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## REVIEWS / COMPTES RENDUS

Mariana Valverde, *The Age of Light, Soap and Water: Moral Reform in English Canada, 1885-1925* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart 1991).

LITERARY THEORISTS tell us that every time we read a text we remake it; we give it meaning as much as it conveys a message to us. Thus, Shakespeare's *Hamlet* or Arnold's "Dover Beach" have as many meanings as readers — more, in fact, since the same reader can find different, startling, and even contradictory meanings in multiple readings of the same piece. Mariana Valverde has perused the somewhat dog-eared "texts" of the moral reform movement in English Canada — texts whose pages have been turned by a good many Canadian historians — and produced a new and, to use one of the movement's central allegories, illuminating reading of them. Many of the familiar names associated with social reform are there (Chown, Shearer, and Woodsworth, for instance) as well as many of the familiar organizations (the WCTU, YMCA, and Salvation Army, among others), but we see them in a different light; one that exposes the connections between the disparate focal points of moral reform as well as the larger process of which it was a part.

Rather than give us an institutional or denominational history of the activities of the social purity organizations which are her focus, Valverde is concerned with recovering how these moral reformers saw the world, and from that vision, how they conceptualized both the problems

that plagued it and the solutions that would cure them. This is not a history of events — of what the reformers did and why — but one of meaning; Valverde wants to understand how these reformers gave meaning to the world they experienced. To do this, she deconstructs the language and the symbols of the social purity movement. In a wonderful chapter entitled "The Work of Allegories," Valverde analyzes the central symbols of the social purity movement — light, soap and water — and shows how these were deployed in particular ways both to conceptualize social problems and prescribe solutions. Take, for instance, the WCTU's rather innocuous pronouncement on prostitution, which argued that "the searchlight of truth and knowledge [must] be turned on at whatever cost before cleansing and healing will come to this running sore of the human family." (35) Here society is understood as a body, an organic whole, whose health is the concern of all. Prostitution (the "running sore") thus threatens everyone, and will only be eradicated by male experts (obviously doctors by the reference to "healing") whose intervention must be intrusive rather than benign (the "searchlight" of knowledge). As Valverde notes, "what is important here is ... the way in which certain historically specific groups are organized in relation to one another through the formal organization of images in a complex metaphor." (36) Through language, social purity activists constructed their world and the social relations in it in such a way as to make certain solutions to social problems possible and legitimate. Thus,

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the allegories they used did not simply describe the world, they did a very particular and normative kind of "work": they taught people how to see the world ("the right type of consciousness") and how to act in it. (41)

By deconstructing the allegories used by social purity activists, Valverde reveals that their seemingly discrete pronouncements and prescriptions for various social problems were part of a single discourse. Though race, class, gender, and sexuality were given different emphases by the reformers in addressing prostitution, immigration, and slums, all of these elements were present in each of those campaigns. As Valverde notes, reformers often conflated race, class, gender, and sexuality in their analyses, revealing the multi-dimensional nature of their social anxieties, and inviting those who read their pamphlets and newspapers or heard their speeches to do the same.

Valverde argues that the discourse of social purity was an important part of the cultural and social consolidation of English Canada, a process associated with nation-building and the rise of the welfare state. Reformers were concerned not just with suppressing sexuality and vice, but with creating a nation whose ethical identity was consonant with the values of middle-class, white, Anglo-Saxon, and Protestant Canada. Though these were largely the initiatives of private philanthropic organizations, Valverde suggests that the state was not disinterested in these activities, allowing and later actively encouraging and assisting their surveillance of and intrusion into people's lives. In fact, far from eschewing the curious (to us) combination of moral and scientific analysis that characterized moral reform, the state adopted it, indicating an unevenness and complexity in the development of the welfare state, something which is obscured by our common references to its "rise." In doing so, however, the English Canadian state was not interested in absorbing social purity ac-

tivity completely, for "private philanthropies continued to exist outside of the state, even through the halcyon days of the welfare state, because there were good reasons on both sides to maintain the fences even while moving them back and forth." (164) Private philanthropy allowed liberal democratic states to adhere to their policy of non-interference in the private sphere, and thus maintain a facade of neutrality. Conversely, a relationship with the state allowed private philanthropy access to resources and gave them a real degree of coercive power over individuals' lives without the burdens of public accountability. This was, all told, a happy symbiosis.

For a short book, this one covers a lot of very interesting and complex terrain. However, if this is the source of one of its strengths, it is also one of its weaknesses: some issues are rather sketchily drawn and others not treated at all. Take, for instance, the book's title, which proclaims it to be about moral reform in English Canada. The introduction, however, explains that the book is about a particular aspect of moral reform, namely social purity. Though Valverde does briefly delineate some of the differences between the social purity activists she focuses on and the better known social gospellers, the relationship between social purity and the panoply of moral reform movements is unclear. Before we can generalize from social purity to moral reform we need to know a little more about where this smaller group stood in the spectrum of reform. Perhaps a way of approaching this issue is to deal with another one that gets rather short shrift: that of religion and sectarian differences. Here Richard Allen's typology of social reform — one which identifies radical, progressive, and conservative reformers with various Protestant sects — may be useful. In any case, any discussion of the discourse of moral reform in Canada needs to address Christianity and certainly Protestantism more fully, even if only to dismiss its importance. Finally, if

Valverde's discussion of moral reform discourse is one in which religion plays a minor role, it is also one which presents us with a discourse that is somewhat removed from the social, political, and economic context and relations that gave it meaning. Despite the fact that the period covered was one which witnessed many changes, we get very little sense of how those changes as well as any conflict between social purity activists and other moral reformers or their "clients" were accommodated within the discourse of moral reform. The power of discourse lies in the fact that it provides people with ways of seeing the world and the social, economic, and political relations in it; in doing so, however, it also places limits on our understanding and our ability to frame alternatives. Discourses thus set our horizons of possibility by adumbrating the boundaries of debate. It is this latter aspect of discourse that is missing from Valverde's analysis.

These are specific concerns. There is a larger and more general commentary that needs to be made about this book, however, and I would like to do that as the moral reformers did: by indulging in a rhetorical trope of my own, something which I hope will reinforce Valverde's point about their power as well as make my own effectively. This book is like a flare; a dazzling flame of light used to illuminate and locate a target — in this case, to locate moral reform and show us how to approach it. In the introduction, Valverde locates her book in the separate, but converging disciplines of history and sociology, and their respective traditions and languages of empiricism and theory. Aided by her "bilingual" abilities, she traverses the gulf between the two disciplines, making a body of literary theory as well as that regarding state formation accessible and meaningful by revealing their analytical power through an empirically-based case study.

But like all flares, the light shed by this one is irregular and fleeting. Valverde has shown us the target and how we might

get there, but as we get into the body of the analysis the light fades, and we are left to stumble in the dark a bit, making our way based on the memory of the picture revealed to us in the first two chapters. The careful and revealing deconstruction of the allegories of moral reform Valverde introduces us to in Chapter Two is not followed through effectively in the chapters dealing with particular reform campaigns. Instead, the analytical sharpness which characterizes the earlier chapters is dulled by descriptive detail whose relation to the argument is not always explicitly drawn. As a result, the discourse of moral reform, which is supposed to be the central focus, is obscured. In addition, the other argument of the book, that dealing with the relationship between private philanthropy and the state, does not clearly follow from the first, and seems to be more asserted than proved. To show that the state adopted the discourse of moral reform we need to have a fuller explanation of the state side; Valverde needs to shed some light on state policy as well as the moral reformers' prescriptions.

Though the fit between the theoretical apparatus and the empirical detail is not as tight as it might have been and the radiance of the analysis is somewhat dimmed as a result, *The Age of Light, Soap and Water* still stands as a provocative and valuable contribution to the history of social reform and, more significantly, because of its self-conscious use of theory, to the writing of Canadian history.

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Kay J. Anderson, *Vancouver's Chinatown: Racial Discourse in Canada, 1875-1980* (Montréal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press 1991).

CANADIAN HISTORIANS have been committed empiricists. Admittedly, they have come a long way from the days when a

passion for biography marked the field's highest aspiration, but they remain reluctant to ground their work in the fertile soil of theoretical reasoning. Kay Anderson's attempt to breath new life into the old subject of race relations in Canada by interpreting empirical evidence through an explicitly articulated theoretical framework is, therefore, both exciting and novel.

Specifically, Anderson suggests a new way to understand the historical relationship between Canada's Chinese minority and European majority, a relationship she explores by examining the symbolic and practical role of Vancouver's Chinatown. She argues that the relationship between Europeans and Chinese was shaped by a racial discourse deeply rooted in western thought. Drawing heavily from Edward Said's study of "Orientalism," she argues that the "language" (or "discourse") of race, by which she means both its linguistic and non-linguistic signifiers, was part of the cultural heritage that Europeans brought with them to British Columbia. Because it creates understanding as well as meaning, language shapes structures of power, and Anderson attempts to show how the discourse of "Orientalism" created a relationship of European dominance and Chinese subordination in Vancouver. The influence of other theorists is evident in her work as well. From Michel Foucault she draws the understanding that power is located not in a specific group or place but permeates society, and is culturally rooted. Antonio Gramsci contributes the idea of hegemony, a set of relations through which power between groups is mediated and structured, and through which the dominant group secures the consent of those it subordinates.

Applying these various insights in a somewhat instrumentalist way, Anderson concludes that European settlers in British Columbia used the discourse of race to define themselves as a privileged "in-group" and the Chinese as outsiders, or "Other." Through a process of

racialization, then, Europeans marginalized and controlled the Chinese and thus assured themselves privileged access to status, wealth, and power. Challenging existing literature that presents race as a phenomenon rooted in either economic relations or self-perpetuating stereotypes, *Vancouver's Chinatown* argues that race is a form of knowledge socially constructed through the interplay of large cultural forces in a particular historical setting.

Anderson develops these ideas through a series of chapters that lay out the book's theoretical foundation, establish the historical roots of British Columbia's discourse on race, and trace the process through which language structured a relationship of European hegemony and Chinese subordination in Vancouver. Drawing on various primary sources, including civic records, she charts the creation of a special area of the city to which for a long time Vancouver's Chinese were largely confined. She shows how Europeans portrayed Chinatown through their attitudes and laws as crowded, alien, unsanitary, and foreign — the opposite of their own "respectable" society and the embodiment of "Other." The neighbourhood's image began to change in the 1930s with the first attempts to present it as a tourist attraction. The 1950s reintroduced the idea of Chinatown as "slum" but in the 1960s and 1970s the tourist industry, local planners, and the federal government reconceptualized it as an officially sanctioned "ethnic neighbourhood" in a "multicultural Canada." Despite positive changes to Chinatown's image, however, Anderson argues that the discourse of race continued to define the area as a symbol of Chinese separation from the dominant European culture, a reminder of their continued status of "Other."

The thesis that Anderson weaves from the interplay of theory and historical evidence is provocative. It forces us to think about how Europeans came to impose, in a short period of time, their laws, language, and institutions on a territory

already inhabited by a rich and complex civilization. The argument that British Columbia can be conceptualized as a hierarchy of cultural groups divided between the "in-group" and "the Other," between "we" and "they," has about it a ring of authority that suggests an approach rich in analytic potential, not just for understanding racism against the Chinese but also the manner in which Europeans related to native people, immigrants (both coloured and white) other than the Chinese, and "outsiders" within their own culture, such as transient workers.

But *Vancouver's Chinatown* also provokes the reader in more critical ways, for it raises questions about Anderson's use of theory to inform historical inquiry, and about the meaning of ethnicity in urban society. First, on the question of theory and history, Anderson does not seem to feel that the relationship between theory and empirical evidence is a dialectic in which one is constantly informing the other, with neither being constant. Rather, she applies the discourse model uncritically, a fact plainly evident for the last forty years when more liberal attitudes about the country's ethnic composition sharply altered the relationship between people of Asian and non-Asian extraction. What does the growing wealth of the Chinese community, the influx of Hong Kong investment money, the intermarriage of Asians and whites, and the geographic dispersal of people of Chinese heritage away from Chinatown (where only 10 per cent of the city's Chinese population lived in 1976) suggest about Anderson's argument that the European discourse on race of the 19th century persisted well into the 20th? Anderson may be correct about the enduring nature of the language of race in Vancouver, but in this book she seems more intent on merely applying her theoretical model than on exploring its value as an analytic tool across time.

A second theoretical question is raised by the author's use of Gramsci's

notion of hegemony, which, as she mentions in the book, requires that we understand how the dominated came to accept their subordination. Despite asserting several times that the Chinese were not passive victims, however, Anderson writes primarily about European attitudes towards and treatment of the Chinese rather than about Chinese response. We learn very little about how the European community's representation of "Chineseness" structured meaning for the Chinese themselves. Indeed, when Anderson does look at the relationship from a Chinese point-of-view near the end of the book, the shift of focus seems jarringly inconsistent.

In addition, Anderson's tendency to see Europeans and Chinese as undifferentiated groups — an approach consistent with the theoretical influence of discourse analysis — leaves unexplored the question of how structures of power within each group, such as class divisions within white society, affected relations between them. For instance, the monolithic nature of her categories of analysis leads Anderson to characterize Strathcona (which includes the commercial area of Chinatown and the residential district immediately to the east) in the interwar and postwar years as a uniformly Chinese neighbourhood; in fact, many years ago in an oral history of the area called *Opening Doors*, Daphne Marlatt showed that Strathcona was ethnically complex. One wonders, then, whether city planners tried to impose massive urban renewal and freeway projects on Strathcona in the 1950s and 1960s because it was Chinese, as Anderson argues, or because it was an ethnically mixed (but non-Anglo-Saxon) neighbourhood that also happened to be very poor?

Finally, Anderson's argument that Chinatown was constructed primarily by Europeans rather than the Chinese also seems to undervalue the ethnocentric forces that operate in every culture, and that are particularly important in explaining the early stages through which immigrant minorities pass when adjusting to a



receiving society. In other words, to what extent did Chinatown emerge and survive as a geographically distinct area of the city because the Chinese, acting according to priorities that emerged from their own culture, wanted it to? The social and symbolic role of Chinatown for both Chinese and non-Chinese residents of Vancouver is a subject of great complexity that, for the post-1945 period especially, Anderson's approach does little to elucidate.

In other words, *Vancouver's Chinatown* both excites and disappoints. Its theoretical perspective is stimulating and will remain its most enduring contribution to the study of race relations in British Columbia. The chapters that document the construction of a Chinese identity in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, supported by solid research and superbly-crafted maps of Chinatown, are also strong. But the book fails to sustain the high level of intellectual excitement that its novel approach evokes at the outset. The many theoretical strands that come together to form the fabric of Anderson's argument are not clearly articulated, nor are their connections fully explained. More significantly, as the book progresses the rigid manner in which she uses theory leaves the reader increasingly unconvinced by her argument. Ultimately, we are left with nagging questions about the practical utility of writing history from an explicitly theoretical point-of-view. That is too bad.

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Michèle Martin, *"Hello Central?" Gender, Technology, and Culture in the Formation of the Telephone Systems* (Montréal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press 1991).

SONNY KLEINFELD REMARKED in his 1981 study of AT&T that "the telephone, despite its polymorphous character, has

largely been snubbed by scholars and popular-culture pundits as a subject for sociological study." In the interim, some valuable sociological research has appeared, notably from Claude Fischer in the United States. However, Michèle Martin's study is the first book-length sociological analysis of the development of the phone and its impact on society; in this case, mainly society in Ontario and Québec between 1876 and 1920. The topics covered by the book are diverse — notably, the rise to dominance of the Bell Telephone Company; the status and conditions of service of female telephone operators; the early social diffusion of the phone; early patterns of phone use, notably by women; and the creation of a bourgeois phone etiquette and phone culture. Fortunately, what might easily have become an academic hodge-podge is reasonably well tied together by a dominant theoretical perspective and an overarching theme. The theoretical perspective is that new technologies tend to be closely linked to prevailing power structures, and that this influences their diffusion and utilization. The theme is that the common scholarly treatment of technologies as male-controlled monopolies needs to be moderated in the case of the early phone. Martin claims that women profoundly influenced its ultimate uses, both in their roles as telephone operators and as telephone users.

In the early decades of phone development, the Bell Telephone Company combined sheer corporate power with dubious business strategies in order to achieve a swift domination of the urban and long-distance phone business in central Canada. Making extensive use of Bell Canada's archives, Martin argues that Bell's marketing and financial strategies, as well as its concepts of telephone etiquette and utilization, clearly demonstrated its status as a corporate representative of the male business elites. Thus, the phone was marketed primarily as an expensive business tool, with a

steady eye on the accumulation of profit. In Martin's view, this capitalist vision led Bell executives to treat the communications needs of the late-Victorian urban working-class, as well as most rural residents, with either indifference or veiled hostility. As for women, they proved to be much more amenable than men to the strict work discipline imposed on telephone operators. But, as phone users, they had to cope with Bell's disapproval of their use of the phone for purposes of socialising with kin and friends — an antidote to isolation in the home which many men, including their husbands, treated as idle chatter and gossip.

In the 1920s, Bell came to accept that social calls were a legitimate use of the phone. Martin argues that this acceptance would have occurred much later, had women not resisted male-dominated telephone practices. This argument is plausible (if ultimately unprovable), and does provide a valuable feminist perspective to the historical study of technology. By the same token, "resistance theory" is central to Martin's attempt to demonstrate that female telephone operators found ways of resisting the standardization of work practices and strict discipline imposed upon them in the early decades of this century. Her attempt is a little fragile, however, because apart from a major strike of operators in Toronto in 1907, opposition to Bell's paternal despotism was very mild, and the Company was at pains to foster a "family spirit" amongst its employees. The latter ploy was quite successful because "hello girls" were members of an occupation which, despite its low wages and stressful working conditions, actually increased in status when defined as being work for "respectable" women. Overall, taken in the context of the period, and in spite of Martin's efforts to document cases of Company "repression" of operators, it is evident that women of working-class origins and white-collar aspirations found that working a few years for Bell was a reasonable prospect.

The above phrase "taken in the context of the period" points to a weakness in much revisionist historical writing, and this book is no exception. Martin's account of the culture of the telephone in late-Victorian society, including her analysis of Bell's socialization of both operators and subscribers to the "proper" use of the instrument, is a major contribution to the cultural history of communications. However, her criticisms of Bell for subverting the potentially widespread distribution of the phone, notably by excluding the working-class from easy financial and physical access, raises some difficult historical questions. For example, it is true that many contemporary civic populists argued forcibly that the Company over charged, and that some form of public ownership was necessary in order to ensure cheaper phone rentals and wider access. Yet, when the governments of the three prairie provinces bought out Bell interests in their territories between 1907-09, Martin dismisses their subsequent unsuccessful attempts to change dramatically the social distribution of the phone (or incidentally to maintain low phone rentals) as the work of "state capitalist agencies." By this value-laden phrase she may mean that the governments ultimately failed to treat telephone service like the postal services — as a universal public utility, vital to the general welfare despite its recurrent financial deficits. But one cannot be sure of this interpretation, just as one cannot be easily convinced that the financially strapped governments of the period should have viewed this rapidly-changing "infant" technology through the eyes of someone writing in the late 1980s. Less "presentist" criticism of the machinations of Big Bad Bell in favour of more discussion of the possible alternative routes to telephone development would have helped.

One final criticism is that this book contains far more typographical errors than McGill-Queen's should be prepared to tolerate. Since it will undoubtedly become an important item in university

courses on feminist studies and the social history of technology, one hopes that the second edition will be more carefully edited.

