among individuals, trust needs to be actively constructed and that efforts in this regard should be considered as a kind of work. While her chapter is largely theoretical without addressing a specific historical subject, the next two chapters analyze highly specific, and often neglected, aspects of work. Alf Lüdtke highlights parallels between industrial work and soldiering with regard to organizational practices and forms of subjugation of workers and soldiers, respectively. Revealing, some might say shocking, as these parallels are, Lüdtke also stresses the fact that soldiers face an existential risk that goes much further than the risks of capitalist employment relationships. Klaus Tenfelde gives an empirical survey about forced labour in Germany and its occupied territories during World War II. Even without theoretical reflections upon changing meanings of work it is obvious from his data how the Nazis had perverted notions of work as a universal source of wealth into a universal regime of terror.

Eventually, the last two chapters bring in the comparative perspective that the book title announces. Sebastian Conrad follows Max Weber's Confucianism thesis from the German sociologist's desk to Japanese discourse about its unique sources for economic success. Contrary to Weber's thesis, which posits that pre-modern religion was the reason for Japanese backwardness in contrast to Protestantism's promotion of capitalist development, Conrad shows that the idea of Confucianism is essentially a modern

product of transnational history and that it was successfully used to expose Japanese growth success in the 1980s. Finally, Andreas Eckert discusses the potential of global labour history as opposed to national labour histories. He takes the alleged crisis of work, which goes back to Hannah Arendt's work and was also advanced by Kocka in collaboration with German sociologist Claus Offe, as his starting point to argue that what appears as a crisis of work by the standards that have developed in Western countries after World War II may in fact be more a crisis of a certain understanding of work than a crisis of actual work. A global perspective shows that the meaning of work does not only change through time but also has different meanings at the same time but in different places. Widening the focus of labour history accordingly, Eckert concludes, opens new fields for research and qualifies the crisis of work thesis substantially.

*Work in a Modern Society* contributes in two ways to labour studies: through its individual chapters and through its underlying narrative that, potentially, steers labour studies in new directions. This second way fits into wider debates around global labour history. Promising as such a broader focus is, it also requires more conceptual work. For some decades labour studies were dominated by social histories that replaced the earlier histories of workers' parties and unions. In Germany, Kocka was one of the key figures who tried to make actual working lives visible behind labour leaders' speeches, rivalries, and organizational structures. Ironically, this focus on everyday life inside and outside the workplace took the structure of the nation-state very much for granted so that the borders of individual nation-states were assumed to contain the social histories of labour. A shift from such nationally contained labour histories to global

labour history should carefully reflect on the changing role of the state in shaping worlds of labour. *Work in a Modern Society* is an example of the need to build solid theoretical foundations for global labour history. Kocka's reflections about work in antiquity and Ehmer's chapter on work in the Middle Ages clearly deal with times during which the concept of the modern, or capitalist, nation-state didn't apply. Whether it still applies today is a question that was hotly debated in different branches of the social sciences over the last two decades. Whatever one thinks about those debates, they should at least provide labour historians with some ideas to steer the unknown waters of global labour history.

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**Ashwini Tambe, *Codes of Misconduct: The Regulation of Prostitution in Colonial Bombay*** (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press 2009)

THIS BOOK IS a timely reminder that rarely are laws on prostitution simply about prostitution and also a reminder that the way in which these laws work in actual application seldom mirrors their intent. In investigating how laws on prostitution played out in Colonial Bombay, Ashwini Tambe seeks to provide a warning to those who would put too much weight on the reformist capabilities of the state and law. Tambe traces the "reception" of imperial laws, such as the Contagious Diseases Acts and anti-trafficking laws, and the nationalist abolitionist response in Bombay – a prominent sex-trade centre – between the "high colonialism" of the late 1800s and the "late" period of more concessionary rule between World War I and independence in 1947. In examining these two periods, Tambe is able to see how,

even as approaches change from regulation to abolitionism, the conditions for sex workers and their experience of “state violence” change little. This leads her to draw the conclusion that one must be highly sceptical of the possibilities of state-led reform. The book is a rich and detailed history that is important to read in the context of today’s debates over prostitution law.

Tambe gives us both insight into the rhetorical function of law and a detailed “micro-history” of how the law is used and misused, or resisted and reinterpreted, on the ground. The Contagious Diseases Acts (CDA) in Bombay, for example, failed to achieve their purported aims of establishing state control over prostitution via medical checks and thereby eradicating sexually transmitted diseases. But they were successfully used to create a racially stratified and demarcated sex trade that served colonial purposes. Here Tambe makes an important contribution to Foucauldian analysis in drawing attention to how the colonial context is both far more juridical and coercive than Foucault’s liberal governmentality approach would allow, and more contingent, as the application of law is caught up in the politics of imperialist rule and anti-imperialist resistance. The CDA in Bombay allowed for more coercive collection of scientific knowledge of women’s sexuality for example than would be possible in the imperial motherland (and was therefore key to the functioning of “scientific knowledge” in the imperial centre). Despite this juridical power, increasingly independent municipalities like Bombay resisted the law’s application, recognizing the CDA as one more imperialist intervention. Sex workers also stubbornly and often successfully resisted being tested and tried, and police, magistrates, and medical officers fought over resources and responsibilities, dooming the CDA to failure in its stated mission.

Similarly, the anti-trafficking acts that followed the CDA, while ostensibly aimed at reducing exploitation of sex workers, were used by colonial officials on the ground to intensify the control over, and exploitation of, European brothel workers while simultaneously ignoring the exploitation within the Indian trade. Indeed, Tambe gives us a detailed account of the murder of one brothel worker, Akoothai, through careful handling of the accounts with their ulterior motives, as an exemplar of exploitative conditions in Indian brothels at the time. Thus, Tambe nicely illustrates how “the colonial state only presented the appearance of universal surveillance” (78) by presenting us with the complexities of how laws played out in reality. This is a lesson even analysts of modern-day law stand to be reminded of – the disjuncture between law’s authoritative rhetorical voice and the vagaries of the everyday application of law.

