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[See table of contents](#)

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REVIEWS/COMPTES RENDUS

- Linda Kealey, *Enlisting Women for the Cause: Women, Labour, and the Left in Canada, 1890-1920* by Janet Mary Nicol / 245
- Sarah Carter, *Capturing Women: The Manipulation of Cultural Imagery in Canada's Prairie West* by Nancy Janovicek / 246
- Margaret Little, *No Car, No Radio, No Liquor Permit: The Moral Regulation of Single Mothers in Ontario, 1920-1997* by Catherine Carstairs / 248
- Dan Azoulay, *Keeping the Dream Alive: The Survival of the Ontario CCF/NDP, 1950-1963* by Robert Wardhaugh / 250
- P. E. Bryden, *Planners and Politicians: Liberal Politics and Social Policy 1957-1968* by Barbara Arneil / 252
- Leo Panitch and Colin Leys, *The End of Parliamentary Socialism* by Dennis Pilon / 253
- Timothy Messer-Kruse, *The Yankee International: Marxism and the American Reform Tradition, 1848-1876* by Paul Buhle / 256
- Richard Schneirov, *Labor and Urban Politics: Class Conflict and the Origins of Modern Liberalism in Chicago, 1864-1897* by Julie Green / 257
- Steven J. Ross, *Working-Class Hollywood: Silent Film and the Shaping of Class in America* by David Frank / 259
- Shelly Romalis, *Pistol Packin' Mama: Aunt Molly Jackson and the Politics of Folksong* by Peter Narváez / 262
- Jane S. Becker, *Selling Tradition: Appalachia and the Construction of an American Folk 1930-1940* by Rob Bowman / 265
- Sanford Jacoby, *Modern Manors: Welfare Capitalism Since the New Deal* by Robert Storey / 267
- Harvey Klehr, John Earl Haynes, and Kyrill M. Anderson, *The Soviet World of American Communism* by Randi Storch / 272
- Amy Kiste Nyberg, *Seal of Approval: The History of the Comics Code* by Martin Barker / 274
- David Burner, *Making Peace with the 60s* by Peter B. Levy / 276
- Michael Hicks, *Sixties Rock: Garage, Psychedelic, and Other Satisfactions* by Harris M. Berger / 277
- Michael D. Yates, *Why Unions Matter* by Paul Le Blanc / 279
- Mike Parker and Martha Gruelle, *Democracy is Power: Rebuilding Unions from the Bottom Up* by Christopher Roberts / 281

- Jonathan C. Brown, ed., *Workers' Control of Latin America, 1930-1979* by Norman Caulfield / 283
- Kathleen Bruhn, *Taking on Goliath: The Emergence of a New Left Party and the Struggle for Democracy in Mexico* by Norman Caulfield / 285
- Ligaya Lindio-McGovern, *Filipino Peasant Women: Exploitation and Resistance* by Pauline Gardiner Barber / 287
- Alison Oram, *Women Teachers and Feminist Politics 1900-39* by Helen Brown / 289
- Douglas Peter Mackaman, *Leisure Settings, Bourgeois Culture, Medicine, and the Spa in Modern France* by Mary Lynn Stewart / 291
- René Leboutte, Jean Puissant et Denis Scuto, *Un siècle d'histoire industrielle: Belgique, Luxembourg, Pays-Bas, industrialisation et sociétés, 1873-1973* by Pierre Lanthier / 292
- Gilla Dölle, *Die unheimliche Macht des Geldes: Finanzierungsstrategien der Bürgerlichen Frauenbewegung in Deutschland zwischen 1865 und 1933* by Rosemarie Schade / 295
- Brigitte Studer, Regina Wecker, and Beatrice Ziegler, eds., *Frauen und Staat/Les Femmes et l'Etat* by Rosemarie Schade / 296
- Neil Gregor, *Daimler-Benz in the Third Reich* by Gary Herrigel / 297
- Francesca Bray, *Technology and Gender Fabrics of Power in Late Imperial China* by Thomas L. Kennedy / 299
- Samir Amin, *Spectres of Capitalism: A Critique of Current Intellectual Trends* by Dennis Soron / 301
- Ellen Meiksins Wood, *The Origins of Capitalism* by Geoff Kennedy / 303
- Pierre Bourdieu, *Acts of Resistance: Against the New Myths of Our Time* by Lawrin Armstrong / 305

REVIEWS / COMPTES RENDUS

Linda Kealey, *Enlisting Women for the Cause: Women, Labour, and the Left in Canada, 1890-1920* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1998)

FEW TRACES REMAIN from the fabric of the daily lives of working-class Canadian women a century ago. Only recently have historians begun to recover their stories in significant detail. Building on this research Kealey has written *Enlisting Women for the Cause: Women, Labour, and the Left in Canada, 1890-1920*. She scours the sparse material available to examine women's participation in labour and socialist movements in the era of industrial change, war, and reconstruction.

Her study is replete with spirited anecdotes of female intelligence, advocacy, and resistance. Individual women activists and collective female political actions are profiled. As well, the types of jobs women held and employment practices of the times are brought to light. The dominant attitudes and ideologies surfacing from newspaper articles and government and union documents explain the behaviours which deterred women from attaining equality. A woman's place was in the home and young women were expected to work until they married. Yet by 1891 one-third of Toronto's industrial work force was composed of women and children; the percentage was even higher in Montreal. The exploitation and vulnerability of women (and children) were cause for public concern and political action.

More than half of Kealey's study covers the prewar period, providing an understanding of the social norms challenged during the war years. Working women were in need of protection and guidance; so went the conventional wisdom. Yet women organized into unions and conducted strike activity in the Quebec and Maritimes cotton mills, in the textile industries in Montreal and Toronto, and in the British Columbia telephone companies, to name a few of the many examples she lists. Women also helped build socialist parties, though they played a secondary role and fought a divided membership on the issue of suffrage and later, pacifism.

Kealey also looks at other community-building roles women held, just as vital to promoting social justice as participating in unions and political parties. Women's auxiliaries were a prime example of a crucial support network between unions, families, and the community. She considers the power of women's consumer activism, giving many examples, such as boycott of Jewish bakeries in Toronto in 1917 by Jewish women demanding lower bread prices. Women on the left organized sewing circles, study clubs, and youth organizations, all of these were important educational groups.

She traces the cultures and ideologies Canadian immigrants brought with them from their home countries and notes differences in female empowerment within various ethnic groups; for example Ukrainian women played a more subordinate role in socialist groups than Jewish women. Finnish women had voting rights

Table of Contents for Reviews is on pp. 5 & 6.

in their home country in 1906 and provided an impatient militancy for women's suffrage. Finns, male and female, also made up a proportionally higher percentage of socialist membership. Ethnic friction among working-class women was pronounced and subverted them from making gains. One of the many examples Kealey describes occurred in union campaigns between Jewish and Gentile textile workers in prewar central Canada. Class tensions also surfaced, illustrated by the lack of support from middle-class women suffragists toward working-class women's struggles. When these social divisions fell, Kealey notes, as they sometimes did, progress in women's rights were made.

In 1914, Canada's declaration of war created a demand for women's labour. Trade union strikes escalated to peak levels from 1917 to 1920 as workers gained leverage to demand improved wages and working conditions. Women participated in this wave of militant activity including the postwar general strikes. Attitudes of various key players involved in women's work in munitions factories provide further evidence that men of all social classes held fears about women competing in the labour force. Instigation and regulation of a minimum wage benefitted a female "underclass" of workers but was undermined not only by employer strategies but also by those of male trade unionists.

The scope of this research is wise and inspires further case studies and lengthier profiles of some of the women activists it highlights. Ethnic influences were very strong in this period; more exploration of the connections to immigrants' home countries could potentially provide a deeper understanding of motivations and beliefs. Contrasting the situation of middle-class women workers, teachers, and nurses for example, against the experiences of working-class women would benefit this study. What were the education levels and skills of women at the time? Instructive to this work would be connecting advancements in these areas

with suffrage and other rights (such as birth control).

Women's roles expanded but were not revolutionized in the postwar period, Kealey concludes. However the accumulative result of women's activism "created new spaces in which women could challenge, albeit in fragmented ways, the structures and attitudes that denied them agency in building what they hoped would be a more just and humane future." Given the odds working women faced, Kealey commends their ability to accomplish as much as they did. Her study provides valuable insights into the quality of the lives of Canada's neglected working-class foremothers, and invokes appreciation toward those who took a stand against inequality.

Janet Mary Nicol
Vancouver

Sarah Carter, *Capturing Women: The Manipulation of Cultural Imagery in Canada's Prairie West* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press 1997)

WE ARE NOT SUPPOSED to judge books by their covers, but the cover of Sarah Carter's most recent book deserves comment. The image on the front of *Capturing Women: The Manipulation of Cultural Imagery in Canada's Prairie West* is a photograph created by James Luna in 1993. The piece is entitled "Mixed Color Marriage." When I picked up the book, I wondered why a modern piece of art was chosen for a book about 19th-century abduction tales. As I read, I realized that the depiction of a wedding portrait of a First Nations man and a white woman was an effective foil to the tropes used in 19th-century tales. The happy modern couple is a thought-provoking juxtaposition to the images of subordinated women that were integral to the abduction tale genre. Moreover, the cover reminds us that the questions that Carter asks about the past still have meaning today. Carter discusses

abduction tales as part of the colonial "concern to forget the past, to present Aboriginal women as a menace to the emerging community, and to encourage and celebrate the arrival of white women." (5) She points to the homage to "the first white woman," a common feature in today's museums, to remind us that this sort of manipulation of history is an ongoing project.

Capturing Women tracks the exploitation of one of the earliest abduction tales in the Canadian Prairie West: *Two Months in the Camp of Big Bear: The Life and Adventures of Theresa Delaney and Theresa Gowanlock*. The story itself is compelling. Here, I am not referring to the seizure of the women but to Carter's narration of the evolution of the tale. The book was first published in November 1885, and was promoted as an accurate rendition of a news event that had riveted the nation's attention. Delaney and Gowanlock were the only women captured at Frog Lake who were from eastern Canada. This was significant to readers since it coincided with a campaign to lure white Anglo-Saxon women westward. *Two Months* stressed the vulnerability of the two women and the constant threat of violence they faced while in captivity. This story differs dramatically from original accounts by Delaney and Gowanlock which praised the Métis women for their kind treatment. Carter argues that the women's version of their captivity was ignored because it would not bolster the political imperatives of the period. Instead of being a truthful depiction of race relations in the West, *Two Months* sought to redefine them. It blamed generous and benevolent government administration of indigenous peoples for the abduction, and called for the segregation of the indigenous peoples from white settlers.

Two Months was one of many published accounts of Frog Lake. Carter argues that the various depictions of the captures reflected different political agendas. During the rebellions of the 1880s, it was not politically expedient for

colonial authorities to circulate heroic images of indigenous peoples. Stories and illustrations about Frog Lake emphasized the savagery of aboriginal war practices and lifestyles. In the 1940s, Frog Lake was retold in *The Beaver*. This account was by Elizabeth McLean, a western woman who was sixteen in 1885. In McLean's account, Frog Lake was instigated by the unfair treatment by the Indian agent, and the kindness of the captors was emphasized. Carter explains that the differences in McLean's account were due, in part, to the passage of time and the new literary conventions available to women. More importantly, McLean's narrative paints a kinder portrait of the captors because images of Indian savagery were no longer required. Race relations in the Canadian West had been redefined successfully according to colonial ambitions.

Capturing Women fits neatly into the growing historiography of the representations of women in colonial societies. Historical research shows that in colonial settings, the virtue of white women was a pretext for controlling indigenous populations. Studies have further demonstrated that panics about kidnapping and sexual danger did not reflect accurately the actual number of assaults or rapes of white settlers by indigenous men. Carter draws on postcolonial theory and gender histories to show how gender, race, and nation functioned as culturally constructed categories of meaning in the telling and retelling of colonial stories of abduction. She places her work into international discussions about colonization, but underlines the unique circumstances that shaped the colonization of Canadian prairies. As settlement moved west, new images of Aboriginal women emerged in relation to those of white women. Aboriginal women were no longer depicted as passive slaves who needed to be liberated from the backwardness of their society. Instead, they instigated dreadful atrocities. In the colonial imagination, Aboriginal women became active agents in the

destruction of white women's moral and cultural work. White women now required protection, not Aboriginal women. This shift in the representations of white and Aboriginal women was central to the new spatial and social segregation that was taking place on the Canadian prairies.

Carter states that her study is about how women were represented instead of what women actually did. In spite of this caveat, she does provide glimpses of the consequences of exaggerated representations of white feminine civility, and Aboriginal women's inability to conform to these ideals. One effective illustration is an Aboriginal woman, known only as Liza, who lived on the outskirts of Virden, Manitoba in the 1940s. Liza was accepted, but only on the community's terms. She was a marginal figure because she could not adopt the constructions of white feminine propriety. Her poverty and her tent at the edge of town underline that her marginality was both real and imaginary. Carter's analysis reminds us that we must read carefully into the narratives from the past. Shifts in representations of gender and race can tell us much about the power relations between colonial authorities and displaced indigenous peoples. As I was writing this review, the RCMP and Manitoba's Justice Department officially closed the case of the brutal murder of Helen Betty Osborne. This is a timely reminder that we need to remain vigilant in our reading of the manipulation of cultural images of First Nations women, and the alleged threat that racialized minorities pose for white women's virtue.

Nancy Janovicek
Simon Fraser University

Margaret Little, *No Car, No Radio, No Liquor Permit: The Moral Regulation of Single Mothers in Ontario, 1920-1997* (Toronto: Oxford University Press 1998)

MANY HISTORIANS and political scientists have noted that the welfare state is divided by gender. Programs directed towards men have taken the form of universal and automatic payments. Programs geared towards women have been discretionary and have depended on women fulfilling their roles as mothers in a way that the state and its investigators found acceptable. Little's study of mothers' allowances in Ontario adds to this literature by examining the role of the welfare state in the moral regulation of single mothers.

Little shows that the bourgeois women who led the campaign for women's allowances drew on a maternalist ideology that was both classist and racist, and took little account of the real needs of poor women. The most prominent supporters were the Toronto Local Council of Women who launched a pilot project in 1914 that included detailed investigations and moral guidance of recipients. Labour leaders joined the campaign later, and for very different reasons. Labour leaders did not believe that poverty was the result of individual weakness. Instead, they hoped that mothers' allowance would reduce the number of women and children in the labour force and decrease competition for jobs. They called for more inclusive allowances that would include deserted, divorced, and unwed mothers, although they believed that immigrants should be excluded. However, the allowance legislation passed in 1920 reflected the biases of its chief lobbyists. The OMA had strict eligibility requirements and minimal payments. Many single mothers were ineligible since the programme was designed for widows, or for women who had been deserted, and who had not heard from their husbands in seven years (later decreased to three

years). Until 1935 only mothers with more than one child were eligible.