Robert M. Pike  
Queen's University

Sue Calhoun, *A Word To Say: The Story of the Maritime Fishermen's Union* (Halifax: Nimbus Publishing Limited 1991).

LIKE MANY MARITIME WORKERS, New Brunswick fishermen have got a raw deal. From earliest times to the present day, these fishermen, and their fishery, have been the victims of exploitation. The "Jerseymen" came first; their "truck system," in which the merchant provided gear and provisions at the start of the fishing season in exchange for the fisherman's catch, salted and dried at the end, was the maritime equivalent of the company store. The Americans came next, pushing the industry into the 20th century and the Jersey men out of the way. "Although the coming of the Americans had loosened the grip of the Jersey men, it had, in essence, replaced one exploiter with another ... The companies continued to dictate the price of fish, and often fishermen were not even told the price until well in the season." (19) It did not take long for the fisherman to realize that they would "remain powerless unless they learned to work together." (19)

The co-operative movement gave Acadian fishermen a first taste of what collective action could bring about. The United Maritime Fishermen (UMF) was established in 1930 as an umbrella organization for local fishermen's co-ops, which soon proliferated. Initially, the UMF focused its activities on teaching fishermen how to develop local co-ops. Soon enough practice was combined with theory: the UMF began to market fish. Later it began to process them too, with the result that it was now in competition

with some of the local co-ops it was supposed to serve. Calhoun tells us that the UMF began to drift away. In the meantime, the fishery was running out of fish, while at the same time the fish companies, foreign and domestic, accelerated their expansion, increasing production capacity beyond what the fishery could sustain. The federal government also became involved, passing regulations and setting up committees. In all of this, the fishermen were without an effective voice.

This book is the story of their union: the Maritime Fishermen's Union (MFU), a New Brunswick-based, francophone-dominated inshore fishermen's union founded in 1977 (although its roots date much earlier than that). Organizing a maritime union is never easy, and the MFU was hardly an exception. Unlike an industrial plant, the workers are not all in one place, and presenting an even more formidable barrier was the fact that fishermen in New Brunswick did not have the legal right to form a union of their own. When the government refused to pass an enabling act, demonstrations and boycotts followed: "The MFU became the darling of the left in the Maritimes, attracting the support and assistance of intellectuals throughout the region who saw the attempt to organize inshore fishermen more as a social movement than anything else." (96) Indeed, the relationship between Acadian nationalism and the formation of this union is one of the more interesting features of this book.

At the heart of the story, however, is the expression of desire from fishermen from the three maritime provinces for a union of their own. But first, there was the fight for legal recognition and, needless to say, the fishing companies did not go out of their way to support labour law reform. Charges, most of which were true, that the union's leadership was communist, did not engender public support, although it is clear from this account that the membership did not share their leaders' world view. At one convention,

delegates were invited to pass a resolution to the effect that the MFU opposed the two superpowers. "There were others that were equally 'out of proportion' to use the words of one fisherman who bluntly told [the union leaders] to stop being 'so out to lunch.'" (139) The union leaders persisted, however, and there is no doubt that the communist link lost the MFU considerable public support.

Eventually, New Brunswick passed a law giving inshore fishermen the right to organize. Nova Scotia and PEI proved much more problematic, and Calhoun demonstrates how anti-labour sentiment in Halifax and Charlottetown did the MFU in. Back in Fredericton, the new law came into force. Meanwhile, a conflict between the MFU and UMF was brewing in the background, with the latter seeking a way to avoid having to deal with the former. Eventually an amendment was passed to that effect. A truce was later reached, but in the end it was to no avail as the UMF, like other fish companies in the region, went out of business. While the MFU did not thrive, it began to deliver results; some because of its militancy, others because it began to play the game, having its delegates serve on government consultative committees illustrates this point. In one of his last acts before submitting his resignation, Tunagate Fisheries Minister John Fraser directed \$300,000 to MFU coffers. The union had, as Calhoun points out, moved from "protest to compromise." (204)

Big battles undoubtedly lie ahead for the fishery is in rapid decline, and the problems in the industry are systemic in nature. Whether the MFU can play a positive role in resource management remains to be seen. This history of the union may provide some inspiration to union members and organizers, if only it was a little easier to follow and read. The best histories usually start somewhere near the beginning and end somewhere near the end. This one pays insufficient attention to chronology. The author's personal interest in one of the heroes of the piece did

not leave me confident that the treatment of him or the union met minimum standards for objectivity and detachment. Indeed, the characters are curiously one-sided; either good or bad, friend or foe. The union is uncritically portrayed as a shining knight. However, the book is not intended to be a scholarly account, and there is nothing wrong with a popular history eschewing scholarly apparatus and style. Yet for popular history this book is something of a bore. Nevertheless, it is not without virtue, most notably for the close attention it pays to giving ordinary fishermen a "word to say" about their union and its past.

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Patricia Marchak, Neil Guppy, and John McMullan, eds., *Uncommon Property: The Fishing and Fish-Processing Industries in British Columbia* (Toronto: Methuen 1987) and Geoff Meggs, *Salmon: The Decline of the British Columbia Fishery* (Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre 1991).

SINCE THE LATE 1960s, the fisheries in both eastern and western Canada have been rocked by a succession of crises. The results have included increased state intervention, corporate concentration, a wave of plant closures, deepening regional disparities, and recent initiatives formally to privatize our fishery resources and coastline areas. During the 1970s, this era of crisis and restructuring was accompanied by the apparent strengthening of industrial unionism as shoreworkers added their concerns to those of fishers on both coasts. In the 1980s, however, industrial unions in both British Columbia and Newfoundland faltered. Weakened by plant closures and layoffs, they were also undermined by inter-union struggles and deepening cleavages between fishers forced to compete in an unequal battle for a threatened

resource. In the 1990s trade liberalization has eroded the collective bargaining power of unionized Canadian shoreworkers, and, in British Columbia, salmon aquaculture has eroded markets for wild salmon and created new environmental threats. Today, the future of "wild" fisheries and the fishers and plantworkers who have depended on them are increasingly in doubt.

*Uncommon Property and Salmon* both examine the historical development and decline of Canada's west coast fisheries. Comparing them produces some interesting results. Both accord class relations, mediated by ethnicity, gender, and state policies, a central role in explaining events and outcomes in these fisheries. In so doing, they effectively challenge the current dominant ideology that tends to reduce fisheries history to the economic theory of common property. Despite their similarities, however, these books were written at different times, are written for different audiences, and have different emphases. A close reading suggests that they offer somewhat different explanations for the events they analyze. Together, they add significantly to a growing literature that challenges dominant ideologies in fisheries management and the policy initiatives these ideologies support.

*Uncommon Property* is the result of the three year Fish and Chips research project at the University of British Columbia. Published in 1987, it consists of a series of articles by a team of sociologists and anthropologists written from diverse perspectives but all sharing a broad political economy approach. Despite efforts to use nontechnical language, the audience for the book is clearly academics and policy-makers. Using the Pearse Commission of the early 1980s and the fishing industry as a whole (rather than just salmon) as its points of departure, *Uncommon Property* presents the results of the team's historical and contemporary research at the international, industry, union, regional, and community

levels. Some articles are based primarily on a review of historical documents, others on field work and interviews, still others on results from survey questionnaires and analyses of statistics from DFO and Stats Canada. One uses content analysis of the United Fishermen and Allied Workers (UFAWU) newspaper, *The Fisherman*. The result is a rich, but rather diverse collection, one of the weaknesses of which is the absence of an introductory chapter that lays out the contents more fully and draws the reader on into the other articles.

Meggs' book *Salmon* deals almost exclusively with the salmon fishery and is intended for a broad readership. The book reflects the impact of the indirect support of the UFAWU and Meggs' 12 year association with the union as editor of *The Fisherman*. It draws on a broad range of historical documents as well as interviews, *The Fisherman*, and research Meggs carried out as editor of the paper. Despite these ties to the UFAWU, *Salmon* is not a history of the union. On the contrary, much of the book is concerned with historical events that preceded the formation of the UFAWU. The discussion of events since its formation in 1945 emphasizes corporate and government activities more than those of the union. Meggs has used his sources to produce a well-crafted book. There are, however, some weaknesses.

Although both books share an emphasis on class and ethnic relations, *Uncommon Property* is primarily a structuralist account in which reference to the actions of individuals is strikingly absent. Actors tend to reflect passively their location in the social structure rather than being constrained by that location. Contrastingly, in Meggs' account, agency is central. Chapters are often constructed around individuals and are sprinkled with quotes from government and corporate actors. Whereas Marchak's concluding essay argues that "this is not a situation involving good guys and bad buys," Meggs' account of corrupt, racist

fisheries inspectors and horsetrading businessmen and politicians inclines the reader to a somewhat different view of history.

Meggs can be critiqued for glossing over the historical importance of such factors as the class-related divisions between fishers and gender divisions between fishers and shoreworkers that are a central focus of some of the articles in *Uncommon Property*. His rather blanket interpretation of fishers as similar to sharecroppers (an interpretation apparently shared by the UFAWU) draws our attention away from the persistent but shifting internal divisions within the fleet and between fishers and plantworkers. *Uncommon Property*, particularly the excellent case studies of Part II, links these divisions to the ethnic and gendered identities of fishers as well as to differences in technology, ownership, and ties to corporate capital.

Alternatively, *Uncommon Property* places perhaps too much emphasis on divisions. It neglects the role of the UFAWU in generating solidarity through its newspaper, alternative ideologies, and organizational linkages. With the exception of Pinkerton's work, the collection also pays little attention to the culture of fishing communities as a basis for solidarity. More research on these and a study of gender relations in fishing households and ties between households would have helped the reader of *Uncommon Property* understand the succession of strikes that occurred after World War II despite class, gender, and ethnic divisions.

Meggs' analysis of the records of Royal Commissions and, in some cases, "confidential" archival material provides important insights into the thinking of government bureaucrats and the mechanisms whereby state policies came to support, as argued in *Uncommon Property*, the process of accumulation. John McMullan's detailed study of the contradictory outcomes of state policy in the 1970s, including the flawed assump-

tions underlying the Davis Plan, help us understand the key role governments played in creating a massive crisis in west coast fisheries in the early 1980s. He also provides convincing evidence that government intervention during the same period supported BC Packers' successful bid to achieve monopoly control of the industry. There is a similar indictment of the Davis Plan and federal policies in Meggs that tells us more about the politicians and corporate-bureaucratic actions that led to the Davis Plan and shaped its impacts.

*Uncommon Property* and *Salmon* both address the question of property rights in British Columbia's fisheries. They document state initiatives that have encouraged the emergence of more capital intensive fisheries, created a monopoly situation, and forced many fishers, plantworkers, and their communities out of the industry. A succession of government reports has justified these initiatives as well as more recent moves directly to privatize fishery resources and coastal areas by attributing the ills of the industry to the "tragedy of the commons." This ideology reduces the problems in our fisheries to the distorting impact so-called common property is presumed to have in the context of a market economy.

As its title suggest, *Uncommon Property* challenges the basic assumption underlying the "tragedy of the commons" ideology. It argues that, prior to European conquest, aboriginal groups had in place diverse and complex property relations by which the West Coast fisheries were regulated. Both books document, in somewhat different ways, the expansion of Euro-Canadian fisheries throughout the coastal area. In this context, they emphasize the active role the federal government and corporations played in undermining the property and other regulatory institutions of native people and replacing them with alternatives. On the basis of this history and more recent events, both books argue, there is ample evidence to suggest that

fisheries have never been common property.

*Uncommon Property* maintains that since the late 19th century, fisheries have been state property. If fisheries are state property, common property and its inherent tendency towards an economic war of all against all in which everyone (particularly fishers) loses, cannot account for successive crises. If, as the common property proponents argue, the central problem with our fisheries is too many fishers chasing too few fish, the central question is why the federal government allowed this to happen.

*Salmon* characterizes the 20th century history of the industry as a struggle between corporate capital and fishers for control over both profits and the resource. Against corporations' recurrent attempts to monopolize the resource, fishers have defended the resource as "public." Common property, Meggs argues, is "not the absence of rights" but rather "the existence of a collective right of all the people, a right and responsibility for stewardship that each participant in a given community holds and may enforce." (251)

The common property argument ignores both local management systems and the option of collective rights except in the form of state control. The state property argument in *Uncommon Property* is an improvement but it draws our attention away from the progressive erosion of alternative, local management structures that accompanied the expansion of the corporate fishing industry and the related imposition of federal rules of access. In so doing, it obscures the possibility that for some members of the industry, such as the native fishers described in Pinkerton's account of the community of Ahousaht, a "public" resource is not the same thing as state property.

Both books remind us that until recently, "public" was defined by fishers, corporations, and government in ethnic terms. Workers and fishers of Euro-caucasian descent have had fuller rights of access and rights to fisheries wealth

those of aboriginal, Japanese, and Chinese descent. Muszynski's article on the UFAWU and other articles in *Uncommon Property* suggest that for fishers and for government the rights of male fishers and corporations to the resource also took precedence over those of women and plantworkers. While regulation on the basis of ethnicity is clearly challenged in both books, regulation and exclusion from access to a public resource on the basis of class (shoreworkers and crewmembers) and gender receive less attention. Meggs deals only peripherally with shoreworkers. Marchak, in her concluding essay, identifies signs of wider consultation between fishers and government in the management of the "state's property" as promising. In her own formulation, there is no mention of consultation by government with shoreworkers. By not explicitly including them in their critical assessments of property rights in the fishery both Meggs and Marchak perpetuate the history alluded to by Neil Guppy of reports and studies that make shoreworkers invisible. As Guppy argues, women are concentrated in shorework. This concentration and the greater attachment to specific communities that makes them an attractive and vulnerable labour reserve for fish processors mean the policies they might advocate for managing our "public" fisheries might be quite different from those of either corporations or male, mobile fishers who can land their fish in different communities and even in the United States.

The "public" interest in British Columbia's fisheries is partly influenced by the alternative uses that are made of the river basin-ocean ecosystems upon which they depend as well as by overfishing and the ecological impacts of different fishing technologies. Both books emphasize that government policy and the fate of our fisheries need to be examined in light of political and ecological pressure from hydroelectric, logging, and mining companies and the impacts of overfishing. The authors of *Uncommon Property*,

however, tell us that because they are not marine biologists, they decided not to enter into the debates about the causes and extent of stock decline. Meggs is less inhibited by disciplinary boundaries. Significantly, his treatment of questions related to science, conservation, and overfishing emphasizes the social and political factors that have shaped government policies in these areas. In other words, his account points to an important weakness in existing political economic studies of the fisheries, including *Uncommon Property*. This weakness is the absence of research on the construction of scientific knowledge and the negotiation of government policy related to fisheries conservation.

Meggs is strongly critical of the neglect of salmon enhancement, and lack of controls on pollution, logging, and dam and railway construction. Federal fisheries has generally targeted overfishing as the cause of stock decline, and regulation and hatcheries as the solutions. As Meggs suggests, this means that fishers and plantworkers, rather than logging companies, bear the costs of stock decline. Here there is some agreement between Marchak's concluding chapter and Meggs' assessment of the future of fisheries conservation. Using different examples, both arrive at the view that federal government commitment to fisheries conservation is heavily compromised by the political influence of the powerful forestry and other nonfishing interests. Meggs' discussion of the almost complete neglect of environmental concerns that accompanied the development of salmon aquaculture adds further support to this point of view. His observation that BC Packers will be less opposed to further destruction of wild habitat now that it has access to aquacultured salmon is sobering.

*Uncommon Property* presents a devastating analysis of the effects of state management of our fishery resources. It offers little, however, in the way of alternatives. Meggs does not clearly define

what he means by collective rights to fisheries or stewardship. In addition, he provides only a brief discussion of ways such collective rights might be expanded rather than eroded. The deepening divisions among fishers, and between fishers and shoreworkers documented in *Uncommon Property*, as well as the concentration of economic power within the fishery, and its increasing economic and political marginality suggest that the prospects for a successful movement to protect the collective rights of Canadians to their fisheries are as dim as the prospects for the stocks themselves. Perhaps these books will help change this.

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Bruno Ramirez, *On the Move: French-Canadian and Italian Migrants in the North Atlantic Economy, 1860-1914* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart 1991).

*ON THE MOVE* is a well-written, fascinating study of how migration from rural communities helped to meet the demand for wage labour created by the expansion of industrial capitalism in North America up to World War I. The author's aim, in his own words, is to broaden our understanding "of what I consider to be the two key characteristics in the dynamics of the North Atlantic economy: the internationalization of labour and the regionalization of capitalist labour markets." (16) Québec acts as the pivotal location insofar as it was from that province that the French Canadians migrated to the textile towns of southern New England, and it was in Montréal that many Italians eventually settled. But the book is less a monograph than two parallel stories which understandably reflect the diverse interests of the author, an Italian-Canadian professor of American history at a French-language university in Montréal.



The paths of the French-Canadian and Italian migrants may occasionally have crossed in Québec, but their migration patterns and labour experiences were quite different. The peasants of the southern Apennines were impoverished village-dwellers, exploited by the landholding petty bourgeoisie known as the "galantuomini." Young men from these communities worked on labour-intensive North American jobs, such as railway construction, with the goal of earning enough money to achieve independent status as small property holders in their home communities. This they often succeeded in doing, thereby altering class relations though not the subsistence nature of the Apennine agricultural economy. By the early 1900s, with the wages from North American labour having inflated the price of land well beyond its intrinsic worth, the Italian peasants began to look upon cities such as Montréal as permanent homes. Here, Ramirez claims, they found "the means to put an end to a life of suspended animation, and they began to entertain the vision of a normal, decent existence." (110) He might have added that they had also given up their dream of a relatively independent landholding status in their homeland for that of a permanent wage labourer in an alien country.

There is a sense of completeness to the Italian story which is missing from that of the French Canadians, partly, as the author points out, because Italian emigration "produced a rich and massive corpus of statistical and qualitative documentation, whereas the detailed data on French-Canadian emigration often had to be created from sources that have little or nothing to do with the emigration phenomenon." (17-9) Ramirez demonstrates considerable ingenuity in exploiting parish registers and notarial records from Berthier County, near Trois-Rivières, to trace the migration patterns of the local people. Thus he finds that for one parish between 1845 and 1900 as many locally-born people were married in

New England as in the rest of the province, and that the favoured location outside this parish (21 per cent) was in Woonsocket, Rhode Island. Rhode Island was also the most popular state for those who sold their Berthier County farms from outside the province. The discovery that tiny Rhode Island was a stronger magnet than the larger and more proximate Massachusetts, or even Montréal, conforms with recent studies of Irish and Highland Scots chain migration to British North America.

By examining the birth places of children recorded in the Canadian manuscript census reports, Ramirez is also able to describe the economic strategy of many of the migrating families. He finds that many of the returnees to Québec had married in New England and now had young children, representing an economic burden which was difficult to sustain in the New England mill towns. Those who migrated to New England, on the other hand, generally had children old enough to work in the factories. Indeed, it appears that many of these emigrant families were simply returning to where the first children had been born.