Tambe moves forward in time to bring home her other main point: that none of these laws worked in favour of sex workers themselves. In her penultimate chapter she examines the nationalist response to prostitution, the terrain of which was, as she points out, already shaped by imperial discourse that presented Indian prostitution as a product of the “backwardness” of Indian culture. The nationalists, therefore, strove to present Indian womanhood in ways that defied the imperialist stereotypes and fought against the toleration of native prostitution by pressing for abolitionist laws. Once again, while abolitionist law was ostensibly about ending the exploitation of women in sex work, its discursive function was actually about “defending the nation’s honour” and in reality the laws were weakly enforced and achieved little more than increasing the arrests of women who worked outside of the brothel structure. Thus while the abolitionist laws buoyed middle-class self-righteousness, they did little to protect

sex workers from violence and exploitation. In fact, as Tambe points out, “the mere existence of laws on prostitution, whatever the content, contributed to the *perception* of prostitutes as criminals.” (121) That is, the discourse or “publicity” around lawmaking had greater effect than the content of the laws. Tambe’s point is once again vital in the context of debates over legal reform and speaks to the resilience and depth of the “whore stigma” that so many sex workers and their advocates point to as the real source of their exploitation.

From this historical analysis, therefore, Tambe draws the conclusion that one must, in the modern day, cast a highly sceptical eye on the possibilities for progressive legal reform, including decriminalization, since no matter what guise the law took in this historical period, it simply acted to further the state’s reach and control and did little for sex workers themselves. Tambe draws on the insights of socialist feminism to argue that only by addressing the underlying conditions (in India in particular but one could certainly argue more generally) of poverty, illiteracy, urban-centred development plans, and the “orthodoxy of market fundamentalism” can exploitation within the trade be addressed. These points are well taken: addressing poverty and the inequalities created by global capitalism would address many underlying problems experienced by many of the most marginalized within the sex trade as in any sector, although this may be a long-term goal. And certainly the state must always be assumed to be seeking control in any legal move. But in moving to the modern context Tambe perhaps elides the differences amongst legal systems (particularly the, admittedly fuzzy, distinction between legalized and decriminalized systems) by linking the call for licensing in the sex trade with sex workers’ rights discourse. Many sex workers’

rights advocates would argue that licensing (the modern-day form of the CDAs) is indeed one more example of state control that undermines the rights and freedoms of people in sex work, and it is therefore opposed by many sex workers’ organizations. While admittedly decriminalization would still involve state regulation of some form (labour codes, signage by-laws, health and safety standards), systems can be designed that at least give sex workers greater space to resist exploitation by the state or by employers and clients – such as rights to complaint procedures, union protections, and workplace standards. And while, as Tambe, again rightly, points out, not all people in the sex trade experience it as “formal work” with a defined structure of employees and bosses, this is true of many forms of “work” in this post-industrial world. Nonetheless, workplace rights still provide one of the best tools we have to at least open up possibilities for people to carve out some measure of control over their own lives. Further, the language of rights serves to provide a counter-discourse to the stigma that undergirds current prostitution laws. We can’t hold back the state or end stigma entirely, but we can attempt to give space to the very resistant forces that Tambe identifies.

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**Malek Abisaab, *Militant Women of a Fragile Nation*** (Syracuse, New York: Syracuse University Press 2010)

WRITTEN IN A clear, engaging style, Malek Abisaab, Assistant Professor in History at McGill University, has given us a fascinating, meticulously researched history of workingwomen – their working conditions and militancy – in Lebanon’s tobacco industry. Over several

decades, these women workers became known for their radicalism and protests against both management and the Lebanese state. Yet these women's voices and struggles have often been written out of trade union records and accounts which focus on socialist activism or 'organized labour.' Rejecting a culturalist lens which has unfortunately characterized so much writing on the Middle East, Abisaab weaves a finely-crafted history of working women's lives and struggles which have hitherto been invisible. Central to Abisaab's argument in the book is his positing of a "multifaceted, ever-changing, intention-driven, and processual view of culture" instead of "a unilinear, stage-driven view of culture as the organizing machine of history." (178)

Through its investigation of the lives and struggles of the women tobacco workers, the book explores the complex connections among class, gender, and the nation-state in Lebanon. It also presents us with an account of a workers' radicalism which arises at least partly from a relationship between anti-colonial struggle and peasant culture. To do so, the author draws upon extensive archival research, oral history, interviews, and surveys of *workers*. Focussing on the lives of women who worked for the *Régie Co-Intéressée Libanaise des Tabacs et Tombacs* – the French-Lebanese tobacco monopoly established in 1935 (now state-run), this is an important study on the industrialization of Mount Lebanon and the economic and social transformation of the Lebanese state. The book traces the emergence of industrial work culture and the extent of its influence on working-women's status and outlook in Lebanon.

Initially mobilized to work to meet a demand in the 19th-century Lebanese silk industry, Abisaab argues that in that industry, women workers continued to reside in the patriarchal household and within its extended kinship network.

Nonetheless silk work provided women a chance to adapt to industrial life and work patterns, and challenge social norms which viewed factory work as shameful. As the silk industry became less lucrative and went into a decline, women found work in the tobacco industry which often meant working and sometimes living away from home, and in larger industrial settings. Abisaab shows that workingwomen have long resisted their exploitation in the tobacco industry, but that their labour activism in the early 20th century built on agrarian experiences and traditions of peasant protest. As Lebanon moved from the French colonial era to independence and nationhood based on tribal-ethnic hegemony, this resistance confronted first colonial rule, and later viewed "state nationalism as an extension of, not a break with, oppressive colonial practices and traditions." (35) The book discusses women workers' participation in anti-colonial struggle against the French, and a diversity of strategies employed by the women including claims made of their employer and the state, the pursuit of legal avenues, and the resort to more militant forms of action in direct challenge to state authority. Abisaab maps a gradual radicalization of these women tobacco workers which had a complex and tense relationship with male-dominated unions and left political parties, neither of which, he argues, determined the women's growing militancy. In one plant he contends that shared experiences of the hardships of rural poverty, displacement, and migration, as well as familial and kinship ties among workers, were significant factors in the women's radicalization, while in the Beirut plant he argues that this politicization was impacted by a growing Beirut trade union and urban political culture, with politicization of arts, music, and other forms of popular culture having their impacts on workers' education.