Little insightfully points out that the administrative structure of the program had important similarities with private charity work. Local boards run by middle-class volunteers were responsible for receiving applications, conducting investigations, and making recommendations. Mothers had to demonstrate that they were "a fit and proper person" to receive an allowance. A variety of social agencies including service clubs, the Red Cross, and the Salvation Army helped provide local boards' investigators with information about single mothers and their activities. The Children's Aid Society often made visits on behalf of the OMA, and sometimes acted as a coercive arm, threatening to remove children unless living conditions improved. Like Linda Gordon and Molly Ladd-Taylor, Little shows how mothers' allowance investigators were obsessed with the cleanliness of the household, the family's sleeping arrangements, and the behaviour of the children. Not surprisingly, non-Anglo-Saxon applicants (especially Blacks, Aboriginals, and Eastern Europeans) faced more intensive examination than their Anglo-Saxon peers and many were rendered ineligible by the need to provide birth, death, and marriage certificates. In the 1930s scrutiny increased along with the numbers of applicants. The finances of the family came under greater examination and many more women were refused allowances because investigators determined that they already had sufficient means, or because their husbands were not "totally and permanently incapacitated."

After a very rich discussion of the 1920s and 1930s, Little skims quickly over the period between World War II and the present. In the 1940s and 1950s, the administration of the OMA was centralized, eligibility and rates increased and new services, such as medical and dental care were provided to recipients. Nonetheless, the allowance remained below subsistence, and recipients continued to

be subject to moral regulation. In this period, investigators were less concerned with weeding out "unworthy" applicants and more concerned with moulding recipients into proper citizens. Deserted and unwed mothers had their sexual behaviour examined while ethnic-minority mothers were instructed on becoming Canadian. The OMA continued to expand in the 1960s and 1970s, only to be dramatically cut back in the 1990s and abolished in 1997. Little is especially critical of "Promises Not Kept" by the NDP, who cut down on welfare "fraud," reduced rates, and promoted full-time employment for single mothers. In the post-war period, Little focuses more on cuts to OMA than to its expansion. This is understandable, given that even in the best of times the OMA was inadequate, discretionary, and oppressive. However, more emphasis on periods of expansion might also help readers to understand why, in the absence of more social and political change, providing more welfare money, rather than less, is critically important to the lives of poor women.

Little's engagement with her topic becomes clear in her final chapter, which passionately discusses the challenges faced by OMA recipients in the 1990s. Conscious of the power imbalances between a scholar and single mothers living in poverty, she decided to conduct oral interviews with groups of single mothers and allowed them to determine which questions were important. This chapter vividly describes the impossibility of living within the money provided by the allowance, the intrusive techniques used by social workers to determine if there is a man in the household, and the scrutiny of landlords, teachers, and neighbours.

Little's study draws carefully on working-class, economic, gender, and political history, and the history of moral regulation to fully contextualize Mothers' Allowances in the socio-economic and political context of the time period. She goes beyond her discussion of Ontario to compare mothers' allowances in other

provinces. However, this strength is also a weakness in that this ambitious project is squeezed into less than 200 pages. The period between World War II and the present is covered in much less detail and lacks the moving personal stories which add to the rest of her text. Also, the historiographic introduction could have been better organized to clarify Little's influences and her contributions to the debate on the welfare state, both in Canada and internationally. Her theoretical discussion of structuralism and moral regulation could have been expanded to more clearly show her position vis-a-vis other theorists of the welfare state both in Canada and internationally. Nonetheless, her careful historical and political analysis and her use of case-files and oral history makes this book a very engaging and important contribution to the literature on the Canadian welfare state.

Catherine Carstairs
York University

Dan Azoulay, *Keeping the Dream Alive: The Survival of the Ontario CCF/NDP, 1950-1963*, (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press 1997)

STUDIES OF THE CCF/NDP often deal with the party as a voice of western protest. These Prairie roots prevent it making headway in central and eastern Canada and becoming a "national party." The focus is usually upon the movement's contributions to Canadian politics in the inter-war and war years, as well as the period after the mid-1960s. In *Keeping the Dream Alive: The Survival of the Ontario CCF/NDP, 1950-1963*, Dan Azoulay breaks from this mould and provides an account of the party in Ontario during the immediate post-war years. It was in Ontario, after all, that the CCF stunned the nation by winning opposition status in 1943, highlighting its growing popularity and spurring the federal Liberals toward its hectic construction of the welfare state. But after almost a decade of rising

popularity, during which time the party held opposition status for five years and averaged a popular vote of 26 per cent, the Ontario CCF slid into the doldrums. "There is as much to be gained from studying failure," Azoulay contends, "as from studying success." (3)

Azoulay attempts to provide an explanation for the miserable fortunes of the Ontario CCF/NDP during this period. The party had to contend with the seemingly impregnable Conservative forces under the popular premier, Leslie Frost. The postwar economy was booming and the Cold War atmosphere tainted any left-wing movement with communism. Difficult times often resulted in dissension and the party was constantly weakened by infighting over such issues as organization, financing, education, and ideology. Yet, Azoulay argues, the party survived and even recovered. He gives the credit to the personnel who through dedication and commitment refused to surrender and allow the movement to die, who fought "to save an institution that they believed had been, and could still be, a force for positive social change in a province that had traditionally accepted change in only measured doses." (3)

Azoulay's goal is to provide a better understanding of how and why the CCF evolved as it did during this period. In pursuing this goal he finds it necessary to focus on "the role of provincial leadership and its efforts to rebuild, maintain, and expand the party's membership, finances, and public support, that is, its *basic* organization." (6) More than anything else, *Keeping the Dream Alive* is a detailed study of the overriding theme of political organization.

It was during these years that the struggling party was transformed from the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation into the New Democratic Party and Azoulay takes the reader on a detailed trail through this "New Party Movement" from the Ontario perspective. He refutes the commonly-held belief that the metamorphosis signaled an abandonment of

the traditional CCF values for the sake of electoral gain. Indeed, he argues, the party activists in Ontario maintained their socialist principles. The new obsession with organization received opposition from ardent socialists who wanted the emphasis to remain on education and ideology but in the end organization would serve as the key to survival.

Keeping the Dream Alive deals with the controversial relationship between the CCF/NDP and organized labour. This relationship was critical for the party in Ontario and Azoulay highlights the antagonisms that existed between party organizers and what was commonly viewed as "Big Labour." The CCF leadership was always nervous about labour's role and went to considerable pains to limit this "controlling influence." The relationship was unavoidable, however, due to the CCF's inability to attract wider bases of support, such as the farm vote that was sustaining the party in the Prairie provinces. In order to survive, the CCF/NDP grudgingly moved closer to the labour organizations but the party was never comfortable with this relationship and cooperation remained awkward. Labour was well aware of the ambiguous nature of CCF/NDP cooperation. What good it would do, labour leaders asked, to go out and induce their membership to support the CCF when the party refused to give recognition to the trade union movement on the basis that it would only lead to the unions controlling the party? (66)

The depth of the anti-labour sentiment that existed within the CCF/NDP is rather surprising. Azoulay accepts the justification that any apparent attachment to labour in the Cold War environment would have been political suicide. He wishes to demonstrate that organizers held off the controlling advances of "Big Labour," thereby maintaining the traditional appeal of the party. The CCF/NDP in Ontario, in other words, did not fall because of undue labour influences. There is little evidence offered, however, to demonstrate that labour was indeed en-

deavouring to take control of the party or that too much association would be damaging. The reader is left with the impression that the party was simply dominated by an anti-labour snobbery. "But perhaps the most plausible explanation for the failure of the Trade Union Committee (TUC) to achieve its goals," Azoulay admits, "was the strong undercurrent of anti-labour sentiment within many CCF riding associations in this period, and the mutual antagonisms of CCFers and unionists in general." (65)

Readers may also be surprised to learn the extent of the "communist bogey" even within Canada's left-wing party. Azoulay provides a revealing depiction of the 1955 expulsion of fourteen communists from the ranks of the Ontario CCF. "Throughout its brief history," he argues, "the party had been plagued by elements on the extreme Left; these alternately sought to cooperate with it in a "united front," or to destroy it either by infiltrating its ranks and converting its members or by endorsing it publicly (the "kiss of death" scenario)." The CCF had no choice but to "rebuff" the communists: "Any other policy would have been politically suicidal, given Ontario's basically conservative political culture." (79-80) Despite Azoulay's sympathetic portrayal of the party, the CCF appears just as paranoid of dark, sinister communist plots as the rest of mainstream society: "Despite the CCF's best efforts to block infiltration, CCF leaders were certain that some of the less prominent members of the Workers Revolutionary Party (WRP) had slipped through the net." (80) The party would thwart the "controlling influence" of Labour and block the "infiltration" of left-wing radicals while courting the more moderate social democratic population of Ontario. It would fail.

In his introduction, Azoulay criticizes the scant literature on the CCF/NDP during the 1950s and early 1960s for its "lack of genuine historical analysis." It is dominated by analytical and theoretical social science models, he argues, in which "dif-

ferent aspects of the party, whether that be structure, ideology, or leadership, are lopped off and analyzed separately over a number of years in order to confirm a predetermined hypothesis-model." (4) But it is questionable whether Azoulay succeeds in providing his desired sense of "historical context." In focusing on organizational detail he ends up failing to provide necessary context. The reader emerges with no sense of the political issues facing Ontario at the time. In addition there is only scant mention of the federal party, other than during the New Party process, and no explanation as to its relationship with the provincial group. The myriad of elections that take place in the early 1960s, for example, only confuses the reader who can make little distinction between federal and provincial contests.

While it has its limitations, *Keeping the Dream Alive: The Survival of the CCF/NDP in Ontario, 1950-1963* does offer a contribution to the party's history. In particular, it offers a detailed study of party organization and some solid overall political analysis. It convincingly questions Walter Young's out-dated interpretation that the CCF/NDP declined after the World War II due to its increasing attention toward electoral activity and organization at the expense of education. "The most important theme in the evolution of the CCF/NDP in this period, contrary to conventional wisdom," Azoulay demonstrates, "is *not* that the party became less of a 'movement' and more of a 'party' over time, but that its evolution was marked above all by *centrally directed efforts to rebuild and expand the party's basic organization by whatever means necessary*, whether these were 'movement'-type methods or 'party'-type methods." (235) The Ontario CCF/NDP did what it had to do to survive.

Robert Wardhaugh
University of Winnipeg

P.E. Bryden, *Planners and Politicians: Liberal Politics and Social Policy 1957-1968* (Montreal, Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1997)

THIS BOOK IS A FASCINATING, well researched and eloquently written description of the early roots of two planks of Canada's social safety net: the Canada Pension Plan, and national health care. Bryden delves back as far as the St. Laurent administration to find the roots of the Liberal party's position on social policy, but focuses the majority of her study on the successive administrations of Lester B. Pearson between 1963 and 1968, with a short epilogue on Pierre Trudeau's first administration. The author weaves together primary source material, interviews, and general history to tell the story of the political forces, both within and outside of the Liberal party which shaped the foundation for Canada's social safety net. By focusing on both the "planners," the mandarins behind the scenes, and the "politicians," and their inherent need to get elected, Bryden provides an excellent analysis of the subtle interplay between politics and policy in this critical and understudied area of Canadian history. The ways in which the electorate, regionalism, federal-provincial politics, and fiscal concerns play against each other still resonate in current debates over the fate of Canada's social programmes. Students of politics, social policy, but most particularly current day politicians immersed in discussions about the "social union," particularly within the federal Liberal party, could learn valuable lessons by reading this book.

Bryden argues that the Liberal's plan to create a pension scheme, under the direction of Thomas Kent and Walter Gordon, ran into heavy weather from both the Ontario government (because of an already highly developed private scheme) and a newly nationalist Quebec (who wished to introduce their own pension system). After some painful and drawn out negotiations, the Pearson Liberals

eventually settled on a formula which would dominate federal-provincial discussions on social policy until very recently: "centralized direction over major objectives but decentralized discretion on implementation." (122) Bryden describes the way in which the Quebec government trumped both the Ontario and federal government at the March 1964 federal-provincial conference by announcing its own plan, which led to both an acceptance at the federal level of provincially organized plans, and to the first exchange of tax points for provincial co-operation. Bryden concludes that the resulting Canada Pension Plan did not represent a shift from centralized to decentralized government so much as a shift from a jurisdictional division of power to a functional division of powers. While this is largely true, it should have been more explicitly noted by Bryden that nothing has contributed more to the decentralization of power towards the provinces than the trading of tax points for provincial compliance, initiated during these round of negotiations, and without which the CPP would probably have failed. The acceptance of this principle can only be seen, in hindsight, as a critical step towards the decentralization of power in social policy.

The negotiations over health insurance, Bryden argues, were different in kind from those over the CPP. Initiation of any kind of policy was complicated for the federal Liberals by their status as a minority government and the pressing need to call a federal election in 1965. Under the policy direction of newly recruited Al Johnson, the federal position on medicare began where the pension negotiations left off — the federal government would lay out the goals of a national system and leave the actual mode of implementation to the provincial governments. Thus, the federal government laid out its four principles, which remain in effect, even after the 1995 Canada Health and Social Transfer, which removed most of the equivalent principles in the Cana-

dian Assistance Plan for federal funding of social assistance. As Bryden demonstrates, medicare is only accomplished as a result of "key governmental actors."

Within this excellent analysis, the one great weakness is Bryden's depiction of the respective roles that Walter Gordon and Lester Pearson play in these two sets of negotiations. Pearson's role is described in uni-dimensional terms, as repeatedly and almost exclusively indecisive. These two national social programmes were achieved, consequently, in spite of the prime minister, and largely due to the political maneuvering of Walter Gordon. While it is clear there were times when Pearson's vacillation may have hurt both the Liberals and the negotiations on pensions and medicare, it must also be accepted that he was ultimately successful. Walter Gordon, it could be argued, was far less politically astute throughout these difficult and sensitive negotiations, a proposition supported by the fact that he twice tendered his resignation for both the budget of 1963 and the timing of the election in 1965. Pearson's goal, to move from the regional politics of St. Laurent, to a unified vision, was, in the end accomplished through these two national programmes, which continue to survive to this day. To this end, it is surprising that Pearson's autobiographical volumes are not listed in the bibliography.

Overall however, this is a highly recommended read about the political origins of two of the most important components of the Canadian social safety net.

Barbara Arneil
University of British Columbia

Leo Panitch and Colin Leys, *The End of Parliamentary Socialism* (London: Verso 1997)

WITH THE ORGANIZATIONAL and electoral victory of Tony Blair's "New Labour" in the 1990s, the Labour Party finally abandoned its century-long commitment to

parliamentary socialism. *The End of Parliamentary Socialism* explores what that historical commitment amounted to and why it could not be salvaged despite significant efforts to save it. Specifically, the book deals with the rise and fall of Labour's "new left" and their determined efforts to wrest control of the party away from dogged parliamentarists and toward more open, democratic process. In sketching out this great debate within the Labour Party, however, the authors go well beyond a discussion of British politics *per se* to comment on social democracy and the state, the forces changing western party systems, and the future of socialism itself.

Put simply, *The End of Parliamentary Socialism* consists of a searching and detailed examination of a specifically socialist democratic reform effort and its aftermath. After taking up many volumes that promise to critique socialist practice but inevitably just dismiss it, it is refreshing to find the real thing. Seven chapters chart the rise of Labour's new left, one tracks its decline, while another two explain the rapid emergence and ultimate victory of New Labour. Those familiar with the basic contours of Labour's recent history will be pleased with the in-depth treatment of all the major events: the early 1970s conference battles over economic policy and nationalization, the long struggle to entrench automatic re-selection of MPs, the late 1970s debates over party control of the election manifestos, and Tony Benn's many contributions, including his run for the deputy leadership in 1981. For those unfamiliar with the intricacies of British politics and, specifically, the Labour Party, this is an excellent introduction.