Despite the evidence of multiple border crossings by the French Canadians, they were less likely to be sojourners than were the Italians, for they established their Little Canadas almost as soon as they began to work in the New England mill towns. One can logically speculate that commercialization of French-Canadian agriculture was facilitated in the older seigneurial zones by the easing of population pressure on the land. There nevertheless remained a substantial number of families who farmed essentially for their own consumption needs, even in a fertile, centrally-located county like Berthier where one-third of the landholdings were less than fifty acres in 1871. Members of these families apparently depended upon seasonal employment in the vicinity, but other studies have shown that men from marginal farms south of the

St. Lawrence frequently migrated to the Maine woods during the winter as well as the New England harvests in the fall. To the extent that the American labour market attracted a seasonal work force then it actually helped to perpetuate a subsistence-style, semi-agricultural economy in Québec.

Like most liberal and Marxist historians, Ramirez seems to feel that the non-market rural economy was a regrettable impediment to "progress," but his work reveals how the peasants and habitants of Italy and Québec were able to cling to a certain measure of independence on their own land by resorting to wage labour on a temporary and/or seasonal basis. Such resistance to proletarianization and the market imperative deserves more sympathetic attention from labour and rural historians alike. *On the Move* should stimulate them to look beyond national boundaries as well as narrow areas of specialization.

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Odette Vincent Domey, *Filles et familles en milieu ouvrier: Hull, Québec à la fin du XIXe siècle* (Montréal: Regroupement des chercheurs-chercheuses en histoire des travailleurs et travailleuses du Québec 1991).

IN 1988, the *Regroupement des chercheurs-chercheuses en histoire des travailleurs et travailleuses du Québec* (RCHTQ) began the collection in which Odette Vincent Domey's *Filles et familles en milieu ouvrier* is the most recent instalment. The idea of the collection was to make excellent MA theses on aspects of Québec's labour and working-class history more widely available by publishing them in an inexpensive format. To date, four volumes have appeared. Two of them are concerned with aspects of the institutional history of Québec's labour movement in the 20th century (Jean-

François Cardin and Sylvie Murray). Two treat the material conditions of daily life for working-class people in 19th-century Québec (Gilles Lauzon and Odette Vincent Domey).

Odette Vincent Domey's book lives up to the high standards set by the other authors in this collection. Hers is a study of girls, women, and the working-class family economy in a Québec community which, by the last decade of the 19th century, was well advanced in its transition to industrial capitalism. Hull in 1891, though tiny by comparison to Montréal or Québec City, was the third largest city in Québec. Its eleven thousand people were mainly recent migrants from rural Québec: French Canadian families who depended on wages earned in Hull's important industrial sector, which was dominated by sawmills and other wood processing industries. At this level, Vincent Domey's book is a corrective to the relative invisibility of smaller manufacturing centres like Hull in the historiography of Québec's industrialization and its working class. More importantly, it is an attempt to understand the daily lives of the ordinary people who inhabited this community 100 years ago.

*Filles et famille en milieu ouvrier* can be situated at the intersection of working-class history, women's history, and the history of the family. The author's attention is focused squarely on workers: in 1891, nine-tenths of the 262 households she studied in detail (Census Division 4 of Hull's *Quartier 3*) were headed by wage-earning manual labourers, the great majority of them employed in one of four local sawmills. Most of her interest, as the title suggests, is in the girls and women who lived in these households, particularly their paid and unpaid work, and their coping skills (or *débrouillardise*, a much better phrase than 'survival strategies') given the material realities of proletarian life in Hull. These, in a word, were hard, and included seasonal and cyclical unemployment, low wages, insecure access to property, inadequate housing, poor

sanitation, and high infant mortality. Her approach, inspired by that of Bettina Bradbury, is to treat the working-class family as "*un lieu de stratégies et de résistances actives*" rather than as a passive object to be moulded by the ineluctable hand of industrial capitalism. (7)

Despite the relative autonomy of the household, the reader is constantly reminded of the importance of the local economy in establishing the material conditions of family life. Vincent Domey reminds us of the fact — well established in the European and American literature — that industry *per se* does not induce changes in family structure. But marriage age, fertility, household composition, and patterns of work and education may well be sensitive to the new conditions associated with a particular type of industrial economy. In Hull, the relative lack of paid jobs for women (compared to textile towns, for example), the seasonal character of labour in the sawmills (which were open a maximum of seven or eight months per year), the availability of winter employment for men in the bush, and the low wages and long hours of industrial work when it was available were all part of this equation, as the author clearly shows.

Methodologically, this study is built around a quantitative analysis of the 1891 manuscript census for a section of Hull's *Quartier 3* consisting of some 262 households. The author uses statistics generated from this well constructed data base to explore household size and structure, residential proximity to kin, marriage age, literacy levels, and women's paid and unpaid labour, among other topics. Though it often parades as a family historian's best friend, Vincent Domey has recognized that the manuscript census can be fickle. She has therefore filled out her data base with nominal information drawn from municipal tax rolls, city directories, and marriage registers. She has gone further than this, however, in gathering a different kind of information from local newspapers, contemporary fic-

tion, testimony before the Royal Commission on the Relations of Capital and Labour (which collected evidence in Ottawa and Hull in 1888 and 1889), and a small but useful collection of interviews, involving subjects who had lived in Hull near the turn of the century.

This combination of quantitative and qualitative methodologies is one of the major strengths of the book. Family historians should follow the author's example and look up from their nominal household records to read a personal narrative or a newspaper from time to time, and this for at least two reasons. For one thing, the manuscript census can seriously underestimate important phenomena, as Vincent Domey's discussion of women's paid labour shows. (Hull in 1891 had two match factories which, according to the published returns of the industrial census, employed 135 women, 33 of whom were less than 16 years old. Yet the manuscript census for the areas in which these employees almost certainly lived turns up no more than 10 *allumettières*.) For another, certain questions — such as what working-class women knew about contraception — simply cannot be answered using a quantitative approach to fertility, no matter how sophisticated the demographic tools. Personal accounts and private correspondence are much to be preferred in this area although, as the author recognizes, these are often hard to come by.

Vincent Domey makes good use of oral testimony to cover this and other silences in the census record. She also manipulates the quantitative data with skill and imagination. There is a particularly useful section on marriage and family formation, in which the pattern of early marriage within Hull's working class is explained in terms of local economic conditions and opportunities in waged labour, strong cultural norms, especially those that stressed women's domestic role, and income needs in the parental household. In the discussion of literacy, one is struck by the overall lack

of reading and writing skills in the community. Only 36 per cent of the population of Division 4, *Quartier 3* (all ages) were fully literate in 1891, compared to 45 per cent and 51 per cent in two neighboring rural counties. Vincent Domey convincingly links low literacy levels to the tradition of manual labour in working-class families, the contributions made by children to family economies as wage earners or household workers, and to the direct cost of sending children to school (fees, books, etc.).

In some instances, however, the statistical analyses are less convincing. The treatment of infant mortality (53) is one example. Here, one is presented with a figure of 197 infant deaths in a period of 15 months, which certainly sounds like, and probably was, a lot. (Indeed, the author speculates that this might have been a particularly murderous year.) But there is no figure on births in the same period which might allow for the calculation of a rudimentary infant mortality ratio, and so permit comparison with other contexts. Elsewhere, in her analysis of family size (64-8), the author measures the number of people per household and the number of surviving, co-resident children per family. This is fine, but it tells us little about fertility. One wonders whether there might not have been scope for the calculation of child-woman ratios (children aged, say, 0-4 years per married woman). Perhaps not, but if so, this to would enhance comparability with studies of other settings.

These, of course, are quibbles. Overall, this is a fine piece of research that fully merits the increased visibility that will result from its publication in the RCHTQ series. One hopes to see further contributions of a similarly high quality in the future.

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Bernard Dionne, *Le syndicalisme au Québec* (Montréal: Les Éditions du Boréal 1991).

EN QUELQUE 127 PAGES bien tournées, Bernard Dionne nous offre un portrait synthèse du syndicalisme québécois, de son passé, son présent et son avenir. Premier numéro d'une nouvelle collection à vocation didactique, intitulée *Boréal Express*, cette plaquette permettra aux étudiants et aux profanes de se familiariser avec le mouvement syndical au Québec et fournira aux initiés une référence utile et complète. L'auteur pose comme prémisse que, contrairement aux États-Unis ou à la France, le syndicalisme au Québec est loin d'être mort et qu'il demeure un partenaire social avec lequel il faut toujours compter. Avec des centaines de demandes d'accréditation présentées et acceptées chaque année, le syndicalisme au Québec, malgré les apparences, se porte assez bien merci. En 1990, il regroupait près de quatre travailleurs sur dix.

Le premier chapitre, le plus réussi selon moi, offre au lecteur une excellente synthèse de l'évolution du syndicalisme québécois de ses origines à aujourd'hui. Le développement des grandes traditions syndicales de même que les lois, les grèves et les autres événements charnières y sont bien décrits. Les ruptures et les continuités y sont bien situées et replacées dans leurs contextes canadien et nord-américain. Cette histoire, précise l'auteur dès le départ, «est essentielle à la compréhension des principales caractéristiques du mouvement syndical». (13) Ainsi, s'en tenant à l'essentiel mais ne négligeant aucun aspect, l'auteur met beaucoup de soin à montrer comment s'est constitué le syndicalisme actuel et par quels cheminements se sont mis en place ses principaux paramètres.

Suivant une périodisation classique (naissance et légalisation, 1800-1880; consolidation, 1880-1918; résistance, 1919-1939; institutionnalisation, 1940-1957; radicalisation, 1958-1990),

l'auteur cherche à montrer comment les luttes et la détermination des syndicats leur ont permis de passer de l'illégalité et de la clandestinité du milieu du XIXe siècle à leur statut actuel de «force importante au sein de la société québécoise». (13) Bien documenté, le récit s'avère en quelque sorte le bilan de plus de quinze ans d'historiographie québécoise et canadienne, et il doit beaucoup aux synthèses déjà existantes — dont celle de Jacques Rouillard publiée récemment chez le même éditeur — qu'il ne cherche pas à dépasser ou à refaire. Enfin, le ton est neutre et évite de tomber dans les travers du triomphalisme, du lyrisme ou du misérabilisme.

A partir de cette base, les deuxième et troisième chapitres traitent de la situation présente du syndicalisme et des défis qui l'attendent dans les prochaines années. S'inscrivant dans l'actualité la plus récente et s'inspirant des toutes dernières statistiques, le propos est ici pour consommation immédiate et risque, par conséquent, de vieillir très vite. Espérons que des mises à jour sont déjà prévues par la maison d'édition.

Le deuxième chapitre débute par une description du cadre légal, qui n'exclut pas, comme c'est souvent le cas, le rôle du fédéral et sa juridiction sur un nombre important de syndiqués québécois, soumis au Code canadien du travail. L'impact majeur des lois de 1944, qui «jetteront les bases de notre système actuel de relations de travail», y est bien situé. Suit une analyse des effectifs syndicaux et des difficultés méthodologiques relatives à la cueillette de données adéquates à cet égard. L'auteur précise que les meilleurs chiffres disponibles doivent en fait être vus comme les «indicateurs les plus fiables» que l'on puisse trouver de la présence syndicale, tant pour le Québec que pour le Canada. Avec plus d'un million de syndiqués et un taux de syndicalisation se maintenant depuis les années 1970 à près de 40 pour cent — et ce malgré les récessions des années 1980 — le Québec compte pour une des régions

les plus densément syndiquées en Amérique du Nord. Suit la description obligée des structures et du fonctionnement des centrales opérant au Québec, de même que des principaux syndicats indépendants. Cette dernière réalité, sans cesse croissante depuis les années 1960, englobe aujourd'hui près du quart des syndiqués québécois, soit davantage que la CSN. La «nature du syndicalisme québécois» est ensuite analysée à travers un bilan de ses traits communs avec les autres syndicalismes nord-américains et de ses caractéristiques «distinctes».

Revenant à une analyse plus dynamique, l'auteur aborde dans son dernier chapitre les «profonds changements qui touchent toutes les dimensions du travail» depuis quelques décennies: la création d'emplois, durant les années 1980, ne se fait plus que dans le secteur des services et, trois fois sur quatre, est le fait de petites entreprises; ces emplois se distinguent par leur caractère occasionnel et à temps partiel; la plupart de ces emplois reviennent aux femmes dont la proportion dans la main-d'oeuvre ne cesse de croître. Devant ces mutations, le syndicalisme a changé son discours et ses méthodes et, selon Dionne, il devra continuer à le faire s'il tient à se maintenir comme force de premier plan dans la société. L'auteur identifie six domaines où la situation est en évolution rapide et pour lesquels les syndicats québécois devront trouver des solutions: changements technologiques, libre-échange, négociation collective dans le secteur public, équité salariale pour les femmes, place des jeunes dans la main-d'oeuvre et démocratie syndicale. L'auteur aborde toutes les facettes des problèmes soulevés et situe avec clarté les enjeux qui en découlent. A travers les lignes de conduite qu'il suggère, Dionne se fait le partisan d'un partenariat lucide et vigilant, option en accord avec le statut qu'ont obtenu les syndicats après plus d'un siècle et demi de luttes pour leur reconnaissance. Oui à la collaboration, donc, mais à une collaboration qui implique de la part de l'État et surtout de

patronat une reconnaissance sans équivoque des travailleurs et de leurs organisations comme agent social positif et créateur. Et l'auteur de conclure: «Il faut espérer que, sans baisser la garde, [les syndicats] explorent toutes les avenues d'une collaboration qui ne ferait, à terme, que des gagnants». (115)

Voilà un petit ouvrage qui atteint bien ses objectifs de synthèse et de neutralité et qui, sans être exhaustif, fait un tour relativement complet de son sujet. D'une écriture simple et précise, suivant un développement logique et articulé, ce livre aux informations récentes et abondantes sera utile tant aux profanes qu'aux spécialistes du domaine.

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Luc Côté, *Les enjeux du travail à l'Alcan (1901/1951)* (Hull: Asticou 1990).

L'ÉVOLUTION DES PROCS de travail constitue un thème central de l'histoire des travailleurs au XXe siècle. Il y a une dizaine d'années, Jean-Pierre Charland lançait un projet de recherche qui visait à mettre en lumière les effets des changements dans les techniques de production et des modes de gestion de la main-d'oeuvre sur les travailleurs de certains grands secteurs industriels du Québec. Charland a publié en 1990 *Les pâtes et papiers au Québec 1880-1980. Technologies, travail et travailleurs* (Québec, IQRC). Ses étudiants Luc Côté et Guy Sylvestre ouvrirent un deuxième chantier sur le secteur de l'aluminium. Le livre de Côté est une version remaniée du mémoire de maîtrise qu'il déposait à l'Université d'Ottawa en 1988.

Côté étudie l'évolution des rapports de travail dans les usines de Shawinigan et d'Arvida de l'Alcan depuis leur début en 1901 à Shawinigan jusqu'à la période de l'après-guerre. Par «rapports de travail» l'auteur entend à la fois les conditions techniques du travail et les condi-

tions de l'usage de la force de travail des travailleurs dans un rapport de production capitaliste. L'ouvrage débute par un «aperçu théorique et historique du procès de travail capitaliste» qui présente les orientations dont s'inspire Côté, soit, pour l'essentiel, celles de Marx, de B. Coriat et de M. Aglietta. Ce chapitre, un peu trop long, aurait gagné à être ramassé et relié davantage au sujet immédiat du livre.

Le deuxième chapitre présente un bref historique de l'implantation de l'Alcan au Québec en remontant aux débuts de l'entreprise-mère, la Pittsburgh Reduction Company, qui deviendra ALCOA par la suite. Il esquisse le rythme de la croissance de la production d'aluminium dans ces deux usines de 1921 à 1956; il fait ressortir l'effet de la Crise puis la remontée de la demande avec le réarmement et la poussée fulgurante de la Deuxième Guerre mondiale. Ce chapitre, fondé surtout sur des sources secondaires, fournit le contexte essentiel aux chapitres suivants.

Le coeur de l'ouvrage est constitué des chapitres III et IV. Dans le ch. III, Côté décrit l'évolution graduelle de la technologie de l'électrolyse et l'évolution de l'organisation et des conditions de travail à Shawinigan et à Arvida. La description des aspects techniques de la production de l'aluminium est réussie. La technologie de l'électrolyse n'évolue pas fondamentalement, mais les modifications dans la taille des cuves, dans la disposition des anodes et dans l'organisation des salles d'électrolyse transforment substantiellement l'organisation du travail. Les réactions ouvrières à ces transformations ne sont pas décrites, faute de sources (175), sauf pour affirmer qu'elles ont «[...] un impact important sur les conditions de travail des ouvriers». (126)

Parallèlement, l'auteur esquisse la mise en place de méthodes «modernes» de gestion de la main-d'oeuvre à l'Alcan, cherchant à y retrouver les tendances générales décrites dans son premier chapitre. Les sources dont il dispose (es-

sentiellement des mémoires de dirigeants) sont malheureusement assez avars sur le sujet. Côté insiste longuement sur un disciple de F.W. Taylor, Harrington Emerson, qui produit une étude sur l'organisation des usines d'Alcoa, dont celle de Shawinigan, «vers la fin des années dix» (111) mais il avoue avoir peu de renseignements sur la mise en pratique des recommandations d'Emerson. L'auteur concède que «le caractère récent de la métallurgie de l'aluminium, avec ses imperfections, ses irrégularités et sa part d'imprévu et d'aléatoire ne peut qu'interdire toute forme rigide d'organisation du procès de travail» (121), mais cette admission enlève beaucoup de pertinence à son cadre théorique.

Les indices de l'adoption par l'Alcan de l'organisation scientifique du travail sont en fait plutôt minces. Quelques études de temps auraient été effectuées et un «service de l'emploi» serait mis sur pied à Shawinigan au début des années vingt (115), mais ce n'est qu'en 1937, douze ans après son ouverture, que le complexe d'Arvida sera doté d'un service du personnel, et celui de Shawinigan ne sera formellement mis sur pied que l'année suivante. (137) L'adoption de primes au rendement, l'un des fondements de l'organisation scientifique du travail sur lequel Côté insiste beaucoup, n'est pas imposée par la direction générale de l'entreprise mais dépend plutôt de l'initiative de chaque gérant d'usine. (120)

Le quatrième chapitre est le meilleur du livre, sans doute parce que les sources — surtout les commissions d'enquête qui suivirent les grèves de 1941 et de 1943 — sont plus riches. L'auteur y décrit la détérioration des conditions de travail et l'instabilité de la main-d'oeuvre durant l'expansion que connaît Alcan durant les années de guerre. Les usines de Shawinigan et d'Arvida sont agrandies et de nouvelles usines sont construites à Isle Maligne, La Tuque et Beauharnois, de sorte que la production décuple de 1937 à

1943. L'entreprise fait face à des problèmes de recrutement, de roulement et d'absentéisme d'une ampleur inégale, pour lesquels elle n'est manifestement pas prête. Les programmes de formation mis en place ne suffisent pas. Le fardeau du remplacement des absents tombe sur les anciens, qui exigent des augmentations de salaire «en guise de compensation pour un travail plus ardu et plus exigeant». (175) Ce serait selon Côté l'une des causes des grèves d'Arvida en 1941 et de Shawinigan en 1943, qui sont précédées de demandes syndicales d'augmentations de salaires et de réduction du fardeau de travail. Les témoignages déposés devant les commissions d'enquête font état de l'ampleur du roulement de la main-d'oeuvre, des difficultés de fonctionnement et des problèmes associés au versement équitable des bonis de production.