Abisaab vividly charts and brings to life women's strategies in negotiating family and work, and captures the complexities and contradictions whereby women's wage labour, desperately required for the survival of many rural families, and their work further away from the family home, brought them into confrontation with family. But, challenging unilinear culturalist paradigms, he illustrates ways in which this was often navigated, rather than viewing women's participation in industrial labour as determined by social taboo or subordination to patriarchal control. The women workers "lived through multiple experiences of class, sect, and gender...categories [that] were neither constantly nor inherently in contradiction with each other." (xxii)

This work contests static definitions and fixed accounts of patriarchy, in many places illustrating the ambiguities and strategies for manoeuvring to subvert or use familial/patriarchal control or norms. Abisaab suggests that these women's actions "became vivid signs of their public assertiveness, strength, and ability to take over highly controlled, masculinized political spaces – even if only briefly." (186) The book is not only a record of these women workers' remarkable resolve to stand firm in their demands for dignity and justice in their workplace, notwithstanding severe state repression at times such as the 1945, 1946, 1963, and 1965 strikes. But also, "[t]he story of radicalized tobacco workingwomen forces us to 'reintegrate' class formation and gendered conflicts into Lebanese national history, thereby illuminating the place of class alliances and gender politics in the state's ideological makeup and in its actions toward its workingwomen citizens." (xxiii) This militancy, sustained over several decades, "gave the labor movement and the postcolonial history of Lebanon new meanings by highlighting both the empowerment of women

and working-class actions as vital and interdependent elements of social change and by reversing the image of women as silent." (186)

At times the women tobacco workers worked with trade unionists and socialist party activists, and subordinated their gender identities to class identity. "At times, they rejected protective male paternalism, but at other times they manipulated it to enhance their roles as women and workers who were navigating their ways strategically within the confines of a tribal-ethnic system and its wider oppressive capitalist orbit." (xxii) The book's penultimate chapter is a particularly gripping tale of the strikes in the 1960s. It illustrates the way in which women's activism led them to mobilize outside of – and indeed, against – the company union, and collectively take control over the settlement process with the Régie. Here, the struggles of the women tobacco workers against the state's violation of their rights really come to life.

Abisaab hopes for further scholarly research to tackle the complexities of class, gender, family, and community in the lives of Lebanese workingwomen. He has set a high standard for such works. I would have liked the author to have drawn out the implications of the dynamics of these earlier phases of struggle for understanding the intertwining of class and gender relations in contemporary Lebanon, and to help think through ongoing tensions and contradictions of state and capital in a neoliberal era. But this is a minor criticism.

This book should be read by labour, feminist/gender studies, history, and sociology scholars, and all those interested in 'development' and the Middle East. Given the unfortunate preponderance of literature on the Middle East grounded in, and perpetuating analyses based upon, assumptions about Middle Eastern/

Muslim “culture,” this book – and the refreshing critical theoretical insights offered – is a must-read for those interested in labour, gender, class, and capitalist relations in the region. Not only is it a rich ethnographic work but the book’s theoretical framework compels and guides us to go well beyond dominant paradigms of scholarship.

AZIZ CHOUDRY  
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**Edward W. Soja, *Seeking Spatial Justice***  
(Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press 2010)

WORKS AIMED AT establishing or restoring social justice, in whatever realm, tend to orient themselves according to some pre-existing framework, doctrine, or discipline. As such, the reader or reviewer measures the relative success of each work by assessing what it contributed to on-going debates or discussions, in terms of attitudes, documentation, style, or (relative) originality. There are also canonical works that have set a standard, just as there is a pantheon of writers to whom we owe a great deal, and who are therefore cited repeatedly, and at great length, such that the contributions to a field seem connected through a chain of notions, ideals, and references.

Once in a while, though, research is presented that affirms an as-yet un- or under-articulated approach that, once described, seems obvious; or, just as rarely, an approach is described that affects the way we think about or experience the social setting in which we work. Edward Soja’s new book manages to accomplish both of these highly desirable ends by offering a “critical geography” that immediately seems vital, while at the same time offering a series of insights and examples that help develop a framework for understanding the “spatial”

dimensions of social justice. He does so with superb examples, beginning with the remarkable story of the Los Angeles Bus Riders Union that won a massive legal victory against the Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA), causing it to redraw its mass transportation system to better meet the needs of workers and the poor rather than the well-served suburban wealthy classes. This example, which starts the book, is particularly fascinating in light of current debates about funding (or not) the transportation infrastructure, including the possible establishment of a new high-speed rail system in particular states (i.e. those which have accepted federal moneys available for their development).

It’s obvious that a city has “zones” in which a preponderance of certain kinds of people tend to live or work, and that there’s a consistency about who tends to occupy specific demarcated spaces (at specific times), including public parks, particular neighborhoods, the downtown core, shopping areas, and so forth. With a little reflection, it’s also clear that certain people navigate within and beyond each space in particular ways that reflect their socioeconomic status, their race, and their sense of belonging. Karl Marx emphasized the historical and class divisions that helped maintain structures of ownership and privilege; M.M. Bakhtin emphasized the time/space compendium in his description of what utterances are or can be produced; Max Weber drew attention to the bureaucratic and rational-legal dimensions of Protestant capitalist society; Pierre Bourdieu drew attention to similarities between symbolic and actual marketplaces as a way of describing not only what is said, but by whom, and with what intonation. In this book, in some ways part of the no less ambitious projects that have been undertaken under the auspices of a “spatial turn” in social sciences, Soja insists upon

the spatial dimension of social justice as a complement to other approaches, a method that insists upon “foregrounding a critical spatial perspective and seeing the search for social justice as a struggle over geography.” This in turn becomes a means of “opening up new ways of thinking about the subject as well as enriching existing ideas and practices.” (13)