This attention to detail allows *The End of Parliamentary Socialism* to challenge much of today's conventional wisdom about the left — that it has been historically indifferent to democracy, that it was superseded by the social activism of the 1960s, and that its institutional politics amounted to hopeless compro-

mises unworthy of further progressive efforts. The historical efforts of Labour's new left complicate these easy generalizations. We see that as far back as the late 1960s Tony Benn for one was urging the party to embark on a "creative dialogue" with the new social movements emerging outside the party, and that by the early 1970s community activists were taking up positions within the Labour party to further their calls for greater participatory democracy. The point here is that Labour has been a broad church at times, and reclaiming the experience of that "plurality" is, for these authors, an important step in mapping out any future socialist direction.

There are some curious omissions from the book. For instance, the surge in Liberal Party support that coincided with the rise of Labour's new left is ignored altogether, as is Liberal support for the Labour Government in the late 1970s, except as an afterthought. In fact, the Liberals first appear in the book on page 162 and gain only scant attention thereafter. Yet ignoring the Liberal Party's role here denies readers an important context that seriously restrained the new left project in the Labour Party. Surely the dramatic increase in Liberal support in the mid-1970s, and again in alliance with the breakaway Social Democratic Party (SDP) in the 1980s, was a key factor in steeling Labour's traditional centre-right ruling group against the new left and its ideas. The authors are unconvincing when they argue that the 1974 elections could be seen as some kind of victory for the new left simply because their left programme did not lead the party to "electoral disaster." In fact, the party's results were the worst since the depression while the Liberals rebounded with support unseen since 1929. No doubt, Labour's traditional leadership saw this as electoral punishment for the party's shift to the left and an indirect endorsement of their own centrist views. After all, it was this easy correlation between the emergence of new left ideas and the party's declining

electoral fortunes that fueled both media and Labour centre-right accusations that this new left must be "loony."

The book is also frustratingly brief whenever the story deviates from national executive battles, struggles at conventions, or the memoirs of MPs. Some will surely complain that the text is effusively Benn-centric, and though I agree with the authors' estimation of his towering stature and importance for Labour's new left, I was dissatisfied with the scant treatment given other new left activists. Nor were some of the key new left institutions, like the Campaign for Labour Party Democracy, given much space, or old left ones, like the Tribune group, given enough context. I was also surprised at the brief, and rather cursory, dismissal of the Trotskyist Militant Tendency in a book arguing for the radical potential of average people. As the authors themselves briefly note, the fact that Militant-identified Labour candidates could be elected to various bodies, and even control some city councils, must say something important about the potential for radical electoral action by working people. Finally, the book is heavy on the new left's rise, but light on its decline. The "end of parliamentary socialism" is handled so quickly that even some of the key figures, like John Smith and Blair himself, are only sketched out.

However, all these criticisms are really minor stuff when compared to the contribution this book makes to important debates about the future of left parties and electoral socialism generally. Panitch particularly has long argued against the many determinisms that allegedly block the way to a socialist party advance, whether they be Przeworski's "dilemma of electoral socialism" where socialist advance is limited by the size of the manual working class, or Sassoon's inevitabilist focus on socialism fading away in the face of changes in the structure of the capitalist economies. By contrast, *The End of Parliamentary Socialism* attends to both political economy and class structure, so neither the new left nor their parlamenta-

rist counterparts are products of voluntarist sheer will, but neither does the book ignore the choices that people make under "conditions not of their own making." As this book's antecedent volume, Miliband's *Parliamentary Socialism*, made clear, Labour's traditional centre-right leadership had always been committed to elitist parliamentarism. But as Panitch and Leys point out, this approach only became electorally successful after World War II when a mobilized left electorate had to be contained and managed through consensus-style politics. So too did Labour's new left emerge at a particular historical juncture, when the post-war consensus was beginning to fail, and a new generation was looking for answers beyond the status quo.

Which brings us to the central point of the book — why did Labour's new left fail? It was not, the authors suggest, for flaws in their analysis. *The End of Parliamentary Socialism* has many kind things to say about the prescience of new left views — they were among the first to recognize the end of the consensus era, they called for decommodifying the media as a key socialist objective well before others, and they argued early on that a socialist party must become a vehicle for its ideas, not merely a poll-taker of a passive citizenry. This last view arguably formed the bedrock of the new left project. Socialism requires an active citizenry and new left activists were keen to bring citizens into a new relationship with the state. Indeed, the authors argue, the new left's goal was the creation of a "different kind of state" altogether. But here Labour's new left made some key tactical mistakes, getting hung up in reforming the party as means of reforming the state. By the time some reforms were actually passed the social movements buttressing the new left's efforts had evaporated. With declining support outside the party, and little organized support within it, the new left were systematically defeated bit by bit in the 1980s, with much of the

groundwork for New Labour then set by Kinnock and new left expatriates.

The End of Parliamentary Socialism is a timely volume. While it is fashionable presently to abandon explicitly socialist — and most certainly Marxist — proposals for democracy in favour of more “realistic utopias,” this book goes some way in refuting the stereotypes and misinformation about past socialist democratic practice. It also exposes as sham the recent social democratic “politics of inclusion” as a bizarre inversion of everything the democratic left has fought for. But perhaps most importantly, the book stands as a model project in reclaiming the left’s history from both its detractors and idolaters, clearly a necessary first step in any future socialist advance.

Dennis Pilon
York University

Timothy Messer-Kruse, *The Yankee International: Marxism and the American Reform Tradition, 1848-1876* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press 1998)

THIS IS AN EXTRAORDINARY VOLUME. As Robin D. G. Kelley once wrote kindly about my own *Marxism in the United States*, Messer-Kruse’s volume could, if read properly, reorganize large sections of US radical history around itself. The reason here is that the rich and revealing material in *The Yankee International* has been lost on generations of researchers myopic from dogmatic “Marxist” and plainly anti-Marxist assumptions. Messer-Kruse has re-examined the data, uncovered the hitherto lost themes, and made of them a brilliant story.

The story begins with the eclectic, trans-class radical tradition that passed from early labour reformers, women’s righters, and abolitionists into the fervor of the Civil War and out again on the other side. This tale is too large to be encapsulated, but Messer-Kruse illuminates the particular personalities and ideas which

pass into the “American” (i.e., English speaking) wing of the First International during the later 1860s.

In passing, Messer-Kruse ably rebuts the dismissal of these people by various observers, from Marx’s devotees to present-day scholars, and this alone would have constituted a major contribution. So much foolishness has been written on this topic (including two recent, very bad books on the American branches’ leading personality, Victoria Woodhull) that *The Yankee International* offers the first clear and nearly comprehensive view of the subject.

The tangled threads of these Yankee radical skeins can be found in such publications as *The National Anti-Slavery Standard’s* ardent if short-lived successor, *The Standard*, in Woodhull & Claflin’s *Weekly* (which has been read often, but never as clearly and closely), and assorted other reform, spiritualist, and suffrage journals. Putting this evidence together with archival materials, Messer-Kruse shows just how badly Marx and Engels misjudged the situation (they were misled by their devotees, but pressed by the anarchists at home, they surely allowed themselves to be misled) in regard both to US radical prospects at large and to the international particularly. Most especially, the two intellectual giants lacked the Yankees’ grasp of racism’s effect upon the American labour movement (some of Marx’s followers would become mentors to Samuel Gompers and to other labour leaders bent upon exclusionary principles). Just as important, they failed to understand the decisive impact that the “Woman Question” was bound to have upon class and race themes in all North America.

Expelled from the International (which was itself in collapse), the Yankee radicals worked within and outside the socialist and labour movements for two decades more, often at the vanguard of anti-racist impulses. Indeed, at a time when scarcely anyone within organized labour would defend Chinese immigra-

tion and Asian-American workers, some of these non-Marxist Yankees offered the voice of sanity and real internationalism.

More is yet to be known about the International's saga in the United States; its German and French-language outlets have hardly been explored, and its role in the contemporary labour movement remains to be told more fully. But Messer-Kruse has made an extremely valuable contribution to seeing how the determined followers of Marx started off on the wrong foot, and kept hopping in many of the wrong directions for generations to come.

Paul Buhle
Brown University

Richard Schneirov, *Labor and Urban Politics: Class Conflict and the Origins of Modern Liberalism in Chicago, 1864-1897* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press 1998)

RICHARD SCHNEIROV's *Labor and Urban Politics: Class Conflict and the Origins of Modern Liberalism in Chicago, 1864-1897* is a provocative and ambitious study. It is a welcome addition to a growing historiographical movement in the US which explores the relationship between the labour movement, politics, and the state. This movement, and Schneirov is no exception, focuses particular attention on the making of mainstream American politics and state policy and the relationship between those developments and the history of the working class. However, where much of this new work has examined the 20th century, Schneirov shifts us back to the Gilded Age and, as he sees it, the very roots of liberal politics. He also looks at the local level, giving us a richly drawn portrait of labour and politics in Chicago, a city which many see as the crucible of modern labour relations.

Labor and Urban Politics begins by tracing class formation in Chicago after the Civil War, and then it moves rapidly to explore the rise of the Knights of Labor

and the Socialist Labor Party, the impact exerted on labour politics by Irish workers, the emergence of a political bargaining relationship between the city's unions and the Democratic Mayor Carter Harrison, the political impact of the upheavals of 1877 and 1886, the decline of the Knights and the rise of the trade unions, and finally, the emergence of a new liberalism and a new cross-class political coalition by the late 1880s and 1890s. What a breadth of topics! And while some of them — such as the Great Upheaval of the 1880s — have previously received ample attention, Schneirov casts his history within a new interpretative framework which then reads freshly and intriguingly here.

In his introduction Schneirov declares: "The central contention of this book is that class formation among late nineteenth-century workers had a profound and transformative impact on the urban political system." (3) Yet it strikes me that his book does not significantly focus on class formation. The broad social, economic, and cultural explorations entailed in such a concept do not exist much in this book. Rather Schneirov's methodology is institutional and political. With great subtlety he pulls apart the various factions which constituted Gilded Age labour politics and their messy relations with mainstream and socialist politicians. He develops highly innovative ways to assess and comprehend the political influence asserted by workers and their organizations. Indeed, he states his agenda more accurately in the book's conclusion, noting that "In this book I have shifted the focus of analysis from the rise and decline ... of labor or socialist parties to a deeper, more inclusive, more persistent phenomenon: the formation, augmentation, and increasing influence, in both the regular parties and governmental policymaking, of working-class political power." (366)

Schneirov's contribution along those lines, and especially the way he teases out the relations between the labour move-

ment and the major parties, constitutes the book's most original and significant accomplishment. The major political parties have received little attention from historians in the last decade or two. Thus our understanding of them has continued to rely on work done long ago by political historians, most of whom had little interest or sensitivity to the influences exerted by working people. Schneirov traces the emergence in Chicago of what Selig Perlman called "political collective bargaining," whereby labour leaders would bargain with the major parties. The successful negotiator might be Republican, or, more often, Democratic. The alliance won for party leaders workers' support at the ballot box in return for policies assisting the labor movement — most importantly, *leniency in a strike* — and patronage in the form of valuable official appointments. This strategy emerged in Chicago as early as the 1870s, and by the 1880s it had evolved into an alliance between the city's labour movement and the Democratic party led by Carter Harrison. The labour movement lobbied Harrison's party for a variety of policies, but its most important achievement involved the support provided by police during labor disputes. Schneirov argues that class-identified voting — mobilized behind the Democrats rather than independent parties — ultimately helped transform the city's political terrain, generating a shift from Republican to Democratic rule and pushing the major parties to remake themselves into more educational and rational instruments of political competition.

The heart of Schneirov's book explores the Great Upheaval of the 1880s, and from this emerges one of the central arguments of his book. Noting that historians have traditionally dated the rise of urban liberalism and progressive reform to the depression of the 1890s, he argues to the contrary that modern liberalism "was a direct response to, and may be viewed as an integral part of, the great upheaval." (260) The events of the 1880s provoked a crisis for more traditional,

mugwump, liberals. Labour agitation for demands like the eight-hour day challenged the notion that laissez-faire principles should dominate society, while the growing labour vote and attacks on the two-party system contested the idea the traditional liberalism could achieve anti-party reforms. These conditions provoked a major rethinking of liberalism, and while Schneirov concedes it would take several decades before the new liberalism became fully configured, he argues that one could observe the key elements of this new way of thinking much earlier. In particular, Schneirov argues, reformers were revising their notion of social ethics, or republicanism and citizenship, and they were changing their view of what might constitute acceptable regulation of the market.

As with so much in Schneirov's book, this is a stunning and highly significant argument. It helps us to see conceptually how the "labour question" emerged and the role working people and their institutions played in that emergence. Similarly, it reconceptualizes the relationship between the Gilded Age and Progressive Era in a way that clarifies the central role the labour movement played throughout the era. Yet although his argument bears greatly on the progressive era as well as the Gilded Age, Schneirov does not address at any length how the main events and themes he has identified played out in the years after 1900. Such reflection, even if only in a brief conclusion, would have added an important dimension to the book. The reader would also have enjoyed seeing Schneirov connect his remarkable city to the larger picture of the US — and North American — labour and political history. Even a cursory glance at secondary literature might have suggested to him the degree to which events in Chicago were or were not paralleled by trends in other cities. Finally, this is a difficult book, one so densely written that the reader may find it hard to extract its major arguments. That would be unfortunate, for Schneirov's book presents a new win-

dow into US labour politics in the Gilded Age. With its remarkable insights regarding labour's role in reshaping urban politics, and especially in forging the new liberalism, this original and deeply researched book will be required reading for labour and political historians.

Julie Green
University of Colorado

Steven J. Ross, *Working-Class Hollywood: Silent Film and the Shaping of Class in America* (Princeton: Princeton University Press 1998)

THERE WAS A TIME when Hollywood did not exist, at least not the hegemonic Hollywood that has come to dominate the production and distribution of that characteristic 20th-century technology of communication, the movies. As a cultural industry, film is little more than a century old, and surveys of film history have described the early decades as a chaotic, creative period when producers, filmmakers, audiences, and exhibitors were still learning how to exploit the new opportunities. Film historians have also pointed out that the early movies were a form of inexpensive leisure-time activity catering to working-class audiences and their sensibilities, and they have also noted that the filmmakers and producers were often immigrants or other outsiders who cast a sometimes critical eye at the American way of life as it existed in the early 20th century. Both of these factors gave rise to the anxieties that helped produce Hollywood as the custodian of the visual imagery of the movies; but before that took place, they had also created an intriguing moment of possibility and alternatives that is the subject of this study.

In most accounts of this early period in film history, there is usually a disturbing reminder that our perceptions are limited by the fact that the great majority of films produced during this era have literally evaporated from the historical record — due to the technical limitations of early

nitrate stock and the failure of the industry to maintain an adequate archive of its cultural production. In exploring the relationship between silent film and the working class, Steven Ross has undertaken a kind of archaeological expedition into early 20th-century American culture. He has come back with evidence that will be of much interest both to students of film history and popular culture as well as to students of labour and working-class history. Besides the surviving films, his sources have included catalogues, stills, scenarios, press releases, and copyright records, as well as the trade journals for the industry and relevant labour and radical newspapers. There he has identified the existence of several hundred films that in their own ways addressed the working class experience, often presented stories of class conflict, and sometimes promoted radical solutions. In short, Ross (who is the author of earlier studies in working-class history) has utilized the familiar methods of the social historian to reconstruct a world that has been obscured by a lack of convenient documentation as well as by theoretical assumptions about the inevitability of the outcomes. Moreover, he has supplied an instructive appendix of sources and methods, which make the point that the study of film history can provide citizens with critical skills that are helpful in responding to the powerful images and ideologies that confront us at the movies.

