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## REVIEWS/COMPTES RENDUS

Joan Sangster, *Dreams of Equality: Women on the Canadian Left, 1920-1950* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart 1989).

THE POST-SUFFRAGE decades have come to represent the decline of first-wave feminism in Canada. The consumerism of the 1920s, the harsh realities of the Depression, followed by war and reconstruction, created economic and social conditions that dampened the spirit of feminism in Canada. *Dreams of Equality* examines the political parties that resisted these trends and harboured concern for women's issues during the years of declining feminism: the Communist Party of Canada (CPC) and the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation (CCF). In this, the book accomplishes an important task. It steps into a gap in Canadian Left history, which mostly has ignored women, and in Canadian women's history, which mostly has ignored the Left and, until recently, these decades. Sangster argues that while liberal feminism was fragmented and weak during this period, "much of the dynamic debate on the woman question was found in leftist circles."

*Dreams of Equality* is much more detailed in its analysis of the CPC, perhaps because of the more complex evolution of the CPC's response to international pressures during 1920-50. In one sense, the Party was consistent in its opposition to feminism: feminism was thought to promote sex antagonism and detract from the class struggle. This made the Party suspicious of autonomous women's organizations. In another sense, relying on

the word of Engels, Bebel, and Lenin, the CPC acknowledged the theoretical importance of women's oppression under capitalism, and was eager to attract working-class women — especially the more "revolutionary" wage-earning women — into its ranks. Sangster argues that strategies and policies to accomplish this end varied according to the different imperatives of the Comintern. The CPC's early years were a relatively open period for discussion of women's issues, as members drew inspiration from the Russian efforts to transform the position of women through collective kitchens, day care and birth control. The CPC created a Women's Department and encouraged participation in Women's Labour Leagues (WLL), though these organizations never were a Party priority. The Leagues promoted various women's issues that were shunned by other parties, most notably birth control. The beginning of the Communist International's third period meant a setback for the WLL. Their autonomy was restricted and they were placed under the leadership of the Worker's Unity League, a trade union body with little concern or respect for the WLL's housewife-members. Sangster demonstrates how the Popular Front period and the fight against fascism reinvigorated the organization of women, when maternalism was used to appeal to women on issues like consumer prices and peace. During the war, Party women briefly filled leadership positions as they stepped into the breach formed by the imprisonment of male party leaders. Throughout the entire period, few women rose to leadership positions and most CPC

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women remained confined to "maternal" issues which were low in the Party's priorities. Sangster concludes that the CPC failed, judged against its own standards, to draw the most "revolutionary" section of women, wage-earning women, into its ranks.

Sangster argues that in contrast to the CPC, the CCF had a much weaker theoretical heritage for understanding women's oppression. The trade-union, agrarian and Christian socialist organizations which formed the CCF nonetheless had organizational traditions which encouraged the development of autonomous women's organizations within the CCF. Autonomous organizations allowed CCF women to contribute to its growth, while at the same time they developed political skills in an environment in which they were comfortable. Like the CPC, the CCF never made women's issues a priority, and the autonomous women's organizations became contentious as CCF members became concerned that they reinforced women's subordinate status.

Sangster's comparisons of the parties are useful. The CPC, despite its stated commitment to the women question, failed to offer a satisfactory theoretical analysis that addressed the issues stemming from domestic labour and woman's place within the family. The highly-centralized CPC political structure dampened the ability of women members to shape policy. In contrast, the CCF permitted more autonomy for its women's branches, but showed less theoretical concern for women's issues; the predominantly male leadership of the CCF, like the leadership of the CPC, was never enthusiastic in its support for women's issues. Sangster concludes that this contributed to the failure of both organizations to address the contradictions of the gendered division of labour which shaped women's participation in the labour force, the family, and party ranks.

One of the important and contentious themes to emerge in this book is the discussion of the way both parties dealt with domestic or maternal issues. Both parties

were pragmatic in formulating policies which they thought would appeal to women: policies which were centred around women's domestic and maternal role. Sangster argues that this strategy was a contradictory one. On the one hand, it succeeded in drawing women into such political activity as the fight against fascism and the Housewives Consumer League. On the other, since domestic issues were never deemed a priority by either party, it meant that women were relegated permanently to subordinate issues and positions within the party. By embracing maternalism, and in the absence of a theoretical analysis of the patriarchal structure of the family, the parties left little to distinguish themselves from the liberal parties that declared women's place to be in the home. Sangster nonetheless concludes that maternalism "could take on a radical potential when married to a socialist analysis."

Certainly both parties supported some women's issues because they believed this furthered class struggle. Both the CPC and the CCF allowed the formation of separate women's organizations for pragmatic reasons: to enhance overall support for their parties and their policies. Such active promotion of women and women's issues within the ranks of these parties may well have provided a remarkable contrast to the Liberal and Conservative Parties, but this is not necessarily radical in the feminist sense of reflecting a strong commitment to the liberation of women. Through evidence of the Left's support for various issues linked to women's domestic role, one can discern a class-based radicalism inherent in Left discussion of these issues. But it is unclear whether this radicalism was directed towards the liberation of women as opposed to the liberation of the working class, and, incidentally, women of the working class. Sangster makes this distinction with respect to birth control. The CPC's singular demand to make birth control legal in the 1920s was defended in terms of the

pragmatic survival needs of the working-class family, not in terms of the rights of women to control their own reproduction. To call simply for the working-class family's need to control reproduction leaves unresolved the issue of *who* makes the decision within the working-class family. With the hindsight afforded by the current struggle over abortion in Canada, we can see this distinction as a crucial one. To legalize abortion without affirming the woman's right to control her own reproduction could leave women vulnerable to the decisions of male partners in the working-class family. Further consideration of this distinction with respect to other issues suggests that the CPC's radicalism on women's issues was class-based but not feminist.

Sangster argues that this class-based emphasis in both the CPC and CCF was consistent with the support base of the parties. Her research indicates that women members tended to identify economic rather than sexual oppression as the primary reason drawing them into the party. Yet her book also provides evidence that a minority of socialist women challenged the CCF and the CPC on the woman question, the role of women within the parties, and the theoretical importance of understanding women's role within the family. My favorite example is one woman's call for "'a little Communism in action,' that is, husbands doing the dishes," followed by her suggestion that "a household hints column for men could recommend more nights out for the wives." Though the voices of such women were rare, they were nonetheless present and reflected a tenacious feminist minority who persistently challenged the Left throughout this period to extend their radicalism to include feminist concerns.

Sangster also cites the absence of a feminist theoretical tradition to enrich debate on the Left. New research into the prewar period reveals a lively series of feminist debates from within the minority ranks of the Left, especially the Social Democratic Party. The women's columns

of prewar socialist feminists like Mary Cotton Wisdom and Bertha Merrill Burns advanced the ideas of the earlier utopian socialists, while American maternal feminists advocated the socialization of housework and child care, thus challenging the sexual subordination of women to men. Although these concerns often were dismissed by Left party leaders, they did provide a tradition which countered the narrowing of socialist engagement only to class-based issues which excluded feminist concerns.

*Dreams of Equality* has raised a host of intriguing questions that warrant further research. Sangster ably demonstrates the women's importance in building the Canadian Left through a range of activities like fund-raising, educating, and electioneering, as well as through militant activities on picket lines. Her work convincingly demonstrates the inadequacy of party history that ignores the role of women and women's issues, and draws our attention to the need for comparably detailed research into the organizing strategies and policies of the Liberal and Conservative parties. This would prove fruitful in advancing our understanding of the development of these parties, and the development of feminism, during these decades.

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Nicole Lacelle, *Madeleine Parent, Léa Roback, Entretiens avec Nicole Lacelle* (Montréal: Les Editions du Remue-Ménage 1988).

MADELEINE PARENT, Léa Roback: deux syndicalistes, deux féministes, deux militantes des années 30, 40, 50 et au-delà, deux femmes à la fois héroïsées et méconnues. L'hommage que leur rend ici Nicole Lacelle n'a rien d'une célébration, d'un tribut en retour des services rendus; plutôt, en invitant les deux amies à se raconter, à témoigner par elles-mêmes de leur vie, de leurs luttes, son livre cherche à stimuler et à nourrir la réflexion et

l'engagement de la génération actuelle de militantes. Une autre façon en somme, pour ces deux grandes pionnières, de contribuer encore aux luttes d'aujourd'hui.

Madeleine Parent d'abord, 70 ans. Organisatrice syndicale au Québec à l'époque de Duplessis, puis en Ontario à partir des années 1960. "Mariée au syndicalisme" comme elle le dit elle-même (49), ses souvenirs s'ordonnent autour des grandes grèves qu'elle a connues, celles du textile au Québec, celles des sec-teurs des bandages ou de la bonnetterie en Ontario. Grève du coton en 1937, grèves de la Dominion Textile en 1942-43 puis de nouveau en 1952, grève de la Ayers à Lachute en 1947, grèves de la Textpack à Brantford en 1971 ou de la Puritex Knitting en 1978 à Toronto, toutes des grèves industrielles, menées majoritairement, parfois exclusivement, par des femmes.

Madeleine Parent raconte la violence. Celle des briseurs de grèves et de la police, celle de la cour supérieure du Québec ou de l'Ontario, celle de Duplessis puis, plus récemment, de ses homologues ontariens, tous égaux dans leur détermination anti-syndicale.

Madeleine Parent raconte l'impérialisme. La collusion entre les multinationales et les gouvernements provinciaux; les opérations de rachat de compagnies canadiennes viables par des intérêts américains, qui transforment les établissements industriels d'ici en de vastes entrepôts et acculent les ouvrières et ouvriers à la résistance, ou au chômage (Brantford, 1971); les rivalités entre syndicats américains et syndicats canadiens (Lachute, 1947); les ententes secrètes entre le FBI, les multinationales et la direction américaine des syndicats internationaux unis pour casser les reins à la section ouvrière québécoise (Valleyfield, 1952).

Madeleine Parent raconte le maccarthysme, le harcèlement, la mesquinerie, les ragots, les moyens de toutes sortes employés par les pouvoirs locaux dans les années 1950 pour la discréditer auprès des ouvrières et tenter de l'isoler.

Mais Madeleine Parent raconte aussi la détermination des femmes, plus

résistantes, plus tenaces que les hommes. Les femmes, capables dans la plus grande discrétion d'organiser un syndicat dans une usine sans que rien ne transpire avant le temps. Les femmes qui font la grève sur le tas tant que leurs griefs ne sont pas réglés. Les femmes de Lachute, citées à procès, et qu'aucune intimidation n'a fait taire. Les femmes de Valleyfield ou de Brantford, indélogeables de leur tente, plantée devant l'usine des multinationales. Les femmes de la Puritex, immigrantes vêtues de noir, jusque là toujours chaperonnées, et qu'on a vu distribuer des tracts en plein centre de Toronto dans la cohue d'avant Noël.

Surtout, Madeleine Parent raconte la solidarité. Et de toutes ses expériences, c'est celle-là qui l'a le plus marquée, et lui a permis de rester sereine. Elle se souvient de l'amitié et du support de cette jeune femme, au milieu des dénigrements des années 50. Et aussi de cette ouvrière du textile, jadis favorite des "boss", ou de cet ancien briseur de grèves, devenu tous deux des militants syndicaux très crédibles. Elle se souvient des téléphones entre voisins à Valleyfield, des livreurs de pain et des laitiers, tous complices pour passer l'information aux grévistes; et des rencontres, des amitiés nouées devant la tente de Brantford entre les piqueteuses et la petite ville. Et du respect mutuel grandi par la solidarité.

C'est une femme en accord profond avec elle-même qui nous parle. Une femme qui a renoncé sans peine à tout ce qui la distrairait de l'objectif de sa vie: la lutte pour plus de justice sociale. Une femme dont les choix, définis dans la jeunesse, semblent d'abord et avant tout avoir été guidés par une analyse rationnelle de la situation des démunis dans notre société.

Après celui d'une femme sereine, voici le témoignage d'une femme heureuse. A 85 ans, une telle énergie sourd encore de Léa Roback, une telle pulsion de vie qu'elle se communique à nous de page en page. Chez elle, l'orientation de la vie n'a pas été la conséquence d'une décision prise ration-

nellement; plutôt, c'est un débordement de vitalité qui l'a en quelque sorte imposée: Léa Roback, des décennies d'engagement pour qu'entre les humains le bonheur soit mieux partagé.

Avec cette précision dans les détails propre à la mémoire des dames âgées, avec aussi un grand talent d'évocation, Léa Roback se souvient. Elle se souvient de l'exploitation, de l'intolérance, de la misère des femmes, mais aussi des solidarités et du travail fait par les communistes pendant la Crise. Mais comme toutes ses expériences ont été toujours très fortement médiatisées par les rencontres qu'elle a faites, Léa Roback se souvient surtout des gens.

Des membres de sa famille d'abord. Sa grand-mère excentrique et désordonnée, son grand-père compréhensif et généreux, ses parents respectueux de ses choix et qui lui ont toujours gardé le gîte et le couvert, son frère Henri, son ami et le compagnon de sa belle jeunesse en Europe, ses sœurs si attentionnées. C'est dans cette famille aimante, unie et nourricière que Léa Roback a puisé l'exemple de l'action sociale le soutien moral et les réserves de sécurité affective qui l'ont guidée dans ses choix, fortifiée dans les difficultés et rendue absolument indifférente à l'argent et au pouvoir.

Léa Roback a vécu une belle jeunesse. De Madame Dax à Kathe Kollwitz, un cycle d'une dizaine d'années qui l'a conduite de la découverte de l'Europe à celle des communistes. Le Berlin des années folles, avec ses prostituées aux bottes tarifées, ses restaurants végétariens, les générales au théâtre à un mark, toute une vie d'étudiante libre et sans souci, jusqu'à la montée des nazis. Ses camarades du parti, son professeur lui-même, à sa façon, lui font comprendre qu'elle doit rentrer ici.

Ici, c'est la crise. Et la rencontre avec Fred Rose, et avec Blanche Gélinas. Les élections de 1935, les tracts au coin des rues, les femmes sous-alimentées, laissant mari et enfants se partager des repas plutôt maigres. C'est pour remédier à des

situations aussi concrètes que celle-là que Léa Roback a milité dans le Parti.

De son travail comme organisatrice à l'Union de la robe, entre 1936 et 1939, puis à la RCA Victor pendant la guerre, elle retient les amitiés; celle de Rose Pessota, de Florence ou de Rae, ses compagnes de lutte. Elle retient aussi la discrimination subie par Hélène, la plus compétente des drapeuses, refusée dans l'atelier parce qu'elle était noire; l'ostracisme qu'ont fait peser sur Gaby, ouvrière communiste, non seulement les patrons mais aussi les agents d'affaires du syndicat international. Surtout elle se souvient de la dureté de la vie des femmes. Cette jeune opératrice, obligée de confier à une crèche ses jumeaux nouveau-nés, les a retrouvés morts à l'âge d'un mois; cette employée de la RCA Victor, morte des suites d'un avortement effectué par un charlatan; Mme Perrault, morte au contraire de n'avoir pas avorté de son petit dernier qui a fini de l'épuiser. A travers le rappel de ces vies et de quelques autres, Léa Roback dresse le portrait de la condition des femmes ouvrières de cette époque mieux que bien des analyses rigoureuses. C'est pour elles toutes qu'elle a été syndicaliste, et c'est pour rester près d'elles qu'elle a toujours refusé d'entrer dans la bureaucratie syndicale.

Madeleine Parent, Léa Roback: deux femmes aux tempéraments fort différents, animées par la même révolte contre le malheur et l'injustice, animées aussi par ce même esprit résolument positif, capable de trouver le bleu même dans un ciel gris. (181) Merci à Nicole Lacelle d'avoir réuni leur double témoignage.

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Veronica Strong-Boag, *The New Day Recalled. Lives of Girls and Women in English Canada, 1919-1939* (Toronto: Copp Clark Pitman Ltd. 1988).

LES MEMBRES DU jury du Prix Macdonald de la Société historique du Canada ont reconnu la valeur du dernier ouvrage de Veronica Strong-Boag en lui décernant ce prix attribué "pour la plus importante con-



tribution à la compréhension du passé canadien". Or il s'agit ici du passé des Canadiennes-anglaises à une époque relativement récente et bien délimitée, celle de l'entre-deux-guerres.

Au lendemain de la Grande Guerre, le gouvernement fédéral et les huit provinces anglophones avaient accordé aux femmes le droit de vote, des milliers de travailleuses, de fermières, de bénévoles avaient contribué à l'effort de guerre, enfin tout laissait présager de profonds changements sociaux aussi vivement souhaités par les uns que décriés par les autres. C'est ce qu'un journaliste a nommé "L'Ere nouvelle", "*The New Day*". Strong-Boag, dans cette étude minutieuse, s'efforce de démontrer les réalisations et les échecs d'un tel espoir.

L'histoire des femmes est ici appréhendée par leurs cycles de vie, non pas en suivant une cohorte mais plutôt en abordant successivement les âges de la vie, de la petite enfance à ce qu'on nomme maintenant l'âge d'or.

Le premier chapitre porte sur la socialisation des filles, c'est-à-dire une éducation proprement féminine selon les critères de l'époque. Cette éducation préparait aux occupations féminines dans un marché du travail forement sexué. Des tableaux statistiques illustrent la concentration des femmes dans un champ restreint d'occupations qui deviennent vite saturées, comme en font foi le surplus de travailleuses de bureau.

Du public au privé, catégories difficilement dissociables, l'auteure consacre un chapitre aux fréquentations et au mariage, destinée prévue de chacune. La section sur le travail de maison situe celui-ci dans une période de plus en plus centrée sur la consommation dont les produits échapperont toujours à un grand nombre de femmes. Tenir maison était rarement l'unique occupation des ménagères qui souvent devaient aussi participer à une entreprise familiale tout en s'adonnant à l'artisanat, à la couture, à la mise en conserve.

La maternité et l'éducation des enfants, les prescriptions dont elles font

l'objet et les conditions dans lesquelles elles s'exercent, constituent un cinquième chapitre pour aboutir sur l'âge mûr et la vieillesse. Alors que nous ne sommes pas surpris de trouver ici une discussion des pensions de vieillesse, de la perception négative de la perte de la jeunesse dans une société qui la glorifie de plus en plus, nous trouvons aussi des pages importantes sur l'engagement des femmes dans la politique. En effet, c'est souvent après avoir élevé leur famille que nombre de femmes pouvaient enfin militer sur la place publique, soit dans les partis politiques, les organisations féministes, les syndicats ou le travail social bénévole.

Cette méthode d'organisation, en suivant les périodes de la vie, a l'avantage de suivre l'expérience féminine à chaque étape chronologique, mais elle pose aussi le problème du traitement des sujets qui reviennent à différents moments. Ainsi, la question du travail se retrouve dans plusieurs sections du livre bien qu'abordée chaque fois dans un contexte distinct.

Strong-Boag nous présente le fruit d'une recherche extrêmement fouillée. On y retrouve la substance de ses récents articles, maintenant mis à la portée d'un plus grand public. Elle a dépouillé une abondance de sources allant des revues à grand tirage aux rapports gouvernementaux; elle a aussi consulté à peu près tout ce qui s'est écrit sur le sujet depuis quelques années, ce qui situe ce travail à la fine pointe de la recherche au Canada anglais.

Chaque affirmation est illustrée par des exemples et on retrouve un grand effort de représentation régionale et ethnique. De plus, l'auteure ne perd jamais de vue la dimension de classe. Elle nous rappelle, par exemple, que l'idole des petites filles représentée par la poupée Shirley Temple, faisait les délices des petites de riches mais demeurait hors de portée de la plupart des petites Canadiennes. Elle souligne que le mariage signifiait pour les jeunes travailleuses "la meilleure garantie de survie" économique (96), que les nouveaux appareils ménagers restaient l'apanage des foyers électrifiés, surtout

urbains et relativement aisés, et que l'incertitude financière caractérisait la vieillesse qui, de plus en plus, se terminait à l'hospice.

Il existe très peu d'ouvrage sur les conséquences de la dépression économique pour la vie des femmes et Strong-Boag commence à combler cette lacune. Les femmes, administratrices du budget, ont dû se débrouiller avec des moyens réduits, réorganiser leurs habitudes de consommation et prendre de nouvelles responsabilités pour suppléer au revenu familial. Strong-Boag conclut que si la dépression a érodé la base économique de l'autorité masculine, si le chômage, les récoltes ratées, les faillites ont affaibli l'identité même du chef de famille, elle a mis en relief la contribution essentielle des femmes et en a fait les "héroïnes de la dépression". (138-139)

Très loin d'adopter une interprétation basée sur la "victimologie", Strong-Boag souligne que dans les limites imposées aux femmes — discrimination, inégalités des salaires — elles ont toujours activement participé à la société canadienne. Chaque époque a aussi eu ses féministes pour réagir aux contraintes imposées à leur sexe et Strong-Boag ne manque pas de relever les critiques de journalistes, de médecins, ou de juges qui n'ont cessé de dénoncer l'oppression et l'exploitation des travailleuses.

Les bouleversements d'après-guerre et l'accès des Canadiennes anglaises à la représentation politique ne leur a pas apporté une nouvelle ère de progrès et d'égalité, mais si la continuité domine sur le changement, il ne faudrait pas conclure à une période d'apathie. "*The New Day Recalled*" s'avérera indispensable pour comprendre cette époque, il ouvre des pistes, éveille la curiosité, et invite la comparaison avec les États-Unis et avec le Québec.

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Eric W. Sager, *Seafaring Labour: The Merchant Marine of Atlantic Canada, 1820-1914* (Kingston, Montreal and London: McGill-Queen's University Press 1989).

SAGER BASES HIS STUDY on data compiled by the Atlantic Canada Shipping Project (ACSP), of which he is a partner. His is a history of Atlantic Canada's largely preindustrial capitalist shipping industries: Newfoundland's coastal schooner trade, and the Maritimes' coastal, West Indies, and ocean-going trade. The ACSP's mandates and conclusions have been published elsewhere, and there is little need for re-statement. *Seafaring Labour* departs from the ACSP's concerns with the nature of the shipping industry and its relation to the region's development. Sager instead wishes to study the industry's labour in the transition to industrial capitalism by pursuing David Alexander's suggestion that seafaring labourers shared experiences similar to those of landward workers in the development of industrial capitalism.

This is a needed addition to historiography on the experience of the working classes, both in Atlantic Canada and within the shipping industry in general. Sager makes clear that the social relations of production are essential to any understanding of industrial transition in shipping. Sailors were skilled labourers dreaming of workplace control because of the peculiar nature of their "...craft, a single word that encompasses both vessel and skill, and it is about the fate of craft, its survival and its extinction in the age of industry..." that Sager is concerned. (10)

He qualifies this statement: for much of the period under study, there was little transition to industrial capitalism within Atlantic Canadian shipping. No substantial change in the social relations of production is indicated by Sager's work. What changes occurred were those of small craft writ large. *Seafaring Labour* begins by suggesting that the small craft of the coastal trades conditioned the preindustrial, paternalistic and fraternal

mutuality of masters and men among seafarers. While admitting that such craft remained important at the end of the 19th century, Sager suggests that they represented but the first stage in a transition to larger ships as the shipping industry became more dominated by ocean-going trade. The social relations of production, shaped by the merging of domicile and workplace, and by the mutuality of work and survival at sea, were changed subtly by this transition. But change was limited: large ships were "proto-factories." Merchants and masters employed large numbers of propertyless workers to sail ships, but because of the technology of sailing, could not seize these skilled seafarer's discretion and control over production and the workplace.

Ship-board social relations became more hierarchical as larger ships created conditions of managerial specialization and of codified labour discipline, but a fundamental paternalistic mutuality continued to define the lives of seafaring labourers. The most important change in the social relations of production appears to have been the decline of fraternalism, relative to paternalism, among seamen and ship masters. In this, relations between management and labour became more formal, informed by masters' and men's interdependence on each other's skill, and by the seamen's ability to withdraw their labour if ship managers and owners did not observe workplace norms.

Sager considers factors external to production to be important in the formalization of existing social relations in Atlantic Canadian shipping. British and Canadian legislators passed laws which, through schooling and examination, enforced the professionalization of ship officers, thus separating them from their subordinates, and codifying the wage relationship by formalizing contracts between seamen and their employers. Such changes were enforced by the manner in which, while at sea, masters embodied the authority both of capital and the state in disciplining labour.

Such legislative change was well un-

derway by the 1850s, and complemented ship owners' attempts to deal with larger changes in world shipping. These changes, unrelated to changes in the social relations of shipping production, were the reason for the transition in the Atlantic Canadian industry. Ship owners tried to reduce labour costs by employing labour-saving technology on larger ships to cope with declining freight rates caused by international increase in transoceanic shipping tonnage. Fewer skilled men sailed more tonnage for less wages in response to changes in world shipping markets. Sager does not demonstrate that social relations of production were important to an industrial transition in shipping. To the contrary, he suggests that change external to these relations (specifically, increased competition between Atlantic Canadian shipping and more-industrialized shipping elsewhere) led to intensified exploitation within existing social relations of production.

In a curious fashion, this conclusion does not allow Sager to explain exactly how seafaring craftsmen's "dreams" informed any transitional dynamic in the development of industrial-capitalist relations in Atlantic Canadian shipping. To the contrary (and Sager uses this to explain the slow industrial development in pre-industrial shipping), the persistence of seamen's cultural autonomy ensured that seafaring labour would not experience the trade unions or confrontations with capital and the state of their landward "brethren."

If Sager had placed such persistence of craft autonomy at the forefront of an explanation of why industrial capitalism did not come forcefully to Atlantic Canadian shipping, *Seafaring Labour* would have fulfilled its promise to consider the centrality of productive social relations in this industry's history. But he offers no explanation for the relatively weak development of an industrial-capitalist Atlantic Canadian shipping industry, represented by the deskilling and increased division of labour that were associated with steam engines and iron

hulls. Sager resurrects the ACSP's conclusion that external forces, namely landward industrial prospects under the National Policy, seduced shipping merchants away from investing in the shipping industry. A shift in investors' attention, not the social relations of production in shipping, ultimately led to the extinction of craft. Sager gives the slight industrial capitalist transition that did occur only a descriptive treatment in his final chapter, which appears largely as an appendix to the book's main argument.