Cependant, ces documents devraient être lus dans le contexte de leur production. Les témoins entendus par la commission Létourneau-Bond de 1941 semblent concertés pour défendre la loyauté des travailleurs canadiens-français et réfuter les accusations de C.D. Howe, qui aurait mis la grève sur le compte d'«agitateurs étrangers». Dans ces circonstances, le roulement de la main-d'oeuvre constitue un paravent commode derrière lequel tant les travailleurs que les cadres peuvent se retrancher, car ils ne s'en considèrent pas responsables. D'autres sources, comme les dossiers des travailleurs, permettraient de saisir plus précisément ces phénomènes de roulement, qui ne datent pas de la guerre.

Le quatrième chapitre relate aussi la mise en place de mesures «scientifiques» du travail et des travailleurs: études de l'environnement de travail, études physiologiques de l'effort fourni par les ouvriers, études de temps et analyses des tâches commandées par la commission Tourangeau en 1943 et reprises ensuite par Alcan. La rationalité scientifique triomphe comme méthode de gestion du travail, mais sa mise en place est

d'avantage le fait de l'État que de l'entreprise, ce qui fait ici aussi douter de la pertinence du cadre théorique adopté.

Le dernier chapitre montre comment, à partir de 1944, l'Alcan se met pleinement — finalement — à la gestion «scientifique» de la main-d'oeuvre et comment l'instauration de ces pratiques s'accompagne de la mise en place d'un discours idéologique tiré en droite ligne du «welfare capitalism». La description est un peu longue et la documentation déborde à l'occasion le cadre chronologique de l'auteur. De plus, il n'est pas évident que le discours patronal constitue un «renouveau» par rapport au discours antérieur.

L'organisation scientifique du travail devient, à la faveur de la guerre, le mode dominant de gestion de la main-d'oeuvre dans le secteur de l'aluminium. Au total, cet ouvrage fournit une description minutieuse de l'évolution de l'organisation technique de la production dans ce secteur. Mais le livre est alourdi par une problématique que la documentation ne justifie pas toujours. L'auteur a parfois tendance à combler son manque d'information par des affirmations tirées de son cadre théorique. De plus, les archives de l'entreprise, assorties d'enquêtes orales, pourraient éclairer davantage les comportements des travailleurs, que ce livre n'examine que très rapidement, et sous le seul angle de la grève ou du roulement de la main-d'oeuvre. La question reste à explorer plus avant.

Terminons en reprochant à l'éditeur son choix de papier. Les pages ont presque l'épaisseur du carton, ce qui rend la consultation difficile et la reliure fragile.

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Daniel Hickey, dir. *Moncton 1871-1929. Changements socio-économiques dans une ville ferroviaire* (Moncton: Éditions d'Acadie 1990).

IL S'AGIT D'UN COLLECTIF, oeuvre de cinq historiens, publié à l'occasion du centenaire de la désignation de Moncton comme «cité» (23 avril 1890). La provenance des textes est diverse; ils n'ont pas tous été rédigés pour cette occasion et, de plus, deux ont déjà été publiés ailleurs. Pour le directeur, «L'étude de ce processus d'urbanisation de la ville de Moncton entre 1871 et 1929 constitue le thème de base de ce livre. Les cinq auteurs présentent leurs réflexions sur les multiples facettes de cette dynamique de changement, mais nous avons privilégié les deux domaines de changements technologiques et de l'intégration des nouveaux venus, particulièrement les Acadiens.» (9)

Le premier texte, signé de Jean-Roch Cyr, est tiré de son mémoire de maîtrise et s'intitule «L'expansion démographique des Acadiens à Moncton avant 1881: le processus d'urbanisation et ses conséquences socio-culturelles.» L'auteur veut placer la croissance de la population de la région et la ville de Moncton dans le contexte plus vaste des grands mouvements de population de la seconde moitié du XIXe siècle, en particulier l'important exode vers les États-Unis, qui touche surtout les anglophones, et le mouvement de colonisation agricole favorisé par le clergé acadien. Entre ces deux mouvements il montre l'existence d'une timide attirance de la ville pour les Acadiens. Malheureusement le texte aurait gagné à être travaillé davantage et les tableaux rendus plus clairs: les titres de colonnes sont mal choisis et de plus, il y a confusion entre la notion de pourcentage de croissance et celle de taux d'accroissement. Par ailleurs, le lecteur doit référer à un autre texte (44) pour trouver la population totale de la ville de Moncton en 1881 et calculer lui-même qu'à cette date, les Acadiens ne forment



que 7,2 pour cent de la population urbaine. Cela met en doute l'affirmation de la page 24 qui veut que «la présence massive d'Acadiens à Moncton est très nouvelle...». L'analyse des mariages et l'importance de l'exogamie va d'ailleurs dans le sens d'une toute première installation des Acadiens en ville, et ce dans un environnement qu'ils ne contrôlent pas.

Le second texte, dû à Daniel Hickey, s'intitule «Moncton, 1871-1913. Le commerce et l'industrie d'un carrefour ferroviaire.» L'auteur ne nous dit pas s'il s'agit d'une nouvelle version d'une communication qu'il avait faite en 1986 à l'Atlantic Canada Studies Workshop (Fredericton) ou tout simplement de sa traduction. Soulignons d'ailleurs que ce renseignement n'est pas donné, le lecteur attentif tombe dessus au hasard d'une note dans un autre texte. (120) Le texte se divise en trois parties. La première examine l'impact du chemin de fer sur l'offre de main-d'oeuvre: en 1881, 12,7 pour cent de la population y travaille, ce qui est plutôt important et cette proportion passe à 27 pour cent en 1913. La seconde partie étudie, à l'aide des registres de crédit de la Dun et Wiman, la situation des affaires. Il en ressort l'image classique de l'essor du commerce de détail avec, en plus, l'émergence des secteurs de la métallurgie et de l'hôtellerie, liés tous deux aux chemins de fer. La troisième partie montre à quel point la ville recrute sa population dans sa région immédiate.

Ginette Lafleur signe le troisième texte, intitulé: «L'industrialisation et le travail rémunéré des femmes: Moncton, 1881-1891.» A partir d'une analyse des listes nominatives des recensements et d'enquêtes sur les entreprises, l'auteur montre l'amorce de la formation d'une main-d'oeuvre industrielle. Ce n'est que le début car la proportion élevée de domestiques, 43 pour cent des professions en 1881 et encore à 39 pour cent en 1891, est un indice probant de la carence d'offre d'emplois industriels. Par contre, la surreprésentation observée chez les

Acadiens indique aussi nettement leur réponse positive à cette offre d'emploi.

Le quatrième texte, «Prohiber ou contrôler? L'application de l'Acte de tempérance du Canada à Moncton, 1881-1896,» de Jacques-Paul Couturier, a déjà été publié dans la revue *Acadiensis*. Il décrit les péripéties locales de son adoption et de son application, ainsi que les incidences ethniques; non seulement les Acadiens ne semblent guère mobilisés par la croisade «abstinente,» mais certaines années ils sont nettement surreprésentés parmi les délinquants. Le texte montre aussi que, devant une certaine dégradation du climat social, on en vient à un *modus vivendi*, par lequel l'objectif de la loi glisse de la notion d'interdiction absolue à celle de régulation de la vente des alcools.

Le dernier texte, «Idéologie nationale et intégration des francophones dans un contexte urbain: le cas de Moncton,» de Phyllis E. LeBlanc, veut examiner l'intégration des Acadiens dans la société urbaine par le biais de leur accession à la propriété foncière. L'examen de trois rôles d'évaluation (1900, 1919 et 1929), lui permet de cerner les propriétaires et l'analyse cherche à rapprocher cette évolution avec la volonté d'une partie des élites acadiennes de faire de Moncton un centre de pouvoir. Elle trouve une certaine sous-représentation des propriétaires chez les Acadiens, mais en même temps, ils sont assez nombreux pour lui permettre de conclure à une intégration dans le milieu urbain.

En dépit de l'intérêt de certains textes, c'est un livre qui manque singulièrement de contextualisation. N'étant pas spécialiste de l'histoire acadienne, pas plus que de l'histoire de l'urbanisation des provinces maritimes, j'ai éprouvé beaucoup de difficulté à saisir l'argumentation des auteurs. Il me semble qu'une bonne introduction faisant le point de l'historiographie de Moncton (on trouve tout de même quelques références en bibliographie...) s'imposait et elle aurait permis au lecteur de mieux

comprendre les démonstrations, comme aussi d'ailleurs cela aurait évité aux auteurs de se répéter: presque tous rappellent l'importance de l'installation des ateliers ferroviaires et ses circonstances. De la même façon, on aurait pu préparer et commenter des tableaux statistiques bien faits, au début de l'ouvrage, pour donner une fois pour toutes les paramètres essentiels de la société urbaine, ainsi que des grands éléments de la chronologie. Après avoir refermé le livre, j'avoue ne pas avoir une idée très nette de Moncton comme société urbaine; il m'en manque une grande partie. En fait, on écrit l'histoire de Moncton comme si l'urbanisation des Acadiens s'était déroulée dans le vide sidéral; pourtant il y avait bien quelque part une majorité dans cette ville et, qui plus est, son action ou son inaction devait avoir une incidence sur le développement de la société urbaine.

Par ailleurs, manifestement l'urbanisation relativement précoce des Acadiens joue un rôle dans les débats actuels de l'historiographie acadienne, qui ne sont pas sans ressembler à ceux entourant l'urbanisation des canadiens-français du Québec. Mais ici aussi, le lecteur est laissé à lui-même. Il aurait bénéficié d'une mise en situation qui lui permette d'apprécier l'apport des présentes études à la connaissance historique.

Mon point de vue étant celui d'un historien de l'urbanisation, je dois dire que cet ouvrage me laisse sur ma faim. En définitive, l'urbanisation y est peu analysée comme processus et lorsque l'on tente des rapprochements avec l'évolution de la technologie ou la démographie, c'est pour employer des notions plutôt vagues, des concepts peu ou mal élaborés.

En conclusion, des études disparates, dont certaines sont intéressantes, mais dont la parution en un volume paraît peu justifiée, en dépit de la promesse de l'introduction.

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Allen Fenichel & Sydney Ingerman, eds., *On the Political Economy of Social Democracy: Selected Papers of J.C. Weldon* (Montréal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press 1991), and Athanasios Asimakopulos, Robert Cairns & Christopher Green, eds., *Economic Theory, Welfare and the State: Essays in Honour of J.C. Weldon* (Montréal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press 1991).

THESE TWO VOLUMES, each in their own way, honour the memory of John (Jack) Weldon, a man of many achievements, some seemingly paradoxical. He was an outstanding economist, combining a sophisticated grasp of the most complex techniques with a remarkably broad-ranging understanding of his subject's intellectual history. At the same time he was a committed Christian socialist, a close consultant to senior NDP circles, and someone to whom unions and left-leaning political organizations frequently turned for advice and encouragement. And he was the dominant intellectual force in the Economics Department of McGill University for decades until cancer, combined with the stress of his battles with the university, killed him at age 64.

One of the books is a collection of Weldon's own writings on economic (and social) policy, with a thematic introduction by the editors, two colleagues (Allen Fenichel and Sydney Ingerman) that shared Weldon's general political orientation. The other is a Festschrift by fellow academic economists, ex-students, and even, in one case, a former teacher, with a warm, personal introduction by another of Weldon's long-time McGill colleagues, Christopher Green.

Each of the books has problems, due partly to the limitations of the format, but mainly to the strengths of the person being honoured.

The first book contains the most important of Jack Weldon's writings on social democracy. It is useful to have them compiled in one volume. But there is a

substantial void. There is no thorough appraisal of the enormous influence Weldon's personally-communicated views had on a generation of union organizers, political activists, and academics who tried to follow Weldon's example by combining their teaching responsibilities with a sense of social purpose. Yet Weldon's office door was always open, literally and metaphorically, for those seeking advice; and it is in this, more personal influence, rather than through the writings *per se*, that Jack Weldon had such a great impact on social debate in Canada.

There are also some serious deficiencies in the volume of commemorative essays — deriving from the very nature of the *Festschrift* format. In such an undertaking a selected group are invited to contribute essays in honour of the academic to whom homage is being paid, and, beyond the initial selection of contributors, the editors can have little control over the contents. Most of the contributors to this collection had the decency to pick topics that were directly relevant to Weldon's own main concerns — such as unemployment, pensions, approaches to the history of economic thought, a critique of the contrived nature of the new-right paradigm of economic policy. However, some of the authors treat these problems in a manner quite out of line with the political direction Weldon himself would have taken — and one could perhaps have asked that there be some effort by the editors and authors either to alert the reader to this difference or to contrast such approaches with Weldon's own thinking.

But, more seriously, some of the contributors took the opportunity, not to acknowledge their own and their discipline's debt to J.C. Weldon, but to engage in sterile exercises in pseudo-scientific sleight-of-hand of a sort that Weldon (himself a prodigious technician) always treated with amused contempt.

Finally, and similar to the absence in the social democracy volume of an over-

all appraisal of Weldon's influence, there is in the *Festschrift* no really solid general assessment of Weldon's contribution to economics as a core discipline. However, one reason for this, spelled out in the volume's introduction, is the nature of the man's own commitments and priorities.

Any bibliography of his published work might look a little sparse by current professional norms. There are four reasons why such a comparison is distorted. One is that, unlike the majority of academics today, Weldon saw himself first and foremost as a teacher. Even in his many years as department chairman, he never committed himself to less than a full complement of teaching responsibilities, sometimes in classes of very large enrolment. And for the better part of a decade, nearly one third of all the PhD theses produced by the department were under his supervision — with the result that it is through the intellectual work of his students that much of Weldon's own thinking was manifested.

A second is that Weldon was old-fashioned enough to believe that no one should publish unless he or she had something worthwhile to say — and that the subject matter actually be worth talking about. He therefore avoided turning out reams of useless paper, in favour of a handful of carefully considered works.

A third is that, again reflecting a tradition that has largely vanished from academic economics, he committed literally decades to preparing one great opus. He left behind a huge and rambling set of notes for a rethinking of the entire history of economic thought. Unfortunately it never reached sufficient level of development where it could be posthumously edited and published — because of the fourth reason for his relative lack of published work.

Jack Weldon drew no politically expedient distinction between theory and practice. Hence the last decade of his life was spent in almost perpetual conflict with the authorities of his university. The battles involved such things as contesting

how the university pension plan was administered (commensurate with his commitment to the economics of intergenerational transfers and social democracy); combatting political interference in hiring and firing practices (in line with his personal dedication to open academic debate); fighting the very faculty association he was instrumental in founding when it developed what he saw as an incestuous relationship with the McGill administration (revealing once again his fundamental belief in the principle of genuine collective bargaining); and an epic battle, which he saw as the most important of his career, to try to stop the university from degrading the academic honour system by using it to reward political servility.

Indeed, this very insistence on combining theory and practice points to perhaps the most important shortcoming of these two books dedicated to Weldon's memory. By producing two volumes, one dedicated to Weldon the economist, the other on Weldon the social and political critic, these books represent an effort to divide the indivisible. There was no distinction in Weldon's mind between his economics, technically speaking, and his political and social activism. But more can be gleaned about this fundamental unity of purpose that guided his intellectual and political life from Jamie Swift's *Odd Man Out: The Life and Times of Eric Kierans* than from these two volumes on Kierans' long-time McGill colleague.

Understanding this unity of purpose is all the more important now. Weldon's ability to understand and use the most advanced levels of economic theory and technique, at the same time matching it with a profound sense of social commitment, stands as the ultimate rebuke to the direction in which this discipline, and his department, have been moving in recent years.

Weldon, following a tradition established by Stephen Leacock, Burton Kierstead, and others, took the lead in building and defending at McGill what

was for a long time probably the most eclectic, open-minded, and progressive economics department in Canada. It was a department where economic theory, economic technique, economic history, and economic policy were treated as mutually reinforcing elements of an intellectual whole. There were, however, flaws in the design and, not less, in the management.

Weldon's department was a fractious collection of people of diverse interests and varied talents, some considerable, some decidedly limited. But he personally drew little distinction between them when it came to implementing his fundamental social-democratic belief in full employment. He protected incompetents and accommodated mediocrities. As a result he eventually faced a situation in which a substantial part of his department, secure (*vis à vis* Jack Weldon) in their tenured positions, yet fearful that association with a "radical" like Weldon would impede their professional advance, turned on him and on his vision of an eclectic and progressive department. The counterattack destroyed much, perhaps most, of what Weldon committed his life to creating.

This destructive process was ably assisted by trends in the subject itself. Economics over the last two decades has become even more narrow, technocratic, and even downright silly in its preoccupations. The more awesome the economic problems the world faces, the more sterile and myopic the discipline becomes. Instead of technique being used to solve a problem, now problems of an imaginary or, at best, trivial nature are conjured up to justify the mechanical deployment of technique.

For some time Weldon's influence, even though diminished during the great battles that consumed his last years, restrained these trends from overwhelming his department. But after his death the floodgates were flung open — with the result that his department is rapidly becoming just another third rate imitator of

academic fads and fashions, many of which, ironically enough, are already falling into disrepute in wiser institutions.

Thus, these two books, however inadequate to the task, do more than just honour the man. They are also an epitaph to an intellectual and political tradition that should not have been allowed to pass away.

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Ernest Ingles, *Canada* (Oxford: Clío Press 1990)

PREPARED AS VOLUME 62 of the World Bibliographical Series, the volume under review provides a good introduction, especially for non-Canadians, to the monograph literature on Canada. Those who are more familiar with this literature will still benefit from having one source that covers such a wide range of subjects and from the citations to relevant bibliographies and periodical titles that Ingles has also provided.

The work begins with a general introduction, by James Pitsula, to Canadian geography, history, population, economy, and culture. This is followed by the main body of the bibliography which is divided into 35 subject areas. Because it is intended for English-speaking users, the overwhelming majority of entries are English-language. The intent is "to reflect, by way of a highly selective listing of available or easily accessible publications, the geography, history, demography, economy, culture, and general society of Canada". (xxvii) Nevertheless, although necessarily selective, Ingles provides 1316 annotated citations to primarily monograph titles and, in what is a valuable feature of the bibliography as well as an indication of the effort that went into preparing it, he also includes in many of these annotations additional titles that the reader may wish to consult.

This raises the total number of entries in the bibliography to 2067.

Attempting to distil several hundred thousand records down to two thousand is obviously an unenviable task and a subjective one; but Ingles has done a commendable job in organizing a most useful list. However, there are omissions that may leave at least the academic users with some gaps concerning vital debates in Canadian studies. For example, in the 1970s R.T. Naylor's *History of Canadian Business* fuelled a debate on the nature of Canadian capitalism that lasted for several years, and yet the title is not included in the bibliography. Similarly, Stanley Ryerson's classic *Unequal Union: Confederation and the Roots of Conflict in Canada*, which influenced, along with H. Clare Pentland's *Labour and Capital in Canada 1650-1860* (item 813), a whole generation of scholars interested in the role of class in Canadian history has been omitted.

One of the 35 subject areas included is "National Identity." Of the 19 titles in this section, 15 deal directly with Québec and/or French-English relations. Considering that Ingles resides in western Canada it is a little surprising that the section is so heavily weighted towards this single aspect of our national identity. Including a few more titles like Larry Pratt and Garth Stevenson's *Western Separatism: The Myths, Realities & Dangers* would have introduced the users to another aspect of the Canadian reality. As for Atlantic Canada, Ingles has failed to include in this section any item that deals with Newfoundland and only one, *Canada and the Burden of Unity* (item 465), that deals partially with the Maritimes.