The early chapters examine the dozen years from the appearance of the nickelodeon in 1905 to America's entry into World War I in 1917. For this period Ross has identified 605 films that fall into a category of working-class films, broadly defined as films that revolved around working-class protagonists and their circumstances; he estimates that there were in fact probably several thousand films of this nature, perhaps 10 per cent of the total production of the era. Among these there were at least 274 films that addressed labour-capital conflicts directly. Some of the filmmakers and titles of this

era are familiar names: D. W. Griffith, for instance, appears through his early Biograph films such as *The Song of the Shirt* (1908) and *A Child of the Ghetto* (1910) as "one of the most powerful critics of class injustice that the movie industry ever produced," and Charlie Chaplin, who produced films such as *Making a Living* (1914) and *The Floorwalker* (1916) in this period, was already proving himself "the greatest anti-authoritarian comic of his age." Accepting, even relishing in, the entertainment conventions of the melodrama, comedy, and other genres, these kinds of worker-films depicted scenes of working-class life with an eye for the hypocrisy of employers, the hardships of immigrants, and the exploitation of women and children. While the labour-capital films of this period tended to be liberal and populist in their outlook, a substantial number were also explicit in their advocacy of labour and socialist causes. The American Federation of Labor, for instance, supported a dramatic biography of the union leader John McNamara, *A Martyr to His Cause* (1911), and the Ludlow Massacre was represented in two films, one of them under the title *What is to be Done?* (1914). Meanwhile, a popular five-reel feature based on the novel *The Jungle* culminated in the hero's conversion to socialism (at the insistence of a Eugene Debs-like leader played by author Upton Sinclair). One of the most ambitious labour filmmakers was the newspaper editor and Socialist Party operative Frank Wolfe, who was determined to "paint the movies red" and turn them into "a weapon for labour"; his first production, *From Dusk to Dawn* (1913), was an epic love story about an iron moulder and a laundry worker that also featured strikes and politics and a socialist electoral victory; judged by the published reports (no copies of the film appear to have survived), this was a gripping drama which received wide distribution and a favourable reception; by 1915 Wolfe was planning to open a permanent movie studio at a socialist col-

ony in California. This is not to say that there were no anti-labour films produced in this period — films such as *Tim Mahoney*, *The Scab* (1911) and *Bill Joins the WWWs* (1915) were overtly hostile to unionism — but Ross estimates that during the pre-1917 period such "conservative" labour films were outnumbered two-to-one by the range of films whose discourse was sympathetic to the working class and its causes.

In the second half of the book, Ross addresses the dozen years that followed America's entry into World War I in 1917 and culminated in the establishment of Hollywood as the dominant force in the movies; by the end of the 1920s a small handful of studios and distributors controlled the vast majority of the films available to American audiences. With corporate control came all the trappings of scientific management — more coordination of production, division of labour, cost accounting, vertical integration, finance capital — and an aversion to the organizing efforts of unions in the film industry itself. The political climate of the times placed a premium on patriotic films, which in the context of the red scare, police surveillance, and censorship threats increasingly came to mean films that presented hostile images of immigrants, agitators, and unions. Although the labour-capital film did not disappear in this era, the discourse shifted abruptly from the earlier pattern; Ross estimates that in 1917-22 some 64 per cent of the films in this category delivered conservative messages that were hostile to unionism. Film historians have identified some of the ways individual filmmakers, such as Chaplin and the remarkable King Vidor (whose 1928 film *The Crowd* offered a bleak vision of the world of the white collar worker), resisted the corporate agenda. But there were fewer such films in the post-1917 period, and Ross is especially interested in directing our attention to the achievements of a persistent oppositional film culture that continued to offer alternatives and attract audiences well

into the 1920s. *The New Disciple* (1921), a melodrama produced by the Seattle-based Federation Film Services, favoured worker cooperatives as a solution to labour conflicts. *The Contrast* (1921) was a drama of coal mining struggles set in West Virginia and produced by New York's Labor Film Services. The American Federation of Labor itself made a drama promoting the union label (and prominently featuring women workers) under the title *Labor's Reward* (1925). An early form of docudrama was *The Pas-saic Textile Strike* (1926), a fact-based drama of union organizing in the New Jersey mills produced by the International Workers' Aid, which was also involved in distributing early Soviet titles (including one helpfully retitled *The Beauty and the Bolshevik* for the American market). By all accounts these labour dramas told stories of human interest, met high technical standards, and found sizeable audiences numbering in the hundreds of thousands if not millions. But these and other efforts were no match for Hollywood, and the labour filmmakers were not able to mobilize the production capital or the distribution networks to support a lasting challenge. In large part this can be explained not simply by the political climate but also by the exceptional dynamism of Hollywood in this period. The cost of making and showing films was rising dramatically, as audiences expected bigger and better productions, including by the end of the decade "talkies," and the luxurious movie palace was gaining acceptance as the appropriate social setting for consumption of the product. But Ross also makes the case that some of the responsibility rested with organized labour itself. While most unions in the 1920s understood the value supporting a labour press, they had failed to recognize the potential of the movies for presenting workers' stories. Samuel Gompers was prepared to endorse individual films that presented what he regarded as positive views of unions, as in the case of the anti-red *Dangerous Hours* (1920), originally entitled

Americanism (Versus Bolshevism) and still available in video catalogues; but he and other union leaders were unwilling to support labour production companies and theatrical films on a major scale. And a remarkable proposal from the electrical workers' union to establish movie theatres in the 1,500 biggest labour temples and thereby create the largest single distribution network in the country received little support from the established unions; Ross considers this a missed opportunity to mobilize working-class market power in ways that even Hollywood could understand.

The moment passed, and the movies have never been the same. In a useful epilogue, Ross surveys developments in the decades since the 1920s and, like other observers, finds that with rare exceptions the American worker is routinely marginalized, stereotyped, or ignored in cinematic discourse. From this perspective, Hollywood's most significant achievement was the conversion of movies from a form of working-class expression to an engine of middle-class identity formation. Instead of fulfilling their potential to empower American workers, the movies have cultivated a fantasy life focused on the world of consumption. From a theoretical point of view, Ross argues that this outcome was not inherent in the cultural form nor was it historically inevitable. The problem has not gone away, and Ross observes that one of the reasons Americans feel powerless is because "they have no vision of how things could be different." In the end, that is what the movies offer - - "the gift of vision" - - and those who construct the field of vision are in a position to exercise a great deal of cultural power. Ross concludes with the suggestion that unions must look once again at the available opportunities to exert a major influence on the prevailing cultural discourse.

This is a significant book which will be required reading for students of film history and working class culture. Although it is very much about the Ameri-

can experience, the study suggests various possibilities for the research agenda in Canada as well, especially in the light of what we know about the integration of distribution circuits, the mobility of filmmakers and the continentalization of taste in this period. To what extent did the several kinds of early worker-films achieve a circulation in Canada, in what places and with what effect? Ross does note that some of the films under discussion were shown in Montreal and other centres, and a more systematic study should be possible. We also know that at least one of the anti-labour films noted by Ross, *The Great Shadow* (1920), was a Canadian production supported by the Canadian Pacific Railway in the wake of the Winnipeg General Strike. What evidence is there of other productions in the various categories of worker-films under discussion? Were there labour-oriented distribution circuits, or even filmmaking initiatives in this period? Did offshore films, that is films that were not American, have more lasting opportunities for distribution in Canada than in the United States? Did the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (like the Bureau of Investigation south of the border) take an interest in the movies, apart from the ones that featured Mounties? At the most general level, social historians in Canada should be tempted to examine the place of the movies in working-class life by using the kinds of sources they have used to study other forms of recreational activity. Although the field remains underdeveloped and often focused on contemporary issues, in recent years Canadian film history has succeeded in pushing the narrative back past the establishment of the National Film Board in 1939. This book should serve as an encouragement for labour and working-class historians to participate in new research on the early years in Canadian film history.

David Frank
University of New Brunswick

Shelly Romalis, *Pistol Packin' Mama: Aunt Molly Jackson and the Politics of Folksong* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press 1999)

AN INTELLIGENT MULTI-FACETED study, Shelly Romalis's account of Mary Magdalene Garland, better known as Aunt Molly Jackson (1880-1960), joins Joe Klein's *Woody Guthrie: A Life* (New York: Knopf, 1980) and Charles Wolfe and Kip Lornell's *The Life and Legend of Leadbelly* (New York: HarperCollins, 1992) in providing biographies of traditional regional singers/songwriters who became involved in American left-wing politics before the World War II. Unlike the portrayals of Guthrie and Leadbelly (Huddie Ledbetter), however, this biography is comparative, the singer/songwriter compared being Jackson's younger half sister Sarah Ogan Gunning (1910-1983), who became a well-known figure of the folksong revival in the 1960s. Romalis, an anthropologist at York University with strong interests in folkloristics and oral history, is less interested in conventional biography than in presenting the interplay of her Appalachian protagonists' ideas with the sociocultural forces that brought them into public prominence. In this sense, her drawing from Alessandro Portelli's *The Death of Luigi Trastulli and Other Stories: Form and Meaning in Oral History* (Albany: State University of New York press, 1991) understanding of oral history and written history as both being highly subjective, mutable constructions, is well taken. For her data, the author makes excellent use of a variety of ephemeral and standard secondary sources, interviews and communications with persons who knew her subjects, and as well, two bodies of untapped primary, archival materials — the extensive interview notes and recordings of New York University Professor of English, Mary Elizabeth Barnicle in the 1930s and 1940s, and the lengthy tape-recorded interviews of labour folklorist Archie Green in the 1950s.

Preliminary sections of the book briefly survey the economic and social evolution of "Central" Appalachia — eastern Kentucky and southwest Virginia. Regarding the regional stereotype that Jackson and Gunning personified, Romalis wisely cites the role of English folksong scholar-revivalist Cecil Sharp, whose folksong collections based on his Appalachian fieldwork activities in 1916, wielded "extraordinary influence" in "establishing the idea of Appalachia as an outpost of English folk culture," and "as an undisturbed fount of authenticity." (22-23)

Between 1880 and the 1930s Appalachia transformed from an agrarian economy to a coal mining-industrial one which afforded a social environment of "little more than basic survival," where, "without a voice in community affairs or working conditions, miners and their families depended on employers' benevolence." (25) While the saga of John L. Lewis's United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) is highlighted in many accounts, a labour organization affiliated with the American Communist Party, figured most prominently for Harlan County, Molly and Sarah's home. In the fall of 1931, a time when the coalfields of Appalachia were being viewed "as a new theater of class warfare" that "engaged the radical imagination and the newspapers," (39) a group of prominent writers including Theodore Dreiser and John Dos Passos travelled to Kentucky as the national Committee for the Defense of Political Prisoners (NCDPP) to publicize the plight of striking NMU miners through public hearings. One of the most compelling testimonies, and the one that garnered the greatest media attention, was that of Aunt Molly Jackson, particularly her inclusion of a highly descriptive original song entitled "Hungry Ragged Blues." Romalis writes that "the mountain woman's unvarnished power stilled the foreign observers, who sat transfixed in their seats," and that the song inspired "some grand possibilities for the miner's

wife." Later, Dos Passos quoted Molly's song in his writings about Harlan, using her "as exemplar and lioniz[ing] her in print as the 'high point' of his Kentucky experiences." (41-42) By mid-1932 clashes over religious beliefs (atheism vs. fundamentalism) and conventional racial and ethnic biases, combined with the backlash of the unsuccessful "Bloody Harlan" strike, spelled the end of NMU influence in the area and the ascendancy of the UMWA, but by then Aunt Molly Jackson had moved to the lower East Side of Manhattan.

The book's second part traces the lives of Jackson and Gunning in great detail, focusing on Jackson's many life roles as wife (three, possibly four marriages), mother, midwife, radical labour advocate, traditional singer, songwriter, cultural broker, and urban political emblem. Settling in New York City with the support of the NCDPP, Aunt Molly sang and "spoke all over the state for relief for striking miners" and she became involved in a "bewildering assortment of left-wing ... sponsored events," that attracted the city's "intellectual and artistic elite." (94-95) Her prominence there as a political, social activist quickly outshone the reputation she had developed in her home state. By the 1940s, however, her economic position deteriorated and her public singing performances became infrequent. Her abandonment by progressive political groups is partially explained by Joe Klein: "The idea that Aunt Molly Jackson was singing the people's music was a lot more palatable than the harsh nasal reality of her voice." (112-113) In 1943 she and her husband Tom Stamos left New York and moved west, finally settling in Sacramento. After the death of her husband in 1948, she lived in relative obscurity. She was interviewed by folklorist John Greenway for his book *American Folksongs of Protest* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1953) and was frequently visited in the late 1950s by Archie Green. Although she corresponded with organizers of folk mu-

sic events, attempting to obtain engagements, she apparently met with little success. She died in penury 31 August 1960.

Sarah Ogden Gunning followed her older half sister to New York City with her family in 1935, and befriended singer luminaries Leadbelly and Woody Guthrie who greatly admired her. Public recognition of her performance style and her repertoire of traditional and original songs developed as a result of her appearance at the 1963 Newport Folk festival, an engagement arranged by folklorists Archie Green and Ellen Steckert. At that point she directly influenced Joan Baez and Bob Dylan, trendsetters for the popular folksong revival which Neil Rosenberg has dubbed the "great boom" of the late 1950s through mid 1960s in *Transforming Tradition: Folk Music Revivals Examined* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1993). Successful festival engagements, concert appearances, and commercial recordings continued until Gunning's death in comfortable circumstances in her home state of Kentucky in 1983.

The final section of this work, "Music, Politics, and Women's Resistance," compares the sisters' work from political and gender perspectives. Aside from their personality differences — Molly boisterous, boastful, crafty and demanding, Sarah, humble, congenial, and even-tempered — Romalis argues that both were "paradigms of the radical and the traditional." (195) That is, they both learned traditional songs at an early age in tradition-directed environments and eventually used this knowledge in socially conscious ways to fashion original songs of resistance. What distinguished the sisters was that for Molly, tradition was shaped by an ideological image of working-class life as envisaged by the Communist Party. In contrast to the uses of tradition in that folksong revival, the folk boom emphasized style, specifics of sound and movement, as popular commodity, over ideological content.

With regard to gender evaluation, Romalis effectively employs Temma

Kaplan's "Female Consciousness and Collective Action," *Signs* 7.3, 1982 (545-566), distinction between "feminist" (unequal power relations) and "female" (social concerns and survival from a gender perspective) consciousness in arguing that like the 19th-century labour legend Mother Jones (Mary Harris Jones), Aunt Molly Jackson may not have overtly challenged gender equality, but what is more to the point, she "manipulated gender symbols" to achieve radical ends, thereby intertwining class and gender issues. Jackson's adaptation of traditional lyrics in "Poor Miner's Farewell," and the sisters' original song "Dreadful Memories" about sick and dying children, bolster this observation.