There is little in this transition of the dynamic of class relations that is shown, by the work of Gutman, Kealey, Palmer, or Wilentz, among others, to have operated in industrial-capitalist development. These historians find conflicts between labour and capital to have been crucial in the development of industrial capitalism through skilled workers' resistance to their proletarianization by deskilling and labour-saving capitalist innovations. Workers' resistance, and corresponding developments wrought by capitalists and the state, advanced the larger maturation of industrial capitalism. A dynamic class struggle, and not capitalist prescience about the advantages of industrial investment (something members of the ACSP elsewhere have argued that historians should not expect ship owners to have possessed), pushed forward industrial capitalist production. In no industry in central Canada or the United States was the incidence of craft autonomy a sufficient obstacle to industrial-capitalist productive relations. Nor in other areas was it a sufficient obstacle to this development in shipping.

Other things being equal, surely the paternalism and mutuality of a sailing-ship technology so marked by craft autonomy would have been the same obstacle to industrial-capitalist relations in shipping everywhere? Sager does make an excellent argument that historically, "other things" were not equal. In Atlantic Canada, despite the sequence from small to big craft which Sager sees as so important in a limited transition, shipping really

was a number of interrelated industries tied to different, non-capitalist modes of production. At points, Sager raises this issue only to suggest that seafarers' origins in the domestic commodity production, or petty capitalism, of Atlantic Canadian farming and fishing communities prevented the growth of working-class solidarity. But why not take this further, to suggest that the developmental problems of shipping must be rooted in Atlantic Canada's dominant modes of production, not only insofar as the industry's investment and market patterns were concerned, but as they were affected by relations between labour and capital? One might propose, for example, that the persistence of the coastal schooner industry of Newfoundland, dominated by domestic commodity production in the colony's fisheries, might have continued to reinforce the mutuality and paternalism which dominated the labour market of Atlantic Canadian shipping. This reinforcement, in conjunction with landward investment opportunities, might have explained the decline of Atlantic Canadian investment in shipping.

*Seafaring Labour* is a provocative study of the problems of industrial-capitalist transition in Atlantic Canada's shipping industry. It shares all the strengths of the ACSP's empirical foundations; it is difficult to imagine where else one might find such a wealth of knowledge of shipping technology, industrial organization, and seafarers' lives. Sager's attempt to establish the centrality of productive relations unique to shipping in this development is innovative. Yet he does not fully harvest the fruit of this innovation, relying too much on the ACSP's conclusions, something he wishes to depart from by writing about the experiences of workers in the shipping industry, rather than the structural problems of this regional industry in itself.

Sean Cadigan  
Memorial University of Newfoundland

Peter Hunter, *Which Side Were You On Boys ... Canadian Life on the Left*. (Toronto: Lugus Productions Ltd. 1988).

Jack Scott, *A Communist Life: Jack Scott and the Canadian Workers Movement 1927-1985*. Edited and Introduced by Bryan D. Palmer (St. John's: Committee on Canadian Labour History 1988).

AT LAST! Former Communist Party of Canada (CPC) members are publishing their memoirs. Unlike previous accounts of Party life written by its leaders or their supporters and admirers (e.g., Tim Buck, William Beeching, Phyllis Clarke, Oscar Ryan, Tom McEwen), Peter Hunter's and Jack Scott's recollections are characterized by a frankness conspicuously absent from the earlier sanitized efforts. While this is all to the good one can only wonder why, in light of precedents established by American, Australian and European ex-communists, Canadian Party former members have not been more forthcoming before now.

To a considerable extent, Hunter's and Scott's autobiographies overlap. Both began their Party lives in the early 1930s; both became union organizers in southern Ontario; both joined the Canadian army and served overseas; both resumed Party work within the trade-union movement after their release from the military; and both withdrew from the CPC before defections and expulsions became commonplace after Khrushchev's denunciation of Stalin, and actions in Czechoslovakia and Hungary confirmed Soviet imperialism's true face. Hunter, perhaps, was more prescient, for he simply dropped out of the CPC in 1955, while Scott was expelled in August 1964 for the ultimate heresy of "factional activity." Unlike Hunter, whose ambitions led to a successful second career with the International Container Industry, Scott remained an unrepentant socialist, fervently supporting Beijing instead of Moscow.

Style, it is said, reflects the man. In this sense, these two books are very different. Hunter's is a measured account of his experiences and actions, tempered by

analytical asides that try to put his actions, and CPC policies and practices, into the context of national and international affairs. In contrast, Scott's narrative is a rambling, repetitious account generously salted with four letter words, and distinguished by uninhibited comments about men and women with whom he worked, came into contact, or fell out. As an *apologia pro vita sua* it is a virtual Who's Who of the Canadian communist movement. It is also a more-human document than Hunter's, for Scott's assessments of persons and particular events, however biased and inaccurate, are invariably pithy and, at times, revealing. He draws aside the veil of Party mystique, confirming that communist morality accords more with everyday life than with the propaganda projections of dedicated, disciplined cadres intent upon building a new society. Thus, in Scott's eyes, Buck, for example, emerges as a warm, fun-loving man with a rich mistress; Stewart Smith is highly intelligent, arrogant, and distant; Stanley Ryerson, "a consummate Party loyalist"; Harvey Murphy, a gambler; Sam Carr, "an overgrown schoolboy."

Both men's odysseys in the Canadian communist movement stemmed from working-class backgrounds. Like so many of this country's radical and trade-union activists, Hunter and Scott were born in Scotland and Ireland, and grew up in Glasgow and Belfast before emigrating to Canada (Hunter with his family in 1922; Scott on his own in 1928). In both men's families, the ideas and language of socialism — Hunter speaks of the Keir Hardie variant — together with poverty and unemployment, dominated their lives. Politicized from their earliest days, forced by necessity to leave school with limited qualifications, it was almost inevitable in the 1930s for such young men to be caught up in Canada's unemployed rallies and union causes. Hunter's involvement began in Hamilton, Ontario, with the Independent Labour Party's (ILP) Youth Group, and soon led to an awareness of, and in 1933, membership in, the Young

Communist League (YCL). Scott's pilgrimage was more direct and began "about 1932" in Chatham, Ontario.

It was a time of high excitement and social turmoil. The Great Depression was at its peak, and the CPC, declared illegal following the 1931 *Tim Buck et al* trial, carried out much of its agitation and propaganda in clandestine fashion. Again, the two men's Party enlistments occurred during the so-called "Third Period" when the Communist International's (Comintern) class-against-class policy was the mandatory guideline for all member parties. As both confirm, that policy led to the CPC's bitter denunciation of the newly-fledged Cooperative Commonwealth Federation (CCF), and, after the Comintern changed its line in 1935, rendered unsuccessful subsequent attempts to cooperate with the CCF.

Hunter's recollections of Party activities during the 1930s is the most significant aspect of his book. Soon after becoming a full-fledged YCL member he, through a combination of ability, dedication, and particular circumstances, was selected for further education and indoctrination at the Lenin School in Moscow. Despite a certain reluctance to elaborate upon courses and the nature of his training, or to name instructors and students with whom he took classes, his Russian experiences (1935-37) are among the most interesting features of his book. They tell much about the prevailing climate of opinion and the blinkered perspectives of Party members, fellow travellers, and naive, high-minded utopians for whom, during those critical prewar years, the Soviet Union could do no wrong.

Not surprisingly, Hunter's and Scott's faith in the Party and Moscow's infallibility survived the shock of the Nazi-Soviet pact in 1939. Following Party instructions to avoid national registration, they enlisted only after the "imperialist war" was transformed into an antifascist crusade in 1941. For both, their experiences of military service were of major significance. In the army they found a comradeship that equalled, even

supplanted, that of the CPC, and both discovered pride in being Canadian. For Hunter, here was the beginning of doubts about the USSR, and its Canadian surrogate, which led to gradual detachment from the movement which for so long dominated his life. That the CPC, through Norman Penner, attempted to retrieve him confirms that he had ability and potential.

Scott's exit from the party was very different. After returning from overseas he settled, without Party permission, in British Columbia. There he resumed his CPC connection and organization activities in the Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers Union at the Consolidated Mining and Smelting Company's Trail plant. A stint in Yellowknife followed before he returned to Vancouver in the early 1950s, first becoming active in the Boilermaker's Union, and then joining the Building Services Employees Union because of his job at the Pender Street auditorium. He broke with the CPC over its unswerving support of the Soviet Union during its quarrel with China, a decision which followed years of skirmishing with the national and provincial CPC leadership. Instead of retreating, as Hunter did, to a more conventional life, Scott, true to his character, continued in his radical orbit. His subsequent involvement in the Canada-China Friendship Association, his role in launching its mouthpiece the *Progressive Worker*, his differences with union leaders, other socialists, and the CPC's British Columbia brass, his activities in the province's turbulent union movement, and his visits to China, take up almost half of his book. The most useful aspect of this coverage is his analysis of, and comments upon, the rise of "The New Lefts in Maoist Dress," — organizations such as the Communist Party of Canada (Marxist-Leninist), the Canadian Communist League, the Red Star Collective, and other assorted hot-house groups that emerged in the 1960s and 1970s. Often scathing in his assessments, Scott captures something of the atmosphere which marked those days, clarifies why and how such organizations

came into being, and what they attempted to achieve. In the process he confirms his commitment to socialism and reveals himself as a thoroughgoing Leninist.

Neither book is without blemish. Both authors fail to address the doctrinal issues which periodically beset the CPC, and to touch upon the leadership crises which convulsed the Party while they were active members. Neither comments upon or attempts to correct distortions, inaccuracies, or omissions in Party (let alone "bourgeois") accounts of the CPC. And discussion of the Comintern's connection with and influence upon the Party is conspicuously missing. In part, such oversights are understandable. Neither Hunter nor Scott were ever at the Party centre, and so were not directly involved in such matters. At the end of Hunter's book, he reflects upon Mr. Gorbachev's policies of democratization, glasnost, and perestroika, and concludes that the possibilities of their success are limited because of the Soviet Party's dogmatic commitment to democratic centralism and its inherent contradictions. Scott, on the whole, is silent about Soviet transgressions, and ends his story before Gorbachev's rise to power. The photographs in Hunter's volume are uncaptioned; he locates Vegreville in Saskatchewan instead of Alberta; and, at times, he tantalizes with intriguing allusions that are not elaborated further (e.g., his connections with Herbert Norman and Norman Bethune). Scott, too, is guilty of the same sin, and is inconsistent in pinpointing many of those he mentions. In this respect, a greater resort to editorial ellipses would have enhanced the value of Scott's memoirs, particularly in his recollections of B.C.'s complex, stormy trade-union history. Sadly, neither book contains an index.

These caveats aside, both works provide fresh insights into Canadian communism, and about why men and women of ability, energy, and spirit devoted themselves so wholeheartedly for so long to a Party whose loyalties lay elsewhere. Both, therefore, are welcome additions to

an all-too-neglected sector of Canada's history.

William Rodney  
Royal Roads Military College

Bob White, *Hard Bargains: My Life On The Line* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart 1987).

IT WAS FORTUNATE indeed that Bob White's first job was in a Woodstock, Ontario factory which had been organized by the UAW. As he was not yet 16, he was covered under the job classification of "boys under eighteen." Less than six months after he started work, a strike was called which lasted most of the summer. When the plant re-opened, he was one of those without work. Fortunately, he received a recall the following spring.

At about this time, an older co-worker suggested the union was the answer for working people, and that Bob should stand for the post of plant steward. Unenthusiastic at first, but made to feel responsible by his badge of office, he resolved not only to learn about unions, but to familiarize himself with the union contract in order to resolve disputes when they arose. In addition, he attended UAW education classes; the more he learned, the more fascinated he became.

Sometime after Bob became steward, he was elected to the bargaining committee. As a committeeman, he was head of three or four departments with stewards under him. After five years, he was elected chairman of the bargaining committee, which meant he was in charge of union affairs in the whole plant. Then he served as a part-time organizer when runaway plants started up in Ontario.

The first UAW convention he attended was held in Atlantic City in 1957. UAW leader Walter Reuther addressed the convention, and Bob was enthralled. Reuther talked about the civil rights movement, about the evils of segregation, and about international affairs. He insisted that the UAW had to look outward, as well as look after the affairs of its members.

In late spring 1957, Bob White led his first strike, which closed the Wellwood plant in Woodstock for thirteen weeks. The company had been taken over by a multinational which refused to consider anything the union asked. Pressure to settle on management's terms came not only from frightened union members, but also from local merchants and politicians. The threat to close the plant was most alarming in a small community where jobs were scarce. The UAW Director came to town with facts and figures which proved the threat was only a tactic, and that the plant was an integral part of the multinational's operation, which also had inherited a bargain from the previous owner. After thirteen weeks the labour department intervened, and a solution was reached. As leader, Bob White admitted that UAW aims had been too high, and the result a near-disaster.

By 1964, the Canada-U.S. Auto Pact discussions were well advanced. The Pact would mean a tremendous expansion of the auto industry in Canada. New, non-unionized plants would open, which meant the field was wide open for organizing. Bob White was chosen to head the UAW organizing-campaign team. Not only had the UAW a lot to offer, but it had been able to pioneer contractual clauses which afterward became standard in all union agreements. It also was known to be a democratic union, with a leadership accountable to workers, and free of corruption. The UAW recruited 35,000 members in five years.

When the UAW's Canadian regional director retired in 1968, Dennis McDermott succeeded him. McDermott believed changes must be made in the relationship between the UAW Canadian membership and the international headquarters in Detroit. If the Canadian section was to grow, it needed to get out from under the shadow of the eagle, and to help accomplish this, he moved Canadian headquarters from Windsor to Toronto. In addition, with Reuther's support, he argued that the Canadian Region was not like any other region in the UAW. It was in a different

country with different labour legislation, different attitudes, different health benefits and a different history. At the 1970 Atlantic City convention, the UAW voted to recognize the special status of Canada, and established that the Canadian regional director would automatically be a vice-president. Canada had been given a unique voice in the union's inner circle. McDermott's next move changed the labour movement in Canada. He was the key figure in the Canadian Labour Congress decision to adopt a new code of conduct, which said, in part, that Canadian sections of international unions should elect their own directors, rather than have them selected by the US headquarters.

This is a fascinating book, encompassing many labour-management confrontations of the 1950s-1980s. It also maps out the growing differences between the Canadian and American sections of one large international union, which eventually became irreconcilable. This resulted in the Canadian section's split from the UAW in 1985, and a founding convention in September that year which inaugurated the new Canadian Auto Workers (CAW) union. Much of this background was documented by the National Film Board's "Final Offer" which depicted the schism between the two sections.

Like the film, this book was produced with the intention of looking at a union and its leader from the inside. Despite White's extremely busy life, he was persuaded that if he did write the book, portraying the events of his working life and his personal life as factually and candidly as possible, perhaps Canadians would better understand unions. He admits in his introduction that much of what he has done in his work, and in his personal life, has been controversial, but change is always controversial, and leadership demands risk-taking. When Bob White joined the UAW in the early 1950s he felt that he had grabbed onto something that he could put his heart into, and that this was a lucky thing to happen to anyone.

Dawn Dobson  
Canadian Labour Congress



Jacques Rouillard, *Histoire du syndicalisme Québécois: Des origines à nos jours* (Montréal: les éditions Boréal 1989).

THE REMARKABLE EXPANSION of Canadian historical scholarship in the 1960s-1970s was followed, in the 1980s, by a welcome stage of synthesis. Thanks to Jacques Rouillard, 150 years of Quebec trade unionism now has been summarized and shaped.

For everyone involved in labour studies, Rouillard's enterprise will be welcome. In trade unionism, as in much else, Quebec "n'est pas une province comme les autres." The emergence of a Catholic union organization, the lack of a social-democratic tradition, the significance of codes and decrees in Quebec industrial relations law, and the recurrence of "corporatism" all have made the Quebec situation exceptional. So did the Quebec labour movement's enormous role in forcing the pace of the so-called "Quiet Revolution," and then, during the 1970s, in transcending it.

As a guide to a complex and controversial history, no one could be better qualified than Jacques Rouillard. *Au Coton*, his early work on Quebec's textile workers, led through studies on Quebec's national and Catholic unions and a history of the CSN to provide a balanced preparation for this ambitious undertaking. Across the solitudes in which, sad to say, Canada's historians so often choose to work, Rouillard's reputation is equally impressive.

Anyone faced with the task of synthesis has the opportunity to create a framework and, by the inevitable necessity of choice, to establish a point of view. Rouillard has done both.

Although two of the six sections are given over to the post-1960 period (a welcome emphasis for most of his readers), Rouillard gives respectable coverage to a period few Québécois historians have tackled: the roots of trade unionism from 1818 to 1897. Indeed, admirers of Bryan Palmer's *Working-Class Experience* might complain that short shrift is given

to the Chevaliers de Travail and the emergence of a class consciousness that was at least as visible in Montreal as it was in Toronto. Rouillard is less romantic.

More serious for him, and more central to his own primary research, was the era of union expansion after 1897, when Quebec industrialization moved out of a long era of depression into a bumpy age of growth. While the main outline of this period will be familiar to labour historians, Rouillard's restatement of Quebec aspects of the 1902 split between the TLC and national unions is a corrective both to Robert Babcock and his critics. So is his account of the post-1902 vicissitudes of TLC unions in Quebec. The 1930s' economic crisis gives Rouillard a chance to review the state of unionism under stress and on the eve of expansion during the 1940s-1950s.

While a Canada-wide perspective on labour history must recognize the importance of wartime labour legislation and postwar prosperity in transforming the status of Canadian unionism, Quebec's experience was more mixed, with a badly-divided labour movement contending with Maurice Duplessis and an uncertain Catholic hierarchy. As a complement to the accounts of the well-known Asbestos strike, Rouillard recounts the crushing of the Montreal Catholic teachers' strike, also in 1949.

In conventional fiction, Quebec unionism would have found its ultimate triumph in the 1960s, with the advent of a sympathetic government, and lived happily ever after. From being almost the most repressive industrial relations regime in Canada, Quebec moved rapidly into the vanguard, leading all but Saskatchewan in granting to public employees collective bargaining and the right to strike, implementing vast chunks of a hurriedly-adopted labour agenda of reforms, and welcoming union leaders as partners in change. However, as Rouillard explains, the radicalization of unions — or at least of their militants — rapidly outpaced what the Liberal and later, the Parti Québécois governments could tolerate.

When the Liberals regained power in 1970 and the PQ in 1981, visions of social democracy were supplanted by a resolute neoliberalism. With René Lévesque and the sovereignty question seeking union support, Quebec unions had political allies for their struggles in the 1970s. Abandoned in the 1980s by both parties and, according to surveys, by a crushing majority of public opinion, Quebec's unions are distinctly not living happily ever after.

Clearly, this gives Rouillard no pleasure. Unlike those who see unions as a political means to someone else's ends, and industrial relations as a capitalist conspiracy, the author is a faithful partisan of unions as they function in real workplaces: "Seule la négociation collective permet d'assurer une meilleure égalité des parties dans les relations de travail et une distribution équitable des fruits du progrès industriel."

The author, and his publisher, may hope that this solid book on Quebec unionism will enlighten a generation convinced that inconvenience is too high a price for the right to strike. The book's smattering of photographs (none of much passion), reading list and detailed end-notes make the *Histoire du Syndicalisme* a worthwhile text. So does its systematic structure which, in each chapter, leads the reader resolutely through accounts of organized labour's relations with government, its political tendencies and action, a review of organization and structures and, as dessert, an account of a few crucial strikes of the period. This makes the book more suitable for classroom reading-assignments than for a good steady read.

In the best modern style, the author provides some useful quantitative data, a few typographical errors (the Grande Association in 1837 [p. 25]?), and only the barest mention of the colourful characters, from Gustave Francq to Michel Chartrand, who have always enlivened the Quebec labour scene. Lord save us from gossip or the mortal sin of "Great Man" theories.

The work of popularization belongs, of course, to more profane and careless

hands. When it is done, it will be all the better for the painstaking work of Jacques Rouillard.

Desmond Morton  
University of Toronto

Robert Lacroix, *Les grèves au Canada: causes et conséquences* (Montréal: Les Presses de l'Université de Montréal 1987).

LES CONFLITS DE TRAVAIL constituent un des principaux champs de recherche des relations industrielles où se côtoient historiens, sociologues, politicologues et économistes. C'est à ce dernier groupe qu'appartient Robert Lacroix, professeur au département des Sciences économiques de l'Université de Montréal et auteur de nombreuses études sur la grève, les salaires et le marché du travail au Canada. Cet ouvrage qu'il présente comme une synthèse de ses travaux antérieurs comprend dix chapitres qui abordent différents aspects théoriques et empiriques de l'activité de grève.

L'ouvrage débute par une critique de la théorie traditionnelle de la grève qui associe l'activité de grève aux modifications du rapport de force entre employeurs et syndicats. Selon Lacroix, cette approche repose sur une interprétation erronée de la théorie de Hicks (1932) à l'effet que les concessions salariales de l'Employeur et du Syndicat dans une négociation collective sont fonction du coût et de la durée escomptés d'un conflit de travail. S'inspirant des travaux de Hicks, certains auteurs ont élaboré une théorie de la grève qui postule que les variations de l'activité économique (A) influencent le coût de la grève (B), ce qui modifie à la hausse ou à la baisse le rapport de force du Syndicat (C) et par conséquent l'activité de grève (D). Lacroix estime que le passage de C à D n'est pas théoriquement fondé car l'employeur devrait savoir qu'en période de croissance économique le coût de la grève augmente pour lui (perte de clientèle et de bénéfices) et il faut donc supposer qu'il

accepterait de payer des salaires plus élevés afin d'éviter un conflit de travail coûteux.

Le second chapitre est consacré à la présentation du modèle proposé par l'auteur. Contrairement à Hicks qui assimile la grève à une erreur de négociation, Lacroix soutient que la grève provient plutôt d'une erreur d'évaluation du rapport de force causée par une information imparfaite. Ce serait le manque d'information et non l'incompétence ou l'irrationalité de l'une ou l'autre des parties négociantes qui selon lui expliquerait les conflits de travail. L'information, explique l'auteur augmente avec la durée de la négociation mais celle-ci ne peut se poursuivre indéfiniment tant pour des raisons de coût et d'efficacité qu'à cause de l'incertitude qu'elle engendre. Il existe donc une probabilité de conflit qui décroît avec la durée des négociations mais les contraintes de temps peuvent amener les parties ou l'une d'entre elles à faire des erreurs d'interprétation de l'information acquise, provoquant un conflit de travail.

Ce modèle informationnel fournit à l'auteur quelques hypothèses quant aux variations de l'activité de grève dans le temps et dans l'espace. Les variations temporelles de l'activité de grève seraient liées aux variations de l'activité économique parce qu'à certaines périodes il est plus difficile d'interpréter et d'évaluer les informations économiques. C'est le cas notamment lors d'une crise ou d'une reprise économique car les indicateurs sont flous et le degré de confiance que leur accordent les parties est faible. Par ailleurs, les variations intersectorielles de l'activité de grève seraient déterminées par la qualité et la quantité des informations nécessaires pour mener à bien la négociation collective. L'information requise est plus considérable et plus complexe dans les secteurs industriels exposés à la concurrence que dans les secteurs protégés, ce qui se traduirait par une plus forte activité de grève. Enfin, les différences internationales dans l'activité de grève renvoient selon l'auteur aux disparités nationales en matière de structures

industrielles et d'institutions favorisant la diffusion de l'information économique (transparence économique et financière, participation ouvrière à la gestion des entreprises).

Dans les deux chapitres suivants, l'auteur apporte quelques compléments à son modèle. Au chapitre 3, il présente brièvement les principaux indicateurs liés à la taille, la fréquence et la durée des grèves. Fidèle à son cadre d'analyse qui incorpore la grève dans une théorie de la négociation collective, il déplore le fait que la plupart des études se basent sur la fréquence annuelle des grèves plutôt que sur la fréquence relative, qui indique le rapport entre le nombre de grèves et de conventions collectives négociées annuellement, et qui serait selon lui une mesure plus significative de l'activité de grève. Le chapitre 4 est consacré à une critique des principales études canadiennes et américaines qui tentent de démontrer l'influence du contexte économique, notamment le chômage et l'inflation, sur l'activité de grève. Il reproche à ces études d'utiliser des données agrégées qui ne permettent pas d'identifier les facteurs économiques en cause. Se référant à son modèle théorique, il propose une nouvelle équation de grève comprenant des variables micro et macro qu'il vérifie empiriquement à partir d'un échantillon de près de 2,000 conventions collectives canadiennes négociées entre 1967 et 1982.

Les chapitres 5, 6 et 7 constituent le coeur de l'ouvrage car ils proposent une explication de l'activité de grève au Canada et sur la scène internationale à partir du cadre théorique élaboré dans les chapitres précédents. L'auteur analyse au chapitre 5 l'activité de grève au Canada de 1955 à 1984. Le tableau des fréquences annuelles et relatives des grèves montre que l'activité de grève est demeurée relativement stable de 1955 à 1964, qu'elle a connu une forte poussée de 1965 à 1981 suivie d'une chute graduelle de 1982 à 1984. L'auteur souligne à ce sujet que la période 1965 à 1981 est marquée par une forte croissance des effectifs syndicaux avec deux années de pointe, 1966 et 1972,

qui enregistrent des hausses de 11 pour cent et 8 pour cent respectivement en regard d'une hausse d'environ 5 pour cent de la population active.