People in disciplines such as urban planning, architecture, geography, and environmental studies are accustomed to thinking spatially, of course, just as people in sociology or history (at least in recent generations) have tended to account for historical evidence to describe the world (it’s unclear to me if there’s any prevailing approach in sociology today, however). And of course spatial issues are always raised in certain domains, such as immigration studies, or border work, and more inconsistently in cultural studies or postcolonial work. But spatial work has new dimensions, now, given electronic media forms (including all sorts of monitoring and mapping) and, more importantly, consideration of spatial issues “represents a growing shift away from an era when spatial thinking was subordinated to historical thinking, toward one in which the historical and spatial dimensions of whatever subject you are looking at take on equal and interactive significance, without one being privileged over the other.” (15) The emphasis here is upon approaches in their relation one to the other, which means that some of what can be found in this book is novel and exciting, and some of it will be very familiar but theorized in this interactive totality that casts the expected in a new light. The newness is more striking for an American audience, less accustomed, perhaps, to similarly inspired work undertaken by the French geographer Alain Reynaud, by Henri Lefebvre in his philosophical and sociological work, or by Philippe Gervais-Lambony, including

his new journal, *Justice spatiale/Spatial Justice*, that complements a growing amount of work in Europe (but also in the fascinating Department of Geography at the University of Vermont).

The other crucial and enlivening element of this book is Soja’s emphasis upon local advocacy, ground-up efforts at social reform, and home-grown efforts at seeking justice within local communities. This isn’t an esoteric argument aimed to re-situate (say) Spivak’s subaltern from the esoteric to the esoteric-spatial, it’s a real and concrete application of clear and lucidly conveyed ideas to very real problems facing people in L.A., and of importance to other people who face similar space-defined barriers towards justice in other parts of the world. The application of what Soja calls the “triple dialectic” – of social/societal, temporal historical and spatial geographical – to efforts undertaken by coalitions of labour unions and community organizations, can lead to the kinds of victories that the one of the poor over wealthy patrons of the MTA exemplifies. But this era of massive budget cuts, particularly in local and state budgets, threatens to undo social advancement; and more dire still is the thought of austerity measures aimed directly at the poor and the immigrant, imposed by a growing Republican majority that still thinks that its constituency is the billionnaires of the US, and has the votes, counter-intuitively, to prove it. Rather than the obscurantist social theory that continues to pervade realms like postcolonial or postmodern studies, we need to turn with urgency towards works like this one in order to fight impending battles.

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**Kathleen Christensen and Barbara Schneider, eds., *Workplace Flexibility: Realigning 20th-Century Jobs for a 21st Century Workforce* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press 2010)**

THIS BOOK DETAILS how “market work” has transformed industrial societies in the post-World War II period and it tries to address the failure of workplace culture and public policy in the United States to align itself with this great transformation. The needs of workers and families are sacrificed for the goals and whims of companies, managers, and the market, creating a “current situation [that] is untenable” and which “cannot continue under the present structure,” the authors conclude. (349) Flexibility exists for employers, but not for employees. Where flexibility initiatives have been introduced, they are limited in scope, not enforced, and usually carry penalties if used – employees fear that they will lose their jobs, advancement opportunities, pay raises, be labelled as not a ‘team player’ or otherwise stigmatized by management and then co-workers.

The situation is worsening, not only because of the economic crisis which the authors did not foresee, but because corporate culture has been making unpaid overtime work mandatory as referenced throughout the book, jobs are becoming increasingly precarious (temporary, part-time, without benefits or security), and 30 per cent of employers violate the law by failing to offer the minimum required family and medical leave to employees. (139)

Enforcement is a key theme of the book. Flexibility options that employees do not use, or that are used *against* employees in these ways and in this context, are not meaningful options. This is the situation in the US. In Europe and Australia it is better, as described in Chapters 11 to 14. In Japan it is worse. (Chapters 15 and 16)

In all countries economic globalization is placing negative pressures on the flexibility needs of workers and their families. This is exacerbated by the growing time demands presented by demographic shifts (more elder care being required), longer commuting times to work due to increasing urbanization, and the increasing requirement of two incomes to support a household.

The cultural contrasts in the book offer valuable insight. At one end of the spectrum a female American manager working in the Netherlands calls an employee after-hours to demand additional work. The employee refuses, politely telling the manager this is her own time, her family time. The employee is shocked by the manager’s call, and the American manager is shocked by the employee’s ‘disobedience,’ yet soon comes to realize that the Dutch may have a better, healthier approach to work and productivity than her corporate culture has instilled in her. At the other end one finds the *karoshi* culture of Japan and many disturbingly similar trends in the US (and in Canada) concerning longer work hours, more unpaid overtime and ‘face time’ expected by corporate managers, the mistreatment of pregnant women in the labour market, etc.

In the 2007 Australian election flexibility for workers was a major platform issue and it helped bring the Labor party to power. Christensen and Schneider explain that by contrast, “safeguards regarding working overtime are not part of the political agenda” in the US. (348) The same can be said for Canada, which is highly integrated into the US economy and is experiencing the same ‘Wal-Martized’ pattern of economic development, and lacks collective bargaining for workers in many key economic sectors, such as the financial sector. Canada is not discussed in the book, though it is important to note the total lack of national

discourse in this country around labour, flexibility, and overwork issues. This is similar to the US, but in sharp contrast to Australia and Europe where these are major and primary election issues.

Surprisingly, even under a conservative government (that of Prime Minister John Howard), Australia moved progressively to a national standard 38-hour work week and maintained much higher minimum wages (267) than one finds in the US or Canada. (Chapters 13 and 14) The 38-hour week contrasts with the 40-hour week official standard in the US and a 44-hour week in Ontario, Canada's most populous province (other provinces have similarly regressive or worse standards than Ontario's).