This cursory summary of an interesting and detailed work hardly does it justice. As a folklorist, I was most fascinated with Romalis's insightful thoughts on singers, scholars and activists. For instance, her description of the great folksong collector Alan Lomax as a political activist who deliberately falsified data in order to heighten "authenticity" is a real eye-opener. As Romalis states, Lomax "shaped authenticity in his role as an advocate — for him the ends — the positive social consequences — justified the means." (165) My criticisms of this work are minor. Perhaps my greatest dismay is that like so many publications in the social sciences today, the author agonizes excessively over the issue of representational authority and her role in constructing the lives she portrays. While this concern is extremely important, it appears that some authors believe that one cannot be politically correct without dramatizing their angst. At the conclusion of the book Romalis goes so far as to present a fictive interview with Aunt Molly Jackson in which the latter lambastes the author for not knowing anything about her songs! Beyond this, the text sometimes meanders in inappropriate directions (did she really have to tell us all about her Toronto sing-along circle?) And at a time when students of folksong are using the less loaded

and broader phrase "vernacular song," her definitional discussion of the former term appears dated. Notwithstanding these quibbles, this book must be viewed as a substantial, readable contribution to our understanding of topical song, society, and the politics of culture. It will be a useful text for courses in folklore and cultural studies.

Peter Narváez
Memorial University of Newfoundland

Jane S. Becker, *Selling Tradition: Appalachia and the Construction of an American Folk 1930-1940* (Chapel Hill, North Carolina: The University of North Carolina Press 1998)

FOR MOST OF THE 20TH CENTURY, the Appalachian region of the southern United States has existed in the popular imagination as the central repository of the values, ways, and means of an earlier, simpler, more innocent time. The details of this temporally distant period are never precisely articulated but, suffice it to say, collectively they conjure up the hegemonic image of America's "folk" heritage. In *Selling Tradition: Appalachia and the Construction of an American Folk 1930-1940*, author Jane Becker systematically unpacks the nexus of cultural, social, and industrial politics that were at play in the construction of this mythology. The results speak volumes about issues of gender, race, regionality, exploitation of labour and, ultimately, the construction of meanings.

The story is fascinating from beginning to end. With roots in the late 19th century-activities of the Arts and Craft movement; by the early 1930s a full-fledged folk revival had begun to capture the imagination of America's urban middle class. Through the efforts of settlement houses, schools, the government, national entrepreneurs and eventually museums, art galleries, and department stores, the Appalachian South — socially, culturally, and economically light years

removed from the realities of urban life — was gradually reified as a land unchanged by time, a supposed living archetype of the roots of contemporary America. The fact that these roots were localized in a culture that was virtually totally Anglo-Saxon does not appear to have been questioned by anyone. Instead it provided comfort to those members of the urban middle class, not so coincidentally also largely Anglo-Saxon, who increasingly found themselves alienated from an ethnically diverse urban underclass.

This movement coalesced with the founding in 1929 of the Southern Highland Handicraft Guild, which Becker describes as "a loose federation of craft-producing centers and schools." (73) The purpose of the Guild was to organize and give direction to southern mountain women who, in the words of one of its early influential members, Winogene Redding, "had no background of how other people lived and [how] what they made in their homes could be used in somebody else's home." (73) Redding and others taught the mountain people various crafts (Redding was a weaving teacher and founder of the Weavers Guild) and then instructed them, in her case on the weaving of specific designs, on what would sell in northern urban markets. The Guild routinely hired professional designers and marketers who were connected to the Northern-based fashion and interior decorating magazines, retail operations, and museums to advise Appalachian craft producers as to what colours, patterns, and designs of quilts, hooked rugs, cane chairs, and tufted bedspreads should be produced for the market. The net result was commodities whose only relationship to southern culture was the actual labour that produced the finished product. Despite this, such commodities were carefully marketed as being "authentic" items identical to those routinely used in Appalachian homes.

The government also saw mountaineers as "uncivilized primitives in need of ... salvation" (107) and to that end were

interested in inculcating in the locals the structures, methods, and goals of corporate capitalism. Various government agencies (most notably the Tennessee Valley Authority) attempted to introduce mechanization and standardization into the world of craft producers. While the goal might have been to make the region more economically self-sufficient, as Becker rightly understands the issue, this was *partially* a struggle between "culturally-oriented" female craft producers (over 90 per cent of the craft producers were women) and male bureaucrats whose sole interest was rational production and strategic marketing. Ironically, this led to a situation where the vast majority of southern craft producers were simply copying over and over the same patterns that had been provided them by New York-based professional designers via one or another manufacturing company. For a variety of reasons potters were never brought into this system and, consequently, Appalachian pottery was regularly criticized for its uniqueness and actual authenticity! Ultimately what was being marketed to urban America was a standardized and invented contemporary Appalachia that supposedly represented what was actually a non-existent past. All of this was in the service of northern corporate capitalism and the psycho-cultural desires of the urban middle class who, in the consumption of such *handcrafted* goods, could embrace a series of values supposedly inherent in a non-mechanized past while giving up none of the benefits of the increasingly technological present and future.

An integral part of this fraud was the condition under which such crafts were produced. While the Guild propagated the myth that the crafts were made in the mountaineers' leisure time just as they had been since time immemorial, the reality was that the goods were produced under what the Department of Labor's Women's Bureau termed "sweatshop conditions." Day in and day out individual crafts women worked long hours,

often having to make alternative arrangements for household chores and child care, and endured considerable stress producing goods that had little or no connection to their lives for meagre financial recompense. The economic conditions of the region provided little alternative to playing along with the game. The craft producers routinely assumed both the direct (transportation) and indirect (warehousing) costs that *rightly* should have been born by the manufacturing company. Working out of their homes meant that for years they enjoyed virtually no protection from the government, even after the enactment of the Fair Labor Standards Act in 1938. Despite intensive pressure from the Women's Bureau of the Department of Labor, due to the fact that the labour force was overwhelmingly female, government agencies did not see the craft producers' situation as one of overwhelming importance.

Becker has done a superb job of marshaling evidence from a wealth of primary sources including the papers of various central actors in both the making and selling of these so-called traditions, the archives of the Southern Highland Handicraft Guild, the records of the Tennessee Valley Authority, and the papers of the Department of Labor's Women's Bureau. In the process she continuously draws out just how constructed this whole phenomenon was. Seemingly no aspect was either innocent or neutral.

Especially insightful is Becker's investigation into the symbiotic role played by museums and department stores in investing Appalachian handicrafts with some of the values normally attached to fine art. The result, no less than the efforts of the domestic magazine industry, helped create an image of these goods in the urban imagination that directly fed the interests of corporate America. In the process, the actual Southern mountaineers became increasingly invisible. Their presence could only complicate the unfettered consumption of the objects they produced by the urban middle class. Becker

makes this especially clear in her discussion of Great Smokey Mountain National Park. She states unequivocally that "the National Park Service showed a market preference for indigenous handicrafts as symbols of mountain life over real local inhabitants, whose presence might confront tourists with some unpleasant realities of contemporary life in the region." (219-220) In fact, the National Park Service systematically made sure that the locals had absolutely zero physical presence within the park. The Southern Highlands Handicraft Guild was complicit in this in that it became the conduit, rather than the actual mountaineers, via which souvenirs would be placed within the park system of concessions.

If I have one overriding criticism of the book it is the fact that, to my way of thinking, Becker underplays the extent to which this construction of an American Folk was conceived in racialized terms. While she touches on the issue of race at three or four points of the text, I would like to have seen an expanded discussion of the racial contexts of both Appalachian and Southern handicraft production in general. For example, after finishing the book I am left wondering when, where, and how did Southern African-American handicrafts (which similarly include quilt making and chair caning) enter the marketplace and the museum and art gallery scenes. How are the presence of these African-American artifacts in folklore centers and at institutions such as the Smithsonian reconciled with the continued imaging of a vague Anglo-Saxon Appalachian core of a national American folk heritage?

This criticism aside, Becker should be commended for a detailed debunking of the construction and lived reality of one of the most dominant and cherished myths of Americana which continues to have resonance into the present.

Rob Bowman
York University

Sanford Jacoby, *Modern Manors: Welfare Capitalism Since the New Deal*. (Princeton: Princeton University Press 1997)

IN *MODERN MANORS*, Sanford Jacoby analyzes how three major American companies — Kodak, Sears Roebuck, and Thompson Products (later Thompson-Ramo-Wooldridge or TRW), nurtured and maintained their union-free status for most of the current century through the adoption and elaboration of welfare capitalism. It is a richly documented, award-winning book (garnering the Philip Taft Prize for the best book in US labour history for 1998), with a set of highly-persuasive arguments, including two which hold significant lessons for workers, unions, companies, and anyone else interested in the historical and current struggles between labour and capital. First, when companies go to great lengths and expense to win the trust and loyalty of their respective workforces (while simultaneously demonstrating their equally consistent and insistent beliefs that unionism was not right for their companies), they can be successful in their efforts to win that loyalty and defeat unionism. Second, in the American context, the successes of major firms like Kodak, Sears Roebuck, and TRW, paved the way for the gradual defeat of the union model by the welfare capitalist model from the late 1940s to the present.

Jacoby begins his book by addressing the fairly standard belief that welfare capitalism in the US came to a screeching halt in the 1930s when large corporate capital understood that it did not require the bread and circuses of welfare policies and programs to meet the needs of its workforces and hold off the spectre of unionism. According to Jacoby, this scenario is not quite what took place. Instead of being "dead and gone," welfare capitalism went "underground" in the 1930s where it reshaped itself. This transformation took three forms: the continued search for, and implementation of, "hard"

and "soft" welfare programs that buttressed "employment" rather than job security; the active incorporation of and utilization of social science-based ideas and methods such as attitude surveys and nondirective interviewing with the express purpose of ferreting out the belief and thoughts of their workforces to promote worker identity with their employers and to undermine unionism; and a decidedly more public/political face to promoting welfare capitalism, strengthening private enterprise, and enlarging the non-union sector in American industry. How each of Kodak, Sears Roebuck, and TRW contributed to the development of these aspects of welfare capitalism takes up the remainder of Jacoby's book.

By the 1920s everyone who owned a camera was aware of Kodak. Started in 1881 in Rochester, New York, Kodak grew to become one of "the largest and most profitable firms in the United States" by the 1930s. By this time Kodak was also among the leaders in the welfare capitalism movement in the United States — a position stemming from personal views of founder and majority owner, George Eastman, who believed it important to treat employees well, from Eastman's ever-increasing personal wealth which allowed him ample financial room for workplace and external philanthropy, and, most importantly, from the expense, the techniques, and the secrets attached to the labour process of making photographic film. "The plant's film-making machines," Jacoby writes, "were costly to stop and start, and thus operated continuously. Were a labour dispute ever to have shut down the plant, it could have inflicted serious damage to Kodak's revenues and profits."

It was factors such as these that "led Kodak to spend substantial sums to secure the loyalty of its workforce." The first steps in this direction were taken in 1897 when the company introduced an employee suggestion system with a monthly prize, followed over the years with the introduction of dining halls, smoking and

reading rooms, an assembly hall for concerts and dances, as well as the establishment of a comprehensive recreation program. In the 1920s, Kodak added a sickness plan, a medical department, a "contractual, nondiscretionary and fully insured" pension plan (introduced mainly because it "would retire workers after ... their period of usefulness and replace them with more efficient workers"), and two departments which looked after securing housing lots and mortgages for Kodak employees. "Employees should be encouraged to buy their own homes," Eastman told his industrial relations chief that "nothing stabilizes a work force like having them own real estate."

Along side these programs were two others that arguably had greater long-term impact in securing the loyalty of Kodak employees. The first was the introduction in 1912 of a profit-sharing program tied to stock dividends and paid to workers on the basis of their annual earnings and length of service — the latter aspect having the important employment stabilizing effect of holding workers to their jobs. The second program, instituted in the 1920s and designed to ease shop floor tensions and enhance employees' perception of Kodak as a good and fair employer, eliminated the powers of the foreman to directly fire a worker. Now, workers were to be "sent to the employment manger with a written disciplinary report. The manger was allowed to rescind the discharge and reassign workers to other jobs." At the same time a complaint system was put in place that allowed workers to "freely state and discuss any complaints or grievances and whereby same can receive considerate, unprejudiced, and prompt attention."

Why did company "spend so much time and money on its welfare programs?" According to Jacoby, apart from the financial incentives that made it cheaper for employers "to give workers fringe benefits than to have them purchase it privately," there was the company's "implicit contract with [its] em-

ployees" that in "return for steady work and excellent benefits, the company asked employees to keep company secrets, accept technological change, trust their supervisors, and stay away from unions." Workers did, it seems, adhere to each of these company wishes. With regard to unions, Kodak did not confront any real threat until the 1940s when the United Electrical Workers (UE) made efforts to organize sections of its Rochester workforce. This attempt was answered by the company through wage increases, a retiming of work standards, the opening of a new cafeteria, and the payment of a record wage dividend. As Jacoby writes: "The drive ended ... and nothing more was heard of the UE at Kodak." (91) (Much to the chagrin of Kodak management one Kodak plant just outside Toronto was organized during this period.)

While in a very different sector, service, and under different organizational pressures, a far-flung set of department stores with different types of employees, for example, mail order and retail, the content of Sears's welfare capitalist measures was strikingly similar to that of Kodak. First, like the film processing giant, Sears attended to the employment security desires of its workforce. Consistently strong economic performance allowed for this. Second, the company provided a full measure of standard welfare policies and practices, with the "weightiest" being profit-sharing and which gained the reputation as being "one of the nation's most generous." In contrast to Kodak's, this profit-sharing plan operated as a pension plan designed, company president Robert E. Wood declared, "to encourage savings and stability." But this was "hoopla," Jacoby suggests. The major purpose of the profit sharing plan was to "keep employees around until mandatory retirement and then ease them out of the door with an annuity." Some workers understood how the plan kept them somewhat helplessly glued to the company. As one worker related in the 1940s the profit-sharing system was a good thing "but they

take advantage of it terrifically. They know damn well that that's the only thing that keeps most of the people on here. If it weren't for that turnover would be terrific." (109) Sears let it be known that if a union ever darkened its doors, the profit-sharing plan would be terminated. As one labour organizer stated, this was the "golden handcuffs approach" to employment stability.

Sears's welfare capitalist measures did not stop here. Indeed, company efforts to promote loyalty and control their workforce were extended through the systematic use of attitude surveys and nondirective interviewing. According to Sears management, such methods were benign in their intent: they were used simply as a means of gauging and judging the "morale" of its workforce and then acting to rectify any problems or dissatisfactions such surveys and interviews uncovered. Jacoby's interpretation, however, differs from that of Sears management. For him, such practices were, and to this day are, used by Sears management for purposes more subtle and insidious than simply attempting to "deal with [morale] problems before they kindled pro-union sentiments." Rather, Jacoby writes, the "program was clearly deceptive and manipulative (nondirective interviewing, for example, sought to change an employee's behaviour without his or her knowledge or consent.)" (140)

Sears was thus at the forefront of utilizing the methods of the social sciences in its efforts to operate its business free from external encumbrances like unions. In the end, however, as the continual struggles with unions (principally the CIO's Retail, Wholesale Department Store Employees' Union) indicate, not all of Sears employees were won over to the notion that the company was the best representative of their interests. Female employees, for example, had many points of discontent with their jobs and their opportunities for advancement. This was due to the consistent and systematic favouritism shown to male employees who enjoyed greater

benefits than female employees. Men were also given the "big ticket" jobs that allowed them the opportunity to earn higher incomes through commissions. Men's longer-service with the company, large numbers of female employees were part time and women were let go when they married, also meant that the company's welfare programs, especially the profit-sharing program, benefitted them to a much larger degree than women. So, too, Sears managers turned a blind eye to their male employees tactics of resistance and discrimination regarding female employees who desired to move into the better-paying and career-enhancing jobs. This form of male solidarity worked to the company's clear advantage in dividing one group of employees against another.