Ce serait là selon l'auteur l'une des principales causes de la montée de l'activité de grève: l'arrivée massive de nouveaux acteurs inexpérimentés dans la négociation collective aurait entraîné plus d'erreurs de perception ou d'interprétation de l'information conduisant à des grèves. (76) A ce premier facteur il faut ajouter selon lui l'importance des grèves de "réputation" durant cette période de croissance syndicale de même que la détérioration de la qualité de l'information économique engendrée par l'inflation galopante des années 1970 à 1975. (77)

L'auteur tente ensuite d'expliquer les différences internationales dans l'activité de grève. Il conteste la thèse défendue par certains politicologues attribuant la plus faible activité de grève dans les pays européens et scandinaves en regard de l'Amérique du Nord aux avantages politiques dont bénéficierait le mouvement syndical dans les pays où la social-démocratie représente une force politique d'importance. Le phénomène résulterait plutôt selon lui de l'impact des structures de négociation, des politiques économiques et des législations sociales sur la qualité et la quantité de l'information. La plus grande transparence économique des pays européens s'appuie sur des structures de négociation centralisées qui accroissent la circulation de l'information et le coût des conflits et par conséquent réduisent l'activité de grève. A titre d'exemple, l'auteur cite le cas de l'Allemagne fédérale qui connaît l'un des taux de grève les plus faibles parmi les pays industrialisés et qui rassemble de nombreuses caractéristiques favorisant une diminution de l'activité de grève: mesures de stabilisation économique soutenues, négociations centralisées, cogestion et informations économiques obligatoires dans les entreprises, structures industrielles fortes et diversifiées. Il compare ensuite le Canada et les Etats-Unis qui présentent de nombreuses

similitudes en matière de législation sociale et de structures de négociation. La chute prononcée de l'activité de grève aux Etats-Unis en comparaison avec le Canada durant la période 1960 à 1980 serait surtout due à la baisse du taux de syndicalisation chez nos voisins qui a réduit considérablement le potentiel de grève.

Le chapitre 7 traite des disparités régionales dans l'activité de grève au Canada de 1962 à 1980. Jusqu'en 1970, la part des syndiqués impliqués dans une grève était plus élevée en Ontario qu'au Québec et qu'en Colombie Britannique mais de 1970 à 1980, la situation s'est inversée, la durée moyenne des grèves demeurant toutefois supérieure en Ontario. Le Québec devance toutes les autres régions canadiennes pour ce qui est de l'activité de grève durant la période 1970 à 1980. La performance du Québec à ce chapitre s'expliquerait selon l'auteur par le système de négociation dans le secteur public qui a accru la rentabilité de la grève et engendré un effet de débordement dans le secteur privé, principalement dans les industries à l'abri de la concurrence et dont les occupations se rapprochent de celles du secteur public. Ainsi, l'analyse de l'activité de grève par secteurs révèle que l'effet de débordement a été plus important dans les industries du transport et des services privés que dans les industries manufacturières. De plus, la politique salariale trop généreuse de l'Etat québécois durant cette période a fourni selon lui des "informations erronées" sur les conditions du marché du travail et la capacité de payer des entreprises, favorisant de ce fait les conflits de travail. (106)

Les deux chapitres qui suivent portant sur les liens entre la grève, l'inflation et les salaires et sur le coût de la grève sont un peu hors contexte par rapport à la problématique centrale de l'ouvrage; leur intérêt réside davantage dans la présentation qui est faite de quelques études récentes consacrées à ces questions. Le chapitre final présente les suggestions de l'auteur pour améliorer la performance du Canada en matière de conflit de travail. L'auteur constate que des

structures de négociation plus larges et plus centralisées comme il en existe dans de nombreux pays européens peuvent favoriser la circulation de l'information mais qu'elles renforcent également l'intervention étatique. De plus, ces structures se retrouvent généralement dans des pays où le pouvoir syndical au niveau des entreprises est nettement plus faible qu'au Canada. Il estime donc qu'une réforme des structures de négociation serait hasardeuse. Il préconise plutôt une série de mesures susceptibles d'améliorer l'information disponible aux parties impliquées dans la négociation collective: accès syndical aux conseils d'administration et aux informations économiques et financières, procédures de règlement pacifique des conflits axées sur la conciliation et les périodes de refroidissement afin de permettre aux parties d'évaluer plus objectivement la situation avant de recourir au conflit.

Comme on peut le constater, il s'agit là d'un ouvrage ambitieux mais qui comporte selon nous certaines lacunes. La principale faiblesse de l'ouvrage est sans doute l'absence totale de préoccupation sociologique dans l'analyse de la grève. L'auteur s'est enfermé dans un modèle théorique étroit qui réduit la grève à la seule dimension du conflit d'intérêt économique à dominante salariale qui se manifeste à l'occasion de la négociation de la convention collective. Les ouvrages classiques sur la grève, tel celui de Shorter et Tilly, nous ont habitués à des analyses plus riches et plus nuancées qui tiennent compte des différentes facettes de l'activité de grève. Autre constat décevant, l'auteur ne fait aucune distinction dans son analyse entre grève et lock-out. Si un tel postulat est cohérent avec le modèle de l'auteur, il n'est guère convaincant pour les théoriciens et les praticiens de la négociation collective pour qui ces deux phénomènes revêtent une signification stratégique différente. Enfin, le chapitre consacré aux comparaisons internationales repose à notre avis sur une analyse superficielle des formes historiques et institutionnelles de la

grève qui varient considérablement d'un pays à l'autre. Le modèle proposé par l'auteur peut être d'une certaine utilité dans un contexte où la grève est restreinte légalement aux périodes de négociation collective comme c'est le cas au Canada et aux États-Unis; cependant, le lecteur familier avec les études européennes sur les grèves, en particulier en France et en Italie où la grève est moins règlementée qu'en Amérique du nord, ne peut que constater les insuffisances d'un tel modèle.

Les limites du modèle apparaissent plus clairement à l'examen de certaines questions qu'on pourrait adresser à l'auteur. Ainsi, si c'est le manque d'information qui cause les conflits de travail, pourquoi ces grèves sur l'emploi qui représentent environ 30 pour cent de l'ensemble des conflits survenus en France de 1980 à 1985 et qui sont paradoxalement provoquées par la divulgation d'informations sur des projets de licenciements économiques? En se référant à un exemple du même genre au Canada, on peut se demander si c'est le manque d'information qui est à l'origine des grèves nationales contre la loi anti-inflation en 1975 et 1976 ou si ce n'est pas au contraire l'existence de cette "information" qui a provoqué ces grèves. Enfin, comment expliquer à partir de ce même postulat les différences intersyndicales dans l'activité de grève, au Canada ou ailleurs: serait-ce que les employeurs divulguent moins d'information à certaines organisations syndicales ou encore que le degré de confiance des syndicats dans l'information transmise est variable?

Le rejet catégorique de toute explication de l'activité de grève basée sur l'analyse du rapport de force entre employeurs et syndicats amène l'auteur à des conclusions souvent fort discutables. Il impute l'augmentation de l'activité de grève au Canada de 1965 à 1980 à l'inexpérience des nouveaux acteurs patronaux et syndicaux alors que pour l'essentiel, la croissance syndicale durant cette période a bénéficié aux grands syndicats du secteur public qui n'en étaient pas à leurs premières armes dans la

négociation collective avec l'Etat. On peut aussi questionner sa thèse voulant que la hausse de l'activité de grève au Québec au cours des années 1970 soit la résultante de la politique salariale trop généreuse de l'Etat dans le secteur public car la montée des idéologies progressistes dans le mouvement syndical a sans doute joué un rôle plus déterminant à cet égard.

En terminant, il faut souligner que cet ouvrage a le mérite d'approfondir une problématique théorique importante. L'auteur considère à juste titre que l'information est un élément stratégique essentiel dans le processus de la négociation collective et la clarification théorique qu'il opère à ce sujet s'avère une contribution positive au débat sur une éventuelle réforme des procédures de négociation collective et de règlement pacifique des conflits de travail. Mais si l'information est essentielle à la négociation collective, elle ne constitue aucunement à notre avis la cause première des conflits de travail dont les enjeux relèvent plus souvent des idéologies et des rapports de force que de la recherche d'information.

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François Lamoureux, *Le conflit de l'autorité. Onze mois de grèves à Marine Industrie* (Montréal: Les Editions du Renouveau Québécois 1987).

EN AOUT 1984 débutait une longue grève aux chantiers maritimes de Marine Industrie Ltée, dans la région de Sorel-Tracy, à une centaine de kilomètres au nord-est de Montréal. A l'instar de la grève de la United Aircraft, dix ans plus tôt, le conflit à Marine constitue une de ces grèves-événements de longue durée, ponctuées de violence et mettant périodiquement en évidence l'âpreté des rapports sociaux habituellement cachée par le train-train quotidien des relations de travail.

Dans ce livre-témoignage, François Lamoureux, président du syndicat et prin-

cipal porte-parole des grévistes, nous raconte sa grève, vue de l'intérieur. Il ne faut pas chercher ici une analyse exhaustive et objective du conflit et de ses causes. Son point de vue est nettement partisan, comme le relève justement son préfacier, Marcel Pepin, l'ancien président de la CSN. L'auteur ne se gêne pas pour régler ses comptes et il distribue allégrement les jugements et les opinions sur chaque intervenant. Mais si son témoignage est forcément biaisé, il n'est pas pour autant malhonnête. Dans son récit, l'auteur n'hésite pas à relever ses faiblesses et les erreurs de stratégie de son équipe, tout en exprimant du respect pour certains des interlocuteurs patronaux. De même, s'il exprime à maintes reprises ses sentiments et ses émotions, il le fait avec une certaine candeur qui ne choque pas. Cette constatation, selon moi, représente une des surprises agréables du livre.

D'autre part, au-delà du récit proprement dit des événements, la lecture de ce récit de grève réserve beaucoup de satisfactions aux historiens du mouvement ouvrier. Personnellement, j'ai été constamment frappé par les ressemblances entre cette grève des années 1980 et les grands conflits du CIO des années 1930-40. Les parallèles sont nombreux: volonté du syndicat d'acquiescer plus de contrôle sur les conditions de la production dans l'usine, implantation solide du syndicat dans la communauté et, inversement, appui de celle-ci aux grévistes, lutte du syndicat pour préserver des emplois, volonté de la compagnie de "casser" le syndicat, éruptions soudaines de violence entre grévistes, policiers et représentants de la compagnie, intervention des grands médias nationaux en faveur de la compagnie, interventions de l'Etat et politisation du conflit, etc. A conquate ans d'intervalle, force nous est de constater que les ouvriers industriels se battent encore pour les mêmes revendications et que les patrons résistent toujours aux mêmes demandes et avec les mêmes moyens. Revoyons quelques-uns de ces éléments tels que relatés par l'auteur.

A Marine Industrie, l'enjeu fon-

damental n'était ni le salaire, ni la classification de certains métiers, ni la réduction des heures de travail, ni même le congédiement de sept grévistes accusés de voies de fait. A la base, il s'agit d'une lutte de pouvoir entre un syndicat militant et dynamique, et une nouvelle direction d'entreprise bien décidée à rendre compétitive une industrie vieillissante. Les relations entre les parties étaient tendues depuis plus de deux ans. Face à la décision de la Société générale de financement, propriétaire à 65 pour cent de la compagnie, de fermer la division navale, le syndicat fit une bruyante cabale auprès de la communauté et des instances gouvernementales pour protéger les nombreux emplois menacés. Très vite, la population épousa la cause du syndicat, ce qui n'eut pas l'heur de plaire à la direction de la compagnie qui n'appréciait pas cette intrusion syndicale dans ses plates-bandes. Dans la foulée de ces événements, explique Lamoureux, "une nouvelle forme de syndicalisme naissait, celle de notre implication dans les décisions importantes concernant l'avenir de notre entreprise". (25) Ne croirait-on pas entendre un Phil Murray ou un Walter Reuther des belles années? Le syndicat alla même jusqu'à s'impliquer avec succès dans la recherche de nouveaux contrats...

Pour la compagnie, toutefois, le problème de Marine, c'était son syndicat. De tradition militante et revendicatrice, celui-ci avait acquis avec les années une convention collective enviable, que plusieurs jugeaient trop avantageuse. Cette fois, la nouvelle direction était bien décidée à faire reculer le syndicat, à récupérer certains gains, à augmenter la productivité et rendre ainsi la compagnie compétitive face aux autres chantiers du pays. Donc, deux philosophies très différentes s'opposaient quant à l'avenir d'une industrie dont toute une région dépendait, l'une strictement affairiste, l'autre plus sociale. Plus que le "conflit de l'autorité", la grève à Marine représentait en fait une lutte de pouvoir entre deux groupes en compétition. Mais, que pensaient les

travailleurs de la base de cette croisade de leurs représentants? Là-dessus, l'auteur se contente des clichés habituels des leaders syndicaux sur le caractère démocratique de leur organisation, présentant ses troupes comme un bloc homogène rangé derrière l'exécutif. C'est sur ces points plus délicats qu'une enquête objective doit venir compléter le témoignage de l'auteur.

Si on en croit la démonstration de Lamoureux, la compagnie se préparait de longue date à un dur affrontement avec le syndicat. Deux mois avant le début du conflit, la compagnie retenait les services d'une firme de sécurité, chargée officiellement d'assurer la sécurité des installations du chantier, mais qui, officieusement, organisait aussi la filature de plusieurs responsables syndicaux. Comme il se doit, la présence de ces sbires patronaux dans "leur" usine exaspéra certains grévistes et, comme à la belle époque, des échauffourées eurent lieu entre grévistes, cadres de la compagnie et agents de sécurité. Des cadres furent notamment battus et sept grévistes furent inculpés de voies de fait et congédiés indéfiniment par la compagnie qui ne voulût jamais par la suite assouplir sa sentence. Ces congédiements empoisonnèrent les négociations pendant des mois et furent la principale cause directe du pourrissement du conflit.

Le livre de Lamoureux dépasse de loin la simple chronique de conflit et il en analyse certains aspects plus profonds. Ainsi, le rôle de l'Etat prend ici une dimension particulière du fait que Marine est contrôlée par le gouvernement du Québec, via la SGF. Plusieurs grandes décisions furent directement prises au cabinet où, malheureusement, s'affrontaient trois ministres en compétition dans ce dossier. Certains d'entre eux, tels l'ex-homme d'affaires Rodrigue Biron, Ministre de l'Industrie et du Commerce, préconisaient la ligne dure et appuyaient la direction de Marine dans sa volonté de briser le syndicat, multipliant à droite et à gauche les déclarations incendiaires. Cette situation n'est pas

sans rappeler les grands affrontements des années 1970 entre le front commun des employés du secteur public et parapublic et l'Etat-patron. C'est d'ailleurs une intervention politique, celle du conseiller du premier ministre, Jean-Roché Boivin, qui finit par faire débloquer le conflit. En juin 1985, la compagnie acceptait enfin de transformer les congédiements en suspension, une nouvelle convention collective était aussitôt signée, et les 1050 employés de Marine rentraient "chez eux", au travail, avec le sentiment d'avoir gagné une grève pour laquelle, avoue Lamoureux, ils n'étaient pas vraiment préparés et qu'ils auraient préféré éviter.

Lamoureux analyse aussi le rôle de premier plan joué par les médias lors de cette grève. Selon lui, si les journaux et stations de radio de la région sont restés neutres et objectifs face au conflit, il reproche amèrement aux grands médias nationaux, notamment aux éditorialistes des grands quotidiens, d'avoir adopté sans discernement la position de la compagnie sans expliquer suffisamment celle du syndicat. Cette partie de l'analyse de l'auteur nous a paru la plus faible et la plus ouvertement vengeresse. Il semble oublier que lui et son organisation se sont également servi à outrance des médias lorsque cela les avantageait et que le jeu des médias en est un qui se joue dans les deux directions. En fait, ces éditorialistes posaient une question importante que Lamoureux effleure à peine dans son livre, à savoir la valeur des arguments de la compagnie concernant la faible productivité et la plantureuse convention collective des employés. Un syndicat "responsable" qui se prétend plus dynamique que la direction dans la sauvegarde de son entreprise menacée ne doit-il pas aussi se poser ces questions et en discuter ouvertement? L'occasion aurait été bonne selon nous.

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Jean-François Cardin, *La Crise d'Octobre 1970 et le mouvement syndical québécois* (Montréal: collection RCHTQ études et documents numéro 1, 1988).

L'OUVRAGE PRODUIT et diffusé récemment sous l'égide du Regroupement des chercheurs et chercheuses en histoire des travailleurs et travailleuses du Québec avait d'abord été soumis comme mémoire en vue de l'obtention de la maîtrise ès arts en histoire à l'Université de Montréal en septembre 1985.

L'auteur s'était donné pour tâche "d'étudier la réaction du mouvement syndical québécois lors des événements d'Octobre 1970, de dégager les motifs qui ont guidé son action et de cerner l'impact de ces événements sur son évolution subséquente". (VI) La démarche s'élabore en quatre temps. En premier lieu, il sera question de cerner les relations entre le FLQ, les travailleurs et les syndicats entre 1963 et 1970. A cette occasion, l'auteur fait ressortir l'importance de la distinction entre les travailleurs et leurs syndicats, les premiers seuls bénéficiant de la sympathie dans les écrits issus des cellules felquistes et ce, jusqu'en 1968. Par la suite, c'est-à-dire avec l'évolution des centrales vers le radicalisme d'une part, avec l'entrée du tandem Vallières-Gagnon au FLQ de l'autre, les rapports avec les instances seront moins antagoniques.

Le deuxième temps de l'analyse est tout entier consacré à l'étude des événements d'Octobre qui constituent ni plus ni moins que l'aboutissement de ce projet ambitieux et ambigu de réformes et de restructurations étatiques des années soixante et qu'on a affublé du sobriquet "révolution tranquille". L'auteur rappelle l'importance de la mise sur pied d'un "deuxième front" à la CSN et, plus généralement, la radicalisation des prises de position syndicales dans la foulée, entre autres facteurs, de la détérioration des relations entre les employés de l'Etat et leur patron.

Le troisième chapitre est consacré successivement à l'analyse des réactions syndicales avant la promulgation de la



Loi des mesures de guerre et à la mise sur pied d'un front commun intersyndical à la suite de cette promulgation. Un chapitre à part, le quatrième, vient ici compléter l'analyse et il est consacré tout entier à l'étude du "cas spécial" représenté par Michel Chartrand et le Conseil central des syndicats nationaux de Montréal.

La quatrième et dernier temps — c'est-à-dire le chapitre 5 — est réservé au soupègement de l'impact des événements sur le mouvement syndical dans les années subséquentes.

Au terme de cette succincte présentation du cheminement du mémoire, je me dois de préciser d'emblée à quel point j'ai trouvé cette analyse intéressante, sobre et sereine. Non pas que les travaux consacrés aux événements d'Octobre fassent défaut, loin de là, mais il fallait sans doute attendre que les faits se décantent d'eux-mêmes en quelque sorte pour qu'une étude aussi rigoureuse des rapports entre les centrales syndicales et le FLQ puisse émerger. Bien sûr, l'auteur déplore en toute fin d'analyse qu'un traitement aussi complet n'ait pas pu être mené du côté des relations avec les travailleurs syndiqués et non syndiqués, il n'en demeure pas moins que si une telle étude devait être engagée, il faudrait alors tenir compte des résultats de ce mémoire.

Il faut relever surtout dans ce travail l'expression d'un constant souci de laisser parler les faits avant de proposer une interprétation de sorte que l'auteur révèle au grand jour de profonds déchirements, des rajustements et des reprises qui montrent à quel point ces événements ont aussi servi de révélateur de contradictions sociales et politiques profondes qui se déployaient sous la surface des idéologies et des alliances qui prévalaient encore à l'époque. Témoignent de ceci les prises de position anti-séparatistes des centrales syndicales, la FTQ, la CSN et l'UCC, depuis 1960 jusqu'à 1966, quand celles-ci déposeront, auprès du Comité de la constitution de l'Assemblée législative du Québec, un mémoire conjoint rédigé par nul autre que Pierre Elliott Trudeau, le futur premier ministre du Canada en

poste au moment de l'enlèvement de James R. Cross en octobre 1970.

Cependant, si les événements servent de catalyseur pour les centrales qui s'ouvrent davantage aux revendications de leurs membres et des citoyens les plus démunis, ils contribuent également à polariser les opinions à l'intérieur même du mouvement ouvrier, entre les réformistes d'un côté, ceux qui s'opposent à la politisation des syndicats de l'autre.

Vingt ans après sans doute que le regard qu'on peut porter sur ces événements vient buter sur une certaine indifférence; c'est pourquoi la lecture de ce petit livre s'impose pour nous rappeler le poids des convictions sur l'Histoire.

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Craig Brown (dir.), *Histoire générale du Canada* (Montréal: Editions du Boréal 1988).

LA PUBLICATION DE la version française de l'*Histoire générale du Canada*, dirigée par Craig Brown, tombe à point. A l'heure du Lac Meech, il apparaît fort pertinent de découvrir la perception canadienne-anglaise de l'histoire nationale.

Nous avons bien sûr d'excellentes études d'histoire du Québec, mais peu sur l'ensemble de l'histoire du Canada. De plus, pour en avoir une perception canadienne-anglaise, il fallait scruter les ouvrages dans la langue de Shakespeare.

L'*Histoire générale du Canada* est un livre qui frappe par son excellente présentation et ses nombreuses illustrations; le titre original étant d'ailleurs *The illustrated history of Canada*. Il est la responsabilité de six historiens et se divise comme suit:

1. Arthur Ray, "La rencontre de deux mondes." Thème: les peuples autochtones avant et après l'arrivée des colonisateurs européens.
2. Christopher Moore, "La nouvelle-France et ses rivales." Thème: les rivalités entre la Nouvelle-France et les colonies britanniques.

3. Graeme Wynn, "Aux confins de l'empire 1760-1840." Thème: le peuplement d'origine britannique et l'évolution de la société francophone depuis la conquête jusqu'après les rébellions des Patriotes.

4. Peter Waite, "Un défi continental 1840-1900." Thème: les transformations fondamentales de la société sous le régime de l'Union des deux Canadas puis du système fédéral.

5. Ramsay Cook, "Triomphe et revers du matérialisme 1900-1945." Thème: L'entrée du Canada dans l'ère moderne. Les deux conflits mondiaux et la crise économique.

6. Desmond Morton, "Crises d'abondance 1945-1988." Thème: évolution de la société canadienne de 1945 à nos jours.

D'entrée en matière nous sommes agréablement surpris de l'espace et du traitement réservé aux peuples autochtones. Jusqu'à très récemment, l'histoire commençait avec la colonisation. Ce qui pouvait différer d'un auteur à l'autre, était la perception de l'accueil des peuples autochtones. Non seulement le traitement de Ray est-il complet, mais il nous apporte une information qui dépasse le cadre territorial du Québec.

Les chapitres traitant de l'histoire canadienne jusqu'en 1945, sont assez conventionnels. Certains reprocheront peut-être le manque de références, mais il est manifeste que les éditeurs ont visé un marché qui dépassait le cadre universitaire. Aussi ont-ils fait le choix d'illustrer le plus possible le livre et d'alléger son écriture. Les différentes synthèses sont intéressantes et complètes.

Le dernier chapitre a cependant une approche différente du reste du livre. Il se rapproche du traitement journalistique. Perspective très à la mode et adaptée par l'équipe du Boréal qui a obtenu un succès appréciable avec le livre de Linteau, Durocher et Robert, *Histoire du Québec contemporain* (2 volumes). Néanmoins des choix semblent discutables. La victoire en 1972 de l'équipe de hockey sur les soviétiques revêt-elle un caractère historique significatif? Même chose pour le déclin de la ligue de football canadienne ou même le "success story" de Terry Fox.

Par contre, on en apprend plus sur le "climat" de l'entente constitutionnelle de 1982 que sur son contenu! Une mise à jour sera rapidement requise compte tenu des débats sur la clause nonobstant de la loi constitutionnelle de 1982, des difficultés de la ratification de l'entente du lac Meech, de la loi 178 au Québec suite au jugement de la cour suprême sur la langue d'affichage au Québec.

On aurait pu ajouter à cette synthèse de l'histoire du Canada certains éléments dont:

- une carte géopolitique récente du Canada
- un tableau de références de la liste des différents gouvernements et du nombre de sièges remportés.
- un index des illustrations (compte tenu qu'il s'agit d'une histoire illustrée)
- des extraits des documents constitutionnels importants.

Pour les lecteurs et lectrices de cette revue, le livre constituera une forte déception puisque sa faiblesse majeure est d'ignorer l'histoire du mouvement ouvrier. Les historiens québécois sont plus sensibles à cette question. L'espace réservé à son étude depuis le second conflit mondial y est tout à fait symbolique. Dans la même veine, une seule page est consacrée à l'histoire de la condition féminine.

Néanmoins on touche aussi à des secteurs comme celui de la politique étrangère (OTAN) qui sont complètement escamotés par les historiens québécois. On sent aussi que Morton a vécu cette période. Les détails sont nombreux, les critiques aussi, surtout pour la période dirigée par Trudeau. Les éditeurs ont donc, encore par choix, mis l'importance sur l'histoire plus contemporaine.

Beau livre donc. Intéressant, mais des oublis et des choix discutables.

Michel Pratt  
CEGEP de Maisonneuve

J. Rodney Millard, *The Master Spirit of the Age: Canadian Engineers and the Politics of Professionalism* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1988).

IN THE LATE-19th and early-20th centuries, Canadian engineers thought themselves true representatives of "the master spirit of the age." They went beyond Laurier to declare not only that the century belonged to Canada, but that the "'Twentieth century belongs also to the engineer'." (14) They believed in the preeminence of technicians in an industrial society, and viewed Canada as a huge engineering frontier whose development would put it in the forefront of civilization. Moreover, as builders of Canada's industrial infrastructure, they saw it as their mission to guide Canada's development. Accordingly, they were dismayed by the impediments to progress evident on every hand: inefficiency, labour-management strife, lack of political industrial leadership, and the failure of the rest of society to recognize that engineers were natural leaders.

These engineers also reflected another spirit of the age: the protective impulse. They were members of the middle class, disgruntled by the low status of their profession, and striving to raise it to the level accorded medicine and law. They saw competition as the major problem and, ultimately, regulation as the solution. In a book which concentrates more on this aspect of engineering than on the practice itself, J. Rodney Millard identifies the obstacles engineers faced in their attempts to raise the status of their profession and the methods they employed to remove them. One of the most vexatious problems was the way 19th-century British aristocratic attitudes stigmatized manual labour so as to link the engineer in the public mind with the tradesman. Other major problems included competition for jobs, particularly from Americans hired to work in Canada, and the fact that engineers, employed by large contracting firms and governments, could not determine

or control their salaries. Although they thought of themselves as independent professionals, engineers lived on fixed incomes. Moreover, at the time, engineering had no legal standing and anyone could practise it.