A major strength of this book is the contribution of various authors to the theme of workplace flexibility and the international comparative analysis of select countries. A striking omission is the Danish flexicurity model, which warrants a chapter of its own (if not two or three) given that it set the standard for flexibility for workers in the early 1990s, and given that Japan and Australia each have two chapters dedicated to their workplace flexibility policies and problems.

The two chapters highlighting European approaches to employer-employee flexibility deal with several countries simultaneously. Suzan Lewis and Laura den Dulk discuss the findings of a cross-national European study on gender, parenthood, and flexible working arrangements. The countries included in the study were Norway, Sweden, Portugal, France, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, Bulgaria, and Slovenia. Janet C. Gornick looks into "selected public policies that shape working time as of approximately 2002 in six European countries" (223) in her chapter. Those countries include the UK, Belgium, France, and others. No European nation

is given specific detailed attention, but one can conclude that initiatives are most advanced in Europe by far in the areas of making part-time work dignified, living-wage work, and removing all discriminatory barriers regarding this type of work, e.g. making pro-rated pension and other benefits a legislated right, giving workers the right with job protection to request full-time hours or to shift from full-time to part-time hours without penalty, offering equal training opportunities and career advancement to part-time workers etc. Europeans spend hundreds of hours less per year on the job in market work (while being much more productive in many instances) than Canadians and Americans, (223–224) because of far more advanced policies in the areas of work-week standards, paid vacation and other forms of paid leave, increased control and rights over time and scheduling of work, etc. This all translates into multiple opportunities for care work (elder, child, family illness, disability), personal development (such as further education), community work, and other invaluable forms of non-market work that North Americans and Japanese in particular cannot access. Among the countries analyzed, the Europeans and Australians come out far ahead on flexibility initiatives and in establishing a national discourse on the subject, although these also face serious challenges in the intensifying global competition of the new economy.

A tragic irony of the book, which is acknowledged only on the second-last page, is the reference to a "financial services company" that no longer exists, yet which was "singled out for praise at the time" of writing. That company was Lehman Brothers. Even more tragic is the reference to BP (yes that BP, of Gulf of Mexico oil spill fame) as another company "singled out for praise." (99–100) Goldman Sachs and other US companies found at the centre of the most recent,

and past, financial and accounting crises and scandals are held up for their workplace flexibility initiatives. This speaks to the overemphasis of Christensen and Schneider and other authors in the book on the voluntary (and self-regulatory) approach to workplace flexibility. These are not the types of organizations one can trust to do the right thing, even when they explicitly say they are committed to something as important as workplace flexibility. It is a very (North) American way of seeing things that has repeatedly led to failure and catastrophe, including the most recent crisis that is placing incredible strains on workers, families, and the unemployed.

As mining giant Vale has proven in Canada just recently, even unionized workforces are falling behind rapidly as their employers become more profitable. The fruits of labour insure company profitability but are not being shared in the form of improved flexibility, paid time off, pensions, wages, or profit-sharing; in fact they are being taken away even where a strong union exists. Voice and collective bargaining are required as a basic framework to develop meaningful, enforceable flexibility *for workers* as proven in Denmark and other European nations, and in Australia. But even these are proving insufficient in the globalized economy. This book fails to make this point clearly and further, it does not approach the real solutions required to advance economic democracy beyond traditional unionization, or the need to address the scale of corporate enterprises that are 'too big to fail' and too powerful (with their lobbying, legal and financial resources, as well as authoritarian decision-making models) to care about or consider workers.

RICHARD PEREIRA

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**Norene Pupo and Mark Thomas, eds., *Interrogating the New Economy: Restructuring Work in the 21st Century*** (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2010)

THIS STIMULATING collection of essays emerged out of a multi-year research project through the Centre for Research on Work and Society at York University. Benefitting from two differently situated yet complementary institutional collaborators, the academic and trade-union intersection from which this book arises provides a rich complementary stance from which to begin to make sense of "the new economy" in the Canadian context. It begins with an accessible overview of how the new economy came about, tracing the basic premises and language surrounding capitalist development in the West. It then hones in on the recent and complex changes that have occurred in the structures of Canadian labour markets, accomplished through highlighting the implications that these processes have had for workplaces and labour markets. It also focuses on the effects that these shifts have produced on the lives of workers, as well as how workers have responded to these new economic conditions.

One of the great strengths of this book is that it denotes very convincingly how the economic paradigm shapes many facets that extend well beyond the economic sphere. As the authors show, this new paradigm has created the structural conditions which inform relations which are different in character from previous eras at the level of the personal, the community, the national, and the global. Changes in the economic structures have also created new market conditions that inform how actors experience labour markets, and which then create and rely on workers adopting a work ethic which assumes the rationality of neoliberalism. In other words, in stark contrast to the

Keynesian era, workers expect (and have come to believe that they should expect) to carry the costs of insecurity brought about by the market, rather than expecting capital to bear some part of this burden. These chapters also do an effective job of showing how experiences within situated spaces that workers experience as isolated realities are indeed related to processes of economic globalization.

A wide breadth of problematics (ranging in both scale and scope) are covered within the chapters of this edited edition. For instance, in Chapter 1 Gregory Albo provides a very good introduction into how capitalism works, including the terminology best employed to discuss capitalism, the processes and discourses involved within its functioning, and the tensions that this economic system produces as well as the challenges recent economic shifts have induced (such as straining the ability of unions to engage in collective bargaining). Chapter 3 provides a conceptual and analytical toolkit by which to make sense of recent changes in both the new economy and labour markets. It explores how labour markets are experienced by different actors as a result of technological developments, structural inequalities including differential access to human capital, and intersections (namely class, gender, and 'race') which function as key axes. Also covered in this book are the specificities of what constitute patterns of precarious work in the Canadian public sector, including employment practices such as seasonal employment, contracting out, and part-time employment relations. Similarly discussed are how the embrace of technological changes – in an attempt to “stay competitive” – has instigated shifts in the labour process which have effectively reoriented insecurities and burdens onto workers as opposed to capital.