Like some of the other volumes in this series, this work includes three indexes — author, title, and subject. A preference for this arrangement over one alphabetical index is subjective, but what should be noted about the title index is the filing rules. The articles "the" and "a" are ignored even when they are not the first

word in the title. An example from the index is as follows:

*Canada: pictures of a great land*  
*Canada: a political and social history*  
 also  
*Canada and the French-Canadian question*  
*Canada and immigration: public policy and*  
*public concern*

This seems an unorthodox approach and at least one other title in the same series that was examined used the more conventional rule of not ignoring the articles.

The number of errors appears to have been kept to a minimum but, almost unavoidably, a few are to be found. For example, Peter Warrian is listed as "Wal-lian" (item 810) and it should be noted that Dominique Clift (item 467) is a male and not a female. However, these criticisms, as well as those mentioned above, are minor and those students who are looking for a general introduction to Canadian studies will be well served by Ingles' work.

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Clark D. Halker, *For Democracy, Workers, and God: Labor Song-Poems and Labor Protest, 1865-95* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press 1991).

IN THIS SLIM BOOK, Clark D. Halker raises a series of complex and interrelated issues. Focusing on some 4,000 song-poems that appeared in the labour press in the late 19th century, Halker states that his purpose is to "expand knowledge of the musical and poetic history of the American working class;" to use these song-poems and their poets as "a lens into the larger world of Gilded-Age workers and labor protest;" and more specifically to examine the contours of a "movement culture" that, he acknowledges (14), was never coterminous with the whole of the working-class cultural experience. The

result of this study, he suggests, establishes the existence of a distinctly working-class criticism of industrial capitalism, a critique rooted in the class-specific understandings of the American republican heritage, mechanic ideology (for example, producerism), and "the true religion" of egalitarian Protestantism evident in these song-poems. Halker concludes his study with an effort to understand the decline of this movement culture in the years after 1895.

While Halker's handling of these important themes is highly uneven, his treatment of American Protestantism and its relation to working people of varied ethnic and religious identities is most problematic. Halker is right when he states that religion was a central force in these song-poems, but beyond that his judgments are highly suspect. "Infused with a character" derived from its encounter with "contemporary capitalism," Halker explains, "religion became transformed from an inert cultural inheritance into a crucial part of the labor movement and the crusade for humanity." Mechanically following Herbert Gutman's 1966 essay, "Protestantism and the American Labor Movement," Halker asserts the existence of a distinct class-based religious expression which called for a return to the "true religion" where character and not wealth determined temporal and spiritual standing. In this account neither ethnicity nor diverse religious traditions presented any serious barrier to working people's embrace of this universalist dogma. "Under the weight of a working-class influence," Halker writes, sectarianism and dogma declined, thus easing the way for these non-Protestants. Catholic workers, he asserts without supporting argument or reference note, "would have been sympathetic when other workers [presumably Protestants] argued that society did not measure up to the standards of Christianity..." (142) Similarly, what eliminated ethnic and religious tensions, and helped solidify the class nature of this religious practice was the fact that "sig-

nificant elements of the immigrant population harbored [a] strong anticlericalism." With these difficulties dispensed with, the author proceeds to castigate elite Protestants and middle-class reformers influenced by the Social Gospel in a relentless pursuit of that magic moment when "true religion" reigned.

The problems here are myriad. The idealized, static understanding of historical relations vitiates efforts at interpretation. Halker's reduction of 19th-century Protestantism to "an inert cultural inheritance" awaiting the quickening that presumably followed contact with movement culture is uninformed and ahistorical, and insulting to the memory of the numerous 19th-century workers who took their Protestantism seriously. Halker's treatment of Catholics and Jews, moreover, is profoundly disturbing for its glib generalizations. Where is there engagement with (or even acknowledgement of) the richly textured analysis of Italian immigrants and the meaning of the *domus* as presented by Robert Orsi; of the moving, if idiosyncratic, evocation of pious Jewish immigrants in the *landsman-shafn*, as described by Michael Weisser; of the proud, and intensely insular, Polish National Catholic Church which to this day remains in schism from Rome? Where too is there the recognition of the role of John Cardinal Gibbons in bridging the gap between Irish Catholic workers and the Protestant-influenced Knights of Labor, with the result that many of those workers could avidly embrace *their* religion, *their* unions, and *their* prelates simultaneously? Gibbons does not even appear in the index.

Ultimately Clark D. Halker does not treat his own themes seriously. For a book of only 150 pages of actual text, he proposes quite an ambitious agenda. Indeed, immediately following the rote dismissal of John R. Commons and the Wisconsin School of labour history with the ritually obligatory invocation of E.P. Thompson and Herbert G. Gutman,

serious problems appear. If these song-poems reflected the "conscious politicized tone" of the movement culture, a culture Halker describes as "a life apart" from the broader world of working people, exactly how these song-poems will be the "lens" onto that larger population is unclear. As the author never addresses this issue, it remains a question throughout. Similarly, the very concept of movement culture itself proves problematic in Halker's hands. It "retained an ambiguous relationship with the larger society," the author writes, and even "showed a certain accommodationist character" to the status quo. (14) A few pages later, however, the reader learns that this movement culture, while not autonomous, nonetheless "provided a separate way of life based on the intersection of workplace, community, class, and labour movement; the values of this lifestyle stood sharply at odds with those of the dominant cultural system." (28)

There are two obvious problems with these formulations. Not only is there a contradiction between these two conceptions of movement culture, but the latter, more assertive claim is itself undermined by Halker's sympathetic treatment (128) of a more orthodox Marxist critique of republicanism, producerism, and what Karl Marx called "religious nonsense." Second, nowhere in this book is there a sustained effort in social historical analysis that would provide a context for examining the value of Halker's lens(es) for understanding American working people. His most interesting comments in this regard are buried in a footnote (22-23, note 30); while his one effort to establish historical context (an examination of the social origins of 93 of these song-poets) reveals the rather embarrassing fact that more than one-third of them were not working people at all. Halker's effort to explain this with reference to labour's ability "to maintain a trans-class foothold" is profoundly inadequate in light of the book's announced purposes.

It is hard to avoid the impression that the author consciously sought to funnel the varied experience of these diverse working people into a preordained framework. At least the persistent internal contradictions, the thinness of the actual research, and the analytical narrowness in the book suggest this as a possibility. Protestantism, as H. Richard Niebuhr noted in his 1962 essay, "The Protestant Movement and Democracy in the United States," has been marked by a constant urge for renewal. This sharply distinguishes Protestantism from Catholicism, with its historic belief that it already possess a fixed truth, and this urge provides both the context and the impetus for institutional as well as spiritual revival. Buffeted as mid-19th-century Protestantism was, not only by the challenge of capitalism but by scientific Darwinism, a new biblical criticism, and by what were often seen as enormous waves of immigrant Catholics flooding the nation, numerous tendencies emerged. Some were clearly regressive, as the example of the American Protective Association would suggest. But what was most astounding about late-19th-century Protestantism was its ability to regenerate itself, address contemporary issues, and to retain, or in many cases, win back the allegiance of working people.

"God of justice," read one late-19th-century song, "save the people/From the clash of race and creed,/From the strife of class and faction,/Make our nation free indeed;/Keep her faith in simple manhood/Strong as when her life began,/Till it find its full fruition/In the brotherhood of man!" These sentiments were not penned by a song-poet of the labour press, although in many respects they might have been, but by the mainstream Protestant hymnist, William Pierson Merrill. It is only by understanding the power of this Protestant society to regenerate itself culturally and spiritually that we can evaluate the force of Protestantism in the late 19th century and, not insignificantly, pay our respect to the very real pain these

song-poets experienced as their world underwent a fundamental transition.

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Sarah Lyons Watts, *Order Against Chaos: Business Culture and Labor Ideology in America, 1880-1915* (New York: Greenwood Press 1991).

POOR GRAMSCI, first a victim of Mussolini and now forced to carry the burden of so much recent marxist scholarship. Sarah Lyons Watts attempts to graft Gramsci's concept of cultural hegemony on to the evolution of labour's place in the new American corporate order. She has taken three familiar episodes — the Pullman Strike of 1894, the scientific management movement, and the open shop campaign of the National Association of Manufacturers — and tries to endow them with new meaning through what might be better termed rhetorical rather than linguistic analysis.

Professor Watts' bibliography is thin; there is no evidence, for example, that any manuscript collections were consulted. Thus, her methodology is implicit in the research strategy. It is in the public utterances and in the published writings of managers and experts rather than in their private communications or, more removed still, events on the shop floor or in working-class communities, that evidence of cultural hegemony can be found. This is, then, history written from the top down with a vengeance. The corporate elites were the dictionary keepers and thus the redefinition of the meaning of and place of labour in the corporate age belonged solely to them.

The chapter on the Pullman strike offers little that Lindsey, Buder, and other scholars have not previously supplied. Watts does add her particular veneer such as: "Hegemony, then, involves the ability of elites to organize meaning, in this case around republican norms reinforced by



paternalism and mutuality and backed by coercion." (54) Watts' chosen method excludes the process of proof for this assertion. A more dialectically inclined marxist might seek to demonstrate how Pullman's meanings permeated the culture of the workers, if they in fact did. Similarly Watts seeks to establish Pullman's control of public opinion through an examination of elite journals such as *Harper's*, *Atlantic*, etc. Not surprisingly she finds that most of the writers condemned the strikers and their brand of militant unionism. Thus, Watts writes, that Pullman and his associates had established "in public discourse the primacy of their argument." Perhaps they had, but the argument is unproved, her analysis incomplete.

The author supplies no context for our understanding of management strategy in this strike. How, for example, did the "public discourse" on this strike differ from earlier large confrontations in 1877, 1886, etc. Second, is public discourse limited to elite journals, did it permeate the daily press? Third, are these elite journals a sufficient gauge of public opinion? Watts concludes that the strike marked a successful turn to identifying the interests of the great corporations with those of the population in general but she offers us no measure of public opinion to substantiate her claim. She seems satisfied that elite discourse may be properly equated with public opinion.

Professor Watts' survey of the scientific management movement is admirably succinct and a fine portrayal of the changing objectives of the experts. In this chapter she convincingly stresses the importance of language for the scientific managers, their belief that terminology begets reality. As one of them, Lillian Gilbreath said, in emphasizing the importance of standardized terminology, it is "because the use of a word very soon becomes a habit — its association becomes fixed." It is one thing, however, to show us how the experts attempted to shape the work world and still another to

demonstrate its effect on workers. In her fine recent work, *Making A New Deal: Industrial Workers in Chicago, 1919-1939*, Lizabeth Cohen shows us how the General Electric Hawthorn works in Chicago resisted unionization in the 1930s but that plant was a showcase for scientific management. The claims for scientific management's wider impact on American workplaces needs to be carefully assessed. Its actual effects on American workers will require research strategies that move beyond the analysis of rhetoric.

The author's final chapter focuses on the anti-union activities of the National Association of Manufacturers. She seems to accept the Association's own claims for its influence. Historians previously over estimated the influence of its more moderate rival the National Civic Federation but an inversion may be no more useful. Neither the NCF or NAM represented their business members except in a very limited sense. A business could pay its annual dues and take no further interest in the association. It is important to note that the leaders of the NAM were drawn from middle sized firms rather than major corporations. Nevertheless, one must agree that they waged a far flung and often effective battle against the trade union movement, but once again Watts fails to prove the extent of their influence on the public and among the workers.

The concept of cultural hegemony, as employed in this book, is merely an older style of intellectual history with a Gramscian overlay, but it remains distinctly an idealist view of history. Some linguistic analysts might see the necessity of proceeding to analyze how the new language permeated the discourse of the lower classes. A Thompsonian might insist, in addition, on knowing if the workers invested the terminology with their own meanings. The use of republican ideology by the working class is a case in point.

Finally, this book indirectly raises another major problem. The merits of linguistic (or rhetorical) analysis for Britain

or continental societies may be questioned but its application to the United States raises further difficulties. The impact of elite language on an ever changing work force, composed of diverse sub cultures, using a multitude of languages, imposes a formidable problem that Watts never considers. If Lenin's body will soon find its rest away from the public gaze, may we safely assume that some of the less useful applications of Gramsci will similarly find a last resting place.

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Elizabeth Faue, *Community of Suffering and Struggle: Women, Men, and the Labor Movement in Minneapolis, 1915-1945* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press 1991).

COMMUNITY STUDIES have become a genre in labour history as the social and cultural aspects of workers' lives assume the dominant focus of analysis. Elizabeth Faue's study of the city of Minneapolis in the early 20th century is concerned with the conflict between community bases and workplace bases of support for the labour movement. Crucial shifts in the 1930s and 1940s created divisions and rigidities which continue to haunt and undermine the contemporary labour movement, but which can, she believes, be understood, addressed, and overcome. Faue argues that the synthesis of labour history that scholars seek, like the revival of American unions, can happen only when community and workplace, class and gender analysis are fully integrated.

In identifying the sources of community and workplace support for unionism in Minneapolis and the conflicts that ensued, Faue employs a highly schematic view of gender. Women workers and their ties to family life represent community, while the workplace is central for male workers. Women are embedded in family and community life, but

men are not. Although this polarization was produced and contested in labour politics and social policy, it remains unproblematic and essential to her analysis. Missing here is a perspective on the recurrent issue of contested gender relationships in labour history which is inadequately explored in the introduction.

The focus of *The Community of Suffering and Struggle* is the 1930s when the ideology of labour activism seized (once again) on sexual difference as a vehicle for recruitment and solidarity. Forgetting the lessons and opportunities in organizing women workers whose ties to community support in the city were demonstrated in the 1918-19 telephone strike, the labour movement glorified the manly heroes of the violent truckers' strike in 1934 and created a labour culture of text and iconography that defined the workers as male and used women as symbols of victimization and privation. This analysis is Faue's great achievement. Her dissection of cartoons and reportage lays bare the way that labour culture in the 1930s universalized male experience and built the new unionism on exclusive terms. "How the culture of unionism expressed and constructed solidarity for men and women workers in a decade of unemployment crucially determined who would be organized and who would lead." (71) But we never learn to what extent male workers, such as those who supported the telephone strike in 1919, objected to or supported these portrayals.

Less satisfying is her sketchy analysis of both the 1919 strike and the truckers' strike. Powerful connections between the toll of depression unemployment and privation on masculinity remain insufficiently explicated in the development of the culture of labour heroes and martyrs. Instead Faue's book is really about women's activism in the 1930s (including oral histories primarily with working women) and the failure of the local and national labour movement, especially the ILGWU, to take it seriously. In the light industries of hosiery and garments, Min-

neapolis women performed jobs such as cutting and pressing usually reserved elsewhere for men, and many women activists were female heads of families. Women workers then combined both the workplace and family/community interests that Faue believes should have been the sources of the new unionism. In coalition with Farmer-Labor politics and the unemployed, they represented new directions for the working class, aside from the CIO. The exclusive terms of gender ideology in labour culture and the rise of union bureaucracy prevented this. In costly ways, the CIO and the AFL agreed on woman's place in working-class life.

Women's activism in the 1930s provided opportunities that the labour movement ignored tragically. The unemployed, clerical workers, and relief project (government) workers eager for organization in the late 1930s were neglected by bureaucratic unions fixated on men in the workplace and condemnatory of militant women. These attitudes continued to shape labour's recruitment of war workers in the 1940s and their attempts to attract women to unions only through patriotic and romantic appeals. These workers remain unorganized today. Still, the reasons why the labour movement refused to respond to Minneapolis' female militants seem overly determined: sexism, politics, and circumstance.

Faue does not subject femininity and womanhood to the same rigorous analysis as she does masculinity in labour culture. She does explore the imagery of the militant mother and auxiliary woman, tracing it to the language of consumerist and union label politics in the 1920s, but the denunciation of "NRA babies" as "damned skirts" who needed to be "whipped into shape" by the male leaders of the ILGWU (138) needs decoding. What is also needed is a systematic treatment of how working women viewed men and manly heroes (including divisions and disputes) and (likewise) how working men viewed womanhood, working women, and disorderly females. As Faue

points out, many garment workers were the wives of truckers. Did the militancy of some women relief project workers that included violent attacks on the persons of strikebreakers (possibly inspired by examples of truckers' violence) threaten to dissolve sexual difference in the eyes of working men? Faue's suggestion that some women regarded male experience and manhood as universals that included their own experience remains undeveloped. What is well analyzed here is the gender ideology of labour culture, but what remains hidden is gender as perceived and contested by Minneapolis workers in the workplace and within the family and community.

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Karen Orren, *Belated Feudalism: Labor, the Law, and Liberal Development in the United States* (New York: Cambridge University Press 1991).

ONE OF THE CENTRALLY important fields to emerge in North America over the course of the last fifteen years is the burgeoning and sophisticated study of legal history. With the advent of 'critical legal studies,' moreover, legal history has turned toward radical interpretive paradigms at precisely the moment that historiography as a whole is tending in more conservative directions. This genuinely positive development is often slightly undermined, however, by legal history's capacity to turn inward on narrow matters of case law and avoid confronting large analytic themes that necessarily relate the law, political economy, and culture.

Karen Orren's book suffers from no such limitations. This is a broad study that goes to the conceptual heart of the meaning of political thought in the United States. She uses a study of the changing tone of the law of the workplace to address the political nature of the American

state. In contrast to a wide range of illustrious comment (Louis B. Hartz, Alexis de Tocqueville, and H. Reinhold Niebuhr) that the United States was born modern and liberal, Orren insists that there were quite tangible vestiges of the feudal order embedded in the US constitution and administered by the judiciary. For Orren "the problem of labor" was legally feudalistic until well into the 20th century, the workplace being governed by the law of master and servant, a remnant of a larger ensemble of hierarchies that ordered medieval life, extending into and through the rise of industrial capitalism as a modern world system in the 19th century. Ranging broadly over this feudal experience, its legal administration, and its continuities in England and the United States, Orren presents an exciting commentary on both the particular court decisions of the judicial governance of master and servant and the cultural and political-economic content of such case law: the workplace was a jurisdiction in which workers "were free agents against every citizen in the republic except their employers." (111)

In arguing that there was a fundamental continuity in labour regulation from Tudor England to Gilded Age America, Orren de-emphasizes the traditional focus on state and property that lies at the core of the insistence that the United States was born liberal. Instead, she looks to the governance of labour and, in the process, her analysis forces reconsideration of much recent labour history that rather too easily romanticizes the years stretching from the Revolution into the period of Jacksonian Democracy as ones of relatively egalitarian republicanism. Class relations and the meaning of America look decidedly different when it is understood, as Orren establishes, that "state solicitude for property proceeded upon the still-undisturbed foundation of hierarchy in employment." (24)

Roughly the first half of Orren's text is devoted to making this argument, conceptually and empirically. She then

moves onto the terrain of trade unionism's challenge to this systematic judicial regulation of the workplace. Examining the rhetorical animosity of the first Workingmen's Party leaders, Gilded Age refusals of the legal insistence that labour must work obediently and outsiders eschew intrusion, and the boycott movement that culminated in the famous 1908 Supreme Court decision on the Danbury hatters, Orren shows how the pre-World War I workers' movement persistently, if unsuccessfully, opposed the "belated feudalism" of the reigning legal orthodoxy of master and servant. By the dawn of the Progressive Era, Orren concludes, it was apparent that "the law was unreliable in the deeper sense that its logical structures no longer corresponded to the social practices it claimed to regulate." (159)

Orren then turns to the experience of regulation in the railroads from approximately the 1870s to the 1920s, paying particular attention to the closing chapter of this history, the Interstate Commerce Commission, which ushered in "a new American state." That development removed, finally, the regulation of labour from the immediate day-to-day oversight of Congress, which delegated authority to a number of publicly-administered boards. These turned out to be the very kinds of administrative units that, for all of their failures and their capacity to be 'captured' by powerful hegemonic interests — ideological and corporate — nevertheless institutionalized "interest-group liberalism" and shattered the now fragile bonds of "belated feudalism." The legal stranglehold of archaic notions of masters and men was finally broken.