To overcome these problems, engineers attempted to foster a professional ethos through the development of engineering schools, societies, journals, and, finally, licensing. But in this effort, they were stymied by differences of opinion among themselves, which involved a struggle between younger and members of the profession over the worth of collective action. And it is this struggle, which emerged within the Canadian Society of Civil Engineers (est. 1887), that lies at the heart of Millard's study. Younger engineers wanted a professional association which would tightly control the profession: averse to unionization because they feared the spectre of radicalism and strikes, they pushed for licensing. Older, more-conservative members of the profession, however, led by the CSCE's dominant "Montreal clique," believed in the operation of a free market economy. They opposed not only unionism, but any kind of regulation of the profession because they believed that the best would rise to the top, and that engineers belonged to an international scientific community which could not be divided along national lines.

In the end, the younger engineers won the day. They became increasingly dissatisfied with the CSCE, essentially a learned society which at times seemed nothing more than a gentlemen's club. During World War I, they marched off to war, and Americans were hired to take their place. Postwar inflation highlighted the inadequacy of their salaries and the increasing competition from veterans practising the trade. Out of this frustration, the Engineering Institute of Canada was formed to foster a new professional image which stressed the importance of industrial research — and the engineer — to modern society. When these tactics failed to win them public respect, engineers finally resorted to collective action as a way to coerce employers and raise salaries, though they stopped short of political action. By

1922, all provinces except Saskatchewan and Prince Edward Island had licensing laws.

Supported by statistics and graphs, Millard's is a tightly focused study. Although he contends that it is a social and institutional history of how a small but important group of organized civil engineers survived social change in an industrializing society, his is largely an institutional approach. There is not much in the way of social or cultural texture here. Millard believes that engineers formed the vanguard of a new middle class whose members' vision of social order was based upon technocracy, and who preached "the secular gospel of social engineering" which was perhaps more influential in shaping modern Canada than the social gospel itself. (11) Perhaps this is so, but his study does not delve deeply enough into the broader and related currents of the time to sustain such an argument. Such conclusions, as well as Millard's statement that engineers "functioned passively as impartial servants of a higher scientific rationality in quest of an efficient and orderly new Jerusalem" (146) require further amplification and consideration of the major intellectual and scientific (especially technocratic) principles of the era.

Marlene Shore  
York University

Pradeep Kumar and Dennis Ryan, ed., *Canadian Union Movement in the 1980s: Perspectives from Union Leaders* (Kingston: Industrial Relations Centre Queen's University 1988).

THIS BOOK CONSISTS of a series of interviews with Canadian labour leaders — the presidents of the CLC, QFL, CNTU and CFL, as well as the heads of eight major CLC affiliates — conducted by the editors in 1987. In their introduction, the editors note that structural changes in the economy and shifts in public policy during the 1980s confronted the labour movement with unprecedented challenges

(including persistent unemployment, technological change, restrictions on trade union rights, deregulation, free trade, and management demands for new work arrangements) which have left organized labour in a quandary. Interviewers sought union leaders' views about these challenges and the unions' responses, and about such related issues as current bargaining priorities, efforts to organize women and service-sector workers, breakaways from international unions, and prospects for enhancing consultative relations with governments and employers.

Clearly, this was an ambitious undertaking; as published, the transcripts run to more than 200 densely-printed pages. The collection's fruitfulness, unfortunately, is another matter altogether. One reason for this lies with the kinds of questions the editors posed. These labour officials are public figures; their views on the challenges facing the labour movement, and the activities of the organizations they lead, are hardly secret. Despite this, much of the collection is taken up by soporific questions like: "What are the major issues facing your union?"; "Is Health and Safety a big issue?"; and "What is the CLC doing to fight privatization, deregulation and free trade?" The answers, needless to say, are hardly illuminating to anyone with a passing familiarity with the labour movement.

Such questions are not the collection's only shortcoming. That would be to assume most of the union leaders actually had something to say about the issues confronting the labour movement, above all about how to escape the "quandary" which the editors rightly suggest that it is in. That this is a questionable assumption is evident from the interviewees' responses to the editors' more-probing questions, notably those concerning the labour movement's attempts to organize the predominantly-female workforce in the financial and retail sectors of the economy. Despite the efforts of a number of unions during the 1980s, these workers remain largely un-

organized, and the leaders' comments about this offer little hope for a breakthrough in the foreseeable future.

Most of these union officials attributed such shortcomings to existing labour legislation, or concurred with the editors' suggestion that organizing efforts in these sectors have been handicapped by the labour movement's 'militant' (?) image, implying that the workers in question somehow are not the stuff of which 'real' unionists are made. But this is belied by the repeated demonstrations of militancy by women workers (including women in these sectors) during the 1980s, and by the thousands more who signed union cards. A few do recognize this, notably Bob White who, referring to the lengthy and largely-futile strikes in these sectors, correctly asserts that the question is not whether these workers want a union, but "what price do they have to pay?" (183) He, too, however, adds his voice to those calling for first-contract legislation, which experience suggests is hardly an answer. Even less promising is Gérard Docquier's suggestion that it might be "wrong to think that one union can do the job (and) wiser to have five or six unions competing with each other," (148) for this is precisely what has characterized organizing in these sectors to date. This fighting over members reflects an approach to organizing inspired by a narrow corporate interest in expanding membership rolls, rather than in the interests of the workers involved, or of the labour movement as a whole. That Docquier is far from alone in continuing to be inspired by this interest is readily apparent from the interviews.

Surely the lesson to be gleaned from the efforts to organize banking and service workers is the inadequacy of this approach. No individual union has been able, at any given time, to organize more than a fraction of the workforce of the powerful, multi-branch national chains which dominate these sectors of the economy. Lacking any bargaining power, the real question has seldom been the fate

of the workers so organized — only whether they would accept it without a fight. This lesson is, moreover, hardly confined to organizing workers in the banking and retail sectors, but equally applies to all the challenges of the 1980s. For what made these challenges so daunting, and left the unions in such a "quandary", is that they demanded qualitative change in the labour movement. If we learn anything from this book, it is that this lesson has been largely lost on most of these labour leaders.

Donald Swartz  
Carleton University

Michael Denning, *Mechanic Accents: Dime Novels and Working-Class Culture in America* (London: Verso 1987).

HISTORIANS OF North American labour have long known of the existence of late 19th-century novels depicting heroic workers and their Horatio Alger-like rise to the good life of rewards an abundant capitalism could offer. Canadian historians of working-class readers early discovered Martin Foran's *The Other Side*, serialized in a number of labour papers, including the *Ontario Workman*. But few researchers have appreciated the sheer quantity of these dime novels about working-class life. Michael Denning establishes this realm of production — drawing on more than 50 titles — and provides the first serious theoretical attempt to address its meanings.

Denning begins with what might be called the labour process of dime-novel production, introducing the genre with an insistence that it be understood as "a central component of the merging culture industry." Dime-novel publishers, not unlike P.T. Barnum, were "early entrepreneurs of leisure." (16) To ignore the consumption of this product, however, would be all too one-sided, and Denning demands that these books be placed firmly within the logic of a readership — craftworkers, labourers, factory operatives — steeped in the class conflicts of

the Gilded Age. Dime novels cut contradictory swaths into the making of modern America, simultaneously orchestrating the beginnings of mass culture and resonating with parts of a class culture of antagonism and struggle.

Within this labour process, capital was accumulated through the fiction factories of dime-novel publishing houses, while successful circulation was assured by such distribution firms as the American News Company, which virtually monopolized the national marketing of story papers, magazines, and pamphlet novels. Denning shows how the business thrived in periods of economic depression, when costs were low and, possibly, the needs of readers high. It was a roller-coaster ride, an uncertain and constantly fluctuating entrepreneurial toss of the dice, where the bottom line of the numbers often depended on such unpredictable forces as postal rates. Authors were subjected to intense speed-up to keep pace with demand: one dime-novelist claimed to have written two 30,000-word stories a week, for months at a time. To do so, he began at seven o'clock in the morning, wrote round the clock, and completed the manuscript early next day. The skills of the trade seemed to be an unchecked imagination, a keen sense of drama, and a steady, untiring hand.

To answer the question, "Who read these stories and what did they think of them?", Denning alludes to surrogate readers and resorts to theoretical speculation, rather than to empirical evidence — an approach dictated by the lack of hard statistical data, and the underdeveloped appreciation of the class character of readership in the United States. He concludes that dime novels were not located within the popular culture of the middle class, but were the texts of a plebeian, popular culture of the producing classes, "whose metaphoric centers of gravity were the 'honest mechanic' and the virtuous 'working girl'." (46) The uses of the dime novel, as it was consumed and debated, provided for Denning a window

into late 19th-century American social conflicts. Caught in the intersection of several developments — moral panic about obscene, indecent, vulgar material (paced by vice reformers such as Anthony Comstock and his Society for the Suppression of Vice), the condescending dismissal of dime fiction by the public advocates of 'really useful knowledge', and a more sensitive, highly-intellectualized elitist attempt to assess the worth of cheap stories — this sensationalist literature is continually captured by, and escaping from, "the narrative paradigms of middle-class culture." The popular culture of the dime novels thus articulated the divisions and solidarities among the 'producers,' the two-sided content of a working-class culture (Denning uses the terms 'producing classes' and 'working class' virtually interchangeably) that embraced the sensationalist commercialized product of the fiction factories, as well as the moralistic battle to restructure working-class life.

To shore up his reading of these texts, Denning draws on a Voloshinovian notion of the multiaccentuality of discourse, suggesting that these books were written and read with mechanic accents. Formulas of republican plots of inheritance, secret brotherhoods of workers, and 'mechanic heroes' are embedded in most of these books. As Denning works his way through the literatures associated with the mysteries of the city, the clandestine orders of Molly Maguires and detectives, tramps and outlaws, Knights of Labor, and virtuous working 'girls,' he finds familiar landscapes and characters, recurrent plots that confirm a world that is both like and unlike the actual social relations of Gilded Age America.

The final question concerns the "happy endings" of these books. Not surprisingly, Denning is of two minds about the dime novel's romantic termination. On the one hand, this is often nothing more than a "path of least resistance." Yet, on the other, it also encouraged the kinds of "utopian longings" that could prove an inducement to act to change the world. (212) In the reading of this litera-

ture, argues Denning, lay the possibility that the disguises of hegemony could be read against the grain, as desire and transformative possibility, with the dialect and class purpose of the 'mechanic accent.' It remains an open question, but one that is nevertheless now on the interpretive table, thanks to this recreation of the dime novel's production and consumption.

Bryan D. Palmer  
Queen's University

Bruce C. Nelson, *Beyond the Martyrs: A Social History of Chicago's Anarchists, 1870-1900* (New Brunswick and London: Rutgers University Press 1988).

AMERICAN LABOUR historians recently have been debating the need for a "synthesis" in our field. This debate has generated considerable heat, a slew of unpublished papers, and a few interesting articles. Frankly, there's been a good deal more talking *about* "synthesis" than there has been of *synthesizing* — until the publication of Bruce Nelson's *Beyond the Martyrs*.

Nelson's work stands squarely on the shoulders of the careful research of many able labour historians — Hartmut Keil, John Jentz, Richard Schneirov, Thomas Suhrbur, and others — who have examined Chicago's working-class history in Gilded Age America. He is able to situate his focus — the anarchists — within a rich, multifaceted historical context. Enough solid work has been done on Chicago (and a few other cities) that it has become possible to raise more "political" questions: What was the relationship between immigrant radicalism and native radicalism? Were radicals "outside agitators," or were they "organic" leaders of rank and file workers?

Nelson is as deeply rooted in the literature, the framework, the research techniques and methods of immigration history as he is in labour history. He takes seriously the cultures of each of the many ethnic groups on the Chicago scene: Germans, Bohemians, Poles, Danes, and native-born Americans. With some help,

Nelson read primary sources, especially local newspapers, in German, Czech, Danish, Norwegian, and Polish. He is not interested in each culture for its own sake, however, and his detailed work is able to portray the "movement culture" of the anarchists as an amalgam of multiple ethnic cultures, woven together with political threads.

Perhaps it is Nelson's willingness to take the anarchists' political ideas seriously that makes this book so interesting. By rooting the movement within a larger social and labour upheaval, and by pushing beyond political labels ("anarchist," "socialist," etc.), Nelson demonstrates how the anarchists were able to take the lead in an uprising of unskilled immigrant factory workers in 1885-86. Their "dual" unions, their newspapers, their soapbox speakers, their cultural vehicles (clubs, militias, celebrations of the Paris Commune, etc.) gave voice to this new force within Chicago's working class. For Nelson, the political ideas of the anarchists can be better understood in the demands of the Eight Hour Movement of 1886 than in the Haymarket martyrs' speeches to the jury.

But Nelson also demonstrates that political ideas were *not* enough to unify the diverse currents within working-class Chicago. *Beyond the Martyrs* reveals a labour movement split in three parts: (1) skilled native-born and German artisans, organized in craft unions and affiliated with the Trades and Labor Assembly; (2) Irish and native-born "labour reformers," skilled and semi-skilled, organized in the "mixed assemblies" of the Knights of Labor; and (3) skilled German and Bohemian immigrants, some of whom had already been exposed to radicalism in the "old country," organized in "progressive" trade unions affiliated with their own Central Labor Union. Conflict and competition among these three nuclei continued unabated during the "Great Upheaval" of 1885-86. Even within the radical movement, the strains of ethnic conflict were never far below the surface.

Yet Nelson also shows that, for a

time, revolutionary socialists led a militant, mass-based labour movement in America's leading industrial city. Power certainly felt threatened — and responded accordingly. Repression — not internal discord, not disenchanted followers, not the success of craft unionism — was the key to the demise of this movement. Even in defeat, as Nelson demonstrates, individual anarchists passed on a legacy to the labour movement that lived until World War I.

*Beyond the Martyrs* represents the sort of "synthesis" that is now within the reach of American labour historians. Layer upon layer of social, political, economic, and intellectual history can be woven together within a specific time and place in order to shed light on new—and old—questions. These questions, in turn, have significant bearing on some of the key questions in our field. Bruce Nelson has set a most impressive example for us all.

Peter Rachleff  
Macalester College

Alan Derickson, *Workers' Health, Workers' Democracy: The Western Miners' Struggle, 1891-1925* (Ithaca and New York: Cornell University Press 1988).

DERICKSON EXAMINES the ways in which hardrock miners' unions in British Columbia and the western United States fought for safe working conditions and adequate health care from the 1890s to the mid 1920s. With considerable skill, the author combines an institutional focus with the concerns of social history; the result, as the warm praise of David Brody and Leon Fink, on the dustjacket suggests, is an outstanding survey of western miners' struggles to ameliorate a dangerous and unhealthy working environment.

The book, however, is a good deal more than a chronicle of miners' efforts to improve health and safety provisions, and their means of coping with the hazards of their occupation. Derickson shows how the initiatives of various locals of the Western Federation of Miners

to establish hospitals and to secure protective legislation "reasserted old values and customs in new ways," he argues persuasively that these campaigns epitomized deeply-held views about self-help, cooperative action and independence. For example, after describing the construction of the first union hospital (in Idaho in 1891), he concludes that, "For an organization militantly opposed to all forms of employer paternalism, the pioneering institution remained a symbol of fundamental values." (100) The traditional work stoppages and mass funeral-marches that followed the death of a miner, as well as the eulogies and resolutions composed by union locals, were additional means of expressing a collectivist vision. Such somber occasions, Derickson notes, "afforded a unique opportunity not only to reaffirm basic values within the union but also to proclaim them to the general public." (79) In his opinion, the success of miners' hospitals, as well as widespread community support for such health-care initiatives, meant that "for a brief moment at the turn of the century, organized metal miners believed that by grassroots activism they could somehow hold back the rising tide of corporate power." As evidence, he quotes the confident statement of a BC miners' union that "The hospital is still going on in the good work and the miners are justly proud of it.... There is nothing impossible to the Sandon miner. 'Labor omnia vincit.'" (123-4)

But the hard rock miners of British Columbia and the United States confronted a determined alliance of employers and government. Union funds dwindled in the first decade of this century as a seemingly endless series of strikes overtook the various constituent locals. Dollars that otherwise would have gone to health care were expended in direct class struggle; Derickson concludes that the need for austerity "had a chilling effect on further health care initiatives." (154) At the same time, employers — sensitive to the profit-draining potential of new union-sponsored compensation laws — began to implement safety campaigns. Such corpor-



ate schemes were an insidious challenge to the earlier tradition of fraternalism and self-help, and Derickson takes the view that "the accident-prevention crusade resulted in a sweeping ideological victory for its proponents." (202) The open-shop drives of the 1920s, and the growing industrial hegemony of such corporate giants as Anaconda, Cominco and ASARCO, were additional factors in the final eclipse of the miners' efforts to pioneer a worker-run health care system.

Derickson's inclusion of British Columbia as an integral part of the western mining industry is particularly noteworthy. Despite the province's many links with American mining, few US mining historians have bothered to include it in their studies. Relying on the superb collection of miners' papers held at the University of British Columbia, Derickson clearly demonstrates that the activities and concerns of BC's unionized miners were little different from those of American miners. He does suggest, however, that the provincial government, after the passage of the 1902 Hospital Act, provided important financial aid to miners' hospitals in the Kootenays, assistance that was unavailable to similar institutions in the United States.

A considerable literature has emerged to describe the dramatic struggles of hard-rock and coal miners, but too often it focuses on institutional development or the course of a particular strike. History that is sensitive to the roles of both women and men, that looks beyond workplace issues, that provides substantive analysis but also chronicles events, has been all too rare, although in the last few years this finally has begun to change. Much of the recent work concerns coalminers, their struggles and their communities; Derickson's book is welcome evidence that the hardrock miners of western Canada and the United States also are beginning to receive the attention of careful and sensitive scholars.

Jeremy Mouat  
Athabasca University

Gerald Zahavi, *Workers, Managers, and Welfare Capitalism: The Shoeworkers and Tanners of Endicott H. Johnson, 1890-1950* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press 1988).

THIS SHORT, succinct, and eminently readable case study of welfare capitalism at the Endicott Johnson Company illustrates the importance of personality and commitment in a largely impersonal and increasingly bureaucratic world. George F. Johnson, a shoe worker who rose to dominate and eventually control Endicott Johnson, built the company into one of the largest North American shoe manufacturers (Zahavi is vague about the details), and created a powerful corporate culture that guided relations between the company and its production employees for nearly half a century. Johnson stressed institutional loyalty. He paid high wages and offered a myriad of financial, medical, and recreational benefits, but his distinctive contribution was his patriarchal presence. He was always there to listen to complaints, resolve difficulties, and lend a helping hand. Even when the company became too large for more than symbolic gestures, he continued to persuade most employees that he understood them and their problems. The workers responded enthusiastically, but, Zahavi emphasizes, they were not so mesmerized that they failed to take advantage of Johnson's "industrial partnership" to advance their own interests. In this atmosphere, unions had little to offer and most workers remained skeptical of them, decisively rejecting both the AFL and the CIO in a 1940 NLRB election, for example. During World War II, a CIO organization did enlist a majority of the workers in the company's tannery, but expired quickly in the more-conservative postwar era. Only the company's own decline in the 1950s-1960s undermined Johnson's "Square Deal" and the relationship that sustained it.

Zahavi characterizes the Johnson policy as "paternalism," suggesting something old-fashioned if not necessari-

ly antiquated. He is certainly right that Johnson was out of step with his contemporaries. By the late 1910s, when the Endicott Johnson effort blossomed, companies like International Harvester, Standard Oil, and Goodyear had embraced a bureaucratic approach to personnel issues, based on a formidable employment department and a large professional staff. Johnson clung to the more personal approach; at least, Zahavi does not mention a personnel staff, and cites numerous contacts between Johnson and the heads of various welfare departments, such as the medical service. Johnson also continued to provide company houses, retail stores, and other services that required frequent contacts outside the plant. Such activities were out of vogue by the mid 1920s and scorned by the avant garde of the personnel movement. Johnson was anything but chic.

He was successful, however: more successful, it appears, than many of his "modern" contemporaries. Regrettably, Zahavi does not evaluate this success in business terms, or provide more than the most rudimentary data on production or productivity. But he does indicate that the company was profitable, even during the 1930s depression; that employment remained relatively stable; and that employee turnover was negligible until the extraordinary conditions of World War II made Endicott Johnson relatively unattractive, whatever its personnel policies. Zahavi is better on other manifestations of the Johnson effort, notably the employees' indifference to union appeals. In two carefully-documented chapters he describes the travail of the unions in the late 1930s and early 1940s, the most favorable years of this century for organizing.

Yet Zahavi's choice of the old-fashioned word "paternalism" to describe an old-fashioned personnel program is also misleading. It implies that Johnson was simply an eccentric who was able to swim against the current. Had Zahavi chosen the more-contemporary term "human resources management," the significance of

Johnson's achievement would be clearer. Acting on common sense alone, Johnson discovered what business school professors now routinely teach prospective employers: that formal benefit programs are not enough; that bureaucracy is the enemy of labor-management harmony; and that union organization is a badge of managerial failure. Endicott Johnson, an unrepresentative example of welfare capitalism in the 1920s and 1930s, provided a preview of the nonunion industrial world of the 1970s and 1980s. In some ways George F. Johnson was ahead of the crowd after all.

Daniel Nelson  
The University of Akron

Daniel Nelson, *American Rubber Workers and Organized Labor, 1900-1941* (Princeton: Princeton University Press 1988).

THIS SUPERB history of organized labour in the rubber industry poses a formidable challenge to the Left/social history perspective that has dominated the field of American labour history during the last fifteen years. Despite the fact that Nelson has little interest in the cultures rubber workers brought into the factories, and no more sympathy for shopfloor militants and radicals, he has written what well may be the best history of an industrial union during the Depression years.

Nelson's chronicle begins with the Wobbly-led Akron strike of 1913, a debacle that was long overshadowed by the more famous battles of Lawrence and Paterson. Margaret Prevey, a local IWW leader and Socialist, quickly took charge of a strike that spread throughout Akron's tire shops, and soon the city's streets echoed to the voices of radical speakers. As the strike spread and IWW influence grew, William Green, a young mine-worker leader and state senator, began meeting with Ohio Governor William Cox in an effort to bring government pressure to bear on both parties to achieve a compromise settlement. But the Green/Cox strategy collapsed when one

of the rubber workers' union leaders, who was secretly on company payroll, testified publicly that he had "no grievances" with management. Nelson blames this disaster on the radicals who ran the strike; it was they, Nelson argues, who failed to develop indigenous leadership, creating a vacuum that the labour spy was quick to fill.

Although the 1913 strike failed, it did spur manufacturers to shift their industrial relations practices in order to make sure that never again would they be threatened by radical agitators. One important change was in personnel practices: in place of the volatile eastern European immigrants who had been the industry's chief supply of new labour in the pre-strike years, employers began recruiting Appalachian workers. Equally significant was a change in industrial relations strategies. In place of the harsh discipline of the foreman/driver system, employers began introducing systematic management, removing authority from the foremen. Finally, the rubber industry became a leader in the field of "welfare capitalism."

While workers tried to organize on numerous occasions during the 1920s, the most significant working-class organization of the decade was the Ku Klux Klan. Based in Akron's working-class wards, the Klan won workers' allegiances during a fight for better public schools in 1921, and dominated local politics until 1926, making the city a national leader in the fight against vice and for the enforcement of Sunday blue laws.

The Depression shattered the tire makers' dominance, although it was not until the economy began to recover in 1933 that rubber workers organized. Labor's breakthrough came at General Tire. William Green, now the President of the AFL, urged General Tire workers to rely on the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) for satisfaction of their grievances. But workers ignored Green's counsel, and sat down in June of 1934 — two and one half years before the far more-celebrated Flint sitdown — to protest

piecemeal cuts. When Communists came to town to support the strikers, rubber workers beat them and sent them packing, but the strikers persevered under their own leadership until General Tire agreed to some of the unionists' key demands.

In the wake of the General Tire victory, Green sent Coleman Claherty to Akron to organize rubber workers. Claherty urged workers to postpone strikes in the hopes that the NLRB would eventually grant them union recognition, but the Board repeatedly dashed Claherty's hopes, and undermined the AFL's prestige. When the AFL finally granted the United Rubber Workers a charter in September 1935, Claherty and Green were rejected, and the delegates turned decisively against the craft-union model of industrial organizing.

The rubber workers' second breakthrough began in February 1936, when unionists sat down at Goodyear's massive Akron complex to protest management's intransigence. Seeing an opportunity to expand the CIO's reach, John L. Lewis threw the new federation's wholehearted support behind the Goodyear strikers. As the CIO's prestige among rubber workers increased, its advocacy of compromise gained increasing credibility; in March, the URW accepted a modest settlement, which was widely perceived as a union victory.

The growth of worker militance was another (and for Nelson, a less-positive) consequence of the union victory. Throughout 1936-47, as high production levels minimized unemployment and sustained workers' job security, Akron's tire shops were hotbeds of shopfloor militancy. In May 1936, in the midst of a wildcat sitdown at Goodyear, strikers wielding clubs and knifelike tools herded foremen and nonunion workers into a "bullpen" made of tables and racks. Armed guards penned them in overnight until management agreed to cancel the appointment of a non-unionist. Acts such as these eroded public goodwill, Nelson argues.

Rubber workers attempted to translate their economic power into political

power in 1937 by championing a labour candidate for mayor, but divisions within the ranks of Akron's workers, as well as renewed anti-union animus within the general public, doomed the union campaign. Hostility between AFL and CIO unionists, which intensified during the mayoral campaign, moved many of the town's skilled workers to vote for the incumbent mayor, who often had sided with the tire companies. Within the tireworkers' ranks, a significant minority expressed their hostility to the union by voting against labour's candidate. And Akron's middle class, which had sympathized with the tireworkers in the mid 1930s, showed their resentment of labour militance on election day.

Worker militancy was a major headache for URW leaders as well. While renewed company resistance slowed union gains, "hotheads" gained increasing prestige in the rubberworkers' ranks. Although Sherman Darymple, and his colleagues at the head of the URW, counseled patience and compromise, the "hotheads" undermined agreements and stiffened company resistance. Moreover, according to Nelson, factionalism at the union's top level diverted needed energy and attention from an increasingly difficult task.