While there is a wide range of issues covered in this book (such as a focus

on the state's role in producing precarious segments in the labour market, and gendered, racialized, and sectoral shifts in the new economy that have impacted unions and their levels of perceived militancy), one of the most significant strengths of this book is the current and grounded issues that are engaged. Perhaps most obvious in this regard is Mark Thomas's chapter titled “Labour Migration and Temporary Work: Canada's Foreign-Worker Programs in the ‘New Economy.’” In this piece, Thomas does an excellent job of thoroughly accounting for recent policy changes to Canada's Temporary Foreign Worker Program which has solidified a shift towards a low-wage, flexible workforce in Canada. The chapter allows the reader to better understand the state's role in producing a global reserve of flexible labourers in low-wage sectors through an intersection of labour and migration policies. Likewise emphasized are the mechanisms involved in producing these shifts, such as the racist discourses and nationalist beliefs which ideologically justify a global reserve of flexible labourers. What is especially impressive about this book – as Thomas's chapter clearly shows – is that these changes to Canadian labour markets are neither simply “good” nor “bad.” Rather, these shifts are fraught with ambiguities given the varying social effects on differently situated actors, as well as on different workplaces and Canadian labour markets.

While this book provides a timely and informed intervention into how we conceive of Canadian labour markets in the current era, there are a few themes that could have been better addressed in this book. Most significant is that there is no chapter devoted specifically to the labour market situation of Canada's Aboriginal peoples, either in the past or in the current era. Given the Canadian focus of this book and the clear effort that was made

to highlight axes that differently privilege actors in the Canadian labour market, it is surprising that (beyond cursory mention) there is no chapter dedicated to engaging with the plight of Canada's Aboriginal peoples in the labour markets. Also needed is a more thorough elucidation of some key concepts that are employed throughout this book, such as that of "labour process." Given that this book is set up in a manner that implies it could be used as a very effective teaching tool (such as by having discussion questions at the end of each chapter), a more thorough understanding of the theoretical roots and conceptual richness behind terms like "labour process" would have improved the book's quality for use by an undergraduate audience. Regardless, *Interrogating the New Economy* is an excellent resource for anyone interested in the current state of work in the Canadian context. In light of the clarity with which it is written and yet the complexity of issues that are engaged, it would be an appropriate resource for university and college students at all levels, as well as for academic specialists.

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**Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri,**  
*Commonwealth* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press 2009)

MICHAEL HARDT AND Antonio Negri have written a book that takes classical Marxism as its starting point and then crafts an argument that claims to rework its origins to address the current state of political economy and Marxist philosophy up to the global economic crisis of 2008. *Commonwealth*, the last in a trilogy (*Empire* 2000, *Multitude* 2004), stands alone and does not require the reading of the other two to grasp the argument. The

main principle of classical Marxism upon which Hardt and Negri have based and reworked their argument is the understanding that the contradiction between the forces and relations of production (collective production and individualized consumption) provides the basis for a class struggle that has the *potential* to lead to revolution.

*Commonwealth* is divided into six parts, each acting like a chapter, with a short *intermezzo* between parts three and four, which divides the book into two halves. The parts, put simply, are: the multitude of the poor; altermodernity; struggles over commonwealth; empire; beyond capital; and revolution. The first half of the book is a philosophical and historical explanation of the topics, and the second half is a political and economic analysis of the topics. The *intermezzo*, entitled "A force to combat evil," is a brief look at human nature, and the conclusion is a reflection of the possibilities of revolution.

The stated purpose of the book is to advance an ethical project within and against Empire through the act of self-rule of the multitude and the invention of new democratic forms of social organization. The book opens with a lengthy analysis of the power of property in the world today stemming from the three modern bourgeois revolutions (English, American, and French) where the right to property was entrenched in written constitutions. The authors trace how the right to property began as a resistance to the dispossession of the poor, but then turned to an issue of security for the middle classes in the three French constitutions dated 1789, 1793, and 1795. They then contrast this with the more advanced Haitian revolution and constitution, discussion of which was suppressed in European political accounts. The defense of property became the foundation of every modern political



constitution and was pitted against the real liberty of the people.

The authors define their concept of the "multitude" as a plurality of singular subjects who cannot be represented by one person such as a monarch and who are, as yet, incapable of self-rule. The multitude, therefore, is closest in Marxist terms to the "masses," but here the authors emphasize the singularity of the subjects since they form no one identity among themselves other than being part of the "poor" (without property). The poor, the authors explain, are playing an increasing role at the heart of capitalist production due to the globalization and casualization of labour, and lie at the centre of any project for revolutionary transformation. (55)

Hardt and Negri suggest that today's modes of production are not just creating commodities, but transforming human relations. They express this as the production of subjectivity through "biopolitical production." This idea has been influenced by the work of Foucault, although they differ with Foucault on some points. Freedom and resistance come both from within and without the "biopolitical moment," and the event that will rupture the continuity of history (revolution) must be understood as originating from freedom and power within the moment. It is a multitudinous strategy that links political decision-making to the bodies in struggle. (61)

Hardt and Negri then introduce the term "altermodernity" to describe a resistance that cuts through both modernity and anti-modernity. They acknowledge that the dualism (modernity/antimodernity) has been used to describe the clash of cultures in the period of empire (e.g. the Spanish arriving in America), but suggest that within the interaction of cultures there is a node of resistance. Anti-modernity is not backwardness therefore, but a point of resistance also. The Haitian

revolution is again used as an example, one they say has been written out of both mainstream history and the many "age of revolution" accounts. (70) If colonialism is a form of "biopower," then, all subjects have access to a margin of freedom that grounds their capacity to resist. During the American Civil War, for instance, about half a million slaves refused to produce and move food to the Confederates during a general strike. (76)