The third company examined by Jacoby — TRW — adds an industrial manufacturer to the mix of processor and retailer. Founded in Cleveland in 1901 by Charles Thompson, the company initially manufactured auto parts for new and used cars but expanded its product line into the aircraft engine parts during World War I and jet aircraft and missiles after World War II. A mass production plant with a "high division of labor," TRW's workforce was consciously composed of a mixture of men from "more than a dozen ethnic groups which prevented any one of them from constituting a majority." This mixture did not, however, include black men and black or white women — a situation that changed only during World War II when a shortage of white men forced the company to alter its policies and large numbers of women and black men were hired on at TRW.

Crawford brought this "hodgepodge" of workers together by promoting the image of the company as a "brotherhood" where all workers, regardless of their job, were friends and workers. He kept his finger on the pulse of his workers by walking around the plants as much as time allowed him — a practice he insisted other senior management indulge in as well, and by the regular use of large-scale

attitude surveys described by Crawford as a way for him "to get into the shop and swap ideas." Again, the underlying rationale for such surveys was quite different than what was put forward in Crawford's public pronouncements. For, along with revealing departmental and worker discontent, "the company's major objectives were promoting catharsis — 'getting things out in the open' — and creating the impression that malcontents were a minority."

As with Kodak and Sears, however, it was the "hard" welfare measures that were more important to securing the loyalty and cohesion of TRW workers. One of these measures was the company's establishment of group bonuses. Reminiscent of modern-day teams, workers were paid on the basis of an hourly rate plus the amount of work put out by members of that workers' group. Unlike contemporary work groups or teams which characteristically number in the tens, work groups at Thompson "typically included 60 to 125 workers" with some reaching 400 in number. By the 1940s "group bonuses accounted for more than 20 per cent of employees earnings." A second "hard" benefit related to seniority, with the firm displaying strong support for its long-term employees. All things being relatively equal, those workers with long-term service got the better, higher-paying jobs, and, in the event of layoffs, kept their jobs.

As opposed to Kodak and Sears, however, these welfare capitalist measures did not completely spare TRW from the reality of unionism. From the 1930s through to the end of the next decade, TRW used all of its resources — including the rampant, illegal use of company unions — to combat UAW efforts to organize its plants in Cleveland, Detroit, and Toledo, Ohio. When the dust settled at the end of the 1940s, TRW emerged bruised but essentially unbroken: the UAW had organized its plants in Detroit and Toledo, but were unsuccessful in the more important production centre of Cleveland. This

outcome set the stage for future TRW industrial relations policy in that any new plants opened in the 1950s and beyond came with company unions and many of the accompanying welfare capitalist policies and programs. More than Kodak and Sears, TRW had survived the onslaught of industrial unionism and the lessons learned were as important to like-minded employers as were those offered by Kodak and Sears.

The final chapters of the book take up these lessons. Throughout the 1950s and 1960s, company officials from each of Kodak, Sears, and TRW used their experience and their positions as important corporate players to actively and successfully change labour laws in the United States, from Taft Hartley in 1947 to alterations in *Labor Board* guidelines allowing the company to make partisan representations to their employees during union organizing drives. As importantly, they responded to union demands for more expansive benefit programs (both in terms of levels and kinds) by pressing the various constituents of corporate US through organizations such as the National Assembly of Manufacturers to adopt pension plans, health plans, and the like. Company-based plans, advocates like Kodak's Marion Folsom argued, would give workers a minimum level of protection and service while simultaneously safeguarding private enterprise from the anticipated incursions associated with the welfare state. In these ways, companies in the welfare capitalist realm were instrumental in enlarging the economic, political, and social boundaries and legitimacy of capitalist production in the 1950s and 1960s — boundaries that had been challenged by industrial and a revitalized craft unionism in the 1930s and 1940s.

As these developments and processes indicate, American capitalists quickly became very impatient with the many restrictions of unionism. This impatience only grew when the new realities of an emerging global economy washed up on

US shores in the 1960s and 1970s. Unionized firms began to openly chafe under the perceived restrictions of unions. According to Jacoby, the "web of rules" characteristic of unionized workplaces (for example, job classifications, job ownership, seniority) placed significant roadblocks in the way of companies responding to the new dynamics of international competition. Indeed, these companies found the path to "flexibility" strewn with resistance and lethargy.

We know the story of the defeat/decline of American unionism in the 1970s and 1980s. Hundreds of thousands of unionized workers lost their jobs in the orgy of downsizing and modernization and closures and relocations that took place during this period. But these were simply the more obvious manifestations and odious results of American industry's search for solutions to the crisis of capital accumulation. Another set of developments took their cue from the experiences of companies like Kodak, Sears, and TRW by adopting "human resource" policies and programs that had their bases in the welfare capitalist models and human relations theories of the 1930s. In this vein, it is fair to say, as Jacoby does, that the schemes of worker participation and workplace teams so popular today took as much from the examples of firms like TRW as they did from Japan — or they could have if they had looked in their own backyards.

Such experimentation did not take place right across the board. Rather, it was the non-union sector that "proved to be better suited than its [unionized] rival to the postindustrial realities of the 1970s and 1980s." It was also this sector where the behavioural sciences made the greatest headway and impact. According to Jacoby, the reasons for this lay partly in the resistance put up by unions to the use of attitude surveys who worried about their intended use. Jacoby tells the story of one union official who told a conference of personnel experts: "Whereas you gentlemen present yourselves to the

workers as specialists and as technicians and as detached professionals, they sort of chew at the end of their cigars, or spit after they have swallowed a little tobacco from the end of their cigarettes, and say, 'Yes, but who is paying you.' This hostility was "ill-timed," according to Jacoby, since it meant that unions failed to appreciate that the increasingly educated, female, white-collar workforce was attracted to the "personal and participative orientation" of the behavioural science influenced non-union sector. When, in the 1970s unions finally began to pay attention to the "quality of working life," it was a case of too little, too late. Indeed, the "new non-union model" was striking in how similar it was to the practices identified by Jacoby as defining modern welfare capitalism.

The final argument in this superbly researched and argued book is precisely that modern welfare capitalism emerged as the most dynamic model of labour capital relations because where its policies and practices were pursued vigorously and consistently, it was able to offer workers what they wanted and needed. In the years directly after the New Deal this was employment and post-employment economic security. In the new era of postindustrial capitalism, it is a workplace that is free of adversarialism and that is open to, recognizes, and rewards, the cut and thrust of individual achievement. There is little or no room in this scenario for promotion via seniority or pay and benefit increases coming via the signing of collective agreements.

Reading this book leaves much to ponder. One can question Jacoby's analysis regarding how workers at each of Kodak, Sears, and TRW really received the overall ideological message of their employers. This is especially difficult to discern in the case of Kodak as Jacoby does not provide much first-hand information on the perceptions and attitudes of these workers regarding that company's efforts to win their loyalty. If Kodak did not know the value of these programs, neither

do we. This query is of less significance in the cases of Sears and TRW where we do learn more about worker responses to their welfare capitalist practices. In both instances, the loyalties of workers were secured only after battles with unions — a fact which suggests that workers do make deeply personal and potentially long-term choices even if those choices are made in contexts where the forces of persuasion and coercion fundamentally favour one side over the other.

Robert Storey
McMaster University

Harvey Klehr, John Earl Haynes, and Kyrill M. Anderson, *The Soviet World of American Communism* (New Haven: Yale University Press 1998)

WITH *The Soviet World of American Communism*, Harvey Klehr, John Earl Haynes, and Kyrill Anderson reinvigorate the debate over the nature of American communism, arguing that, in some all-consuming fashion, "the American Communist party was a creature of the Comintern and, through it, of the Soviet Union." (2) Like the first volume in the *Annals of Communism* series, *The Soviet World of American Communism*, this second volume of a projected fourteen depends heavily on archival collections from Moscow's Russian Center for the Preservation and Study of Documents of Recent History (RtshKhIDNI). This time, Klehr, Haynes, and Anderson use these sources to document the subservient relationship the American party had with the Soviet Union, concluding that their evidence provides a clearer rationale for American anti-communism. (356)

The authors have carefully selected and annotated 95 documents to paint a static picture of the American Communist party's unwavering loyalty to the Soviet Union from its formation in 1919 through the Soviet Union's 1991 breakup. Punctuating their narrative with these documents, which range from party memos

and financial statements to CPUSA members' applications to leave the United States for the Soviet Union, these authors show how Comintern officials selected CPUSA leaders and determined CPUSA policies, even in the 1930s when revisionist scholars believe the American party was at its most independent and democratic. They reveal the extent of Moscow's financial assistance to the American party from 1919 through the 1980s and also document the presence of Comintern representatives in the United States and CPUSA delegates in the Soviet Union from 1919 through the 1940s. Concerning the latter group, the authors highlight the experiences of those American communists who died in the Soviet Union during Stalin's purges in a section entitled the "Great Land of Socialism."

To Klehr, Haynes, and Anderson the most important and tragic aspect of American communism is the American party's subservient relationship to the international Communist party in general and Stalin and the Soviet Union in particular. But their methodology mars their argument. By presenting only selected, high-level documents, the authors skew their results in favour of the highest strata of the party and overstate their conclusions. While the relationship of the American party's national leadership to the international communist movement makes American communism unique, the authors ignore the complexity inherent in that relationship. A fuller elucidation of this relationship would create a more balanced understanding of American communism.

In fact, documents from RtsKhIDNI that come from the party at the local level suggest alternative interpretations of its relationship with the Comintern. Local party records show that rank-and-file communists were often less interested in high-level debates than they were in organizing within their own local arena — be they trade unionists, unemployed council members, or civil rights advocates. By focusing only on the party's

leadership, the authors fail to see the creative ability of locally-based activists to forge practical and widely supported solutions to very real problems. For example, by limiting their documentation to Moscow's changing line on the American Communist party's trade union policies, Klehr, Haynes, and Anderson can comfortably assert that the Comintern determined the end of the American party's venture into revolutionary, dual unions organized by the Trade Union Unity League (TUUL). Yet, Chicago party sources reveal that local pressures and politics convinced communist trade unionists to leave the TUUL before the Comintern agreed to this action. Local party organizers also led the way into the Congress of Industrial Organizations. These examples show that party policy was not merely imposed from the top, but also was established through the experience and activity of party trade unionists. Local shifts that predated Comintern policy changes also occurred in the Chicago party's unemployment activities and in its youth organizing because activists on the local level were a dynamic part of the social conflicts of the day. Of course, one should not infer from these examples that Comintern approval was irrelevant. In fact, American party leader Gil Green went to Moscow to argue the merits of such premature "Popular Frontism." Instead, these examples suggest that the nature of the relationship between the American party and the Comintern was simply more complicated than Klehr, Haynes, and Anderson allow. Russian sources show this to be true not only in the arena of labour unions, but also in women's activities, and organizing among African Americans and white ethnic groups.

While Klehr, Haynes, and Anderson remind us of the special place the Soviet Union held for American communists and the tragic result of that relationship, *The Soviet World of American Communism* remains unbalanced. Not only do its authors fail to document alternative ways

that communists thought about the international movement of which they were a part, they also disregard important recent scholarship on the Communist party. For example Kevin McDermott and Jeremy Agnew's *The Comintern: A History of International Communism From Lenin to Stalin* published in 1997 documents the complexity of political wrangling within the Comintern. Ignoring such a study allows the editors to imply that the Comintern was a uniform, monolithic entity. They fail to explain how Comintern policies were determined and whether its decision-making processes changed over time. In the volume's "Selected Readings," its authors disregard all of the post-1970s scholarship that examines the American Communist party from the local level, suggesting alternative interpretations to the question of the American party's relationship to the Comintern.

Clearly, the Klehr-Haynes school has not yet created a complete "portrait" of American communism. Yet discussions with scholars outside of their school indicate that we are getting closer to such a synthesis. One hopes that while recognizing the special relationship that existed between the American Communist party and the Comintern, scholars of the party will shift their focus away from vindicating anti-communism and place it more clearly on understanding the motivations, experiences, successes, and failures of American communists. Only then can we hope to create a scholarly history of American communism.

The end of the Cold War brought Soviet leaders to make public formerly classified papers of the Comintern and its member organizations, including those of the United States. Such a turn of events has offered scholars of the Communist Party of the United States an unprecedented opportunity to scrutinize former conclusions concerning the nature of American communism; to explain the relationships that existed among rank-and-file communist activities, the American Communist party, and the international

party; and to offer fresh interpretations that would capture the complexity of American communism. The result of Klehr's, Haynes's, and Anderson's political agenda is that this volume forges ahead with the same questionable methodology as its predecessor, offering simple interpretations of a complex world.

Randi Storch
SUNY, Cortland College

Amy Kiste Nyberg, *Seal of Approval: The History of the Comics Code* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi 1998)

THE 1950s CAMPAIGNS against "crime" and "horror" comic books were, arguably, among the most important of all censorship movements of the 20th century. Occurring simultaneously in more than twenty countries, carried on waves of media moralism and blinkered indignation, they led in some cases to outbreaks of book-burning, in other cases to laws banning whole genres of publication. Yet compared with other fields of censorship, for example, film or literature, until recently the campaigns have remained largely unresearched — except by nostalgic or angry fans, trying to find out what they had lost and how they had lost it. This book adds in some significant ways to our knowledge. How much fuller it makes our understanding of the phenomena is less clear.

The core of Nyberg's book is a narrative of a number of key aspects of the American comics campaign. Beginning from the general moralistic stance taken towards publications for children, which inevitably spilled over onto comic books almost from their inception, she traces the steps that led, by 1954, to a regime of strict self-regulation in the comics industry. Her tale is very telling. She offers a detailed account of the thought of the central figure in the American campaign, Fredric Wertham, drawing on materials that have only recently become available from the Wertham archive. As James Gil-

bert in his *A Cycle of Outrage* (1986) has also shown, Wertham is a highly complex figure, combining a liberal passion which made him, for example, a key spokesperson against educational segregation with elements of Frankfurt School pessimism about mass culture. His crusade against the comics brought these two sides of his politics into a curious liaison.

Although Nyberg does not play close attention to the structures and organization of the comics industry itself as Matthew McAllister usefully did in his essay in *Journal of Communication* (1990), she does nonetheless judiciously show that the industry was already in decline by 1950. A number of publishers were already going to the wall, even before Wertham's campaign started to bite. Others—Dell, most particularly—refused to associate themselves with a "lower class" of publishers, and thereby weakened publishers' capacity to resist. In telling the tale of the 1954 Senate Hearings into comics books and delinquency, and the resultant self-regulation Code, her research clarifies many things about the motives and conduct of particular participants. For instance, she has uncovered a series of exchanges between Senator Hendrickson, who chaired the first stages of the Senate Hearings, and William Gaines, conservative anarchist publisher of the most important comics of the period, the EC line and the publisher most harmed by the anti-comics crusades. These recently uncovered documents give us a rich picture of the mutual incomprehension of the two sides.