As the nation sank into recession in 1938, Akron unionists were hard-pressed to hold on to earlier gains. The unions' failure to organize rubber factories outside Akron meant that wages in the industry center were 40 per cent higher than those outside it, a disparity that led tiremakers to decentralize operations with a vengeance. Akron unions' diminishing bargaining power demoralized rank-and-filers, while public resentment of the unions, for killing the goose that laid the golden egg, surged. Only when war production brought renewed prosperity to the rubber industry was the URW able to consolidate its gains in Akron and complete the organization of the non-Akron plants. Even then, deep divisions within the union leadership prevented the URW from exercising firm control of its bar-

gaining environment.

This sketchy summary demonstrates clearly the unheroic quality of Nelson's saga. On the whole, Nelson is even-handed in his dissection of the foibles and failures of all the actors in the rubber workers' saga, but in at least two ways, he paints a more negative picture than the facts justify. First of all, Nelson devotes far less attention to the years 1941-43, when the URW finally triumphed, than to the years 1937-40, when it was repeatedly stymied. As a result, the reader is more apt to remember — vividly — the union's many failures than its ultimate success. Second, by repeatedly referring to shopfloor militants and their leaders as "hotheads," Nelson betrays a bias in favor of the URW officialdom and their supporters at CIO headquarters. Surely the militants were partly responsible for the tire companies' decision to leave Akron for low-wage sites. But more than 40 years ago, Goldin and Rutenberg, in their classic *Dynamics of Industrial Democracy*, demonstrated that intransigent employers were responsible for the growth of the implacable militancy that Nelson describes. When the companies refused to bargain in good faith, or worse, reneged on their agreements, moderate union leaders had little to offer their ranks, which is why the Akron locals repeatedly elected militant officers.

Perhaps more significant is Nelson's decision to eschew the social history approach that has come to dominate the field of labour history. He does a fine job demonstrating how deep were the divisions in the rubberworkers' ranks, and he pays far more attention to the role played by anti-union workers than is done by historians who prefer to chronicle the heroism of the militant minority. But Nelson's lack of interest in social history prevents him from exploring the roots of the divisions among the rubberworkers. Were union activists drawn more from the ranks of Akron's ethnic communities than from the Appalachians? What separated the shopfloor militants from their more-cautious colleagues? Were there aspects

of the culture that produced the Ku Klux Klan that could also be mobilized on behalf of organized labour? Nelson's method cannot answer the questions his fascinating account provokes.

And yet, *American Rubber Workers and Organized Labor* is more noteworthy for its strengths than its defects. While Nelson tells us little about Akron's families, churches, and ethnic societies, his use of the archives of the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service and the NLRB provide countless fascinating details about the use of labour spies, the shifts in management strategies, and the importance of internal labour politics in determining the course of bargaining. Moreover, because Nelson is not mesmerized by the heroic actions of working-class leaders or shopfloor militants, he is able to analyze carefully the shifting sentiments of the rubberworkers' rank-and-file, local businessmen, and government officials. It is very clear from Nelson's account that the union's ability to win strikes in the years 1934-40 was largely dependent on public support. When the companies were able to use the police and state militia as strikebreaking tools, while flouting the NLRB, they were able to repulse union organization. But when union pickets ruled the streets and plant gates, and the NLRB or the War Labor Board could restrain employer resistance, the URW made its major advances.

Nelson's account of the organization of the URW is so well done that it threatens to recast historical understanding of the emergence of the CIO in a way most Left/social historians probably would not welcome. Take for example, the rubber workers' experiences in the Spring of 1934. While some Left historians have argued that the setbacks suffered by strikers in San Francisco, Minneapolis, Toledo and the textile industry blunted the thrust of rank-and-file militancy and strengthened the influence of conservative labour leaders, Nelson argues that the rubber workers reacted to their problems differently: they rejected AFL leadership and charted their own course, which cul-

minated in their victory at General Tire.

Or, consider the setbacks suffered in the years 1937-40, after the Goodyear victory. While most accounts of the CIO treat labour's emergence as assured after the Flint Sitdown and the US Steel pact, Nelson shows that the 1938 recession and the rightward shift in American politics took the wind out of labour's sails, creating a crisis which was resolved only when the coming of World War II decisively changed the economic and political environment.

By rescuing the rubber workers from historiographical oblivion, Nelson's fine study succeeds in calling into question some of the key shibboleths of the dominant interpretation of the CIO's emergence.

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Harvey A. Kantor, *Learning to Earn: School, Work, and Vocational Reform in California, 1880-1930* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press 1988).

LABOUR HISTORIANS have traditionally paid little attention to schools and schooling. Some even have accused historians of education of knowing little or nothing about the working-class families and students they purport to understand. Now this rift appears likely to close, as historians of education adopt continually more-sophisticated interpretations of workers and labour markets. As this occurs, labour historians would be wise to make themselves aware of these histories. Certainly in this century, public schools have played a central role in the making and remaking of the North American working class.

With this in mind, Harvey Kantor's *Learning to Earn* is recommended as a useful introduction to contemporary issues, approaches and debates. Admittedly, more detailed and more theoretical treatments of aspects of the vocational movement have been recently published, most notably by David Hogan and Joel Perlman. And Kantor's lack of theory,

and his careful treatment of raging liberal-revisionist battles, will win him both kudos and criticism.

But Kantor has produced a clear, thoughtful and, in some instances, challenging interpretation of 50 years of the vocational movement. In places, his book is as much a synthetic overview of the United States as a case study. He illustrates how and why vocational education had established itself structurally and ideologically in public school systems across the nation before World War I, some years before the 1917 Smith-Hughes Act freed federal funds for industrial education and home economics. *Learning to Earn* does not point toward some new understanding of how public education works in capitalist democracies, but it does allow a fuller understanding of early and persistent attempts to coordinate schools and the labour market.

From recent histories of labour and the rise of monopoly capitalism, Kantor constructs a picture of a national economy undergoing dramatic transformation in the late-19th and early-20th centuries. He emphasizes increasing mechanization, rapid deskilling and the death of apprenticeship, and suggests this was an age of increased worker militancy.

Kantor places the vocational movement in this context of "Work, Protest and Industrial Reform." The movement began in earnest in the first years of the 20th century as an attempt to build on *ad hoc* manual and commercial courses offered in high schools across the United States. The goal was to establish comprehensive skills-training courses, either within or outside of the public system, linked as closely as possible to shifting, local wage-labour demands.

Kantor argues that while business organizations such as the National Association of Manufacturers were the earliest promoters of vocationalism, they soon were supported by education officials, progressive social planners and organized labour. Business wanted to guarantee a steady supply of trained workers and to avoid class strife; social planners desired a similar muting of class

conflict within existing capitalist structures; education administrators hoped vocational courses would stream burgeoning school populations, reduce retardation and dropouts, and make school relevant to a new economic age.

After brief, early opposition, the AFL and state and local labour leaders came on board for, in Kantor's interpretation, three reasons: 1) the shared belief with business that apprenticeships were dying; 2) an agreement with administrators that school was too abstract, and especially boring and irrelevant for working-class students; 3) a recognition of vocationalism's momentum, and the wish to have some say in its organization and operation. Kantor maintains that labour had at least a limited say in the development of vocational schools within the existing public systems, and their retaining a substantial academic element.

However, Kantor also argues persuasively that but for commercial education of female students, vocationalism had little impact either on occupational histories or aggregate economic development. Why? First, most high school students, regardless of social class, appear to have aspired to white-collar positions. This kept vocational enrollment low. Second, Kantor suggests that students understood the labour market better than did vocational promoters or counsellors, and realized that the growing sectors of the economy, proportionately, were the service and commercial sector. Again, students eschewed industrial for academic courses. As well, commercial education was the only vocational offering that could replicate workplaces, and that related to expanding labour-market demand. Combined with high female demand for entry to newly-open professions, commercial education emerged as the only really popular and "successful" vocational field.

Thus, the greatest importance of vocational education, Kantor argues, was the entrenchment of a belief that economic problems can be solved in schools; that questions of labour organization and strife, of

unemployment and productivity, can be cured by teaching appropriate job skills, and by coordinating schools and labour market entry. Although this economic faith in education was, Kantor admits, not entirely new, it was demonstrably new in force and form.

This faith in the need and possibility of coordinating schools and jobs was epitomized in the short-lived vocational guidance movement. In the most original chapter in the book, Kantor traces how, in the 1920s, most California high schools developed some form of vocational guidance. The hope was to identify student abilities, instruct them about job possibilities, teach appropriate skills, and place them in jobs. But because most students aspired to white-collar rather than blue-collar jobs, because this was contradicted by vocationalism's blue-collar focus, and because counsellors had little grasp of labour-market realities, these were dismal efforts. By 1930, guidance counsellors were helping students with timetables and giving intelligence tests. Though Kantor does well to caution against overlooking the still-significant role counsellors played in course selection, this attempt to link precisely schools and local labour markets died a quick death, for reasons obvious from this distance.

Kantor concludes that like guidance, the whole vocational movement failed to deliver on its promises. Schools simply could not ameliorate conditions endemic to capitalist economies such as unemployment, alienated work or class divisions and conflict. At the same time, he notes that the belief in vocationalism has proven tremendously resilient to empirical and theoretical debunking. We continue to believe that in some shape, schools can and should train workers, as well as managers and owners. As far as this has been believed, and as far as schools have ordered social organization, labour historians should apprise themselves of education history. *Learning to Earn* would be a good place to start.

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Lynn Y. Weiner, *From Working Girl to Working Mother: The Female Labor Force in the United States, 1820-1980* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press 1985).

LYNN WEINER présente ici une synthèse de l'intégration des femmes américaines au marché du travail, en relation avec les débats qu'elle a suscités et les réformes qui en ont résulté. Selon l'auteure, la participation des femmes au travail salarié s'est faite en deux phases. Jusqu'en 1920 environ, la majeure partie de la force de travail féminine se compose de jeunes célibataires, ce qui fait craindre pour leur futur rôle de mère et d'épouse. La deuxième phase, qui débute vers 1920 pour se poursuivre jusqu'à nos jours, se caractérise par le nouveau phénomène des mères salariées et l'apparition d'un nouveau débat centré sur le sort réservé à leurs enfants. A chaque époque, c'est l'arrivée massive des travailleuses blanches autochtones qui fait naître la controverse. Dans cet ouvrage, divisé en deux parties consacrées à chacune des deux phases, l'auteure examine successivement les causes démographiques, économiques et culturelles de la participation des femmes au marché du travail, les débats qu'elle a provoqués et les ajustements qui en ont résulté autant en terme de réformes et de législations, qu'au niveau de l'idéologie domestique, c'est à dire de la conception de la place des femmes dans la société.

Le premier chapitre débute sur un examen des premières décennies du 19e siècle au cours desquelles les anciennes formes d'encadrement du travail salarié féminin, en particulier le service domestique et les "factory housing," ont peu à peu été abandonnées au moment où la main-d'oeuvre blanche est remplacée par des immigrantes: désormais, le travail d'usine et le service domestique ne seront plus jugés acceptables pour les jeunes blanches autochtones qui commencent alors à envahir les emplois du secteur tertiaire. A partir de la Guerre civile, l'auteure constate la présence de plus en

plus importante des femmes célibataires sur le marché du travail. Cette augmentation de la main-d'oeuvre féminine s'explique d'une part par des facteurs démographiques, comme l'immigration et les migrations internes, combiné à un âge au mariage assez élevé, et d'autre part par une demande accrue pour ce type de main-d'oeuvre. Si la plupart de ces jeunes filles qui travaillent contribuent à l'économie familiale et vivent avec leur famille, entre 14 et 34 pour cent d'entre elles selon les localités, excluant les domestiques, vivent seules et doivent s'autosuffire. La présence de jeunes blanches autochtones parmi ce sous-groupe de travailleuses, initiera, à partir de 1860, un débat examiné dans le deuxième chapitre du livre.

Le 19<sup>e</sup> siècle voit en effet apparaître et se développer l'idéal domestique de la femme au foyer auquel devrait aspirer toute jeune fille "respectable." Aux yeux de la plupart des observateurs de l'époque, le travail salarié effectué dans des conditions souvent déplorables, loin de la maison familiale et donc d'un lieu d'encadrement et d'apprentissage adéquat, vient compromettre la santé physique et morale des futures mères et menacer l'ordre social. Tandis que certains suggèrent leur retour pur et simple au foyer paternel et que les féministes réclament de plus larges possibilités d'emplois pour les filles, les progressistes, sans remettre en question le rôle et la place des femmes, proposent que la société s'adapte à cette nouvelle réalité en offrant aux jeunes travailleuses des conditions physiques et morales d'emploi et de vie qui protègent leurs futures maternités.

Le troisième chapitre examine les réformes mises en place pour atteindre cet objectif et qui traduisent, selon l'auteure, à la fois une acceptation du travail des jeunes filles, mais aussi la certitude que le mariage et la maternité viendront mettre fin à leur condition de travailleuse. Les réformes législatives, étudiées dans la deuxième partie du chapitre, visaient donc avant tout à protéger la santé physique et morale des futures mères en leur offrant des conditions d'emplois moins

dures physiquement et moins susceptibles de les amener à se prostituer pour survivre. L'auteure analyse l'impact de ces réformes pour l'ensemble de la main-d'oeuvre féminine et constate que ces lois protectionnistes disparaissent au cours des années vingt, en même temps que la présence des filles sur le marché du travail devient un phénomène largement accepté et que leur statut de travailleuse n'est plus considéré comme menaçant pour leurs futures maternités. Ce renversement s'explique entre autre par l'arrivée sur le marché du travail de femmes mariées et de mères de famille qui se retrouvent au centre d'une nouvelle controverse.

La deuxième partie du livre est consacrée à l'analyse de ce phénomène. Dans son examen des transformations de la main-d'oeuvre féminine (chapitre 4), l'auteure passe en revue les différents facteurs avancés pour expliquer cette entrée des femmes mariées sur le marché du travail au cours du 20<sup>e</sup> siècle, et en particulier la participation plus récente des femmes des classes moyennes et des mères de jeunes enfants. Jusqu'en 1940 environ, la majorité des femmes mariées travaillent par nécessité économique, souvent à domicile, échappant ainsi aux statistiques officielles. Dans la majorité des cas, elles sont noires et/ou appartiennent aux classes les plus pauvres de la société et abandonnent leur emploi dès que leurs enfants sont suffisamment âgés pour les remplacer. Quelques-unes toutefois travaillent pour améliorer le niveau de vie de leur famille, annonçant des changements importants dans la perception du rôle économique des femmes et des valeurs familiales qui surviendront dans les années 40 à 70. Durant cette période en effet, un nombre croissant de femmes, et en particulier celles des classes moyennes, rejoignent leurs consoeurs noires et pauvres sur le marché du travail. Tout comme pour les jeunes filles du 19<sup>e</sup> siècle, l'importance des transformations démographiques qui surviennent à cette époque ont été avancées pour expliquer ce phénomène: baisse de la natalité, urbanisation croissante, augmentation du



nombre des diplômées et vieillissement de la population. Selon l'auteure, la réduction de la semaine de travail et l'augmentation des salaires réels, de même que l'allègement, sinon en temps, du moins en effort, des tâches domestiques doivent aussi être considérés. Mais surtout, cette augmentation du nombre de femmes mariées sur le marché du travail coïncide avec une augmentation de la demande de main-d'oeuvre féminine, en particulier dans les emplois de cols blancs, au moment où moins de jeunes filles sont disponibles pour travailler en raison des lois scolaires et du vieillissement de la population.

Ces transformations s'accompagnent de changements importants dans les attitudes par rapport au travail salarié féminin, examinés dans le chapitre suivant. Dès les années vingt, comme il a été mentionné plus haut, la présence, encore minoritaire, de travailleuses mariées venant des classes moyennes ouvre un nouveau débat. Cette transgression de leur rôle "naturel," par nécessité d'abord puis de plus en plus par choix après les années 40, suscite des inquiétudes, non pas pour leurs maternités futures, comme c'était le cas pour les jeunes célibataires, mais au sujet de la santé physique et psychologique de leurs enfants. Cette controverse atteindra son apogée dans l'après-guerre au moment où les théories freudiennes se répandent de plus en plus; l'argument psychologique est venu remplacer l'argument moral dans la défense de l'idéal domestique de la femme au foyer. Pourtant, jamais les femmes mariées n'ont travaillé en aussi grand nombre. L'idéologie féministe qui émerge dans les années soixante et conteste la division des rôles sociaux fondés sur le sexe reflète d'ailleurs cette réalité. Sous son impulsion, l'idéologie domestique de la femme au foyer se rétrécit pour ne plus englober que les femmes ayant de tout jeunes enfants. L'acceptation dans l'avenir de leur présence sur le marché du travail dépend, selon l'auteure, du succès ou de l'échec futur des luttes pour les garderies.

Le dernier chapitre étudie les débats

qui ont entouré l'adoption des différentes réformes pour répondre aux besoins de ces mères au travail. Qu'il s'agisse du placement en institutions, des garderies destinées aux enfants des veuves ou des démunies, ou encore des pensions et allocations qui leur sont versées par l'Etat à partir du début du 20<sup>e</sup> siècle, l'auteure constate que ces programmes, loin de reconnaître le changement social, visaient surtout à protéger la santé physique et morale des enfants ou à encourager les mères à se consacrer exclusivement à leur famille en conformité avec les valeurs domestiques des classes moyennes. Alors que le phénomène des mères travailleuses s'amplifie à partir des années 20, les places disponibles en garderies se font plus rares et sont réservées aux enfants des femmes mariées les plus démunies. Faire garder son enfant devient un signe de pauvreté, ce qui encourage la recherche de solutions individuelles. Depuis les années 60, les groupes féministes affirment que les garderies doivent être perçues comme un service essentiel: cette conception suppose que la société accepte pleinement le droit au travail salarié des mères d'enfants d'âge pré-scolaire, ce qui n'est pas encore le cas. Si l'idéologie domestique a dû retraiter depuis le 19<sup>e</sup> siècle, elle englobe toujours les mères des jeunes enfants encore considérées comme les seules aptes à en prendre soin.

Cette analyse l'amène à conclure que contrairement au travail des jeunes filles, l'intégration des mères au marché du travail n'a pas conduit à l'adoption de réformes et de changements structurels importants. Selon l'auteure, il faut en chercher la cause dans la survivance de l'idéologie domestique de la femme au foyer, héritée du 19<sup>e</sup> siècle, mais encore très présente dans la société américaine en dépit du fait que la majorité des mères travaillent. L'obtention de garderies et une plus grande flexibilité dans les horaires de travail représentent les deux luttes encore à mener pour faire accepter ce phénomène.

L'ouvrage de Lynn Weiner offre une synthèse intéressante de l'histoire du

travail salarié féminin aux Etats-Unis et constitue un exemple stimulant d'une analyse intégrée de divers phénomènes (économiques, démographiques et idéologiques) pour en expliquer l'évolution. Il suggère toutefois sans l'interpréter une contradiction persistante entre les besoins de main-d'oeuvre féminine et l'idéologie domestique de la femme au foyer et tend plutôt à démontrer que les politiques et réformes adoptées visaient davantage à protéger les maternités présentes et future de ces femmes qu'à interdire ou restreindre leur participation au marché du travail en conformité avec cette idéologie.

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Karen Brodtkin Sachs, *Caring By The Hour: Women, Work, and Organizing at Duke Medical Center* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press 1988).

UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL organizing drives and their breadth almost defy description. One or several unions attempt to convince many disparate workers with a seemingly-unending range of job descriptions and responsibilities who are frequently scattered over a sprawling complex of buildings and work areas that they have a common interest and will benefit from union membership. As a staff nurse and volunteer organizer, I participated in the successful effort to unionize the University of California hospitals from 1979 to 1983. Reading *Caring By The Hour* reimmersed me in the joy and agony of such a struggle. Sachs, currently assistant professor of anthropology and director of women's studies at University of California at Los Angeles, joined with pro-union service and white-collar workers at Duke University Medical Center (DUMC) in 1977-78 in a failed campaign to unionize the university hospital. *Caring By The Hour* is a history of unionism at DUMC. It is based on interviews Sachs conducted during the campaign, and her research following the union's failure to expand

Local 77 of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) to include clerical and technical workers, such as data terminal operators and medical secretaries.

Sachs explains that the book began as an analysis of women's union activism and work culture at the Medical Center, and admits that it grew into a history of health-care work and the evolution of unionism at Duke "in spite of my intentions." (4) How fortunate for us that this came to pass. Her book is a finely-crafted, complex study which reveals how the black community's growing sense of pride and entitlement during the civil rights movement collided with Duke University's paternalistic attitude towards its service employees. This clash resulted in the formation of the Duke Benevolent Society in 1965, which soon affiliated with AFSCME Local 77. In particular, the union attacked Duke's "plantation system," which treated black workers as casual laborers with no job security, or remedy for arbitrary and abusive practices by supervisors and management. (46) By 1972, Local 77 won the right to represent Medical Center housekeeping and laundry workers, as well as food service and housekeeping workers campus-wide.

While Local 77 had spokesmen, male leaders who publicly articulated the union's demands and accomplishments, Sachs demonstrated that the union's early success depended on "women's everyday work culture and black women's social networks." (1) Women at the center of clusters of friends and relatives, dubbed "centerwomen" by Sachs, set up and maintained social networks that replicated the function of families both inside and outside the workplace. These networks sponsored social events both inside and away from the hospital, reinforced individual and group self-esteem and nurtured a sense of pride in their members' work. They celebrated their members' value as kin, as adults, and as workers. Politicized by the civil rights movement and a burgeoning Southern labour move-

ment, they constituted a sturdy base upon which leaders built a union. "Union leadership," according to Sachs, "lay in the interaction of center and speaker functions...." (213)

Sachs makes a great contribution in her redefinition of leadership. Her reconceptualization of the mechanics of union organizing and of leadership bring women who normally live in the shadows of charismatic orators and more-visible, elected male officials to the forefront. Sachs illuminates these women's role in shaping and communicating the political consciousness and consensus of the networks they represented, and shows the dynamic nature of union-building.

The union campaign which culminated in an NLRB election in 1976 failed because the bargaining unit contained many white secretaries who did not identify with the union, and because Left-wing faction fights within networks undermined union solidarity. The networks themselves, however, remained potential sources of union grass-roots support. Sachs successfully demonstrates that AFSCME 77's last attempt to organize the Medical Center in 1977-79 went down to defeat because officials from AFSCME International headquarters did not activate the centerwomen in these key social networks. In addition, social networks lost their political edge as the late 1970s brought the decline of the civil rights movement and a changing political climate.

Sachs also cautions us that some social networks and work cultures stifle resistance. She identifies the work culture of medical-record secretaries as a "culture of complaint," (94) in which the secretaries tended to lament about their situation rather than take concrete action to change it. Their social networks reinforced this behavior. Similarly, office secretaries and receptionists preferred to transfer out of unpleasant workplaces instead of pushing for improvement. Job experience, then, Sachs demonstrates, was a crucial factor in the determination of the character of social networks and work culture. In combination with race

and class differences, these circumstances drove a wedge between workers with similar occupations, and hindered alliance-building between black and white female workers at the Medical Center.

Sachs acknowledges that one of the book's weaknesses rests with her failure to establish the role church membership played in the composition and militant character of social networks central to the union's vitality. Taylor Branch extensively has documented such a connection, and its dependence on the black church as an organizational base and inspirational wellspring, in *Parting The Waters*, his study of the civil rights movement until 1963. A similar exploration on Sachs' part would have done much to validate her thesis, as women were key figures in the church community.

In all other respects, *Caring By The Hour* is a splendid addition to the literature on labour, health, women's, African-American and southern history. It is an engaging study that both union activists and scholars will find compelling and useful.

In many respects, it is a dismal time for unionists and unionism in the United States. Employers chip away at past contractual gains; apathy and fear pervade many union memberships, and organized labor appears to lack the coherence, energy and strategies needed to counter these attacks and conditions. We must take some time, between skirmishes, to reexamine earlier periods of union growth and militancy. We must rediscover what spurs individuals to become unionists and in what circumstances we can tap into incipient cultures of opposition and on the job. We must be able to cultivate leadership across occupational, race, class and gender lines. We must re-educate ourselves and the public about unionism's powerful legacy and potential for social and political transformation. *Caring By The Hour* provides unionists and all students of history with a vital resource to serve these ends.

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Mike Davis and Michael Sprinker, eds., *Reshaping the US Left: Popular Struggles in the 1980s* (London: Verso 1988).

IN THIS THIRD volume of *The Year Left*, an annual publication, fashioned after the *Socialist Register*, the participant-observer authors examine recent North American protest movements.

There are five articles on "new social movements." Van Gosse discusses the Central America solidarity movement, with emphasis on the Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador (CISPES). Solidarity groups jointly organized the Pledge of Resistance, an effort involving some 42,000 persons committed to civil disobedience in the event of a US invasion of Nicaragua. Despite being "perpetually caught between the excesses of ultra-leftism and the political timidities of a pragmatic progressivism," the movement has been a durable and effect one. A mark of its success is the FBI's "terrorism investigation" of CISPES.

Contributor Johanna Brenner discusses female peace activists. Locating the source of militarism in capitalism, she debunks those strands of feminist theory that view both militarism and the oppression of women as expressions of male domination, and advocates connecting feminist antimilitarism to other social movements.

Polls show that environmental issues are highly salient to people, but "the American environmental movement is fragmented, without strong constituent-based organizations or a national program." Margaret FitzSimmons and Robert Gottlieb argue that the movement is hobbled by institutionalized groups which rely on using lobbying, litigation and experts. They recommend more democracy, grassroots involvement and the forging of links to other movements.

The peace movement arose in response to Reagan's advocacy of a "winnable" nuclear war. Its main organizational expression was the Nuclear Weapons Freeze Campaign, which sought a bilateral moratorium on nuclear weapons.

This was to be realized by grassroots pressure and local referenda, ending with congressional legislation and a treaty with the USSR. John Trinkl discusses the organization's weaknesses and its merger in 1986 with SANE.

Barbara Epstein provides an informative account of the nonviolent direct action movement, which featured deep personal commitments, blockages of nuclear sites and mass arrests. The members predominantly were white females whose schedules were flexible enough to allow them to go to jail occasionally. Their high moral tone and concern for community-building restricted the movement to the highly-dedicated few.