"Altermodernity" was named by the anti-globalization movement and derived from the word "altermondialiste," (102) suggesting a diagonal line rather than a play of opposites. Examples of altermodernity for Hardt and Negri lie in the Zapatista campaigns, and in the 2000 and 2003 struggles over water and natural gas ownership in Cochabamba, Bolivia. These struggles are characterized as altermodern ones for the authors because the organizational structure is no longer vertical as in centralized struggles around class, and no one person or group of workers (e.g. miners) could claim to represent the entire working class. (110) These struggles then were over the ownership of the commons and counter to the "republic of property" in which water and gas were being privatized. The site of the struggle was no longer a single workplace, but a metropolis with neighbourhood councils forming the basis of self-rule. (111)

Altermodernity therefore suggests a more profound rupture with modernity. It traces its origins from the Enlightenment to the work of Machiavelli, Spinoza, and Marx against absolutism. It includes the workers' movements, and it includes liberation struggles against imperialism and colonialism. The nature of the struggles is changing because the nature of work under capitalism is changing and "immaterial production" (images, information, knowledge, affects, codes, and social relationships) is becoming hegemonic.

Therefore the structures of resistance have also changed. While material production (e.g. automobiles) still exists, its value is increasingly dependent on immaterial factors and goods. (132) Work with automated and computerized systems now produces value along with the older technologies.

Hardt and Negri identify three ways that labour has changed. The first is in the way the object of production has shifted from the consumable product to the subject and the social relationship. (132) Second is the way in which what used to be called the “feminization of work” has become standard for most workers with the shift to so-called “flexible labour.” Third is the flow of both legal and illegal immigrants to supplement the local labour force that has become essential for the economy even in the southern countries. (134) Capital then is realized as a social relation as well as a commodity.

The authors argue that the contradiction between the social nature of capitalist production and the private nature of capitalist accumulation is dramatically intensified and provides a political opportunity for resistance, especially in the cities where most of the world’s population lives. Whether the “multitude” can act *politically* is the question posed in the final parts of the book? This raises the issue of agency and the question of what *direction* the movement of the multitude takes. Is it democratic or antidemocratic? The shift from *being* the multitude to *becoming* the multitude is now posed by the authors.

On the issue of agency, the authors depart from classical Marxism. They argue that the leadership in Russia in 1917 was top-down as was needed at that stage in historical development. Most Marxists would argue, to the contrary, that the movement was from below and that the successful leadership was democratic centralist, not top-down. Still

Hardt and Negri do not advance their argument further and leave the reader with a sense that opposition is/was spontaneous—it just happens. While they state that the multitude is the only revolutionary figure today, they do so without describing how it comes together to act in the world. (175) The question of self-organization and organization into structures beyond neighbourhood councils is not addressed.

The authors now redirect their attention to contemporary politics in Iraq. They state that there is an emerging world order quite different from the one the neoconservatives have anticipated in the United States. They see the Iraq offensive as a defeat by 2007 with the US having to escalate troop commitments instead of withdrawing them. (210–11) They see the American and Western dependence on finance capital in place of production as another symptom of decline and note that new countries like China have taken up production and experienced a rise in status. The authors also argue that no single state will emerge as hegemonic; (220) nor will a multilateral order emerge. (222) Instead they cite Saskia Sassen on the denationalization of certain components of the nation-state as a global agenda. “Governance,” once a corporate term, is now entering common parlance to describe a hybrid system of state, corporate, and other ruling systems.

The concluding sections of *Commonwealth* discuss the various forms of resistance that arise from within capitalism. *Jacqueries* (popular revolts), such as that of the *piqueteros* in Argentina in 2001, are mentioned, and the authors note that these are somewhat spontaneous with only a minimal amount of organization. (236) The question of how the insurrection is made permanent is raised but by no means resolved. (245) A larger overview and discussion of structure is missing here. The book draws towards its

conclusion with a set of minimal reforms needed if capitalism (not socialism) is to survive. They include basic physical infrastructure (clean water, sanitation, electricity, food), basic and advanced education, open access to information (including wireless networks), funds for advanced research in technology, open national borders and the freedom to move or not move, and a minimum guaranteed income (nationally or globally). These are expressed as the basics for capitalist production and through the peoples' struggle for these basic needs capitalism creates its own gravediggers. (310) Here the book turns full circle.

On the question of revolution, the authors conclude that any revolt must tackle the problem of property and the privatization of the commons. On the question of identity politics, they say that identity must become a way of creating unities rather than differences so that identity becomes an end rather than a means and an end that may not be required as the people acquire sovereignty. Revolution then for the authors becomes a question of political representation (346) and a matter for creating "subjectivities in singularities." They state that they believe that Lenin and Trotsky's notion of leadership is not applicable today as people no longer need leaders. (353) The authors admit that a revolution must eventually be governed and supported by some alternate form of government, but fall short of suggesting what that would be other than some form of federalism with pluralistic and plastic structures. (372)

To conclude, *Commonwealth* is a work attempting to revise Marxism that fails in its final chapters to present any convincing alternatives to the classical models that exist (either socialist or capitalist). The book has a spontaneist feel about it despite its attempts to develop a structure and is in serious need of less philosophical

language and more concrete examples and analysis of modern struggles (The trade union movement is barely mentioned). The examples cited in this review were squeezed from the text, which is very abstract, and at times, vague. Having said that, the book is certainly worth reading critically even if it must be seen as a very limited project, and will no doubt interest those who read political economy and political philosophy generally. Readers should be alerted to a section on "Revolutionary Violence" (367–371) and would be wise to check this section first before recommending students read this book lest it be misinterpreted. This section stands awkwardly in the context of the whole and would probably have best been removed by the editors of Belknap Press since it does not contribute to or extend the argument in any useful way. The book attempts to end on a positive note, so let us hope the peoples of the world experience some of the "happiness" ("De Singularitate 2: Instituting Happiness") that the authors wish for them at the end of *Commonwealth*. (376–383)

ELLEN L. RAMSAY

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**D.W. Livingstone, ed., *Education and Jobs: Exploring the Gaps*** (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 2009)

THIS COLLECTION is a sequel to *The Education-Jobs Gap: Underemployment or Economic Democracy* (1999) by D.W. Livingstone which has become something of a modern classic in the field of work, as it relates to the issue of education and skills matching. Consequently, this volume is most welcome as it brings a wealth of valuable updated and new insights and evidence on the linkage among education, skills, and learning, and actual job requirements for the labour force of the 21st century.