The contribution of Orren is to consistently reinsert labour into these processes. Unlike Kolko's *Railroads and Regulation* (1965), for instance, her account stresses the importance of working-class struggles over the wage and the meaning of the ordered environment of labour. In doing so, Orren offers a novel

interpretive twist on examinations of class relations in the United States. The initiatives of the labour movement, not an early established capitalism, ushered a truly liberal social order into being. When that liberalism finally addressed labour in the Supreme Court's decision in *N.L.R.B. v. Jones & Laughlin Steel*, upholding the National Labor Relations Act (1935), the residue of centuries of hierarchically-ordered judicial regulation was wiped clean. In Orren's reading of this historical development, labour in the United States has not so much been the sorry victim of liberalism as its ironic champion and architect. From this vantage point, Orren is less interested in asking 'Why has there been no socialism in America?' than she is in exposing the extent to which trade unions and class struggle defeated a feudal economy, settled into a moment of comfortable and understandably congratulatory compromise with Neal Deal Democrats, and then found that the new liberal state presented labour with a confusing and unprecedented array of dilemmas. What has come to be regarded as the historical failure of American workers was, in ironic fact, prefaced by an historic success.

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William. E. Forbath, *Law and the Shaping of the American Labor Movement* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press 1991).

"BRINGING BACK IN" has become a common strategy in recent scholarly analyses of working-class history. Often, this approach has yielded valuable insights which add to or alter earlier historical interpretations. Gender, family, race, ethnicity, religion, ideology, community, etc., are all important aspects of working-class life and experience and, therefore, merit attention. Similarly, the role of institutions, including various state ap-

paratuses and trade unions, has received greater attention recently after a period of partial neglect by social historians who were themselves reacting against the institutionalist biases of their predecessors.

Forbath's recent book (a re-working of an earlier and widely praised article published in the *Harvard Law Review*) is an ambitious attempt not only to "bring law back in" but to make it central to our understanding of the development of the American labour movement during the critical period between 1880 and 1930. Forbath's basic thesis is that the American labour movement's embrace of voluntarism cannot be explained sociologically from the bottom up, but rather was an outcome of its interaction with the courts, legal doctrine and language, and legal violence. According to Forbath, the book aims to offer "a more empirically grounded case for the constitutive power of law." (x)

Forbath argues that law critically influenced the labour movement in a variety of ways. Most directly, the law changed labour's strategic calculation about what was possible. A hostile and powerful court struck down as unconstitutional laws enacted in the 1880s and 1890s which aimed to regulate various aspects of the wage contract and working conditions. Of particular significance was the decision of the New York Court of Appeals striking down an 1883 law which prohibited the manufacture of cigars in tenements. Samuel Gompers, a leader of the cigarmakers local at the time, drew the lesson that the possibilities of reform by legislation were seriously limited by the power of the court to pass upon its constitutionality. These experiences tipped the balance of opinion in debates over the direction of the labour movement away from independent, class-based political activity, towards a narrower economism.

A second and more subtle mechanism through which the law exerted influence on the labour movement was by altering the ideology of its leaders. Having been cast by the courts and legal doctrine in

semi-outlawry, the leaders of the labour movement struggled both to assert their legitimacy and to cast the courts own decisions as inconsistent with the core liberal ideas of freedom of contract and equality of rights. Thus, in the very process of struggling to free themselves from the tyranny of the judicial repression, the American Federation of Labor not only affirmed liberty of contract, but also accepted the naturalness of the capitalist marketplace, the inevitability of marketplace conflict, and the legitimacy of the competitive freedom enjoyed by corporations. (131)

In support of these arguments, Forbath provides the most comprehensive account to date of the role of American courts in striking down Gilded Age legislation and in attacking trade union activity through "government by injunction." In addition, he provides a particularly sobering account of the "ground-level" events which followed in the wake of judicial decisions. The breadth of the orders issued by the courts usurped from local elected officials their power, thereby overcoming whatever influence labour may have been able to exert on them. Moreover, the use of violence against strikers on behalf of employers by police, troops, and private guards was on a scale which far exceeded that in England or Canada. Full statistics are not available but for the three years for which there are accurate figures (between 1902 and 1904) 198 people were killed and 1,966 injured. According to Forbath, the court's decisions lent a "thin but hard coat of legality" (117) to much of this violence.

Forbath has done an admirable job of depicting the depth and extent of law's violence, in word and deed, against the American labour movement. His argument about its "shaping" of the labour movement is convincing insofar as it emphasizes the need to take seriously institutional analysis. But, his stronger thesis that the voluntarist trajectory of the American labour movement can be ex-

plained by its legal environment raises as many questions as it answers.

In that regard, we might begin by asking why it was that American employers made such heavy use of the courts when they became embroiled in conflict with trade unions. Certainly it was not because American courts were uniquely hostile toward collective action by workers. In England, as early as 1868 an equity judge had declared the court's power to issue injunctions in labour disputes "one of the most beneficial jurisdictions that this Court has ever exercised." Further, the courts were prepared to interpret broadly the meaning of property to support their jurisdiction. And, although English courts did not have the power to strike down as unconstitutional legislation passed to restrict their common law power to come to the aid of employers resisting trade unions, they did have the ability to narrowly construe it. The history of conflict between parliament and court during the 19th century over this issue clearly is indicative of the willingness of the courts to use their interpretive authority to preserve their own power and that of employers. It might be noted as well that courts in Ontario were also prepared to issue injunctions and criminalize secondary boycotts even in the face of statutory immunities. When comparing these jurisdictions with the United States, what is striking is not the difference in legal doctrine and judicial attitude, but the frequency of resort to law. American employers made far more frequent use of the coercive power of the law in the context of industrial conflict than did their English and Canadian counterparts. Also, the level of state and employer violence against workers was far higher. Do institutional differences provide a satisfactory explanation for this or, perhaps, do we need to also emphasize the level of political-economic analysis to understand why class conflict in the United States was so intense and vicious during this period? For example, is it significant that England was dominated by

the first industrial revolution while the United States entered the second industrial revolution much earlier and without having first established a system of industrial relations in which old craft unions were firmly established?

This raises another question. Was, as Forbath's argument suggests, the American Federation of Labor exceptional in opting for voluntarism at the end of the decade? Again, the comparison with England is informative. By the end of the 1880s at the latest, older style British Paineite radicalism had ceased to be a powerful source of working-class opposition to capitalism. Rather, the mainstream of the British labour movement opted decisively for a policy of accommodation which accepted the inevitability, if not the fundamental legitimacy, of capitalist social relations and sought to make marginal improvements for its predominantly skilled membership. Moreover, trade unions became firmly committed to an ideology and practice of anti-statist voluntarism in industrial relations. This position proved remarkably durable, surviving the growth of the "New Unionism" after 1889 and the development of an independent political capacity which could have led to direct state interference in industrial relations. One does not have to adopt a strict Leninist analysis to suggest that trade unions under capitalism are likely to function, at least some of the time, as labour market organizations committed to bargaining with employers for better terms and conditions for their members. Courts did not have to strenuously push trade unions to embrace voluntarism. The burden of Forbath's argument then is to explain why the leadership of the American Federation of Labor abandoned the broader political and social objectives pursued by their English and European counterparts in addition to voluntarism in collective bargaining.

Great weight is placed by Forbath on the greater difficulty faced by the American labour movement in achieving its goal of voluntarism. The British *Trade*

*Disputes Act* of 1906 gave English workers a degree of immunity from judicial interference which American workers were unable to obtain until the *Norris-La-Guardia Act* of 1932. Here, the ability of the American courts to strike down legislation clearly played an important role. But was this confrontation the critical influence which caused the majority of American trade union leaders to reject a more labourist or socialist ideology and political practice? Perhaps, but the militancy exhibited in the struggle to overcome the legal impediments faced by the labour movement, including defiance of the law (ch. 5), suggests that law itself may not have had the influence Forbath suggests. An alternative account might begin by recognizing that in all developed capitalist countries there are likely to be powerful forces, material and ideological, arrayed against any working-class movement which threatens the economic order. Law plays a part, indeed, often an important part, in defending and reproducing that order. It is to be taken seriously, but it must be more firmly located in the "deeper" explanations Forbath rejects.

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John V. Orth, *Combination and Conspiracy [:] A Legal History of Trade Unionism 1821-1906* (Oxford: Clarendon 1991).

THE GULF BETWEEN LEGAL and social histories of labour looms large, and since it is rarely bridged, the tendency in historical writing has been to treat the legal and social fields as mutually impenetrable. This not only results in a series of unconnected narratives, each dealing with different layers of a social formation, it also limits our ability to theorize the process of social change. But it need not be so. Pathbreaking work on the use and role of criminal law in 18th-century England, such as E.P.

Thompson's *Whigs and Hunters: The Origins of the Black Act* (New York 1975) and the collection of essays in D. Hay's *et al.*, *Albion's Fatal Tree: Crime and Society in Eighteenth Century England* (New York 1975), have demonstrated how rich the cross-fertilization of legal history and social history is for understanding the strategies employed both to contain social conflict and to create a relatively stable, albeit contested, moral economy.

John Orth's legal history of trade unionism in England between 1721 and 1906 does not attempt to bridge this gap. In *Combination and Conspiracy* he has set himself a narrower, though necessary, task — to unearth the history of pre-modern labour law. By providing a detailed, nuanced and sophisticated reading of both the statutory and common law responses to workers' organizations and collective action, Orth has helped to lay the foundations of a rich legal history of English labour. Now that this preliminary work of legal excavation and construction has been completed, it will be possible for historians to begin to illuminate the interconnections and dissonances between the workers' felt needs and the law's response to their collective aspirations.

From the perspective of legal history, Orth's slim book is an important contribution to our understanding of labour law. As he makes clear in his Preface, the legal history of labour has received little attention, in part because law played a relatively minor role in shaping labour relations in England. However, as he demonstrates throughout the ten chapters of his book, the law's presence was stronger in the 18th and 19th centuries than in the 20th century, when what Kahn Freund termed "collective laissez-faire" prevailed as the technique for "regulating" labour relations. But, as Orth carefully shows, "[t]he abstentionism that came to characterize law's relation to labour was suggested by earlier experience and was in a framework inherited from the past." (viii)

To a social historian, Orth's treatment of the legal history of trade unionism may seem a dry-as-dust account of the procedural intricacies of the early 18th century combination laws and the doctrinal machinations of the common law courts which sought to repress the early workers' organizations. There is little of the colour and flux of social conflict of the period in Orth's narrative; for example, discussion of early worker protests, which in time would be called strikes, is limited to a brief mention as the events which triggered legal responses, whether by the enactment of a statute on common law litigation. But what this book omits in terms of social history is more than made up for by its keen analysis of the relationship between substance and procedure in the early combination statutes, the interplay of parliament and the courts in devising a legal technique to regulate labour relations, and the emergence of new common law doctrines suitable for capitalist productive relations.

Legal issues that may seem technical from a modern perspective, and are consequently neglected, were of great importance to the historical actors. In his discussion of the series of combination acts enacted from 1721 to 1796 which made workers' organizations in specific trades statutory crimes, Orth shows that the instinctual response of England's elite to insubordinate workmen was repression. But, as he is careful to illustrate, the elite's concern for procedure almost predominated over its interest in the result; "it monopolized legislative time and clothed the product in legitimacy." (24) Moreover, workmen, too, believed in the importance of the proper form and engaged their betters in legalistic controversy. But, as Orth acknowledges, while labour gained much from due process and even-handedness in forms and rules, it suffered from an ideology of individualism informed by economic hostility. In Britain (as in Canada), most analyses of labour law have tended to



confine themselves to these themes, indicating the presence of inequalities that result from political class conflict and/or ideological domination. Consequently, British critics have produced a socio-political history of labour law which says little about legal discourse. Orth's monograph goes a long way to remedying this, for he shows how "concealed in seemingly technical rules of contract and tort are policy choices of equal significance to labour." (x)

The period examined in this book is framed by two statutes, the first combination act, enacted in 1721 in response to the tailors' strike of the same year, and the *Trade Disputes Act* of 1906, which finally immunized trade unions and the collective actions of their members from the common law. The eight substantive chapters, which are bracketed by a short introduction and even briefer conclusion, are arranged chronologically, divided either by important statutory enactments or doctrinal categories of the common law. Throughout this period the legal response to workers' organizations and their activities underwent a profound transition, one which Orth carefully details. The main contours of this transformation of legal techniques and concepts can be summarized as follows: a revolutionary reconceptualization of property; the transformation of labour from status to contract, and the emergence of the contract of employment as the cornerstone of labour law; a shift from criminal to civil law and, ultimately, to a position of legal abstention in the ruling elite's legal response to trade unions, strikes, and picketing; the increasing divergence in the response of parliament and the courts to labour relations; and, the gradual movement away from the statutory regulation of wages, hours of work, and apprenticeship, through arbitration and individual negotiation to collective bargaining as the predominant means for establishing the terms and conditions of employment. Throughout his narrative of this legal transformation, Orth

demonstrates the vitality and generative force of the common law as developed by judges, who latched on to older notions, such as conspiracy and restraint of trade, which initially had nothing to do with workers' combinations to repress and confine workers resistance to their masters. Simultaneously, he shows how workers' concern with due process and procedural protections stopped short of a thorough embrace of the rule of law with its emphasis on legal equality in the treatment of workmen and their masters, since, as they were well aware, it obscured the profound material inequality which characterized social relations.

Woven throughout the text are the shifting political allegiances of the labour movement. In response to their repression by legal elites, workers and their associations embraced a strategy of exemption from the force of the common law and used their increasing political force to bend parliament in that direction. Sometimes the petitions of the skilled workers lent themselves to the laissez-faire aspirations of the parliamentary Benthamites, as the combination acts of 1824 demonstrate. Other times, as in the case of the 1859 *Molestation of Workmen Act*, the demands of the National Association of United Trades for statutory immunity from aspects of the common law were acted upon by the Tories, who, deriving their support from the landed gentry, were not terribly concerned about isolated disruptions in manufacturing enterprises.

Despite these changing political loyalties, what is clear is that the extension of the franchise made parliament increasingly responsive to the demands of workmen for immunities from the common law. Initially parliamentarians and judges acted in concert; however, as skilled workers gained political clout the strategy of statutory exemption was successfully employed, culminating in the 1871 *Trade Union Act* which immunized trade unions and their economic weapons from the criminal law and the 1906 *Trade Disputes Act* which exempted them from

the civil law. Labour finally secured the right to be left alone in the use of its economic warfare. This legal settlement was maintained, despite occasional judicial incursion, until Thatcher began to whittle away at labour's immunities, termed privileges by Hayek, in 1979.

Orth has made a concerted effort to explain legal terms and provide a sufficiently detailed description of the legal system so that readers unfamiliar with the peculiarities of legal language and referents will not be lost. While he is generally successful in this, the complex interaction of successive statutes and judicial decisions can, on occasion, be overwhelming. The provision of a brief map of the major legal contours in the introduction would have oriented the reader through this terrain. As is the tendency with much of legal history, this book is unsullied by broader theoretical debates. Orth's theoretical commitments are tacit, rather than explicit. For some readers this may be seen as a major shortcoming, for others, a refreshing departure from stultifying abstract debate. Historiographical disputes are only occasionally referred to. The focus is almost exclusively on legal texts — statutes and judicial decisions — their contested meanings and historical significance. By taking law seriously and subjecting it to rigorous examination, *Conspiracy and Combination* enriches our understanding of how English labour came "to see the common law as inherently hostile to its organizational aspirations and to use its parliamentary power to avoid as much as possible the law and the legal profession." (155) Why Canadian labour has adopted a different approach to the law and the legal profession has yet to be explored, and we can only hope that it receives the same careful attention that Orth has given to English labour.

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Joseph White, *Tom Mann* (Manchester: Manchester University Press 1991).

ON THE DUST JACKET of Joseph White's book there appears a photograph of a distinguished looking, late middle-aged man, attired in a conservatively-cut three-piece suit, topped by a gray bowler hat. The portrait suggests respectability, even gentility, the look of an Edwardian who had succeeded in the professions, or business, or the clergy. Yet the figure portrayed, Tom Mann, became a hero of mythic proportions to British communists, and, for a time, drew the attention of some of England's most distinguished left-wing historians. The Communist Party of Great Britain sponsored a full-scale biography of Mann. Although Dona Torr acted as the principal author, Christopher Hill actually wrote the introductory historical chapters on the "rights of free-born Englishmen." And then when Torr died prematurely, the Party approached E.P. Thompson to complete the biography. That version of Tom Mann's life was never completed because Thompson broke with the party and hence the project, and no one else elected to pick up the pieces of a life for which sources were sparse and far from verifiable.

Now, nearly a half century after Torr's biography ended in midstream, Joe White has written a complete life of Mann in brief compass. In 222 pages of text and with a minimum of notes, White narrates in plain language the long and tumultuous life of a man who was at the centre of British and international labour and socialist movements from the 1880s through the 1930s. We follow Mann's journey from the "new model" unionism of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers through the "new unionism" of the dock and transport workers into the stormy and often sectarian strife of the Social Democratic Federation, Socialist League, and Independent Labour Party, then into syndicalism, and ultimately to a destination in the Communist Party. Along the way, Mann participated in some of the

most militant and conflictual labour wars on two continents: the great 1889 London dockers' strike; the 1909 Broken Hill miners' strike in Australia; the 1911 Liverpool transport workers' strike, to name only a few. He helped build an international federation of maritime workers; organized for labour and socialism in New Zealand and Australia; spent two long sojourns agitating among South African mine workers; twice visited the United States for extended lecture trips; and made several visits to the Soviet Union and China on official party business. All in all, quite a life for a respectable-looking Englishman who, according to White, as a young union official came close to deserting the labour movement for a life devoted to the Anglican Church.

How far and how well does White succeed in helping us to understand the trajectory of Mann's life and public career? How effectively does he reconcile the outward and even inward respectability (Mann's reputation for boozing and womanizing notwithstanding) of much of Mann's life with the labour leader's reputation as a militant radical and the "first man" of British communism? Clearly, White succeeds better at describing the public activities of Mann and the shifts in his political and union policies than in explicating the inner sources of Mann's public life as a labour radical. For that we can't really blame the author who had no choice but to build his case from a paucity of hard evidence. Mann's own *Memoirs*, on which White relies heavily, seldom plumb the depths of their author's psyche or personality. Dona Torr's biography, Hill's historical prologue notwithstanding, falls too much into the genre of Communist hagiography to believe on many disputed aspects of its subject's life. And there is simply not enough of Mann's correspondence or other unpublished materials to resolve all the unanswered questions about his personal and public life. White, in fact, has used well whatever unpublished and pub-

lished materials exist to narrate as clear a life as we are likely to get.