Five articles chronicle union struggles. Phil Kwik and Kim Moody describe the strike of United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) Local P-9 against the concessions demanded by the Hormel Company. The local had to fight both the company and the union. Officials of UFCW appeared on Ted Koppel's *Nightline* to denounce the strike, cut off strike benefits and put P-9 under trusteeship. Still, the P-9ers continued to fight, calling for a national boycott of Hormel products, broadening their ties with other groups, holding marches and rallies. The strike was lost, but the authors cite P-9 as a model of working-class self-organization and of what unionism could be.

Frank Bardacke gives an inspiring account of the 1985-87 strike by Chicano and Mexican women frozen-food workers in Watsonville, California. For more than two years, not one of the 1,000 workers returned to work. This remarkable unity was fortified by ethnic ties among the strikers, and between the strikers and their community. Bardacke also attributes the strike's success to its Left leadership, which worked closely with the rank and file to take militant decisions that circumvented the union bureaucracy.

A coalition of union and community groups in Van Nuys, California persuaded General Motors to keep open its only remaining plant in the state. GM maintained that this decision was a result not

of workers' militancy, but of unionists' approval of Japanese-style management techniques. Eric Mann provides a useful account of the attitudinal obstacles to organizing unionists for such an action, and discusses the character of the workers' politics — a willingness to transcend normal trade-union practice to reestablish traditional union practices (as distinct from socialist goals). Mann stresses the importance of leadership, which in this case came mainly from within the *local* union.

John Calvert maintains that Canadian labour has been more successful than US labour with regard to numbers of members and to resisting the erosion of collective bargaining. I agree with the first claim but not the second, because of the alarming increase in Canadian government restrictions on the right to strike. Calvert attributes the Canadian advantage to "a new trade union culture and political outlook" which rejects business unionism. This explanation fails to consider how material conditions shaped these attitudes. Then too, it's easy to idealize Canadian unions when the dismal record of US labour is the basis of comparison.

Calvert implicitly praises Canadian union leaders; Bryan Palmer condemns them in his account of the 1983 Solidarity movement in British Columbia. That the movement went out with a whimper is ascribed to the reformist politics of NDP leaders and union bureaucrats, who are characterized as accommodationists and capitulationists (the essence of business unionism). We are taken step by step through the buildup, demobilization and demoralization of a movement with great potential, culminating in International Woodworkers of America (IWA) president Jack Monro's infamous private agreement with Premier Bill Bennett.

The last two essays depart from the rest by tackling theoretical questions relating to the working class. According to Michael Kazin, the US working class is a "rhetorical abstraction," because few workers have been motivated by class consciousness or the goal of socialism.

The evidence: the language and world views of top leaders of labour organizations convey no socialist or class-conscious content. John L. Lewis and Walter Reuther are seen as reflections of their constituents, and George Meaney as the "genuine" voice of white workers! This approach confuses whole and parts, and the evidence is highly selective. The most elementary error is the failure to distinguish between rank-and-file workers and union bureaucrats. The data consist of fragments of some labour leaders' utterances. The words and actions of workers are entirely ignored, as are actions of capital and the state that crippled or destroyed workers' strikes and movements. Kazin's approach offers little more than a grotesque caricature of the working class.

David Roediger argues that race is marginal to most working-class historiography, and analysis of it ordinarily is restricted to how racism divided workers. He maintains that it is more appropriate to explore how racism shaped the class-conscious choices of workers, and urges that this "tragic history" be placed high on the agenda of labour historians.

This collection of essays provides useful and informative descriptions, analyses and criticisms of the forces of opposition in the US and Canada during an era when reactionary politics and conservative ideas appeared hegemonic. This book is good medicine for those persons mired in political pessimism and nostalgia for the 1960s.

James Rinehart  
University of Western Ontario

Ruth Milkman, *Gender at Work: The Dynamics of Job Segregation by Sex during World War II* (Urbana, Illinois: University of Illinois Press 1987).

WORLD WAR II and the resulting shortage of male labour gave American women access to more jobs and more money than at any other time in our nation's history. Women successfully performed "male"

jobs, yet at the end of the war, they left or were pushed out of these jobs on a massive scale. Ruth Milkman examines this phenomenon and tries to explain the forces that combined to create and perpetuate job discrimination and the segregation of women. She successfully explores the effects of industrial structures of work on the development of separate "male" and "female" jobs by using an industry-specific, historical approach. She examines two successful but disparate industries, auto manufacturing and electrical manufacturing, and weaves together the political and economic realities of each industry and their women workers during the war. At the same time, she shows why early Marxist-feminist and labour-segmentation theories about gender discrimination in the workplace do not completely explain persistent sex segregation.

Some early Marxist-feminists (Milkman specifically cites Juliet Mitchell, Peggy Morton, and Wally Secombe) argued that women's positions in the workplace were directly connected to their position within the family. According to Milkman, this view explains the actual existence of job segregation based on gender, yet it does not adequately explain why society stereotypes and perceives certain jobs as "male" while others are labeled "female." Milkman points out that the definition of "male" and "female" work is an elastic one; jobs that are "female" and those that are "male" differ from industry to industry, and between plants within the same industry. In addition, Marxist-feminist theory fails to differentiate between jobs in different industries, and to explain how sex-based stereotypes develop over time. In contrast, Milkman believes that an ideology of sex-typing jobs exists, but that is has developed differently within each specific industry.

Labour market-segmentation theorists, particularly Richard Edwards, address why different jobs are given to different genders by "segmenting" labour into groups of primary and secondary

workers. Primary workers have stable, high paying jobs. Secondary jobs have low wages and high turnover rates. Milkman finds this theory useful for looking at divisions of labour. However, she faults it for not differentiating between the various subgroups that make up primary and secondary fields and for not acknowledging the distinctiveness of particular industries. Segmentation theory also completely ignores the possibility of a link between the role of women within the home and within the workplace. It assumes that segmentation exists as part of management's scheme to divide and thus control labour. This implies that both male and female workers have an obvious class interest in defeating job segmentation on any basis. Yet Milkman's industry-specific, comparative approach shows that male workers sometimes sided with management to discriminate against women.

In 1944, the peak year for women workers' participation in both the auto and electrical industries, 27.8 per cent of the auto workers were women, and 48.9 per cent of electrical workers were female. In 1946, women were only 9.5 per cent of the workforce in the auto industry, which was only slightly higher than their prewar representation. However, women electrical workers were 39.4 per cent of the workforce in 1946. While the percentage of women electrical workers decreased almost 10 per cent from 1944, it was considerably higher than their prewar representation. In the auto industry, women workers were tossed out of their "male" jobs by management with the acquiescence of the predominantly-male union. Women electrical workers kept their jobs and the support of their male colleagues.

Although male workers in auto and electrical manufacturing were worried about losing their jobs after World War II, they dealt with the issue in different ways. Male auto workers allowed or encouraged job discrimination against women workers, while male electrical workers joined with women workers to protest

sex-based wage discrimination. Acknowledging the sheer number of women workers within their union and fearful of being replaced with cheaper female labor, male electrical workers fought to change sex-based differences in pay. In contrast, women made up a small part of the auto-industry workforce. Male auto workers were more interested in crowding out anyone who threatened the monopoly they held on the jobs that already existed. Also, there were not enough *organized* women workers to force the union to deal with their particular issues. As Milkman points out:

The situation of women auto workers was entirely different from that of northern blacks. Although the incorporation of women into the industry during the war had not provoked riots or hate strikes, this was primarily because female employment was explicitly understood to be a temporary expedient, 'for the duration' only. After the war, women were expected to go 'back to the home.' There was no parallel expectation regarding black men. And while women war workers wanted to remain in the auto industry, as we have seen, their preferences (unlike blacks') lacked legitimacy. While black workers had the civil rights movement behind them, there was no mass feminist movement or even popular consciousness of women's job rights at this critical juncture, when the sexual division of labor that would characterize the postwar period was crystallizing. (126)

Although Milkman notes the absence of an organized feminist movement and how this affected job segregation by sex, she also gives much attention to the general political difficulties that unions faced during this era, especially the more-radical unions like the United Electrical Workers and the United Auto Workers. She successfully and clearly explores the question that others have raised while tracking those questions and others over time, without succumbing to the strait-jacket of deterministic, theoretical approaches.

Edna Johnston  
Catholic University of America

John W. Boyle, *The Irish Labour Movement in the Nineteenth Century* (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press 1988).

THIS IS A LONG and sometimes-interesting historical document, and it has a long history. Its central portion was written as a PhD thesis during the 1950s and early 1960s. The degree was awarded in 1961 by Trinity College, Dublin. The author put the best parts of his research into a series of articles and Irish radio talks, and there the material should have rested, for the PhD thesis upon which the articles were based was depressingly unpublishable. Boyle subsequently migrated to Canada and, while teaching at Mount Allison in the late 1960s and early 1970s, rewrote and expanded portions of the manuscript. Later, while teaching at Guelph in the late 1970s and early 1980s, he added as appendices to the text several lists of trades councils and tables of financial details of various union activities. Finally, after Boyle's retirement from Guelph, the study was published by the Catholic University of America Press, which shares with many Irish-American institutions an uncritically-philanthropic interest in Irish history.

Since Boyle gives no evidence of having taken in the great ferment that has occurred since the early 1960s both in labour history and in Irish historical studies, it might be inferred that the volume is of little value. Such is not the case. The book preserves, as if in amber, the way that labour history in the British Isles was done in the late 1950s, and the way that Irish historical work was done. It is an amazing antique, and like an ancient but still-working piece of early industrial machinery it should be treasured for what it is. For labour historians, the character of the book is best described as being exactly the sort of volume that Henry Pelling (to whom Boyle acknowledges a major intellectual debt) would have written if he had taken to studying the Irish labour movement. Irish historians will note that Boyle's other major debt (besides the obvious indebtedness to his thesis supervisor) is to Emmett Larkin.

Thus, for Irish historians, the character of the book is best described as being exactly the sort of volume that Larkin would have written had he not dropped labour studies and taken up his ten-volume, million-word history of Irish Catholic bishops and their church in the 19th century. Boyle's volume is a seemingly-endless listing of every tiny union, its formation and (usually) dissolution, all presented without anything that resembles analysis, let alone theoretical sophistication.

Yet, Boyle's work will provide useful background material for Irish labour historians, although they will wish to deal directly with some of the topics which he gingerly approaches and then refuses to treat analytically. The most important of these is whether or not in the 19th century (or in the present) it is realistic to conceive of there being an Irish labour movement. That is: is not the valence of sectarianism so strong that a single Irish movement is impossible? Second, he refuses to face the question of whether or not Irish nationalism was not fundamentally incompatible with Irish trade unionism. Third, the relationship of the Catholic church to unionism is skirted. The church, even more than the nationalist political elite, may have been the reason why organizations based on social class have done so badly in Ireland. These are not small questions; were they to be approached directly, a study of 19th-century Irish unionism would have great comparative interest to labour historians of England and Scotland.

Still, there are some nice parts of the present book. The citations are scrupulous and a model of clarity. The information that Boyle garnered in interviews with labour leaders in the years 1957-62, when he was working on this study, is invaluable. The typography is excellent, with notes at the bottom of each page, and the index is first-rate. Large university libraries with research collections should consider purchasing this volume.

Donald H. Akenson  
Queen's University

Gregory Anderson, ed., *The White-Blouse Revolution: Female Office Workers Since 1870* (Manchester: Manchester University Press 1988).

THIS COLLECTION of seven papers examines one of the most significant occupational shifts in the last one hundred years: the massive entry of women into office work. As Margaret Hedstrom's perceptive chapter on the United States experience notes, whereas women accounted for only two per cent of all clerical workers in 1870, by 1930 nearly half of the clerical workforce was made up of women.

*The White-Blouse Revolution* covers this fundamental workplace change from a number of angles, including the impact of changing technology, the deskilling of clerical work, changing educational and marital patterns, and the impact of two World Wars on the overall occupational structure. The emphasis lies squarely on the British experience, although several chapters, in some ways the most interesting, address the US case. Most of the book is descriptive, rather than analytical, though there is some airing of contentious issues. These include the relative influences of capitalism and patriarchy on the division of labour, and the nature of clerical deskilling as engineered by the introduction of the typewriter and other information technologies.

The major shortcoming of the book is that it lacks an overall perspective or argument. The editor's lead-off chapter might have provided one, but instead summarizes the history of women's entry into the clerical workforce. Debates are referred to obliquely, and the most interesting observations are illuminations of subthemes within a chapter. For example, Hedstrom suggests that technologies are used as cultural supports for the reproduction of gender relations by pointing out that typewriter companies deliberately chose women to demonstrate the new machine because women were considered skillful at piano-playing.

Though most of the chapters are sympathetic to the view that changes in the



structure of the economy help explain changes in women's work, most try to go beyond this by suggesting that patriarchy was a strong force in the specific structuring of women's employment. As Jane Lewis puts it, "the nature and conditions of women's work should also be considered part of the construction of masculinity and femininity." Susan Dohrn's chapter on the first women to work in the banking and insurance industries demonstrates the tight interconnection of economic and gender issues by describing how women were viewed as likely candidates for jobs that were both dull and low-paying.

This policy of admitting women into the clerical workforce changed significantly during and after World War I, as Meta Zimneck describes. She documents how wartime needs accelerated women's entry into clerical jobs. Between 1914 and 1918, women went from 21 to 56 per cent of staff in the British Civil Service. But demobilization (which, as she notes, "was not so much a relaxation into 'normalcy' as an attempt to recreate it by main force" succeeded in reducing the percentage of women to 25 per cent by 1923, a figure that remained constant until World War II. Zimneck presents strong evidence about how the British government used popular feelings toward war veterans to legislate the elimination of thousands of women from the clerical ranks.

Rosemary Crompton documents changes in the structure of clerical labour since 1945. She claims, convincingly, that it is more useful to look at how clerical work is segmented by gender, rather than feminized. Hence, though almost all typists, shorthand writers and secretaries are women, large segments of the clerical, cashier, and office machine-operator categories remain male. Moreover, she notes that the influx of women into the clerical workforce since 1945 has been made up mainly of married women, particularly women returning to the workforce after childbearing.

*The White-Blouse Revolution* demonstrates the specific ways in which, as

Crompton says, "classes are gendered." In doing so, it takes a useful step toward remedying a deficiency in much social history and social theorizing about the subject.

Graham Lowe's work *Women in the Administrative Revolution* provides another such step. Models based on bureaucratic and technological pressures simply have ignored the ways in which, as Hedstrom puts it, "gender-based strategies continue to hold considerable sway in shaping social relations."

Although the book is strong in documenting "the white-blouse revolution," it passes over too lightly the fundamental changes, in the nature of office work, taking place now, which have profound consequences for women. The application of integrated computer communications systems is eliminating jobs in industries, such as telephone, that employed large numbers of women. Moreover, the promise of productivity gains from rapid technological change is bringing about a rise in occupational safety and health problems. Connected to this is the decentralization of office work back to the home, or to suburban neighborhood work centers, where overhead is lower, in part because more of the office costs are absorbed by workers. These developments reflect a deepening and an extension of the white-bloused revolution that labour historians who have charted earlier experiences with job loss, health and safety struggles, and institutionalized homework, are in a good position to examine.

Vincent Mosco  
Carleton University

F.M.L. Thompson, *The Rise of Respectable Society: A Social History of Victorian Britain* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press 1988).

SINCE ANOTHER Thompson first argued for the effective agency of the working class in its own making, 19th-century historiography has been increasingly

peopled with astute working chaps who, often without even budging from the pub, contrive to repeat this remarkable exercise. Such existential sturdiness is reported to have secured them not only against middle-class schemes of cultural colonization but against the fool's gold of political adventurism. The type is featured again by F.M.L. Thompson as 'the thinking workingman (who) quite rationally preferred enjoyment in music hall comfort to the discomfort of attending political meetings about remote and pointless causes.' Other groups in this account are also out and about making their own lives: the upper middle class are found not guilty of toadyism to their social superiors nor as philistine as Arnold charged; middle-class women create meaningful roles in voluntary work (not much about their lower-class sisters though); only the lower middle class and the residuum languish in cultural pusillanimity or worse. In this liberalized extrapolation of culturalism nearly everyone is a cultural hero/ine.

For this Thompson, Victorian Britain was made not by the collective and conflicting energies of class but by the aggregate yet separate initiatives of a wide range of subcultural groups within a finely-layered social structure, each group answering to their own readings of the normative dynamic of respectability. This is a largely self-policing world where popular alienation from official authority reinforces independent consciousness. There is some polarisation by class in work and politics, though Thompson sees this largely as a matter of rhetoric and sectional self-interest on the part of a still far from fully-made industrial working class. Major lines of social division are fragmented by gradations of status and associational loyalties, as exemplified in the complex social geography of urbanisation and the expanding world of leisure. As a consequence, Britain in 1900 was a much more 'orderly and well-defined society' than in 1830, 'but it was not an inherently stable one,' and trouble lies around the corner.

This, then, is the central argument of the first book in a new series which aims to combine an effective synthesis of the mass of new research from the social-history explosion with fresh interpretation. As Director of the Institute of Historical Research in London, Michael Thompson has been well-placed to monitor the flow of new material in the field, and there is a clear need for a work of this kind. While there has been no shortage of general texts on modern Britain, coverage in social history has been patchy. The very good series edited by Hobsbawm is well over a decade old, and never did produce a volume on the late-Victorian period, a gap still to be filled in the new Penguin social history of Britain.

The general work of synthesis here commands respect, as we are taken thematically from the basic patterns of industrialization and urbanisation to a consideration of family life, marriage, childhood, homes and houses, work and leisure, and on to a concluding chapter on authority and society which treats with the social impact of reform lobbies and the increasing intrusion of the state. While one accepts that for all its considerable length this must be a selective overview, there are some odd imbalances given the nature of the central thesis. There is, for example, too little attention to those prime devotees of respectability, the lower middle class, whose function as what Orwell called 'the shock absorbers' of British society is germane to Thompson's concern with order and stability. The author acknowledges his dependence on the secondary literature, but references are limited to suggestions for further reading which may make the unfamiliar reader uncertain as to the particular authority for a number of incidental propositions — on the moderating politics of factory women, or the success of most Victorian marriages. Are they part of the author's 'seriously argued revision' or the new orthodoxy of a sub-field? Some obsolete thinking nevertheless is also perpetuated. Henry Broadhurst is quoted yet again on the need to

keep womenfolk sequestered at home, an attitude that is now considered untypical of male union activists.

It is in the matter of interpretation that the book is more problematical. We are never told directly what it is that is being revised unless it be a class-obsessive transformational model that is now too vulgar for even the most neanderthal of Marxists. The argument for a pluralist society that achieves unity in diversity, albeit with inherent tensions, is a long-standing liberal reading (if still a fruitful one, as in historians' new attention to the complexities of Britain's national communities). The force of continuity amid change is now widely acknowledged and is arguably more significant where the old persists within the clamantly new, as in the here-neglected mass press, than in the survival of modified traditional forms like the fair to which Thompson pays disproportionate attention.

Respectability is certainly important but the argument for its near universality, however many its varieties, squeezes the complexities of ideology and control into a single discourse. For some time, historians have been tracking respectability's wider reach beyond the thin grey line of tight-lipped Nonconformists and a putative labour aristocracy, but they have also been attending to other supple and integrating ideologies in civil society: 'Englishness,' anti-industrialism, the class-neutral idea of the nation and citizenship, the rise of consumerism and a national-popular culture, and a working-class 'culture of consolation.' For Thompson, this latter territory is again occupied by the sturdy chaps, now armed against 'the imposition of middle class values' by the 'collective power of the working class purse,' and enjoying the protection of 'the capitalist system itself ... as the guarantor of popular sovereignty over the use of popular leisure.' Well, yes, but ... Elsewhere the author has torpedoed the social control model, but here has put nothing much in its place, unless it be a spurious consumer sovereignty. There is no engagement with present

debates on culture in which historians have been involved. It is in such a vacuum that Respectability Rules, OK! — though in the nicest possible way.

Michael Thompson allows himself an occasional friskiness — Engels 'shacking up' with a mill girl — but the general style is lucid, measured and urbane. This works very well indeed in integrating a daunting historiography, but its general benevolence limits the book's interpretive acuity.

Peter Bailey  
University of Manitoba

Stephen G. Jones, *Sport, Politics and the Working Class* (Manchester: Manchester University Press 1988).

FOR THE MOST PART, sport historians and labour historians regard each other's areas of study as alien worlds. It is rare for sport historians to consider the relationship between sport and the working classes, and just as rare for labour historians to consider anything as trivial as sport to have any relevance to understanding either working-class culture or the labour movement. This book by the late Stephen G. Jones attacks these underlying assumptions, and convincingly demonstrates that both sport historians and labour historians could learn much from each other. To labour historians, Jones demonstrates that the labour movement has used sport to achieve both political and social objectives. For sport historians, he uncovers a previously unexplored world of sport history.

Jones' objective was to examine "The relationship between the labour movement and sport in inter-war Britain." (1) Central to his approach is the assumption that it is impossible to understand a phenomenon like sport without placing it in its wider socio-economic context. In Chapter 1, he describes the genesis of the theoretical positions which led to his over-all concern with structure and agency. Interestingly, his greatest debt is to Canadian sociologist Richard Gruneau. This concern with structure and agency is

one of the strongest elements of the book. Jones provides a carefully-balanced account of the relationship of sport to broader societal structures. He never claims too much, but always recognizes that sports played a limited role in the political strivings of the labour movement and the state. Nevertheless, he demonstrates that sport did play a role, and that to ignore this is to give an incomplete picture of the ways in which socialists attempted to effect changes beneficial to the working classes.

Chapters 2 and 3 offer a broad overview of working-class sport in the late nineteenth century and between the wars. These chapters are based on an insightful reading of the literature. While his is a comprehensive and accurate review of the literature, it is predicated on available work and reflects the weaknesses of this literature. In fact, the little that has been written on sport history has focused on those activities introduced and dominated by the middle classes. Surely a view of working-class sport should focus on those activities that arose out of working-class culture. Analysis that ignores truly working-class sports such as dog racing, rabbit coursing, quoits, fives, pedestrianism, rowing and potshare bowling (at least in the North East coalfield) must be incomplete and, in the final analysis, inaccurate, especially if one is concerned with structure and agency. Additionally, although his emphasis on commercialization is well placed, it involves a particular view of commercialization, and thus needlessly narrows the focus of attention. Depending upon one's definition of commercialization, it is possible to argue that working-class sport was always commercial. However, it must be emphasized that these two chapters are simply a prelude to the main focus of the book.

Chapter 4 ("Up the Reds: Workers, socialists and Sport"), Chapter 5 ("The Labour Party, the unions and sport in the 1930s"), and Chapter 6 ("The State, working-class politics and sport") present insightful, innovative and original views about the relationship of sport to work-

ing-class struggles. Jones' carefully balanced and reasoned discussion provides a convincing and complete account of the connection between sport and politics. The rise and fall of the communist British Workers Sport Federation (the communists were always more aware of the political usefulness of sport), the growth of the National Workers Sport Association, the use of the National Playing Fields Association, the National Youth Labour League, and the Woodcraft Folk all are used to illustrate the subtle relationships between sport and political action. His examination of the working-class role in the battle over access to the countryside is a case-study of successful political action. Organized labour was able to affect policy decisions, but within severely circumscribed boundaries. At the same time Jones carefully avoids claiming too much. He recognizes that sport was a minor element in labour's struggle. Yet the very fact that it was involved demonstrates that workers were not just powerless victims, but in various ways had input into decisions that influenced their own lives.

This book is, indeed, as the series editor claims, "the first of its kind in the academic world." A comprehensive command of the literature, and an understanding of basic theoretical assumptions, allied to extensive work in primary sources, have resulted in a challenging book. It leads one to mourn, once again, the untimely death of one who promised so much.

Alan Metcalfe  
University of Windsor

John McIlroy, *Trade Unions in Britain Today* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, and New York: St Martin's Press 1988).

'SOLVING THE UNION PROBLEM is the Key to Britain's Recovery': the title of a Conservative pamphlet published shortly before the 1979 election clearly signalled the attack which trade unions would face.

Now, after a decade of Thatcher government, industrial relations may be seen as an arena in which the policies of the radical Right have been pursued with particular commitment and consistency. The destruction of a quarter of the manufacturing jobs in Britain, and resulting mass unemployment, have brought down union membership by more than 3 million from the 1979 peak of 13.3 million. The quasi-corporatist machinery of tripartite boards, regular consultations in Whitehall, and trade union representation on an array of public bodies, largely has been dismantled. A succession of legislative controls over union organization and industrial action has transformed labour law in Britain from one of the least to one of the most tightly regulated in the world.

Yet for all this, there is very little agreement among industrial relations analysts about the impact of Thatcherism on trade unions. (Whether or not 'Thatcherism' itself is a coherent project and analytical category is itself controversial, but this is another question). The fall in union membership has been severe, but not disastrous. It largely has reflected the decline of strongly-unionised industries, rather than an active process of de-unionization. The scope of collective bargaining appears undiminished, and most large employers still see value in cordial relations with unions (many of the key exceptions being in the public sector). Financially, several trade unions were in serious difficulty in the early 1980s, but their position is now healthier; ironically, this is in part because of the fall in the number of strikes. And although the government has rewritten the statute book, the effect on the ground is far from clear. Hence, while some commentators speak of a crisis of trade unionism, others insist that unions have fared remarkably well in the face of unprecedented challenges.

McIlroy surveys the state of British unions in a book intended as a concise and accessible text, particularly for use in adult education courses. In six chapters, he outlines the social and economic con-

text of recent British industrial relations; relationships with governments and the Labour Party; the traditional legal system and the changes of the 1980s; the effects of new technology, and the extent to which unions can influence the form of its introduction; the question of democracy within unions (one of the key areas of Thatcher government intervention); and the debate (now largely quiescent) over industrial democracy. A final chapter seeks to draw general conclusions on the condition of trade unionism under Thatcher and its prospects for the 1990s.

McIlroy deals informatively and effectively with all of the main issues on his agenda. He provides a range of statistical and other data without burdening the reader with excessive empirical detail. The historical background of more recent developments is briefly but competently presented. On controversial questions, an effort is always made to present unemotionally the conflicting positions; the author tries to avoid imposing his own perspective.