But some of Nyberg's interpretations are less convincing. In defending Wertham against instant dismissal, she claims for him qualities that are hard to substantiate. She argues that in a number of ways Wertham prefigures more modern concerns about the mass media, for example, in his concern about representations of gender and sexuality. Nyberg goes further: "Wertham's ideological analysis, while relatively unsophisticated, would not be out of place in the company of

media scholarship that addresses many of the same issues. Another area in which Wertham might be considered a pioneer is that of audience analysis." (95) Here, Nyberg references modern ethnographic investigations. This is very troubling. First, as a number of us have argued, Wertham systematically distorted—to the point of virtually lying about—the materials he claimed to analyze. Second, his psychotherapeutic sessions with young offenders on which he based his claims about the effects of comics bears only the thinnest relation to modern ethnographic research—whose methods were already in this period well developed in the hands of cultural anthropologists.

Part of the problem is Nyberg's own attitude to comic books and their narratives. She does reproduce and usefully discuss one famous EC strip, "The Whipping," which dealt in startling and almost social-realist fashion with racial prejudice. She rightly sides with Gaines in his counter-attack on Wertham's crude and false characterization of this. But beyond this, she simply adopts their own terms for describing the comics: were they "harmless entertainment," as Gaines insisted, or was it, as Wertham felt, that exposure to the "unintentional messages" would over time "build up a social context in which children learned to accept, if not to imitate, the violence?" (73) This is a very narrow reading of the analytic options, and ignores so much of the very fruitful work that precisely constitutes modern "ideological analysis."

Nyberg's main complaint is that the Comics Code, and the complicity of the publishers in its limitations, has restricted comics to "children's fare," and thus restrained the overall creativity of comic book artists and writers. That's a fair point—but surely only as a starter. It surely needs a wider understanding of the modern construction of "childhood" and of what is allowed to that (as Mark West well did in his *Children, Culture and Controversy* (1988)), and the wider ideo-

logical role of conceptions of childhood. Beyond these, I suspect we will need to consider the comics campaigns in quite different terms, in particular for the way these comic books arose from, but abrasively encountered, a set of hopes and fears engendered out of post-World War II reconstruction. No intra-industry narrative can be a sufficient ground for this.

For those who do not know the important story of the 1950s campaign, this book will enlighten. For those who know the story and wish to expand their understanding of it, it must be read alongside other contributions.

Martin Barker
University of Sussex

David Burner, *Making Peace with the 60s*. (Princeton: Princeton University Press 1996)

OVER THE PAST SEVERAL YEARS, Princeton University Press has published some of the finest studies of modern American history, from Steve Fraser's and Gary Gerstle's *The Rise and the Fall of the New Deal Order* to Thomas Sugrue's *The Origins of the Urban Crisis: Race and Inequality in Postwar Detroit*. Recently, Princeton's editors announced a new series on 20th-century America, which, based upon its list of forthcoming titles, holds great promise. David Burner's *Making Peace with the 60s*, unfortunately, falls short of the high standards set by these other works.

As Burner writes, this is not a "general history of the 1960s." (10) Instead, Burner strings together a series of essays on many of the most prominent themes of the era, from "The Cold War Under Kennedy" and "The Poverty Wars," to "The Student Rebellion" and "The Rucksack Revolution." Based upon his laudatory discussion of Richard Hofstadter's works, one suspects that Burner sought to bridge the gap between narrative and analysis. Yet lacking Hofstadter's stylistic genius and unable to achieve the

"apartness of the academy" (135), which Burner finds so admirable in Hofstadter's works, Burner fails to produce a study that will satisfy the needs and desires of either the general audience or the specialist.

The strongest chapter of the book, "The Liberals' War in Vietnam," nicely summarizes the central principles of America's cold war policies and the ways in which the Vietnam War reflected an "unfolding" (189) of these principles. Combining a concise description of America's deepening commitment in Vietnam with adept commentary on the efficacy, or lack thereof, of the Kennedy and Johnson administrations' actions, Burner's discussion is both readable and reasonable. His section on the rise of the antiwar movement is solid as well. In contrast, his section on the rebellion at Columbia University lacks balance and clarity. It suffers from too much immediacy, overemphasizing the significance of the episode, particularly in comparison to events that Burner does not discuss.

The most controversial chapter, "Killers of the Dream," examines black power. Burner minces few words here. Beginning with Paul Tillich's statement, "sin is separation," Burner judges black power a "disaster." Black power "muddled the goals of civil rights. It seriously diminished the support ... of the white community that black progress required. Above all it trampled on a persuasion of nonviolence, civil disobedience, and integration that had been the heroism, the glory, and the promise of the early movement." (49-50) To support this interpretation, Burner emphasizes Malcolm X's "swaggering vocabulary of violence," and the ways in which Stockley Carmichael, H. Rap Brown, and other black militants became "intoxicated" (Burner's words) with their own language. Saving his most damning criticism for the Black Panther Party, Burner emphasizes black power's male chauvinism, which led black militants to portray women as

"bitches" and "bimbos" and to subordinate the needs of women to men. (73)

While some of Burner's views serve as an understandable counter to much of the overly romantic material on the Panthers that has been published, paradoxically, the chapter suffers from many of the same maladies that Burner finds most offensive about black power itself. Burner does not adequately place black power within proper historical context. He spends too little time outlining many of the specific practical goals of SNCC and the Black Panther Party, from electing black officials in the South to overcoming wanton police malfeasance in the North. At times Burner blames black militants for the whole gambit of current social problems without clearly establishing why black power deserves the blame. For example, he notes that there are currently more blacks in jail or on parole than in college, presumably because of the ideology of black power as opposed to de-industrialization, particular drug enforcement policies, and other recent factors.

Put differently, Burner seems too intent on "making peace" or having his say on many of the controversies of the 1960s rather than with understanding the turbulence of the era. The book also suffers from Burner's uneven attention to details. At times it is picayune; at other times blatantly inaccurate. For example, Burner carefully writes that the March on Washington assembled in front of "*Daniel Chester French's* Lincoln Memorial [my emphasis]." But then he gets the order of the speeches made in front of the memorial wrong. While some of Burner's contemporaries may applaud his candour, those in search of a detached and reliable work on the era will have to look elsewhere.

Peter B. Levy
York College, Pennsylvania

Michael Hicks, *Sixties Rock: Garage, Psychedelic, and Other Satisfactions* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press 1999)

ONE OF THE TRADITIONAL weaknesses of popular music scholarship has been the lack of attention to musical sound. While our bookshelves bow with high theory reflections on the social function of popular culture, literary analysis of rock lyrics, and social histories of the music industry, until recently few scholars have focused on the musical sound itself. There are several reasons for this. The analytic apparatus used to study Western art music are notoriously incompatible with most kinds of pop, and some, but certainly not all, pop music movements espouse a romantic, anti-intellectual ideology. Perhaps most importantly, past music scholars often believed that pop music was unworthy of study. As ethnomusicology and folklore began to make inroads into music departments (and as a generation of music scholars raised on rock have begun to take their place in the academy), the elitist dismissal of popular music has begun to wane. Studies by music scholars such as Stan Hawkins, Alan Moore, Robert Walser, Sheila Whiteley, and myself have begun to analyze the structure of popular songs and use that analysis to gain deeper insights into the social and political meanings of the music. Michael Hicks' new book, *Sixties Rock*, makes some useful contributions to this project. While many readers of *Labour/Le Travail* may wish that Hicks spent more time connecting the music to its social contexts, his highly accessible analysis and congenial writing style will make this book an enjoyable addition to many a personal and academic library.

The garage rock of the 1960s and the psychedelic music that followed soon after are the subject of Hicks's study. A "collection of interrelated essays," (vii) the book outlines the major stylistic features of the musics in question and provides a somewhat briefer discussion of

how these musics reflected the ideologies and experiences of their makers. For those who seek a comprehensive history of garage or psychedelia or an authoritative canon of these genres, this book may be a disappointment; such a project is not Hicks's goal. What he *does* provide is a well crafted and extremely accessible analysis of musical style in garage and psychedelia, several focused essays on particular problems in rock history, and a brief programmatic statement on doing rock music scholarship.

The first three chapters are the most tightly integrated of the book. Chapter one develops techniques for discussing the development of 1960s rock vocals from the blues and rock and roll of the 1950s, while chapter two provides a parallel history of distortion in rock guitar. Extending and critiquing Roland Barthes's notion of the "grain of the voice," Hicks identifies a variety of tone qualities used by rock singers in the 1960s, including the "roar," the "buzz," "baby talk," and the "disembodied tone." Rock singers, Hicks suggests, were able to evoke complex emotional states and depict three-dimensional characters by creatively juxtaposing different vocal techniques in their songs. This argument is suggestive and important, but at times I wanted more development. Hicks cites particular recordings to illustrate each technique, but a more detailed description would have made the text richer. The social history of guitar distortion is a useful contribution to the literature, complementing more interpretive discussions of guitar distortion by writers like Robert Walser.

In many ways, chapter three is the center of the book. With sections discussing tempo, beat, and harmony (as well as the timbral concerns of the previous chapters), Hicks gives a careful account of what gave the garage bands their characteristic sound. While the analysis is powerful and sophisticated, readers with little formal music training will still be able to understand Hicks's clear discussion. The

passages on guitar riffs (the signature chords that listeners identify with "Louis Louis" or "Gloria") will be extremely useful to any scholar working on guitar-based rock music from the 1960s forward. Finding the values of "activism," "antagonism," and "community" in the music, Hicks argues that garage rock was a type of avant-garde artistic movement, specifically a variety of futurism. Musical sound is still very much the focus, and the argument here is somewhat brief. Hicks spends little time situating garage rock within the profound social changes of the 1960s and does not attend to the impact of race, class, or gender upon this emerging musical movement.

Chapters four and six are focused studies of the development of particular songs, "Hey Joe," and the Doors' "Light My Fire" respectively. Hicks does a nice job of identifying the traditional rhetorical devices of American folk music in "Hey Joe" and exploring the stylistic changes in the various versions. Threaded through this analysis is the argument that the song was less the creative product of an individual artist than it was the result of an ongoing stylistic reworking of traditional material. As a part of this argument, he suggests that William Moses Roberts Jr. (the earliest copyright holder of an identifiable version of the song) may not have actually composed "Hey Joe" but merely picked it up from the early 1960s Greenwich Village folk scene in which he performed. Despite the apparent continuities of Moses' "Hey Joe" with traditional models, there is no clear evidence to prove that Moses merely copyrighted a pre-existing song. As a folklorist, I was surprised to see a contemporary reference to the old and highly problematic notion of the anonymous "folk process." The discussion of "Light My Fire" admirably traces out the stylistic variations of the tune, and again the emphasis is on musical form.

Hicks finds firm ground in chapter five, where he provides the main stylistic analysis of psychedelia. The text identi-

fies the main psychological effects of the LSD experience (temporal distortion, a blurring of boundaries between phenomena, depersonalization) and shows how the musical techniques of psychedelia artfully twisted features of the then contemporary rock and folk styles to produce the sonic equivalent of an aid trip. Hicks discussion nicely complements Sheila Whiteley's analysis of psychedelia in *The Space Between the Notes: Rock and the Counter-Culture*, and those teaching upper level undergraduate courses in popular music might consider using these books in tandem. Hicks's final chapter is the most structural and least interpretive of the book. Entitled "Ends and Means," it identifies a variety of ending techniques in 1960s rock. The playful discussion sheds light on an often ignored feature of the music and will stimulate anyone who appreciates rock music.

Reading *Sixties Rock*, scholars oriented toward ethnography, oral history, or critical theory may find themselves occasionally uncomfortable. Musical meanings are less abundant in the book than musical techniques, and little attention is given to social context or the politics of culture. Further, the analysis is mostly Hicks's. Little oral history data supports the text, and historians or sociologists may wish that Hicks discussed his structural analysis or musical interpretations with the people who made and listened to the music. But to over-emphasize these problems would be to deny the real insightfulness of Hicks' analysis and the undeniable charm of his prose. Hicks clearly has a love for 1960s rock, and I would recommend this book to those that feel the same way. For such an audience, reading Hicks's book will be time well spent.

Harris M. Berger
Texas A & M University

Michael D. Yates, *Why Unions Matter* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1998).

MICHAEL YATES' *Why Unions Matter* is a clearly written introduction by a university economist who came from a working-class and union family and is himself a union member and a labour educator. Yates writes that "it is through teaching workers that I learned how to write a book like this." We are all fortunate that he had such good teachers. He ably utilizes various academic "disciplines" — economics, sociology, political science, history — without all the jargon and pretensions and gives us a straightforward, sophisticated, comprehensive, and down-to-earth survey of the labour movement in the United States.

The main text of about 150 pages includes these chapters: 1. Why Unions?; 2. How Unions Form; 3. Union Structures and Democracy; 4. Collective Bargaining; Unions and Politics: Local, National, Global; 6. Unions, Racism and Sexism; 7. The Tasks Ahead. Thirty additional pages include an appendix listing useful resources such as books, periodicals, web sites, and organizations, plus informative reference notes for each of the chapters and a good index that helps the critical-minded reader make better use of the book. Investing seventeen dollars (US) and several hours reading-time is the equivalent of taking a top-level course in Labour Studies. Anyone who wants to understand today's labour movement for the purpose of participating in it and helping to build it should read this book. It is a pleasure to read — punctuated with interesting personal stories and informative anecdotes, important slices of labour history, photos, cartoons, and graphs that all help to drive home key points.

The "union advantage" for workers alone is illustrated — in regard to wages, benefits, and dignity on the job — with clear and persuasive facts. The reader also receives tips on union organizing, a sense of how healthy unions are structured

(Yates insists that democracy is a key to organizational health), and enlightening insights into the collective bargaining process. But this book goes far beyond "bread-and-butter unionism." Or rather, the point is driven home that organized labour must move beyond a narrow "pure-and-simple" framework if it is to be effective in meeting workers' most basic needs. In fact, its very survival is dependent upon evolving into a more expansive social-unionism, and becoming more inclusive than is reflected in the present majority white (80 per cent) and male (60 per cent) membership base. Women and people of colour represent dramatically growing sectors of the labour force. As Yates writes, "Union membership, like the labor force itself, is diverse, and is becoming more so. The share of minority workers and women in total union membership is growing. Yet, union densities for all groups have been falling. If unions are to grow, if they are to meet the challenge of a multiracial and gendered economy, they must organize more women and more people of color."

The need for working-class unity in the face of immensely powerful employers — the notion that "differences of sex and race must be set aside and ultimately seen for what they are — artificial barriers to collective action" — is tempered only by the fundamental notion that an injury to one is an injury to all: "No labor movement in this nation can succeed unless it challenges racial and gender inequality consistently. Had the labor movement made opposition to racism and sexism paramount many years ago, it is doubtful that the dismantling of the welfare state which we are now witnessing could have occurred."