And what we get is the life of a radical labour leader who lacked a coherent ideology or consistent practices. In words that White lifted from newspaper obituaries, readers discover an individual who "ended as he began — as a simple agitator, a Socialist revolutionary, and a rebel against existing society." (vii) Or in Mann's own words, "I have been what many persons like to term 'An Agitator,' and I am ... AN AGITATOR, AND INTEND TO REMAIN ONE." (98) We get a man who moved in both the SDF and the ILP, while remaining friendly with leaders of the new Labour Party; we get a trade unionist equally at home at different times in "new model" craft unions, "new, new" industrial and general unions, and also hospitable to the concept of the "one big union." We get a communist who was not a "true believer" in Bolshevism, Lenin, or Stalin, yet remained publicly loyal to the party of Stalin.

From all this inconsistency, only two threads emerge clearly. Throughout his entire public life, Mann privileged the union movement over the political party, direct action at the point of production over parliamentary manoeuvres. As White stresses repeatedly, Mann, especially after his experiences in Australasia from 1901 to 1909, remained at core a syndicalist, not a socialist and certainly not a communist. And, as White also emphasizes, it was a syndicalism not indebted to Georges Sorel and others for theory, but a belief that "can perhaps be seen as the expression of a spontaneous theory of the labour movement from below ... perhaps best approached as spontaneous anti-Kautsky — or Lenin — or the Webbs." (166) Second, from the days of his fame as leader of the London dockers' strike of 1889 until his death 52 years later, Mann perceived science and rationalization as the preferred prescriptions for society's ills. For him, workers' control meant the scientific, rational organization of industry, or Taylorism in

the workers' interest not private profit. In that respect, Mann was much a part of the world of late Victorian and Edwardian England, the universe of the Webbs, their Fabian colleagues, and all the new social scientists and social reformers who believed that secular intelligence, true science, and rational management could be used to build a perfect society. In its own way, White's life of Mann explains why the forward march of labour of Great Britain was halted well before Margaret Thatcher took power. For Mann, like all too many other successful agitators and labour organizers of his generation, "was all but totally ill-equipped to descend into the maelstrom of factional struggle..." and there to hammer out a unified vision and common praxis for radical workers and revolutionaries.

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John Bendix, *Importing Foreign Workers. A Comparison of German and American Policy* (New York: Lang 1990).

BENDIX STATES at the beginning of his comparison that trends in modern political systems, particularly "the extension of rights to citizens ... [and] the inclusion of ever widening circles of citizens" exclude all non-citizens, for example, all of the foreign workers who have not or cannot apply for naturalization. He rejects simplistic notions of pluralist societies, interest group representation, and dual labour markets for native-born and foreign workers. Rather he defines his framework as "neo-pluralist" (Lindblom): "within capitalist economic systems business has a 'privileged position'" and workers come into highly differentiated sectoral labour markets. Within this framework the author turns to the importation of "Gastarbeiter" into West Germany from the mid-1950s to the early 1970s (ch. 1-4) and to Mexican "braceros" in the US, from the 1940s to

the early 1960s (ch. 4-8). Thus he deals with the period of war and post-war prosperity to the oil shock of 1973. The concluding chapter is devoted to a comparison of the economics, politics, and governing of imported labour. Several appendices, containing chronologies of the developments in the two countries and statistics of the number of workers involved, conclude the volume.

Bendix hypothesizes that the situation of foreign workers could turn out better than their non-citizen status implies in view of the shift from legal status to "one's contributions to the society." However, the migrants can neither speak for themselves nor does any citizen speak for them. "It is left to those who are legally and politically responsible for the promotion of the welfare of citizens, the administrators, to deal with the non-citizens." (3-4) This situation is analyzed with a focus on the "most important national-level agencies and private interests in formulating foreign workers policies." (5)

In his four chapters on the West German experience, Bendix analyzes governmental policies without ever viewing them uncritically. Both employers and unions were able to influence decisions but not to determine them. The size of the recruitment programs and large-scale legal entry of migrants outside of the formal recruitment procedures led to a situation where government and all interest groups involved lost control over the process. The envisioned short-term stays of "guest workers" became ever longer. Rotation of the foreign labour force could not be enforced administratively because the governments of the sending countries balked and because the German side had to avoid ugly reminiscences of the treatment of foreign workers in the time of the Kaiserreich and the Third Reich. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, the new social-democratic government paid more attention to humanitarian considerations.

Bendix points to the problem of union attitudes to the foreign workers and, in

turn, migrant workers' attitudes to unions. After a period of hostility or disinterest, the brief 1966-67 recession led to a rapid increase of membership of foreigners in German unions and to joint strikes and struggles for better wages. When political authorities finally realized that a policy concerning the number and length of stay of foreign workers in West Germany had to be formulated, the oil shock intervened. The resulting ban on recruitment, however, took effect before the changed economic situation was felt on the labour market. Its rationale, Bendix justly reminds his readers, was a militant, widely noticed wildcat strike of Turkish workers demanding more responsiveness to their particular needs. The idea of "stemming the tide" of workers' demands and a large foreign presence won out over "integration." This is an aspect that in subsequent years has been overlooked in public debates as well as in research.

The Bracero Program is described with similar detail in chapters 5-8 and the conflicts between interest groups of growers and state agencies are analyzed. The role of the unions in formulating policy is definitely smaller than in West Germany, partly because of the unions' disinterest. Compared to the German case, the Bracero Program remained small, bringing at its high point in the mid-1950s less than 450,000 workers into the US, while in West Germany the number of guestworkers increased from about 100,000 in 1956 to more than 2.5 million in 1973.

The concluding chapter compares US and West German developments. In both cases imported labour replaced native labour rather than displacing it. German employers hired workers for longer periods of time and government quickly lost control over the length of the stay, while in the US the temporary character of migration continued to be enforced. Growers, however, succeeded in hiring "specials" for year-round employment. In West Germany imported labour was paid

union wages, if at the lower levels of the wage-scale. In US agriculture wages were held down by the presence of unorganized foreign workers, as evidenced by the frozen wages in Imperial Valley agriculture and a sudden rise of wages after the termination of labour importation. Only then did growers have to offer wages acceptable to citizen workers. However, the shortage of agricultural labour cannot be explained, as Bendix argues, simply from wage levels but also by lack of possibilities to bring citizen reserves, women, children, and old people into the migrant labour market.

This study remains focused on decision making, setting of policies (or absence of this), and interest group interaction with governmental departments and agencies. As such it is informative and well-argued. The migrant workers themselves receive attention only through their official organizations, if any. Ethnic group organizations, for example, non-citizen organization — usually not influential on the governmental level — are not part of the analysis. But then, Bendix explicitly aimed at a comparison of policy. His citizen-/non-citizen dichotomy so clearly stated at the beginning, achieves less visibility in the course of the comparison. Here, a different level of comparison, migrant workers with immigrant workers, would have made differences or similarities more clear. But a two-nation comparison like this one is a valuable achievement in itself, given the dearth of such studies.

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Josiah McC. Heyman, *Life and Labor on the Border: Working People of North-eastern Sonora, Mexico, 1886-1986* (Tucson: The University of Arizona Press 1991).

FROM STUDIES OF MINES and workshops in 18th- and 19th-century

Europe to those of Ford's early factories in America, a common theme in labour historiography has been the struggle to transform pre-industrial populations into reliable and disciplined industrial workers and consumers. Josiah McC. Heyman's unique contribution to this growing literature comes from his ability to weave together diverse approaches to the study of this phenomenon — usually considered to fall within specialized academic sub-disciplines — into a coherent whole. While Heyman's interest in class formation is informed by the work of Herbert Gutman, Eric Wolf, and June Nash, his close attention to kinship, key junctures, life histories, family life cycle, and gender is more akin to the work of Larissa Lomnitz, Tamara Hareven, Joan Scott, and Louise Tilly. Thus, readers of *Life and Labor on the Border* are rewarded with a detailed study of the formation of a distinctive working class on the Sonora-Arizona border as well as a discussion of these findings within a broad, comparative perspective.

At the heart of Heyman's work is a detailed ethnography of six Mexican grand families, the kind of group formed by a couple, their children, and their grandchildren. Information collected on these core families included detailed residential and work histories, basic data on births, marriages, and deaths, oral life-histories, household incomes and budgets, and details about kindred. Heyman then gives analytical shape to these "ethnographic details" by relating them to "key junctures" (personal and economic events) in the lives of individuals, families, and the region. Using this approach he divides working-class formation into three periods: 1) the formative period in the mines (1886-1949), 2) a period of transformation at the border (1929-1968), and 3) the maquiladora period (1967-1986). While Heyman's loyalty to the details of working people's lives serves him well in the body of the book, he begins by taking on an unidentified, and easily battered, strawman —

those social scientists who consider working people as mere carriers of paid labour power who view class, if at all, as neat descriptive categories ( 2, 3, 52, 201). Despite the fact that his work has been shaped by many equally at home in history and anthropology, he goes on to offer anthropology as a corrective to this practice.

Once into the substantive chapters of the book, Heyman uses his ethnographic material to great advantage to study the formation of the contemporary border working class. In the formative period associated with mining, for example, close attention to his informants allows him to present a much more nuanced, and, I believe, accurate, role of the company store in workers' lives. Long the *bete noire* of Mexican labour historians, the dreaded company store (*tienda de raya*) has recently been charged with imposing a "bastardized version of debt peonage" on northern Mexican workers (Ramon Eduardo Ruiz, *The People of Sonora and Yankee Capitalists* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press 1988, 76). By contrast, for Heyman, the creation of consumers — purchasers of material culture — is as important in working-class formation as the inculcation of new labouring habits. He sees company stores as important sources of American material culture obligating workers to continue labouring, not through the medium of debt, but to keep the goods rolling in. As one miner's wife in El Tigre put it: "The company store had everything; there was clothing, all the food that was needed — American, pure American." (72)

Such attention to the fact that class is experienced in gendered terms is normal for Heyman. During the mining period, for example, he finds that widows utilized the tools of manufactured material culture, specifically imported kitchen tools, appliances, and sewing machines, to survive; women then made residential choices based on ease of access to this purchased material culture. Later, during the shift to the border between 1929 and 1967, some wives of cross-border

migrants had the opportunity to guide investments into small businesses they controlled; at the border, the experience of mining-town widows became generalized. Finally, in the contemporary period, women work in the maquiladoras as part of a household economy, alternating between wage labour and unpaid work according to household needs. Focusing on gender allows the author to posit interesting conclusions concerning the changing relative power of husbands over wives and parents over their children. It also enables him to show how the maquiladora factory system operates to make family skills acquired by men "relevant" but those acquired by women "irrelevant." Heyman also addresses the larger question of the social construction of gender. He convincingly shows how new consumer goods led to a fundamental redefinition of what it meant to be a woman and a man.

Central to Heyman's argument is that the historical process he outlines had led to a unique way of life along Mexico's border with the United States, indeed, to the creation of a distinctive border culture. (108) This may be true. The argument would have been more convincingly demonstrated, however, if he had contrasted border "waged life," as he calls it, with Mexican urban culture located a little farther from the international boundary. In other words, in exactly what ways is border culture distinctive? Heyman also maintains that the border working class had its origin in mine work, relocated at the border, and then became involved in maquiladora production. Yet, other than noting that the children of miners ended up in the maquiladoras and that patterns of work and consumption continued, he is unclear as to how members of the working class retained, reshaped, or rejected previous cultural patterns and beliefs. Indeed, other than a few references to baseball and a tantalizing glimpse at a celebration of the saint's day of the miners (76), he pays little sustained attention to rituals,

celebrations, leisure activities, in short, to the culture of class.

This is merely to say, however, that Heyman's interests lie elsewhere — in the family and in how kin and family roles interact with capital to shape individual and family choices. Because of his ability to blend the details of individual lives with larger questions informed by many disciplines, his work will be of interest to family historians, labour historians, border specialists, Mexicanists, and others. The predominance of individual life histories makes this a good choice for the classroom as well.

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Bradley K. Googins, *Work Family Conflicts: Private Lives — Public Responses* (Westport, CT: Auburn House 1991).

IT HAS BECOME COMMONPLACE to observe that both work and the family have changed dramatically in the past forty years. The 1950s world of "Ozzie and Harriet" and "Leave It To Beaver" is an historical curiosity largely foreign to the children of baby boomers. By the end of that decade, almost three-quarters of American households consisted of families where the father was the breadwinner and the mother a full-time homemaker caring for children. Today, little more than 10 per cent of all households fit this 'traditional' mould. Married or unmarried families exhibiting a myriad of arrangements now abound — dual earner families, single parent families, 'blended families,' intergenerational families. Family dependence on the income of the male breadwinner is no longer the predominant pattern. It takes two adults to earn the equivalent of what one adult earned a generation ago. During the past twenty years, women, especially mothers with young children, have entered the paid-labour force in record numbers. The economic and social chan-

ges which have made dual income families a necessity and placed enormous pressures on single parent households signal a permanent departure from the experience of families during the prosperous post-war decades.

In light of these changes, concerns have been raised about the health of American families. A steady rise in the divorce rate, growing numbers of 'latchkey' children, the great prominence of school 'dropouts' and teenage suicide are believed by many to be indicative of a general malaise. The problems faced by American families have increasingly been linked to demands of the workplace. How have the needs of work and family been met in a labour force which comprises such a large proportion of women and men with family responsibilities? Feminist scholarship has long argued that women, particularly working-class women, have had to shoulder both work and family pressures for generations. The issue of the 'double day,' however, now confronts women, and growing numbers of men, of all social classes.

How it does this is the subject of Bradley Googins' sobering sociological study, *Work Family Conflicts*. Googins departs from an entrenched social science tradition which has analyzed work and family as separate spheres. He explores their interrelationships and the conflicts which challenge the family, the workplace, and American society. Central to his concern is the growing inability of Americans to achieve a balance between work and family demands. Not only are the majority of adult family members in the paid labour force but the workplace has also demanded more time from its employees. Googins cites various surveys to show that Americans are working longer and more varied hours than in previous decades. Family members simply have less time, energy, and resilience to provide the type of support expected in the past. Their days are spent scrambling to put together adequate arrangements for the care of children or dependent aging

parents. After basic household needs such as cooking, cleaning, and laundry are met, few hours remain for leisure. The emotional involvement necessary to sustain partners often requires more energy than adults have. The result is a high level of stress and conflict within the family.

This situation has been exacerbated by the response of the workplace. Googins takes corporate America to task for failing to acknowledge or deal with these conflicts. Instead, most corporations "have continued to adhere to the myth of 'separate worlds' which have allowed them to maintain firm boundaries that seem to protect the primacy of productivity." (11) Meanwhile, family demands and pressures continue to enter the workplace. Large numbers of parents have little choice but to manage their home and childcare obligations from work. Supervisors are thus faced with setting and interpreting company procedures for family matters on an ad hoc basis in the absence of comprehensive corporate policy. The result is mounting absenteeism, decreased productivity, and a decline in the quality of work performed.

Above all, Googins faults the state for this dilemma. Despite the major socioeconomic changes of the past four decades, American governments are caught in a time warp. A deeply-held belief in the sanctity of the family — still viewed as the patriarchal nuclear family — justifies the state's refusal to intervene except in a very limited way. Any attempt to push for a more active state role in work and family issues gets mired in partisan political, religious, and ideological debate: "The overwhelming ideology of laissez-faire capitalism and the preeminent rights of the individual overshadow a common good to the extent that adopting a family policy cuts against the grain and represents a form of ideological heresy." (288) Googins observes that in comparison with the family legislation and programmes of other advanced industrialized countries, the United States fares the worst. There is no federal



statutory protection or financial support for maternity or paternity leave. Federal government family allowance payments, disability benefits, pre-school and after-school programmes, and health care are either minimal or non-existent. The protections offered by state and local governments are only marginally better.

Googins elaborates his analysis by examining specific features of the work/family predicament. Unlike many sociology studies, his account is historically informed. Drawing primarily on Steven Mintz's and Susan Kellogg's *Domestic Revolutions: A Social History of American Family Life*, he provides a survey of the changing relationships between work and family from the colonial period to the present. The survey underscores the struggles between the two for the loyalty and attention of Americans since the beginning of capitalism. It also dispels some pervasive misconceptions. As Googins observes, the predominant family of the 1950s was not 'traditional' but an historical anomaly. The employment, marriage, divorce, and fertility rates and patterns of the baby boom generation reflect a continuation of historical trends which can be traced to the turn of the century. That continuum was only broken temporarily by the parents of baby boomers.

In a chapter which discusses a major study of two corporate workforces, he shows that the conflict and stress involved in balancing the demands of job and family are very real and pervasive. Another chapter details the ways workers have attempted to cope with family obligations. It reaffirms what Meg Luxton, Ann Oakley, and Joseph Pleck, among others, have extensively documented. Women continue to assume the bulk of household chores and family nurturing, although men are beginning to take a more active role. The unequal division of family responsibilities means that women essentially subsidize their partner's careers at the expense of their own advancement in the workplace.

Googins, however, observes certain class differences in the way family obligations are allocated. Contrary to received wisdom, he suggests that working-class families — where wives generally contribute a substantial part of the household earnings — are more egalitarian than upper middle-class families in which a wife's earnings are often significantly less than her husband's. Moreover, working-class families have few economic alternatives other than having members contribute, although gender divisions are not completely eliminated.

Chapters on child care and elder care underline the irony of a situation where services designed to alleviate work/family conflict can actually generate more tension. These services are often expensive and vary widely in quality. Suppliers also do not necessarily embrace the same philosophy of care as users. In the absence of an adequate system of care, most families have to make their own informal arrangements. Baby boomers in particular, who tend to have children comparatively late in life, increasingly find themselves looking after both young children and aging parents. Citing statistics on project needs for care, Googins warns that the situation will only get more difficult.

Responsibility for the resistance to change is not only laid at the doorstep of the private sector and the state. Sections of the book which consider societal responses to work/family conflicts contend that older, but still widely-held, perceptions stand in the way of any effective solution. A strong attachment to the values of independence and self-reliance results in families embracing individual solutions rather than a more appropriate collective response. An inability to cope is regarded as a personal failing rather than a societal matter. Entrenched gendered identities and values also impede a more equitable resolution of family and work obligations. Rumours of the death of such attitudes as 'a woman's place is in the home' are still premature.

Men continue to have difficulty rejecting stereotypes when the predominant culture does not widely embrace or condone such change.

*Work Family Conflicts* concludes with a prescription of general remedies for the present situation. It calls for a multifaceted approach which recognizes the necessity of both ideological and structural change. Corporations and government are urged to take an active part in promoting greater gender equality, encouraging men to assume more 'ownership' of family responsibilities and support for women in the paid workplace. Conflicts will be reduced through company innovations such as flexible scheduling, job sharing, parental leave, and the provision of child care, along with other measures. Federal, state, and local governments will replace the current piecemeal social support provisions with a more comprehensive programme. Googins warns, however, that state involvement must still conform to the 'American Way': "[t]he role of government in the social economic system of the United States was not created and is not intended to provide the final answers, but to work with its citizens and institutions for the commonwealth of the larger society." (283) Ultimately, the way out of the current dilemma is to be achieved through partnerships between family members, between management and labour, and between corporations, the community, and government. Such partnerships will respect "creative entrepreneurship, the spirit of enquiry, and the freedom to strike out on one's own." (302)

Googins' study is a mine of information on the nature of work/family relations. It synthesizes a great deal of research to provide a disturbing picture of the contemporary situation. Unfortunately, it is not the book it could have been. Individual chapters are poorly integrated into the text and there is much unnecessary repetition. The terminology of his analysis owes much to sociology's Par-

sonian legacy. We hear a lot about 'role conflicts,' 'role stress,' and 'functional' or 'dysfunctional' families. While Googins' avoids some of the long-criticized limitations of Parsonian functionalism — such as its failure to understand the relations of power between women and men — he does not fully distance himself from its assumptions. Were families in the 1950s as 'functional' as he leads the reader to believe? Research on the family tension and conflict of that period has resulted in a welcome reevaluation.