The concluding discussion of the 'state of the unions' is perhaps the book's most stimulating section. Again, McIlroy first surveys current debates. On the issue of 'macho management' — seen by many commentators as a distinctive feature of the 1980s — he suggests that 'a tougher stance... is a discernible but minority trend.' The significance of 'no-strike deals,' he argues, has been much exaggerated. The notion of the 'flexible' firm, in his view, also overstates the novelty or coherence of changes in work organization and employment practices. The decline in membership represents 'a serious setback' for unions, but not a collapse. Strike activity has declined, but by no means disappeared. Real wages have increased during most of the decade (in marked contrast to 'concession bargaining' in North America), but it is far from clear whether this should be attributed to union pressure rather than the dynamics of segmented labour markets. Shop-steward organization has survived the 1980s virtually unscathed, but whether its strength has been reduced significantly is much harder to establish.

What of the future? Employment is shifting from manufacturing to services, the average size of workplaces is declining, a growing proportion of employees work part-time (most of these are women). Employment thus is found increasingly in contexts where unions traditionally have found it hard to organise. Yet, insists McIlroy, the obstacles are not insuperable: 'there is no law governing trade union decline.'

Nevertheless, the responses of trade unions themselves suggest that survival in the 1980s has involved redefining their character and purpose. Some — notably the Electricians — appear committed to a strategy of organising *employers* rather than workers, with methods sometimes verging on US-style 'sweetheart' deals. Others have emphasised services to members as individuals — financial packages, cheap pension and insurance schemes, travel agencies — while playing down their role as *collective* representatives of their members. Over all, there has been a trend toward the competitive pursuit of a dwindling employment constituency, in a manner which undermines the labour movement's cohesion as a whole. The TUC, its status diminished by government contempt, has lost the means to impose the coordination and solidarity required to meet adverse circumstances. The process of union amalgamations, which has accelerated in the 1980s, has been a defensive reflex rather than a bid for greater unity, and in many cases has complicated further the Byzantine structure of British trade unionism.

These considerations shape McIlroy's over-all conclusions. Measured by their standing with individual employers and the maintenance of workplace-level organization, British unions have indeed survived the past decade remarkably well. But 'set against the broader canvas, the picture looks different.' Political influence, over-all unity of purpose, identification with social goals transcending the agenda of collective bargaining, all appear significantly weakened. The model of *Labourist* trade unionism, consolidated in the first three-quarters of

this century, has fallen victim to Labour's political eclipse (and to the Labour Party's own efforts to distance itself from the traditional union link). Older, 'semi-syndicalist' conceptions of union strategy have been discredited by the failure of the 1984-85 miners' strike. The only alternatives, suggests McIlroy, are either selfish and parochial business unions, or else a redefinition of the possibility of class-wide union action — perhaps influenced by Scandinavian experience. There are, he concludes, no easy solutions to the current dilemmas: the changes required would be 'the work not of years, but of decades.'

McIlroy has produced a challenging and readable assessment of British trade unionism today. At the same time, he offers an intelligent discussion of interpretative — and *practical* — issues which will be salient for other, very different trade union movements.

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Veronica Beechey, *Unequal Work* (London: Verso Books 1987).

SEVEN OF THE NINE ESSAYS in this book track Vernonia Beechey's work over a decade to fashion an explanatory account of women's oppression that adequately encompasses the nature and material reality of women's paid and unpaid labour, and the relationship between the family and industrial capitalism. The last two essays (a review of two books on unemployment in Thatcher's England and an overview of recent structural changes in the British workforce), ground Beechey's proposals for a more flexible and equitable vision of employment for both women and men in the future.

With the possible exception of the final essay on the future of work, all the essays in this volume were published previously elsewhere. Frustratingly, neither the original publisher nor the date each essay was first published is noted. More problematical, although Beechey's intro-

duction locates her own writing broadly within the context of evolving feminist and Marxist-feminist research produced during the same period (the early 1970s through mid-1980s), and assesses retrospectively some of its methodological shortcomings, only one essay contains an editorial preface to indicate which of its arguments Beechey believes have continuing relevance. As a result, the organizing principle of the collection is unclear, not least of all because Beechey's analysis matures so noticeably from essay to essay, and programmatic Marxist theorizing is superseded by more empirically-based and concretely gender-specific research.

The first three essays mark Beechey's early efforts to develop a Marxist-feminist framework for understanding women's distinctive position and oppression within capitalist forms of the labour process. Although critical of the sex-blindness of orthodox Marxism and its inadequate attention to the family and the sexual division of labour, this work is extraordinarily abstract and palpably constrained by its reliance upon economistic Marxist analysis and terminology.

The best of these essays, "Women and Production: A Critical Analysis of Some Sociological Theories of Women's Work," accessibly identifies the problems involved in analyzing female wage labour from existing sociological and Marxist analytic models. The second piece is a seriously-dated and highly doctrinaire elaboration of Marx's labour-process theory to analyze women's concentration in low-paid, unskilled or semiskilled jobs as an industrial reserve army. Its inclusion is puzzling because the subsequent essay, a review of Braverman's *Labor and Monopoly Capital*, rejects reserve army theory to explain long-term structural shifts in women's employment. The Braverman review, though dated, provides a useful model of how not to apply Marxist theory to women. In criticizing Braverman's analysis of the sexual division of labour for its universalism, romanticism, ahistoricism, over-simplification and male-centredness,

Beechey introduces methodological questions applied throughout this collection to test the adequacy of emerging research on women's labour.

Notwithstanding Beechey's skill in exposing the flawed assumptions and gaps in the theoretical and explanatory approaches of others, her work from this period suffers from its own universalisms. As Beechey herself puts it, this early writing was "highly functionalist, paid insufficient attention to empirical evidence about women's situation in the labour market and to differences among women, and it tried to force an analysis of gender relations into pre-existing economic categories which were ill-equipped to deal with them." (10)

Although gender relations and women's specificity often get lost in this theorizing, Beechey's three essays from this period supply useful introductions to, and illustrations of, the intellectual debates of their time and the groundbreaking efforts of Marxist-feminists to expand the notion of "work" to include women's domestic labour, and to analyze the nature and role of the sexual division of labour.

Only one essay squarely engages longstanding debates among feminists concerning whether and how to conceptualize patriarchy in understanding the relationship(s) between the subordination of women by men and the organization of various forms of production. In "On Patriarchy," Beechey somewhat schematically describes the theories of patriarchy developed by such feminists as Kate Millet, Juliet Mitchell, Shulamith Firestone, Sheila Jeffreys, Christine Delphy, Heidi Hartmann, and Zillah Eisenstein, and finds them all lacking for a variety of reasons. They variously are descriptive rather than explanatory and biologically reductionist; they privilege the family, patriarchal ideology, or reproduction as the primary site of women's oppression; or they are dualist, seeing patriarchy and capitalism as two separate but interrelated systems constructing women's oppression.

In rejecting dualism, Beechey's Marxist roots are pronounced, if abstract:

feminist method must be historically specific, integrating "production and reproduction as part of a single process" and revealing that "gender differentiations are inseparable from the form of organization of the class structure." (114-5) Male power and its abuses do not figure in this approach; women's subordination is oddly depoliticized, becoming a gender "difference," one unit in the sexual division of labour.

The gravitational tug of Marxism seriously limits Beechey's critique in two ways. First, it leads her to conceptualize the family, family ideology and reproduction almost exclusively in terms of their labour value and their role in the organization of paid work. Male violence in the home, for instance, which significantly constructs the conditions under which reproduction takes place, is never mentioned. Nor is misogyny.

Second, it erases the role of other oppressive social institutions — notably racism and heterosexism — in the construction of the family, the labour market, and the state as vehicles of systemic sexual inequality. Race and ethnicity are mentioned, in passing, throughout the book as differentials which have yet to be integrated adequately into theories of women's work. Sexuality is mentioned exactly twice, and is never related either to women's wage-labour experience or to capitalism. At a minimum, the commodification of sex, the sex trades, and sexual harassment are surely fundamental, material conditions of women's distinctive oppression within capitalist forms of the labour process.

When Beechey draws on recent empirical studies of women's employment, her analytic insight is far more satisfying. In her review of three case-studies of women in particular industries, her summary of the research she and Tessa Perkins conducted on part-time work in selected manufacturing and public-sector occupations, her review essay of ten years of British research on women's employment, and her overview of structural changes in the British workforce,

Beechey finally springs free of ideological abstraction, richly demonstrating how gender constructs the organization of paid and unpaid work. Here, women are not a unitary class; the gendering of different occupations is illuminatingly distinguished; the tensions between a male-dominated union movement and women workers' aspirations come alive. The review essay, in particular, is both an extraordinary resource guide to the literature in this field and a provocative call for future research building upon the knowledge-base she so accessibly anatomizes in this essay. (In this regard, the book's lack of a bibliography is disappointing).

Over all, this book is a sometimes-frustrating, sometimes-fascinating historical record of one theorist's efforts to relate production and reproduction, patriarchy and capitalism from a creative intellectual patchwork of Marxist and feminist ideas. Although Beechey raises more questions about these relationships than she answers, and although, in my view, the questions she raises suffer from the narrowness of all hyphenated feminism, her critical insights in assessing and synthesizing developments in the literature on women's labour pose consistently engaging challenges for scholars in this field.

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Veronica Beechey and Tessa Perkins, *A Matter of Hours: Women, Part-Time Work and the Labour Market* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press 1987).

ONE NOTABLE FEATURE of North American labour markets after the great recession of 1981-82 was the rise in part-time employment. The initial reaction of many labour-market observers was one of concern — a manifestation of the "tilt" toward the secondary labour market at the expense of "good," primary labour-market jobs. It was cited often as further evidence of a restructuring of labour markets in



response to deindustrialization and the rise of the service economy. However, the recovery of full-time employment in the United States, although not in Canada, suggests that the reality is considerably more complicated than first envisaged.

What is perhaps more significant than the cyclical trend is gender differentiation in part-time work. In Canada, one of every four employed women works part-time, but only one out of every fifteen to twenty males is similarly employed. Between 1981 and 1988, however, while part-time work increased more or less proportionately among men and women, *involuntary* part-time employment increased almost 50 per cent faster among women than among men. And while involuntary part-time employment for males was concentrated among youth, for women it was concentrated in the prime working and family-supporting ages, 25 to 44 years.

This brief summary of recent trends in part-time work is meant only to introduce a subject of considerable, if neglected, importance in labour-market analysis: part-time work and its impact on women's welfare. What should be recognized is that part-time work is not, in itself, necessarily bad or undesirable. But it is, of course — if it is involuntary — a crudely disguised form of unemployment. Less obvious, but more insidious, part-time work may be one manifestation of job- and wage-discrimination against women, as well as one method employed by capital to undermine the labour-market position of male workers and unions. It is these issues that are the subject of Beechey and Perkins' study, which combines a general survey and analysis of the literature on part-time work with empirical evidence they collected from a case-study of Coventry, England, between 1979 and 1981.

The central focus of *A Matter of Hours* is not the increase in part-time work in postwar Britain (though they make note of this), but rather the "development of a new form of work which is highly exploitive and heavily

gender specific." (1) Part-time jobs are exploitive because they are bottom-level, dead-end jobs, frequently devoid of benefits (such as sick and maternity pay, pensions, holidays, and overtime pay), and gender-specific because "male jobs" are constructed as full-time positions while "women's jobs" are constructed as part-time work, specifically so women can combine paid work with unpaid housework and caring work.

One major conclusion of their investigation is that there is no single pattern of part-time work across all industries and over time. During the war and the postwar boom, labour was in short supply in Britain. Under such conditions, women were considered a reserve army of labour and employers tried to induce them into the labour market by offering part-time work with hours and conditions that were complementary to their household responsibilities. As a result, women's needs and preferences were accommodated in the design and scheduling of jobs. However, the jobs themselves disproportionately were the least-desirable types (dull and repetitive), and were in "domestic" types of work (related to housework). In part, this reflected the low level of public support for child care in Britain that otherwise could have liberated more women for full-time work.

With the economic stagnation of the 1970s-1980s, however, the situation changed markedly. There was no labour shortage, yet part-time employment of women continued to increase. Beechey and Perkins considered two possible explanations: the substitution of lower-priced, part-time female labour for regular, full-time male and female workers; or alternatively, use of part-time work to provide employers with low-cost flexibility to cover demand-peaks and to extend the work day and the work week.

Their evidence strongly supports the second interpretation. In fact, to the extent that subcontracting and privatization did result in the conversion of reasonably-paid full-time jobs to low-paid part-time jobs (mainly in catering and cleaning

services), it was a case of full-time women being replaced by part-time women — just one more example of how right-wing, conservative policies have acted to the relative detriment of women.

The pattern of women's part-time employment also varied among industries, particularly between manufacturing (where part-time employment has been declining in recent years), the domestic service industries, and the teaching and nursing professions (where it has been increasing). In manufacturing, part-time work was particularly vulnerable to cyclical fluctuations but, in any case, the secular decline in employment in manufacturing and the contracting-out of domestic-type jobs contributed to the downward trend.

The conclusion that flexibility was the main reason for the expansion of part-time work should not, however, lead to the conclusion the involuntary part-time work is a *necessary* outcome of labour-market forces. Indeed, this is the most important conclusion of this work.

Employers use gender-differentiated ways of meeting a labour shortage or attaining flexibility. Where men are employed, jobs are invariably full-time and flexibility is gained through overtime and short-time working, and sometimes through the employment of temporary workers. Where women are employed, on the other hand, flexibility is attained through the creation of part-time jobs. (76)

In fact, they go further. The labour market, they argue, does not respond to supply and demand by wages (which are determined by the social costs of reproduction, in turn dependent on the existing standard of living), but rather "through social and political changes such as changes in family organization or migration procedures." (139)

In the last chapter, the authors discuss policy responses to the problems raised by part-time work. Their answers break no new ground — the promotion of non-traditional jobs for women (though as they note this tends to neglect part-time workers since most nontraditional work is

full time), and a reduction of the standard work-week which would make more jobs accessible to women with family responsibilities. Implied in any strategy is the need to remedy the woeful inadequacy in Britain's child, elderly and handicapped care, which forces women to work part-time rather than accept full-time work as they are able to do in many other European countries with superior social welfare programs.

*A Matter of Hours* is a welcome and perceptive look at a relatively neglected aspect of the labour-market experience of women. What is left underdeveloped, unfortunately, is the extent to which the problem is *institution specific* rather than *gender specific* as the authors maintain. As they point out, Britain's experience differs from that of France due to different levels of social services, and to the Thatcherite policies that have increased women's disadvantage. More comparative research would have greatly enhanced this aspect of their analysis. It also should encourage us to look at part-time work in Canada which, on superficial analysis, appears to differ somewhat from recent experience in the United States.

Perhaps the most problematical part of this otherwise-stimulating study is the theoretical discussion of the reserve-army and dual labour-market approaches to part-time work. Apart from the gratuitous and by now clichéd potshots at Braverman's pioneering work, *Labor and Monopoly Capital*, the criticism of dual labour-market theory is dated, and does considerable disservice to the wealth of more recent work in labour market segmentation. A fuller integration of their findings with contemporary, segmented labour-market theory would be a welcome addition to this work. Such minor criticism aside, however, this is a significant contribution to labour market analysis and to the particular position gender plays in structuring the labour process and the labour market under modern capitalism.

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Samuel Estreicher and Daniel G. Collins, *Labor Law and Business Change: Theoretical and Transactional Perspectives* (New York: Quorum 1988).

SINCE THE BEGINNING of the decade, the United States has experienced a profound economic restructuring as a result of the new stress on product specialization and global competition. Plant closures, mergers, bankruptcies, automation, and deregulation have posed a severe challenge to the promise of the New Deal's *Wagner Act*. That promise consisted of productivity gains and employment security for unionized workers in exchange for an uncontested core of managerial prerogatives and industrial stability for employers. The problem is that the existing legal arrangements do not protect unionized workers from the brunt of this restructuring. Between 1980 and 1986, 10.8 million workers in the United States were displaced as a result of what Estreicher and Collins euphemistically refer to as "business change."

How is it that the existing collective bargaining laws have failed to protect unionized workers from the ravages of economic restructuring? In exhaustive, often-repetitive detail, the seventeen essays in this book identify and discuss the structural inadequacies of federal labour law which renders it inadequate to provide meaningful collective bargaining over plant closing, relocations, work transfers, corporate reorganizations and new technology. Moreover, the essays also indicate that during the past ten years, a series of judicial and administrative decisions has further limited the ability of unionized workers to use existing collective bargaining institutions to respond to corporate reorganizations. But, while the essays clearly demonstrate *how* labour law and collective bargaining institutions have failed to enable unionized workers to meet the "challenges" posed by economic restructuring, the book fails to offer any attempt at an explanation of *why* they have failed.

This collection of essays manifests

the same flaws as most books addressed exclusively to a legal audience. Not only is the broader economic and political context inadequately described, there is no attempt to provide any theory about the relationship between legal institutions, doctrines and practices, and economic change. Nor, for that matter, is there any attempt to examine and analyze the role of legal institutions in structuring the relations between labour and capital. Instead, the various essays describe how the current process of economic restructuring has influenced industrial relations practices, and considers in detail those aspects of federal labour laws that are likely to be of critical importance to business-change decisions.

The collection is divided into two parts, the first of which the editors describe as theoretical. Wedged between an opening chapter, which presents an overview of the role of collective bargaining in the current era of economic restructuring, and a closing chapter, which contrasts the legal regulation of labour relations in the United States with the regimes in various other countries, are six chapters (written by legal academics) devoted to detailing the following aspects of the legal regime: information sharing, successorship obligations, arbitration of business-change disputes, employee pension plans, and such corporate-law considerations as the legal restraints on appointing union representatives to the board of directors. It is difficult, however, to discern what Estreicher and Collins mean by the use of the term "theoretical." The closest thing to a theory offered anywhere in the book is the endorsement of industrial pluralism offered by Kaden in his opening chapter.

Industrial pluralism has provided the theoretical and institutional foundation of American collective bargaining since the *Wagner Act*. Procedural mechanisms which both guarantee and regulate workers' rights to associate and to bargain collectively are provided as a means of redressing employers' overwhelming bargaining power without government interference in the outcomes of market for-

ces. In exchange for wage increases, job security and binding collective agreements which limited the exercise of arbitrary managerial power, unions forego recourse to industrial action in order both to contest investment and organizational decisions and to resolve midterm disputes. But it is precisely the employers' prerogative to make unilateral decisions of the first sort which renders unions powerless to deal with corporate restructuring. At most, labour law has provided unions with a limited right to bargain over the effects of restructuring decisions. Some unions have adjusted to the new economic environment by obtaining stock rights and the appointment of labour representatives to the board of directors in exchange for concessions. Kaden seizes on the ability of these unions to maintain a bargaining presence in exchange for concessions as evidence that the existing institutional structures have the capacity "to adapt the relationship between capital and labor to the complex demands of a new economic order." (19) The fact that union membership in the United States has declined 16 per cent between 1980 and 1986 is taken by him as evidence of the need for some minor procedural reforms.

This faith that procedural tinkering can remedy the defect of the collective bargaining regime is symptomatic of the limitations of industrial-pluralist analysis. The legal institutions, rules and practices which regulate the relations between labour and capital are abstracted from the broader economic and political context. Consequently, industrial pluralists are unable to provide an explanation either for the emergence of particular institutional arrangements at specific historical junctures, or for the ineffectiveness of institutional arrangements in light of changing economic conditions.

Exclusive preoccupation with the instrumental use of the legal regime characterizes the second part of the book. The remaining nine chapters offer "transactional presentations" in which legal practitioners advise their respective client-constituencies on the use of the law to

achieve their objectives by focusing on the interplay of legal rules and practical constraints in the context of such transactions as plant closings, mergers, automation and technological change, employee stock-option plans, and bankruptcy reorganizations. These chapters reinforce the conclusion that federal labour laws in the United States offer little help to unions during economic hard times.

But despite its very obvious limitations, this book serves several useful purposes for Canadian scholars. First, it functions as a reminder that it might not be necessary to retrench collective bargaining rights legislatively in order to mount an attack on organized labour, as the example of the United States shows. Structural limitations, such as fragmented bargaining units and limitations on the right to strike, in existing Canadian legal institutions may be exacerbated by judicial and administrative incursions, obviating the need for direct legislative attack. Second, these essays may be a useful point of comparison for determining the ways in, and extent to, which American labour law diverges from its Canadian counterpart with respect to restructuring decisions. American labour law departs from Canadian labour law in a number of important respects which limits a union's ability to respond to economic restructuring. The question is whether these institutional differences will remain as the pressure for harmonization increases as a consequence of the economic restructuring which almost inevitably will result from the Free Trade Agreement.

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Charles C. Heckscher, *The New Unionism: Employee Involvement in the Changing Corporation* (New York: Basic Books Inc. 1988).

*THE NEW UNIONISM* proposes nothing less than a fundamentally new industrial relations system for the United States and, by implication, Canada. Heckscher believes

that the framework of the Wagner Act as it has evolved through judicial interpretation and through the National Labor Relations Board, is obsolete. The problem, as he sees it, is that the "balance of power" between the unions and the major employers has broken down in the face of major economic transformations: in particular, the shift from mass production to services in the domestic economy, and the massive acceleration in international capital flows. The proposed solution is not, as others have argued, to revitalize the Wagner Act framework. The author believes that such reform underestimates the rapid global transformation now underway, and that it misses the more fundamental point that "the balance-of-power model is increasingly inappropriate to a 'post-industrial' society."

Heckscher's concern in this new context, however, is age-old: he wants to find a way to prevent workers from "diminishing their motivation and withdrawing their commitment to the workplace." He is also concerned with the decline of union representation in the United States. Since unions can "create a sense of belonging and commitment in their membership," he contends that unions lead to "significantly higher" productivity. (Here, he cites Freeman and Medoff's *What Do Unions Do?*, but their claim is that it is good industrial relations and competition in product markets which are associated with higher productivity.) Heckscher argues, in contrast, that since the managerial abuses of labour which gave rise to the Wagner Act have diminished, there is no longer a need for *adversarial* unionism. "By drawing sharp lines to define the parties and their tactics," the Wagner Act framework and labour's own history have become sources of rigidity.

The principal objective of *The New Unionism* is to reconcile unions' representation function with an abandonment of "their power base in the membership's willingness to strike." In return for this, unions would enjoy access to "the realm of 'management prerogative.'" Heckscher believes that this "new unionism" would be consistent with the needs of the growing stratum of nonunion, semi-

professional employees who are concerned that "standards for getting ahead should be fairly and equally enforced." Such a new form would also be consistent with an emerging managerial change "toward some as-yet-undefined 'postbureaucratic' form."

The outlines of this new industrial relations system emerge in what Heckscher terms "managerialism," a set of structural and cultural changes including "quality of work life" (QWL) programs, the team concept, and more generally the new 'corporate cultures' which focus on management's attempts to articulate and promote values capable of stimulating productivity-enhancing creativity and commitment among employees. Critical, here, is the notion that managerialism is based not on power relations, but on "influence" where workers "are responsible for 'managing' their jobs," and join task forces where "they function as equals with their bosses."

The author believes that the effectiveness of managerialism is limited, however, by its failure to establish a "new form of independent representation" for workers. Heckscher wants to graft onto managerialism an independent, pluralist, and decentralized form oriented to a "better way to build agreement." The graft is derived from professional associations such as engineering and is dubbed "associational unionism." The main elements of this model are a code of conduct for the members; more member participation and education; new types of representation (through labour-management task forces) and new services (skills training programs); a "wider" choice of tactics (more lobbying and public relations campaigns, fewer strikes); and alliances with groups outside the union (consumer activists).

To bolster associational unionism, the author proposes a new bill of minimum rights for individual workers so that instead of striking they could sue their employers in areas of due process (disciplinary action); more access to corporate information; greater freedom of

speech ('whistleblowing'); and increased freedom to form a "differentiated network of associations [that] would be less likely to seek a single enemy." Government would not play a role in substantive issues, but would have a restricted role as a "guarantor of fair negotiation." This, briefly, is the author's proposal.

*The New Unionism* would have benefited from a comparison with the Canadian industrial relations system. Despite the numerous similarities between the Canadian and US systems, the extent of union representation in Canada is proportionately more than twice that in the United States. This suggests that the great weight Heckscher attaches to the many weaknesses of the Wagner model is exaggerated. Factors such as the quality of union leadership, the nature of nationalist and chauvinist sentiments among union members, variations in the form of union organization *within* the Wagner model, political parties available to labour, and other factors need to be assessed.

Yet, over all, the author's appreciation of the crisis of the American labour movement is much stronger than the alternative he offers. At the heart of associational unionism is a distinction between "bureaucracy" (the author's characterization of Wagner Act unionism) and managerialism, between a system built around power relations and one founded on relations of influence. It is true that the decline of the blue-collar labour force has left a more-differentiated work force in its wake, that basic wage and fringe-benefit issues do not address a growing number of concerns about skills and promotion, and that lines between workers and managers have become less distinct in an increasing number of workplaces. It is also true that such tendencies play a central role in the current crisis of unionism. It is *not* true, however, that any of this removes the basis of conflict between employers and workers. Nor is it true that the legal framework of industrial relations is a major source of labour-management conflict — except insofar as

it has become the object of employers' often-illegal assault. The conflict between workers and employers stems from fundamental economic and political inequalities in the workplace. Because Heckscher ignores such inequalities, he is unable to show how associational unionism can produce a form of unionism that is both independent and non-adversarial. There is simply no evidence that management values independent unionism, and so much evidence to the contrary.

The author's attempt to remove conflict from the industrial relations system also fails in other ways. On the one hand, he proposes that workers enjoy a minimal bill of rights, but on the other, he cautions that the "spread of employee rights...has suffered by its overdependence on governmental enforcement." Job security, the most critical issue facing most workers, is also unresolved. Instead of limiting management's right to lay off workers, he proposes that the state and the associational unions use employees' contributions and taxes to retrain workers for "career flexibility."