The volume is edited by Livingstone, who is the lead on the Education-Jobs Requirement Matching (EJRM) Project based out of the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE) at the University of Toronto; seven other members of the research project team have also contributed chapters to the collection. This research is part of a long-term study on the problem of skill and knowledge underutilization in the workforce. The volume is concerned, in particular, with “the education-based dimensions of the underemployment of those who do have jobs,” (1) but it also goes well beyond this in exploring the more informal side of life-long on-the-job learning. In its near 400 pages the book offers an extensive critical literature review along with original Canadian-centred research derived from surveys and ethnographic studies. For those who might find the size of the volume a little overwhelming, the opening and final chapters offer very useful overviews of the main threads of the research.

This work provides a valuable counterweight to uncritical human capital proponents and boosters of the so-called value-added jobs revolution created for ‘the age of information and the knowledge economy.’ In a period when requirements for literacy and computer fluency are ubiquitous, when the levels of schooling among the general population continue to increase (and outpace actual job requirements), and when so many jobs, particularly in the burgeoning service sector of the economy, have been subject to downgrading through flexibilization of the workforce, the linkage between jobs and skills/education has become an ever more pressing question for critical evidence-based examination. This volume provides just such a timely analysis.

One of the values of the study, which yields many fruitful insights and findings, comes from its use of a mixed methods approach involving linked surveys and

case studies for its analysis. The researchers employed a Canada-wide survey of working adults, plus a focused survey of waged and salaried workers from Ontario (each conducted in 2004), along with non-random semi-structured in-depth interviews conducted in 2005–2006 of employed individuals to uncover the deeper meanings of the questions posed in the larger-scale representative surveys. The ability to match findings from empirically-based surveys with insights from detailed qualitative interviews is important. The case study interviews allow access to deeper understanding of the raw numbers, enabling the identification of key themes and providing grounded real life experiences to help shape the analysis. The use of quotations from interviews in the case studies gives actual voice to how workplace learning takes place and how underemployment is actually experienced.

The volume uncovers evidence that points to an ever-growing incidence of worker over-qualification for jobs. Its five case studies, which look at teachers, computer programmers, clerical workers, auto workers, and disabled workers, allow for in-depth examination of the relationship between qualification and jobs. The book reveals that while over-qualification is common, there are important occupational distinctions with respect to the mismatch between jobs and qualifications. For example, teachers have the highest levels of matching between formal educational attainment and job requirements, while clerical workers, for whom formal educational requirements for entry are generally low, have the highest levels of mismatching and underemployment. Significantly, the study gives workers with disabilities special attention, revealing how these workers are particularly disadvantaged and vulnerable in a workforce that has become increasingly polarized between ‘good’

and 'bad' jobs and subject to high levels of job insecurity.

It is also important to recognize that the key data sources for the study were collected between 2004 and 2006 at a time when the Canadian economy was performing at a high level and when unemployment was relatively low. This was a time, in other words, when workers were in a better position to match their skills and education to jobs in the labour market. Yet the study uncovers serious skills/education and job mismatches and consequently high levels of underemployment. This raises a number of important issues. First, what happens to the matching during bad economic times, such as today, when more workers are chasing fewer jobs? The expectation is that the phenomenon of underemployment likely spreads and deepens. Secondly, the prevalence of over-qualification even during 'good times' suggests that there is a structural problem in the economy in which there are simply not enough good jobs for the quality of skills and education embodied in the labour force. In an economy in which the industrial strategy has followed neoliberal lines that promote underinvestment in training and the promotion of 'race to the bottom' wage strategies, the prevalence of job-education/training mismatches should be expected.

The study also approaches its understanding of the education-jobs paradigm and the problem of 'over education' in a dynamic rather than static manner. It notes that instrumental treatments that simply attempt to match years and levels of formal education and narrow notions of 'applicability' of education type to a specific job miss other important dimensions of the relationship, such as the broader cultural purposes of education. The findings tell us "that the capabilities of individuals, the requirements of jobs, and the relationships between them cannot be reliably indicated by simple

measures of years or levels of educational attainment. These data reveal the importance of informal and implicit learning by workers in performing their jobs, which has the effect of transforming their abilities and modifying their jobs." (7) In fact, informal learning is at least as important as continued formal education to enhancing job performance, a fact that is often neglected in many human capital approaches to the issue.

One limitation of the study concerns the case of more recent immigrants and visible minorities. While they are identified in the study, they are not given a more thorough scope of treatment. In part this lack of in-depth examination may be due to limitations with the large-scale survey instruments because of the unreliability of small numbers. However, demographic projections inform us that in a few years newcomers will be the sole source of labour force growth, and that visible minorities (whose growth has been driven by more recent waves of immigration) constitute a rapidly increasing share of the Canadian population and are already nearing 50% of the population of our largest city, Toronto. Among these groups the problem of skill and education recognition and underutilization is well known and has become the focus of considerable public policy discourse. Hence, an expanded discussion and analysis of the experiences and problems of skills/education and job mismatches for immigrant newcomers and visible minorities relative to other segments of the Canadian labour force would have been extremely valuable as this comparison is seldom drawn out in a systematic fashion.

This book is essential reading for all those concerned with understanding the contemporary labour force, one marked by greater levels of polarization, and growing contingency. The relationship between formal education, workplace

learning, and job qualification is too often misunderstood. *Education and Jobs: Exploring the Gaps* helps to bring

clarity to this relationship and better understanding of the growing problem of underemployment.

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