Despite its sense of the past, *Work Family Conflicts* still has its moments of historical amnesia. The term 'traditional' is used in a cavalier fashion for perspectives and relations that are relatively new and perhaps less predominant than assumed. To what degree has the 'instrumental' task of wage earning 'traditionally' defined masculine family 'roles'? As new historical research on masculinity reveals, it is hard to determine when and whether such characterizations of men's lives were entirely accurate. Googins' account of gender relations in the family also indicates little of the distinct class and racial differences of the past or the present.

The most disappointing feature of the book is its recommendations for change. Googins might have given more consideration to the detailed proposals developed by women's groups, child and elder care coalitions, unions, and others who have been confronting these issues. Curiously, he does not examine issues such as affirmative action or equal pay legislations which have much to do with an effective response to work/family conflicts. More problematically, he does not really confront the issue of power in American society. He recognizes that corporations will not act until their 'bottom line' is threatened and changes can be seen to enhance productivity. But surely, there are measures corporations can adopt to maintain profits without responding as Googins would like. Shifting production

to low wage areas of the globe has been a favoured strategy. In any case, the majority of Americans, employed by small firms, will be unaffected by a beneficial corporate response. Realizing this, Googins calls for greater state protection but this rings hollow in light of the expanded but still largely circumscribed role he assigns to the state. Homilies on the 'American Way' cannot be substitutes for solutions which seek to change the oppressions of unequal value, including some thoughtful recommendations for change, but also they will be enticed by nostrums that fail to address the reality of the 'American Way.' In the time-honoured tradition of American consumerism, the cover of *Work Family Conflicts* should contain the following caution: *caveat emptor*.

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Norma M. Riccucci, *Women, Minorities and Unions in the Public Sector* (New York: Greenwood Press 1990).

ISSUES OF RACISM and sexism are being taken up by working people in the US and Canada, as women and minority workers struggle against long-standing discrimination in employment. Riccucci's timely study of *Women, Minorities and Unions in the Public Sector* examines the equivocal role being played by American public sector unions in addressing these concerns.

Given the long history of male domination in most North American unions, combined with their racist treatment of non-white workers, unions have in many ways contributed to the sex-segregated and race-segregated labour force, maintaining the privileged position of white male workers. A study which assesses the role of unions — as they have both contributed to inequality and struggled against discrimination — would be very useful at this juncture. Riccucci's

book addresses these concerns, and provides a good deal of documentation on union involvement in equality issues. However, her work has serious weaknesses, both in terms of methodology and analysis, and these weaknesses call into question her assessment of public sector unions.

Riccucci's book is based on the premise that public sector unions are "important, yet overlooked, participants in the decision- and policy-making processes that affect the employment of women and minorities." (2) The key question she asks is whether unions are hindering or facilitating the employment progress of women and minorities in government work forces. Riccucci argues against the popular belief that public sector unions have had very progressive records regarding women and minorities; she marshals her arguments against these "over-generalizations" in order to demonstrate how public sector unions have set up barriers to equality for women and minorities. This focus on union opposition to equality leaves the reader with a negative assessment of public sector unions; in my estimation, this perspective demonstrates the author's lack of understanding about the policies and practices of the labour movement as well as a certain anti-labour bias.

Riccucci examines several related areas of American employment practices, including Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO), Affirmative Action (AA), and Comparable Worth (Pay Equity). These strategies against discrimination can be traced to the 1964 Civil Rights Act (Title VII) as amended by the 1972 Equal Employment Opportunity Act.

In chapter 2, Riccucci analyzes the social composition of public sector unions; based on the membership data for women and minorities, she draws inferences about the popularity of unions among these constituencies. She also highlights the lack of representation by women and minorities in union leadership positions, which makes it less likely that unions will

address the concerns of these groups. This is the only chapter in which Riccucci specifically discusses minority women. In the rest of the book, she explains that "women" includes women of all colours and "minorities" refer to male minorities. This focus is problematic, given recent critiques of universalism in feminist analysis and concerns about how gender and race compound the discrimination faced by women of colour.

In the next chapter, Riccucci studies the legal obligations of unions to protect and promote the employment interests of women and minorities. She points to the pervasiveness of union discrimination against these constituencies and examines the legal arguments and decisions regarding the duty of fair representation and union liability in affirmative action, layoffs and seniority. Riccucci then examines joint labour-management committees and joint apprenticeship programs. She concludes that labour-management cooperation may perpetuate the exclusion of women and minorities from the labour force if one or both parties oppose EEO/AA. She highlights the strong resistance by craft unions to women and minorities in apprenticeship programs, concluding that policy makers should not underestimate the ability of unions to hinder progress in this area. Riccucci also examines the history of institutionalized discrimination against women in non-traditional occupations such as firefighting, police and corrections.

Chapter 6 reviews public sector union involvement in the comparable worth, pay equity debate. Riccucci looks at collective bargaining, job evaluation studies, union organizing, official union policies and resolutions, political activities, and litigation. Her analysis focuses on the motivations of unions which have engaged in this battle against discrimination.

The author relies on case law as the major source of data for her analysis of unions' positions on EEO and AA, arguing that it is too difficult to gain access to union records or to interview union offi-

cials. By adopting this legalistic approach, Riccucci ignores information which might trace the actual practices within unions, the struggles over policies, and the organizing strategies of workers. Her discussion of union "motivation" ignores the assessments of trade unionists themselves, those people who are most directly involved.

Riccucci studies unions in isolation from the broader social and political forces which shape their policies and practices. She draws inferences about the popularity of unions among women and minority workers based solely on membership data. Her voluntaristic analysis assumes that joining unions is a matter of choice for workers; this approach fails to account for the structural obstacles to unionization, the re-structuring of the American labour force, and anti-union legislation in the US.

Riccucci's overview of union involvement in pay equity also reflects her lack of understanding about labour. She criticizes labour organizations for passing resolutions which are not enforceable among affiliated unions or locals. But policy statements are only the first (crucial) step in change; implementation of union policies is a complex process. Riccucci fails to acknowledge union critiques of comparable worth policies and she dismisses alternative labour strategies for addressing the wage gap (for example, increased minimum wage). She demonstrates little knowledge about how workers are organizing within unions for equality (there is only passing reference to groups such as the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists and the Coalition of Labour Union Women).

Riccucci commends unions for their hard work and accomplishments in the fight for pay equity, but she qualifies this support by linking union action on pay equity to specific motivating conditions, such as pressure from the membership or organizing strategies to attract new members. The author's discussion of union motivation is not grounded in the words

and experiences of trade unionists themselves. It would seem that Riccucci is directing her research to academics and policy analysts, rather than to women and minority workers.

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Corey Rosen and Karen M. Young, eds.,  
*Understanding Employee Ownership*  
(Ithaca: ILR Press 1991).

*UNDERSTANDING EMPLOYEE Ownership* provides an introduction to a form of employee ownership which has gained great popularity in the United States during the last ten years: employee stock ownership plans (ESOPs). Since 1981, the assets of ESOPs grew phenomenally, increasing from \$2 billion to \$60 billion. Currently, there are 11,000 ESOPs covering 12 million American workers. While most ESOPs do not give employees majority ownership of the company's stock shares, "three of the ten largest steel companies, two of the five largest ship builders, three of the ten largest hospital management firms, (and) two of the ten largest engineering firms" have majority employee ownership. (197)

An ESOP is essentially a deferred benefit plan, similar to pension and profit-sharing plans. The unique feature of an ESOP is that the plan's assets consist solely of shares of the company's stock, which are purchased for employees by the company. The stock is held in a trust for the employees, who cannot sell the stock until they leave or retire from the company. Some ESOPs buy the stock with borrowed money; they are called leveraged ESOPs. Other companies use their own money to purchase the stock.

The growth of ESOPs owes much to the efforts of the National Center for Employee Ownership (NCEO). Founded ten years ago, NCEO has been the main advocate of ESOPs in the United States. In addition to conducting research studies

on the efficacy of ESOPs, NCEO has provided technical assistance to companies interested in setting up the plans. They have also been instrumental in persuading the US Congress to pass tax laws which encourage the formation of leveraged ESOPs.

*Understanding Employee Ownership* was written by staff members of NCEO. While the book's contributors recognize the ESOPs do not always have a positive impact, they argue that, on the whole, ESOPs benefit both workers and companies. Studies conducted by NCEO indicate that "for the large majority of participants, ESOPs represent a net financial gain, often of a considerable size." (26) At the same time, when ESOPs are combined with participative management, they strongly improve the productivity and profitability of companies.

Based on this positive experience, Corey Rosen, the Executive Director of NCEO, claims that ESOPs have the potential to play a significant role in the US economy. According to Rosen, ESOPs represent a new economic alternative that combines the best of capitalism and socialism. Like Louis Kelso, the originator of the ESOP idea, he sees ESOPs as a "third way" which joins together the economic efficiency inherent in capitalist economies and the goals of social justice which socialism emphasizes. Employee ownership on an expanded scale is the basis for an enlightened people's capitalism.

Employee ownership actually has had little impact on the US economy. The total amount of ESOP assets — \$60 billion — sounds impressive, but amounts to only 2 per cent of total corporate stock assets (and a much smaller percentage of total economic assets). Further, ESOPs have not changed the basic relationship between workers and owners. Given the fact that the stock is held in trust, workers rarely have a direct say over how their "own" stock is used. Even the minority of ESOP plans that provide employees with majority stock ownership don't necessari-

ly lead to expanded worker control of a company's operations.

The rapid expansion of ESOPs does not portend any structural change in the economy, but is the direct result of tax benefits offered to companies that have ESOPs. Companies that borrow money to set up leveraged ESOPs can deduct both the principle and interest on the loan. ESOPs are thus an attractive way to raise capital for the company while simultaneously providing an additional employee benefit. Rosen estimates that the annual cost to US taxpayers for this Reagan-era tax break is \$1.56 billion.

ESOPs have flourished while US workers experienced a significant decline in their standard of living, a fact that the book's contributors seem to be unaware of. By any social or economic indicator, North American workers are worse off today than in 1981. For example, from 1980 to 1989, the average (real) wages and benefits "package" to workers declined from \$14.42 per hour to \$13.01 per hour, a drop of \$1.41 per hour. At the same time, the poverty rate increased from 11.7 per cent (1979) to 12.8 per cent (1989). The gap between the rich and the poor also widened during the 1980s. The incomes of the richest 5 per cent of families grew by 25.7 per cent from 1979 to 1989 while working class and poor families suffered income declines. Economic inequality in 1989 was greater than it was in 1947.

These statistics reflect the political dominance of Reaganomics, and the weakening of the labour movement. Last year, union membership declined to just 16.4 per cent of employees. Labour's clout has diminished both economically and politically. While striking workers lose their jobs to scabs, unions face aggressive corporate demands for contract concessions, including co-payments for health insurance, the elimination of cost of living (COLA) clauses, and a reduction in paid time off. Industry-wide contracts, which were the backbone of the unions' economic power, have unravelled as cor-

porations demand "flexibility" and productivity from their individual plants. Meanwhile, politicians have been almost totally unresponsive to labour's modest legislative agenda.

While *Understanding Employee Ownership* was not written by or for people in the labour movement, one of the book's themes is that labour unions should cooperate with business to promote employee ownership and participative management. According to ESOP advocates, such cooperation is labour's only hope for survival in today's economy.

In fact, ESOPs and allied participative management schemes are damaging the US labour movement. Because they are initiated by management within individual companies, they encourage workers to become more concerned about the profitability and competitiveness of "their" companies rather than with the need for solidarity with their union brothers and sisters. To the extent that labour's revitalization depends on expanded solidarity as well as more control over national policies regarding investments, capital movements, and other basic economic decision, ESOPs are not a viable strategy for the labour movement.

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*(The views expressed in this review are mine alone and do not necessarily represent the views or policies of the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union.)*

Terry Eagleton, *Ideology: An Introduction* (Verso 1991)

IN *IDEOLOGY*, TERRY EAGLETON returns to territory he first considered in *Criticism and Ideology* (1976). Until now, the latter was an anomaly in Eagleton's critical repertoire because it

presents an alternative role for the traditional Marxist critic. For the most part, however, Eagleton's strength as a literary/social critic has been centred in his fundamental distrust of and dissatisfaction with post-structuralism and deconstruction. Nevertheless, in the bulk of his critical work (especially *Walter Benjamin*, 1981), he splices Derridean concepts with Marxist literary theory while ultimately refusing to valorize representations over the real. In particular, he has consistently decried the political apathy and nihilism of contemporary discourse theory.

In Eagleton's view, the endless contortions and spiralling ironies of such a model fails to discriminate between words and the powers and purposes behind their utterance. To defer meaning indefinitely minimizes and, therefore, distorts the relationship between speakers and the speech which describes action. Eagleton specifically rejects postmodernist scepticism of empirical models of representation because the whole notion of ideology becomes redundant if "truth" cannot be grounded in the real. As always in his criticism, Eagleton insists here that literature mediates the space between theory (text-science) and lived ideology: "In yielding up to criticism the ideologically determined conventionality of its modes of constructing sense, the text at the same time obliquely illuminates the relation of that ideology to real history." (1976, 101) In order to counter the vacuousness of Nietzschean-influenced post-structuralist thought, Eagleton proposes to re-establish "ideology" by tracing its critical history, thus reasserting its validity. In the process, he attempts to inhabit the terrain abandoned by contemporary theorists and to recover a legitimate critical space.

At its best, Eagleton's analysis provides a useful survey of the traditional canon of great thinkers from the Enlightenment through the 20th century. To some extent, he constructs definitions of "ideology" that may have startled these

writers, but he generally provides sufficient justification for his conclusions. As an introduction to theoretical studies, then, *Ideology* foregrounds issues that are often overlooked. By insisting that contemporary discourse theory relinquishes participation in the real world and distances itself from the social order it seeks to decipher, Eagleton retrieves territory for the intellectual. He repeatedly criticizes critical disengagement by testing abstractions against culturally specific situations.

Although his approach is always pragmatic, Eagleton neglects the cultural specificity of realism itself. Transplanting a working definition of "ideology" from the 20th century into the 18th can be of doubtful utility. Furthermore, as critics like Christopher Norris and Tony Bennett have noted, Eagleton's greatest weakness may reside in his dependence on metaphors of sight ("oblique," "dense," "visible," etc.) to describe the condition of a text's ideological base. If *Ideology* is intended for use in university seminars on critical theory, his audience may have problems with the "slippage" of realism, especially as the term is applied in literary studies. They may likewise have difficulty appreciating Eagleton's inclusion of thinkers whose ideas about the real are evidently antithetical to his own. When Eagleton wishes to discredit a writer, he frequently resorts to ridicule to demonstrate the limitations of an argument. On the whole, the satirical denigration of narrow minded critics tends to deflect attention away from the issues he seeks to address. Such examples proliferate and, by the time he reaches Stanley Fish, much of his discussion's credibility has been temporarily sacrificed.

Critics like Fish are easy targets, given the parameters that Eagleton establishes, and his discussions of such figures contrast markedly with the lengthy apologies for others like Althusser. Many of the examinations of the theorists with whom Eagleton takes issue could have been condensed or deleted entirely from

*Ideology* without sacrificing the validity of his position. As it is, reducing and subsequently dismissing so many writers serves only to divert the course of his study, since such instances tend to function cumulatively as digressions.

It may have been more profitable to concentrate on tracing the concept of ideology in fewer works. At the beginning of *Ideology*, Eagleton constructs a model that does not necessarily demand inclusiveness. For instance, in the opening and closing chapters, Eagleton provides a lucid and challenging synthesis of what he identifies as the most important philosophies:

One central lineage, from Hegel and Marx to Georg Lukacs and some later Marxist thinkers, has been much preoccupied with ideas of true and false cognition, with ideology as illusion, distortion and mystification; whereas an alternative tradition of thought has been less epistemological than sociological, concerned more with the function of ideas within social life than with their reality or unreality. (3)

Surely this is a useful framework for a discussion of ideology and one that allows Eagleton the flexibility he requires. His opening chapters are particularly insightful, largely because his interpretations are so clearly idiosyncratic. The etymological search recorded here neatly introduces the subject. But the summaries of individual writer which comprise the bulk of *Ideology* too often simply expand comments he has made before in other contexts and frequently oversimplify and distort important arguments in those texts.

The sustained and sensitive discussions of Marx, Althusser, and Freud, for instance, stand in marked contrast to dismissive and cursory remarks on Mannheim and Goldmann. Others, like Adorno and Marcuse, receive more attention but Eagleton is equally reductive, concluding that they have a "gloomy vision" whereas a thinker like Habermas takes the opposite (and, presumably, correct) position: "Rather than passing judgement on the present from the Olympian height of

some absolute truth [communicative rationality], it installs itself *within* the present in order to decipher those fault lines where the ruling social logic presses up against its own structural limits, and so could potentially surpass itself." (131) If Eagleton were to suspend or limit some of his remarks on the inadequacies of Marcuse and instead develop his notions of ideology in Habermas, we might be better able to situate the latter in Eagleton's original model.

In fairness, one part of Eagleton's project gains impetus despite such cursory analyses. He consistently resists, more or less convincingly, the endless demystification which he believes deconstructionist thought promises in its substitution of discourse for ideology. He argues, with justification, that it is possible to sever power from social relations if all discourse is equally (im)potent. In many ways, Eagleton's criticism creates and then occupies the ground separating deconstruction from traditional Marxist criticism (and, perhaps, that between Marxist theory and new historicism). This uncertain territory, however, carries with it unresolved difficulties in *Ideology* because his Althusserian posture itself frequently enlists the strategies of deconstruction. One of the most significant (and relatively unexplored) problems in Eagleton's formulation is determining the point at which the process of criticism can and/or should be stopped and ideology deciphered.

A recurrent thread that weaves throughout *Ideology* but which Eagleton never focuses on is postmodernism's denial of both pain and anger in its massive appropriation of class, race, and gender. In Eagleton's terms, the refusal to act both accompanies and mimics this appropriate stance:

In its radical American form, [postmodernist theory] occasionally goes along with the belief that anything, including life in a Siberian saltmine, is probably preferable to the current American way of life. Those who expound it will tend to be interested in feminism and



"ethnicity" but not "class struggle" or "exploitation." (165-66)

Although such observations are reasonable in certain contexts, Eagleton's position that the "radical" politics of Baudrillard and Lyotard are sterile does not address the overt denial of political involvement by many postmodernists. The elitism of such gestures is manifested in a wide variety of ways, not the least of which is the rupture between postmodernist theory and feminist practice/praxis. Eagleton concludes that "[for postmoder-

nists] it is possible to see a radical interest as just one among many in the theoretical marketplace" (175) and asserts that "it may help to view ideology less as a particular *set* of discourses, than as a particular set of effects *within* discourse." (194) However, by assuming that "feminism" and "ethnicity" demarcate specific and relatively uniform interests, Eagleton misses an opportunity to critique the sterility he has earlier identified.

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