*The New Unionism* is weakest of all in its presentation of the virtues of managerialism. While the author provides no in-depth study of any concrete example of this new form, he does mention a few cases, notably the few unionized exceptions. He cites Ford and General Motors, but fails to provide evidence that they exemplify any fundamental shift away from conventional power relations. He does not recognize that workers' "influence" in both these firms is in fact highly circumscribed. Indeed, at Ford and General Motors, massive rank-and-file campaigns are now mounting against the very managerialism Heckscher lauds. Another example he mentions repeatedly is the Shell refinery at Sarnia, Ontario, a small plant of about 120 workers whose skills give them considerable power over the production process because the technology is vulnerable to very costly breakdowns — an atypical labour-management scenario. The author also neglects to mention that while the plant is represented by

the Energy and Chemical Workers Union, the local is a *de facto* company union. Heckscher does inform us that a sister refinery "was designed on the same principles," but he does not tell us that the plant is non-union.

Although certain recommendations (such as his endorsement of an AFL-CIO proposal to provide associate-union status to workers at non-union sites) are interesting, they are no substitute for real unionism. The kind of unionism that Heckscher prescribes may apply to a small aristocracy of highly skilled workers, but this form cannot meet the needs of the vast majority, both white- and blue-collar workers, who do not have such skills. Associational unionism is, at best, weak unionism. Increasing concentration of capital and globalization of production make this kind of hyper-decentralized "new unionism" an employer's dream. Better, more-independent worker representation is needed, clearly, but it will require a major mobilization of worker power — something that neither the state nor consensus-oriented managers are likely to promote.

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Alfred W. Crosby, *Ecological Imperialism: The Biological Expansion of Europe, 900-1900* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1986).

WHEN I TELL PEOPLE that the phrase "control over Nature" is a bold and pompous oxymoron (and I never lose an opportunity of doing this), they generally look puzzled. Nearly every adult in the West has been infected by the hoary notion that human history shows us the story of our increasing "mastery of Nature." The precise phrase varies, but all are varieties of techno-nonsense, utterly belied by the most cursory look at the actual environmental evidence. Henceforth, few books will be more useful to me in my quest to re-educate people on this matter than *Ecological Imperialism*. Indeed there can

be very few people (already re-educated or otherwise) who could fail to be enlightened by this extraordinary book. The title promises much; Crosby delivers more. Perhaps without explicitly intending to do so, Crosby manages to deflate significantly the pretensions to technological greatness of both the Old and the New Worlds. Since some so-called aboriginal peoples are also shown by Crosby to have seriously blotted their ecological copy-books, it would not be too much to say that world history can never look the same again after this work. One's day-to-day consciousness can be permanently enlarged by this kind of history. Now, these are very large claims to make for what is actually a delightfully short book.

The basic problem Crosby set himself was both remarkably simple and seemingly vast. How were Europeans and their descendants able to spread outwards from Europe as successfully and permanently as they did? Crosby's own answer to this question is very straightforward, and so compelling that everyone must henceforth at least admit that the difficulty of the problem has been permanently reduced. Eschewing both the usual idealist arguments about European culture (viz., Western science) being just inherently superior, and also the many simple-minded attempts at self-styled "materialist" explanations which try to speak authoritatively of "economic" superiority (without considering seriously what this possibly could be in ecological terms), Crosby effectively establishes a wholly-new foundation for all future discussions about imperialism (and about much else besides). How did he achieve this considerable result?

Evidently not at all dazzled by the folklore of European might, Crosby starts by taking explicit notice of the many cases, such as the Norse invasions and the Crusades, where Europeans did NOT establish deep roots in foreign soil. His originality lies in his taking this horticultural metaphor literally. Where European plants and animals could not thrive,

neither could Europeans (and hence cultural transplants did not "take" either). Among the successful cases, which he terms "Neo-Europes," Crosby finds a common ecological pattern. But the ecological argument Crosby makes is not a matter just of geography; it is also a matter of history proper. For it is not just that all Neo-Europes had essentially similar primeval ecosystems which the Europeans could simply invade and then immediately inhabit. Ecological invasions are processes and therefore inherently historical, at least when people are involved. It turns out that Neo-Europes have been established where the primeval ecosystems had ALREADY been seriously disrupted in certain characteristic ways (the unintended results of earlier, often non-European human actions), but not yet reoccupied by established "civilizations." Notoriously, the Middle and Far East proved resistant to European takeover attempts. The Europeans and the members of the "portmanteau biota," as Crosby puts it, are not especially gifted or otherwise well-endowed invaders. Rather they simply are unusually-virulent weeds, weeds being defined generally as specialists in colonizing already-disrupted ecosystems. For example, according to Crosby, it fundamentally was not technology, or even strictly people, that "tamed the prairies." It was European ruminants and the grasses adapted to them that cleared the land for Western agriculture. Crosby tells that story and those of several similar Neo-Europes in order to illustrate his general argument.

The stories are spiced with a great deal of unflaggingly-absorbing detail. Crosby's writing is easy to read, frequently very amusing, and occasionally laced with trenchant sarcasm. While the book's structure and organization are perhaps not beyond all reproach, the argument is perfectly clear at all times. On a more mechanical level, I may observe that this book is also unusually beautifully made, with an extremely attractive and appropriate cover illustration. But I must take this opportunity (quite uninvited) to decry publicly the common habit, ex-

emplified here, of supplying books with extensive endnotes but no ordered bibliography. This book is bursting with tantalizing references and it would be nice to have organized HELP chasing them up.

In my opinion, *Ecological Imperialism* emphatically belongs on the required reading list for any course with a world historical agenda or with any substantial component of European or Neo-European social or economic history. It occurs to me, however, that there may be some people who are intellectually unwilling to digest unaided works like this which impinge on so many fields at the same time, and which so reduce the relative importance of much of what we usually think the stuff of history to be (ideas, politics, warfare, etc.). There will also be some (quite differently-minded) who may be seeking more of this heady kind of stuff. For these two categories of potential readers, the following remarks about how to classify *Ecological Imperialism* are intended. Regardless of how specialists in imperialism react to it, Crosby's work must count as a valuable addition to that small and enriching (but far from new) literature on our role in changing the face of Earth. It is a body of scholarship that has been scandalously ignored. Witness the fact that few people know that we have already made almost the whole planet over again, if not in our own image, then at least not according to Nature's original either. Vernon Carter and Tom Dale's *Topsoil and Civilization* and Edward Hyams' *Soil and Civilization* had already told us in summary fashion how the peoples of the Ancient World (and their goats) destroyed their parts of our global living environment. Perhaps alarmingly, now that Crosby has explained the conditions of the Old and New Worlds as well, there is almost nowhere left. This, of course, we recognize as our predicament now. Western agriculture and its variants have directly and indirectly ruined most the planet's original ecosystems. Apart from anything else, Crosby's account forces such environmental issues on the reader, and forces



them relentlessly. It is easy to see that the economic globalization occurring today is further accelerating the process described by Crosby as the reversal by human beings of the work of Continental drift which had so enriched the path of evolution. I hope we are not so confident as the 17th-century New Englander who asserted boldly that "the Lord hath cleared our title to what we possess." (208)

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Francesco Benvenuti, *The Bolsheviks And The Red Army, 1918-1922*, trans. Christopher Woodall (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1988).

STRICT ATTENTION to the 'objective situation' in his study of the formation of the Soviet military forces has provided Benvenuti with an alternative explanation for the Bolsheviks' adoption of organizational principles which were applied to the Red Army and subsequently transferred to the governing apparatus. For this reason, *The Bolsheviks And The Red Army, 1918-1922* is of interest not only to military specialists, but also to students of the Soviet political system. According to Benvenuti, the decision to abandon 'democratization' of the army, initially introduced in 1917 with the Petrograd Soviet's promulgation of the infamous Order No. 1, in favour of the construction of a professional standing army, was catalyzed by the German occupation of the Ukraine. Following the signing of the Brest-Litovsk treaty, the establishment of a hierarchical command-structure was carried out on a regional basis according to need: first on the eastern front to counter the threat from the Czech Legion, and only later in the southern theatre. The exigencies of Civil War, then, were responsible for centralization of the armed forces rather than conscious adherence to organizational strategy which the Bolsheviks, and indeed Soviet historiography, has claimed was the key to the revolutionary party's success in 1917.

Despite his reference to strategic considerations, though, Benvenuti avoids operational history and focuses instead on Bolshevik military policy during his crucial period. A political approach to the examination of the establishment and reform of the Red Army is not without precedent, of course, as the author rightly notes in his introduction. While Erickson has persuasively argued that the fate of the armed forces was held captive to political struggle among the Bolshevik elite, other historians have studied contest between interest groups and offices within the military. Given the political role of the army and its unspoken mandate to preserve the regime, and the ubiquitous appearance of party organs within the military structure whose function was to guarantee political reliability through inculcation of the proper socialist consciousness, this approach is certainly warranted. Benvenuti, however, moves beyond the strictly political to describe the regularization of relations between the party and the military from the perspective of institutional history. Hence the major portion of his work is taken up with extensive documentation of the rationalization of both the command structure and political work within the army. While the former consisted of establishment of Revolutionary Military Councils on the national and front levels which relegated broad powers to the Commanders, the latter process was more complex. Benvenuti identifies three distinct groups which competed for the right to initiate and monitor political activity within the army: party committee, commissars, and the *politodely*, which emanated from the civilian party organizations, central party organs, and the general staff respectively. Having extended control over the commissars and the party committees, by the summer of 1918 the *politodely* had won recognition of their claim to preeminence. The commissar's powers over the commander became largely supervisory, and the responsibility for the creation of party cells was wrested from the territorial

party organs. By crowning the *politodely* edifice with the Political Administration of RVSR, the War Commissariat's bid to introduce centralization in the military and political life of the army was realized.

For many Bolsheviks, these reforms signalled the growing autonomy of the armed forces. Benvenuti's most substantial contribution to the study of party-military relations lies in his examination of resistance to reform. A heterogeneous group, the 'military opposition,' criticized reorganization not simply out of suspicion of Trotsky's independent attitude, but also because changes entailed rejection of the more-traditional socialist image of the military as the 'revolutionary arming of the people.' The fundamental contradiction between the 'democratic' and 'centralism' surfaced in debates over issues such as the building of a militia or standing army; definition of the rights, powers and privileges of commanders and commissars (and, indeed, of party members); enlistment policy; election of officers and party representatives; and the introduction of 'traditional' as against 'revolutionary' discipline. Lenin's characteristically pragmatic appraisal of the military situation translated into Central Committee support for Trotsky's program; however, as Benvenuti argues, the adoption of the centralist policy was less consistent than historians have supposed. In his view, many of the opposition's concerns were addressed at the Eighth Party Congress, once the military situation had moved decidedly in favour of the Red forces. This emphasis on a compromise agreement seems somewhat disproportionate. As with many Soviet policy statements, resolutions voted at the Congress which were designed to conciliate the opposition were consigned to the "blueprint for the eventual transition to a 'socialist militia of the entire people' — which was to follow the 'elimination of classes.'" (109) Other measures "foreshadowed" the extension of party control over the military apparatus, and reconcentration of control in the party centre was carried out largely through personnel changes or-

dered by the Central Committee during debates over strategy in 1919, rather than through institutional change in the War Commissariat itself. Benvenuti's revelations do, however, illuminate the opportunity for negotiation which continued to exist in the early Soviet period.

One of the author's secondary goals was to evaluate the appraisal of the war commissar presented by various historians. His study reaffirms the portrayal of Trotsky as the brilliant organizational genius chronically inept in political maneuver. Hence Trotsky's seeming shift in policy — in acceptance of the need for the institution of the territorial militia system — had little to do with recognizing political realities. According to Benvenuti, the 'shift' was a product of military victory, demobilization, and a complementary change in focus. Trotsky's attention now concentrated on applying military organization and discipline to the civilian sector. The establishment of a militia force could only facilitate the militarization of labour. Benvenuti's attention to institutional reform, and to the apolitical Trotsky, however, does have its limitations. Neglect of the political motivation on the part of other Bolshevik leaders may be cited in the case of Stalin in particular. To present the future dictator as ideologically inclined to favour collegial command and the promotion of Red commanders because of their class purity (50) surely minimizes Stalin's determination to build an independent position on the southern front, and indeed, his emerging political rivalry with Trotsky.

In many ways, Benvenuti's work provides a case study of the interweaving of party and state institutions which became a familiar feature of the Soviet governing apparatus. Specifically, this interweaving consisted of the involvement of the party in administration, and the construction of a large bureaucratic machine (the PUR) whose function was to indoctrinate the masses. Civil war required that rationalization take place first within the military and, as a result, the

peasant soldier became the first subject in the experiment with mass propaganda. Often with materials made available only recently, Benvenuti has documented the *ad hoc* creation, under fire, of this legacy which gave new meaning to the term 'Soviet power.'

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Ramón Eduardo Ruiz, *The People of Sonora and Yankee Capitalists* (Tucson: The University of Arizona Press 1988).

PROFESSOR RUIZ follows many students of Mexican history out of the capital city and into regional topics and archives. His aim is laudable: to study the economic, political, social and cultural effects of the arrival of American railroads, mining companies, and capitalists in the "periphery" of Sonora between 1880 and 1910. His focus on what he refers to as the "Americanization" of Sonora, however, leads him to ignore larger theoretical questions, such as dependency, and to emphasize the nationality of capital rather than class confrontation. For Ruiz, it is more important that the companies and individuals arriving in Sonora were American than that they were capitalist.

Arrival of American railroads transformed Sonoran mining, cattle-raising, and export agriculture, tying them to United States markets, sources of capital and to the vagaries of world market prices for copper, cattle and garbanzos. Further, railroads made or broke towns, shifted the political balance of power in favour of regions and groups (especially merchants), hardened class structures by pitting a dependent bourgeoisie against a newly-created industrial proletariat, and led to conflict over land in the Yaquis valley. Companies created enclave economies controlling municipal police forces, monopolizing food supplies through the infamous company store, or *tienda de raya*, selling municipal lands for their own profits, and paying workers in script. Professor Ruiz treats all these

themes, and uses Sonoran municipal archives to great advantage to show the specific contours of American company control.

In his treatment of Mexican workers in the chapter titled "The Making of a Working Class," however, Professor Ruiz borrows only the title from E.P. Thompson. In this section, workers are not historical actors but seem to respond only to poor accommodations and economic downturns. Foreigners construct the world of the miner, and economic conditions alone determine worker behavior. The author asserts that class consciousness was emerging, but does not consider whether workers built their own culture based on life in the mines and mining communities of northern Mexico. His assertion that hard times led to labour agitation and strikes (107) contradicts conclusions Alan Knight has drawn in explaining working-class behavior. Furthermore, while racial-supremacist attitudes characterized mine managers (and diplomats, for that matter), Professor Ruiz ascribes the brutality of the treatment of miners, especially the strip search, to "white" racial arrogance against "brown" Mexicans. (65) Strip searches, as well as brutal abuse by means of company police, the company store, and script, characterized relations in many North American mines lacking manager-worker racial overtones. The over-all theme of "Americanization" detracts from his argument.

It is in consideration of attitudes, however, that the "Americanization" thesis most limits analysis. Professor Ruiz has culled from municipal sources and elite papers a deepening concern with public order, morality, control of alcohol, gambling and prostitution, and penal reform. Indeed, he begins his introduction with a mining-town mayor lamenting the consequences of immorality and disorder, and demanding money for a bigger jail. For Ruiz, these represent the breakdown of 'traditional' society and the acceptance of American values on the part of the elite — occurrences he laments. Others might

see a fascinating discourse surrounding elite acceptance of a developmentalist ideology, and the attempt to impose it on the Mexican people.

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Daniel James, *Resistance and Integration: Peronism and the Argentine Working Class, 1946-1976* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1988).

JAMES' STUDY of Argentine labour between the consolidation of Perón's first government in 1946 and the demise of his second in 1976 is the most dispassionate, detailed, and rewarding treatment of its subject yet written. Using primary material from newspapers, union publications, government documents, and interviews with prominent labour leaders, James carefully charts a path of reason through the polemical secondary literature on the subject, much of which, to use the author's terms, more resembles hagiography or demonology (depending on its sectarian evaluation of Perón and the Argentine working class' persistent commitment to Peronism) than it does reasoned analytical discourse.

James' method is multifaceted. Theoretically, it draws on a sensitive reading of modern sociological theory, especially that produced by Western Marxists, regarding the nature of organized labour in modern capitalist societies, and on insights into the construction of beliefs and the dynamics of political activism taken from Leftist European thinkers like Raymond Williams and Jean-Paul Sartre. Methodologically, it focuses first and foremost on the historical experience of Argentine workers and labour leaders, not on the policies and utterances of political elites (including Perón himself), or on the structural economic and social conditions in which workers find themselves (although those subjects are not totally neglected). Politically and philosophically, it tries to avoid what the author calls "an essentialist notion of the working class." Such a posi-

tion entails "an understanding of the complex, multifaceted variety of working-class action and consciousness and denial of a single, and essential, working-class nature." (259-60)

The mode of presentation is roughly chronological, with a variety of analytical themes developed for each of the study's several historical periods. Part One, composed of a single, synthetic chapter, deals with the rise and decline of the first Peronist government (1943-55), and stresses the meaning of labour's incorporation into the state, the polity, and, in a real and psychological sense, into the national "community." Part Two (chapters 2-4) focuses on the period of the "Resistance," 1955-58, when workers confronted the reality of state repression and an employer offensive designed to destroy Peronist unions and outlaw Peronist politics. A partially-transformed Peronism emerges from this testing, a movement whose strength originates on the shopfloor and moulds the corporatist, paternalistic, reformist ideology of its exiled leader into something at once more radical and ambivalent. Part Three (chapters 5-6) encompasses the frustrated presidency of Arturo Frondizzi, whose liberal developmentalist platform, akin in many ways to that of Peronism itself, founders on the realities of Argentine class conflict. During this period Peronist labour suffers grave and lasting defeats. Cowed and increasingly passive, leaders and rank and file search for tactical solutions to state and private repression, declining real wages, and growing unemployment. Their less-than-pretty solution, known as 'Vandorism' in Argentine labour history, is the subject of Part Four (chapters 7-8). For many, a simple result of false consciousness or of an original corporatist sin inherent in Peronism, this period of corrupt, gangster-style, bureaucratic unionism is for James all that and much more. He argues that Vandorism is also a pragmatic response by labour leaders and Peronist rank and file to the meagre opportunities available to labour in an extremely hostile environ-

ment characterized by the militarization of politics and a concerted offensive by industrialists bent on a wholesale rationalization of production. Those opportunities, such as they are, revolve around the power of the labour bureaucracy in the highly centralized system of industrial relations bequeathed by the Perón era (a power reflected in the hefty budgets and expanding social services of unions during this period) and the unity of a working class whose primary loyalty remains focused on the person of Perón. Augusto Vandor, whose primary base of support lies in the powerful metal workers unions, and whose power within the movement seems at times to rival that of Perón himself, embodies all these traits. Part Five (really chapter 9, since chapter 10 is a conclusion to the whole study) covers the entire decade from 1966 until the fall of the second Peronist government. Like chapter 1 it provides an admirable synthesis of the available secondary literature, and analyzes the multifaceted, and ultimately, failed, challenges to the conservative politics of the centralized and corrupt Peronist labour bureaucracy. Within the labour movement, these challenges are centered in the new industries, particularly automobile manufacture, in the interior of the country, especially in the city of Córdoba, the scene of an extraordinary, Marxist-inspired worker-student rebellion in 1969. In the political sphere, they revolve around efforts by middle-class youths to radicalize or revolutionize the political legacy of Peronism, notably by acts of terrorism directed against the military, the police, and even the Peronist union hierarchy. These challenges succeed first in discrediting and moderating the military regimes of the early 1970s, and then lead to military and elite civilian acquiescence in the return of Perón. Yet the Perón who returns sides not with the radical reformists within his movement but with the conservative union hierarchy. His government quickly founders, unleashing, following his death and the military overthrow of his wife Isabella,

the terrible "dirty war" from which the nation has only recently emerged. The relationship of the Peronist experience of the working class, between 1946 and 1976, to the tragic events of the late 1970s and early 1980s, is not addressed directly by the author. Instead, his conclusion is a short recapitulation of the theoretical, philosophical, and political assumptions on which his rich account of the core period (1955-65) treated in the book is based.

If there are flaws in this work, they relate to its major strength: the concerted effort to view Peronist labour sympathetically and dispassionately from the vantage point of a sophisticated Western European Marxism. It could be argued, for instance, that reliance on theory generated in advanced capitalist societies during the exceptional period of economic expansion and labour accommodation following World War II might not be the most fruitful way to approach the Argentine situation. Peronism promoted an illiberal, corporatist, nationalist ideology and form of labour integration that was institutionalized in delayed form, not during the 1930s and early 1940s (when it could have been more easily tolerated at home and abroad), but rather during the postwar floodtide of cosmopolitan liberalism. As a result, the tensions — political, ideological, social, and economic — between labour and capital in Argentina reached proportions simply not comparable to those operative in the liberal capitalist societies of the North Atlantic (or, for that matter, in many of the other major Latin American countries — e.g., Brazil or Mexico). James makes no effort to assess the viability of Peronist ideology and political economy in this liberal postwar world. Were he to have done so, it is hard to see how he could have avoided a more-negative assessment of Peronism's meaning for the Argentine working class.

Related to this issue is a methodological one of equal import. James' shopfloor perspective, his effort to understand the "structure of feeling" of the Peronist rank

and file, constitutes the single most important contribution of the book. By itself, however, it consistently downplays the conservative, hierarchical, corporatist tendencies of Peronism, which involved the first Peronist government in contradictions that caused it first to reverse its policies of economic nationalism and social redistribution, and then made it incapable of mobilizing workers against what it identified as the nation's foreign and domestic "enemies." The same contradictions helped stimulate the kind of unionism Vandor personified, helped stack the deck against the democratic tendencies within the union movement and the Third World liberationist currents within Peronism in the late 1960s, led in part to the debacle of the second government of 1973-76, and, for all these reasons, contributed fundamentally to the dynamic of the dirty war that followed. Does James really believe that the consistently-conservative outcomes of Peronist politics were not inherent in its ideology?

To be sure, to attempt answers to these questions is an eminently political project. But to avoid them is to deprive Argentine labour, and students of Argentine history, of the full implications of the research and analysis of this book. To come to sympathetic terms with Peronist labour from the Left, one does not have to adopt James' politically-agnostic, "non-essentialist" stance. His material well demonstrates the essentially democratic credentials of Argentine rank-and-file labour during the entire period covered. No other class struggled as consistently and as mightily to democratize Argentine society.

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Stephen M. Davis, *Apartheid's Rebels: Inside South Africa's Hidden War* (New Haven: Yale University Press 1987)

FUTURE HISTORIANS of contemporary South Africa are likely to be preoccupied with one central question: how to explain

the international and domestic resurgence of the banned nationalist movement, the African National Congress (ANC), during this period. Davis' book develops an argument which such historians will want to consider. His sympathetic but nonpartisan portrayal of the ANC is likely to resonate well beyond the current crisis in South Africa. However, Davis himself is not simply a scholar interested in exploring the complex terrain of South African resistance politics. He also is a some-time journalist and diplomatic aide. His book consequently tries to address (and influence) two other audiences as well: an ignorant general public, and misinformed American policymakers. Davis' attempt to talk simultaneously at three levels is both the most-ambitious, and least-satisfactory aspect of this book.

The book's brief preface lays out the author's credentials, and six chapters of fast-moving prose on the history, strategy and organization of the "most quixotic guerilla organization of modern times." Davis is no historian, and provides only the barest outline of the ANC's long history. It would have been difficult, in any case, to improve upon Tom Lodge's definitive *Black Politics in South Africa Since 1945*, to which Davis defers. The penultimate chapter reviews the response of the apartheid state to the ANC's activities, and the epilogue crystal-gazes pessimistically into South Africa's "Pyrrhic future." Davis' journalistic skills are evident throughout: all three audiences will find the book compelling reading. The general public will come away with a much better understanding of South Africa's liberation struggle. American politicians will be comforted by Davis' constant reassurances about the true nature of the ANC. And informed scholars will glean useful background information about the organization and military tactics of the ANC-in-exile. They will be less convinced that Davis has an unassailable case.

To explain the ANC's dramatic renaissance during the last twenty years, Davis develops three basic arguments. First, he argues that the ANC's relocation

from the capitals of Europe to the slums of Lusaka was a critical factor in raising its profile in the region and, ironically, in Europe as well. Second, he suggests that this geographical reorientation put the Congress in the right location to benefit from state repression during and after the 1976 Soweto uprising, when scores of "impassioned dissidents" fled the country. Third, he argues that the structural reorganization of the internal underground allowed the Congress to direct and benefit from popular insurrection in the 1980s. Each thesis is pursued with vigour and conviction, but there is often an underlying uncertainty.

In a section titled "Return to the Frontline" (37-47), for example, Davis curiously inverts historical logic to argue that the South African government's attacks on various ANC bases in the 1980s were responsible for the decision to locate in Zambia in the 1970s. Later, Davis skates quickly over the issue of why the Soweto-era recruits, schooled in black-consciousness, adopted so readily the nonracial platform of the ANC. (59) More seriously, Davis is unsure what role to accord the ANC in the 1980s popular mobilization against the apartheid state. Did it direct, or was it the unwitting beneficiary? If the latter, why? And if both, in what proportions? Davis, like most other commentators, is unsure. A great deal more research needs to be done before this complex question is unravelled. In particular, we need to know a lot more about three things: the influence of prison politics on domestic opposition

to apartheid; the nature of black political culture within South Africa and, in particular, the symbolism and iconography of protest; and the shifting ideological and policy debates within the ANC itself.

It is on the question of ANC ideology that Davis' appeal to American policymakers is most intrusive. In a series of asides throughout the book, Davis hastens to reassure the doubting Democrat and hostile Republican that the ANC is, despite appearances, ideologically sound. The apparently-powerful position of the South African Communist Party in the ANC is inconsequential. The Congress Alliance was a matter of mutual convenience and the SACP had little popular appeal among the country's black populace in the 1950s or the 1980s and, indeed, will have none in the future. The leadership of the ANC-in-exile is "manifestly moderate and Western-oriented" (51, 97); the Freedom Charter, "far from being a Marxist document," calls for democracy and free enterprise (59); the education of youth into the ANC's political culture includes "dampening enthusiasm for Marxist radicalism." (63) Davis' political intervention may make the ANC more palatable in western capitals, but the interests of scholarly understanding are not that well served. These reservations and omissions aside, *Apartheid's Rebels* is an absorbing and informative book. It is unlikely to satisfy completely or convince any of its intended audiences, but all will gain from it.

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