In fact, Yates argues, the future of the labour movement is dependent upon it becoming more than simply a union movement. Not only must it take the lead in the social struggles to advance the interests of each sector of the working-class majority, but it must recognize that "the Democratic Party has long since aban-

doned any allegiance to working people (indeed, its alliance with labor during the Great Depression must be considered an exceptional result of its own self-interest and the open revolt of workers). It is now a party of capital every bit as much as the Republican Party."

To clinch this point, he tells us to "look at who funds both parties and who serves in the administrations of both parties — Wall Street financiers, corporate executives, and other assorted wealthy individuals, almost without exception." He concludes: "Labor's need is to develop a politics of its own, an independent politics, one to which it holds no matter what policies are promoted by the two parties of capital. If it fails to do so, it may as well give up hope of revitalizing its cause." One suspects that he believes the program of such a party will need to be significantly more radical than, for example, the current policies of the British Labour Party or Canada's New Democratic Party.

Yates's book reflects, and will certainly contribute to, a vital process underway in the labour movement and the working class. It is a process he himself describes as involving "thoughtful, effective radicals ... [who] play a part in the structures of the AFL-CIO, as well as in the national unions and central labor councils," but a process in which there is also "a labor radicalization ... [that is] dependent on the workers in locals across the country" who are fighting to build democratic, effective, socially-conscious unions capable of defending the entire working class.

"This is a more hopeful time for unions and the labor movement than any time in the past thirty years," Yates writes. "The economy has been growing strongly, and labor shortages are developing in many markets. If the public response to the UPS strikers is any indication, unions are no longer viewed as just another special interest group." He suggests that "what might motivate workers to become part of a movement is the possibility that the current system can be

transcended and a new, democratic, egalitarian society built." This implies "a working-class ideology, a labor-centered way of thinking and acting which is based upon the understanding that a capitalist society is not and cannot be a just one."

Yates is positive about recent developments in the AFL-CIO leadership. "The new AFL-CIO is certainly a hopeful sign," he writes, "and we are perhaps seeing the beginning of an upswing in union organizing as the New Voice Team puts its organizing model into practice." But his vision goes far beyond what this leadership is projecting. He makes a clear case for the notion that the democratic control of the economy and the possibility for the free development of each individual — notions at the heart of the socialist perspective — are possible and necessary, and he obviously believes that the labour movement can and should go in the direction of realizing such goals.

Yates also insists that even the most well-meaning union leadership apparatus cannot be expected to solve the problems of the working class. What is required goes much deeper and farther than that. He concludes: "In grassroots organizing, based as it must be on rank-and-file control, it struggles for the hearts and souls of our national unions, in alliances with organizations and individuals committed to building the kind of society that is within our grasp, in battles with the employers, whose usefulness becomes less apparent each day, a new labor movement and a new social movement might be born. That is the hope for the future."

Paul Le Blanc
Carlow College

Mike Parker and Martha Gruelle. *Democracy is Power: Rebuilding Unions from the Bottom Up*. (Detroit, MI: Labor Notes 1999)

AT A TIME WHEN STATES and corporations are attempting to further insulate decision-making from popular control, trade

unions remain one of the few vehicles working people have to impose democratic constraints on the exercise of power. Despite this, it is commonly heard (most recently in the pages of *Dissent*) that in order to be more "effective," unions must mimic employers in centralizing control and shielding it from the base. Mike Parker and Martha Gruelle argue to the contrary: far from being a moral luxury unions cannot afford, a strong democracy lies at the very heart of union power and effectiveness. Coming amidst a renewed interest in organizing within the leadership of the AFL-CIO, and the growth of democratic reform movements among many of its affiliates, the book marks a timely intervention as labour's own "democratic deficit" is forced onto the union agenda.

Similar to other Labor Notes publications, the book offers a wealth of arguments and insights in the style of a practical and readable guide for union activists. The first three of the book's eight chapters are devoted to a general discussion of the importance of union democracy to workers' empowerment, and to developing the notion of a workplace-based "culture of democracy." Departing from parliamentary conceptions of union democracy, Parker and Gruelle are primarily concerned with grounding the union in rank-and-file participation and control, rather than a formal set of rules and procedures governing union business. Emerging out of rank-and-file organization and informal relations in the workplace, a strong democratic culture is characterized by "membership information and involvement, real power, and a healthy give-and-take between leaders and members." In this respect, the aim of deepening membership involvement serves as a guide to structuring the institutions of union democracy, rather than formal rules and procedures being allowed to substitute for broad and active participation.

A particularly important component of effective unions, in the authors' view,

is a commitment to the inclusion of women, people of colour, and gays and lesbians seeking an end to discrimination and for a union leadership more reflective of the base. Organized as committees and caucuses, these members form an important part of the broader reform movement, calling into question the politics of the union, as well as contesting management practices. Unions face difficulties in demonstrating the union movement's relevance to a changing workforce unless they place themselves in the forefront of struggles against racism and sexism. Yet providing leadership on these issues can mean the difficult task of confronting the sometimes entrenched attitudes of members; extending democracy can prepare the way for conflict and dissent, which many in the leadership may find uncomfortable and shrink from as an unnecessary diversion from the proper "business of unionism."

The second half of the book addresses the nuts and bolts of conducting democratic elections, organizing reform caucus campaigns in the local, changing undemocratic union bylaws and organizational structures, and participating in national and international-union conventions and elections. Appendices offer "how-to" tips for conducting effective and democratic meetings, as well as a simplified alternative to Robert's Rules of Order. Throughout, the book draws lessons from the recent experience of movements such as the Teamsters for a Democratic Union and New Directions in the United Auto Workers, offering a glimpse into the creative practice of reform activists in American and international trade unions. Canadian readers will note that the book is written with mostly American reference points and examples; while the theme and discussion of the book transfer well to Canada, some of the details do not. For instance, the legal stipulations concerning internal union democracy and financial reporting are specific to the United States and are different for Canadian jurisdictions.

The treatment of the obstacles to strengthening union democracy is honest, if somewhat truncated. To their credit, Parker and Gruelle acknowledge the tendencies towards bureaucratization in unions, while remaining critical of theories of the inevitability of union oligarchy. They confront a number of the reasons many workers don't associate democracy and union power, offering practical suggestions for fostering the real membership participation and empowerment that can make workers want to get involved in the union. Nor do the authors purport to offer easy solutions to all problems. Rather, the book itself adopts a democratic tone — readers are encouraged to reach their own decisions, without the authors imposing their own answers. The inescapable tensions involved in such issues as the exercise of effective leadership and its relationship to rank-and-file control are revealed rather than blithely papered over with guarantees against top-down union governance.

One implicit argument of the book that could have been brought into sharper relief (ironically, considering it is partly the purpose of the book itself) is the importance of developing members' confidence and analytical "tools" with which to challenge the leadership. Workers can become more enthusiastic about pushing for and sustaining membership control of the union not simply through the process of learning budgeting and administrative tasks or how to design a newspaper, but as they develop speaking and organizational skills through participation. In order to strengthen and spread these skills within the ranks, the union needs to think about the internal resources available to develop confident and active union participants and leaders. As the authors point out, rather than imparting democratic skills and the desire to deepen these capacities, schools and other public institutions tend to operate in reverse, reinforcing the notion that "workers can't do it themselves." To the extent that societal institutions inculcate a "culture of pater-

nalism" that extends into the workplace and union itself, neglecting the effort to win a broader democratization of society will limit unions' success in deepening the democratic participation of members in their own institutions. Unions can play a pivotal role in this regard, not only as potential schools of war, but as schools of democratic self-management, insofar as the democratic capacities unions foster are valuable to workers fighting for greater decision-making power over community issues and in political life generally.

There is mounting evidence that workers can fight concessions and win when they feel their union belongs to them; a deepening of worker involvement and control over their organizations can boost workers' confidence to struggle collectively in ways that make a difference. As Parker and Grucelle illustrate, a commitment by leadership to labour-management cooperation is often associated with weak union democracy; the spread of quality circles and work teams that often go under the rubric of "workplace democracy" therefore make building a real union culture of democracy that much more pressing. This book is a reminder that a deepening of democracy is required if unions are to regain workers' allegiance and occupy the centre of workers' collective identity and struggles. But it also reminds us that building a union culture of democracy can help raise workers' expectations of a richer democracy in the workplace, as well as for control over the political process and public administration of social life as well.

Christopher Roberts
York University

Jonathan C. Brown, ed., *Workers' Control in Latin America, 1930-1979* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press 1997)

LABOUR HISTORIANS and Latin Americanists alike will covet this collection of es-

says that treats working-class protest and organization during the "middle years" of the 20th century. These were years, according to lead author Jonathan Brown, Professor of Latin American history at the University of Texas at Austin, in which nationalism and populism interfaced with the notion of workers' control. By examining the dynamic of workers' control in Cuba, Mexico, Guatemala, Argentina, Brazil, Bolivia, and Peru, the authors seek to demonstrate that workers influenced key events in those countries, particularly revolutionary upheavals. The essays succeeded in convincing this reader that workers, rather than being led by elites, acted on their own, and significantly shaped the political agendas of entire nations, especially in the area of foreign relations.

The authors achieve their goals by focusing on the workers' fight for control on the shop floor and how organized labour attempted to take those struggles into their local communities and also into national life. This collection of essays makes a significant contribution to the progress of contemporary debates in the field of labour studies because they broaden what has previously been accepted as a definition of workers' control. More than just the idea that shop floor battles bring dignity to their proletarian lives, workers' control also refers to the struggles of working people to gain power for a variety of ends. Workers' control, therefore, is never complete, because it is always an item under negotiation with the employer. And, as these essays make clear, this is particularly important when that employer is a foreign-owned enterprise.

Whether they were sugar-cane workers in Cuba, miners in Bolivia and Peru, oil workers in Mexico, or railroad workers in Guatemala and Argentina, their combativeness against foreign employers catapulted organized labour into a political force that imposed its demands on national leaders. At the same time, however, essays in this volume written by

Andrea Spears (Mexican railroad workers), and Andrew Boeger (Bolivian tungsten miners) reveal that workers also tenaciously resisted the dictates of domestic capitalists when struggling to promote the notion of workers' control. In so doing, the authors of this volume shed light upon the process by which cross-class nationalist alliances emerged to challenge the power of foreign capital and influence in their respective countries. In addition, many of the essays demonstrate how worker-inspired actions against domestic entrepreneurs also provoked political backlash and repression.

Strengthening this volume are the wide variety of sources used by the authors in documenting and crafting their arguments. Unlike much of the labour history on Latin America in the early part of the 20th century, and study of the "middle years" has an enormous comparative advantage. A more mature labour movement offers a rich array of voices of urban and industrial workers as well as more complete information concerning their rural proletarian counterparts. The records of employers, which by the "middle years" were laced thoroughly with data and correspondence emanating from modern personnel departments, are complemented with dispatches from foreign consuls, and national government records, along with labour movement newspapers as well as the mainstream press of the respective countries examined. And, although many of these sources existed in the days of early working-class organization in Latin America, paucity had turned into plethora by the middle decades of the 20th century.

One result has been a better understanding of how cross-fertilization between urban and rural movements occurred and how this factor connected to the large developments of populist and nationalist movements, such as in Cuba during the 1930s. Moreover, these essays highlight the fact that proletarianization in Latin America has not been cataclysmic; rather, it has been a process which

has occurred in fits and starts. In countries like Mexico, Cuba, Peru, and Bolivia, workers used reference points from their peasant past to develop strategies of resistance to the dictates of their industrial employers. Forced to build new patterns of social interaction, instead of abandoning traditional practices, workers transformed them and adapted them to meet their new needs.

The authors of this volume make clear that direct action and the concept of workers' control offered Latin American workers not only a vehicle for confronting and challenging the institutions that controlled their lives, but also the possibility of creating a new world that satisfied the expectations and forms of security consistent with their peasant past. Because proletarianization was never a complete process for many workers, the urban and rural experience continued to reinforce one another, which along with the continuing and sometimes increasing foreign economic presence in Latin America, resulted in the enduring appeal of workers' control.

This volume also sheds light on the issues of culture, gender, race, and ethnicity in Latin America. Josh DeWind and Boeger's work on Peruvian and Bolivian miners respectively reveal the residual influence of indigenous culture in the industrial work environment. Joel Wolfe's analysis of Brazilian labour and industry reflects how special exploitation by employers and exclusion from power within the various male-dominated unions forced female factory workers to develop their own shop floor organizations, which helped to bring political clout to the Brazilian working class during the era of Getulio Vargas's nationalist dictatorship. Indeed, most of the essays in this volume contribute to the understanding of how labour has at times successfully overcome the greatest obstacle to unity in Latin America: a racially and ethnically heterogeneous working class.

All of the above results in the volume making a significant historiographic con-

tribution to the study of Latin America and of labour in developing countries. Latin Americanists studying various aspects of the region's history such as business, politics, history, and international relations will treasure and reference this volume. Its major contribution to the discipline of labour studies is that it places the working class at the centre of the major nationalist and revolutionary upheavals that have occurred in Latin America during the 20th century. If there is a weakness, it is that the book fails to effectively link the struggles of the Latin American working classes of the "middle years" to the earlier history of labour in the region. Overall, this is a seminal work which will provoke discourse among scholars of both labour history and Latin America for years to come.

Norman Caulfield
Fort Hays State University

Kathleen Bruhn, *Taking on Goliath: The Emergence of a New Left Party and the Struggle for Democracy in Mexico* (University Park, Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press 1997)

SCHOLARS OF THE CONTEMPORARY political scene in Mexico will treasure this important study which analyzes the challenge made by the *Partido de la Revolución Democrática* (PRD) to the 60-year hegemony of the ruling Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI). Besides explaining the emergence of the PRD as well as its origins and development, the author provides valuable insight into the reasons for the PRD's failure to consolidate its initial political gains. In the process, Bruhn also offers a myriad of analyses as to why the PRI remains politically resilient, despite the economic malaise and political fragmentation that characterizes contemporary Mexico.

Drawing on extensive field research, which includes newspaper articles, political party manifestos, propaganda, statutes, and reports as well as interviews of

major participants, and a rich plethora of electoral data, the author integrates this material into a theoretical framework which gives the reader a concise understanding of both the formation and decline of the PRD. Bruhn couches her argument with the assertion that the conditions which fostered the emergence of the PRD differed substantially from the conditions surrounding the party's attempts to consolidate itself organizationally and electorally. She also argues that while the PRD faltered to rein in the support given to it by the Mexican electorate in the 1988 presidential election, its emergence energized the political system and significantly contributed to the process of democratization in Mexico.

Bruhn begins framing her arguments by analyzing the reasons behind the defection of significant numbers of Mexican voters from the PRI and the political vacuum filled by the rise of the PRD as an effective opposition party. She traces the history of the PRI and the Mexican electoral system and ends with discussion of the economic and political crisis that has gripped Mexico since 1982.

Starting with the 1910 Revolution, Bruhn analyzes that event as a civil war resulting from an elite conflict that eventually generated the mobilization of peasants and workers for revolutionary demands. When the fighting subsided, victorious state building elites faced the challenge of satisfying some of the demands of the popular sectors — namely land and a share of power — and, at the same time, of providing limited channels of participation for the mobilized masses. The result was the development of a stable political regime with three distinct features: presidentialism, one-party rule and a state corporatism that concentrated authority in the hands of officially recognized interests, such as organized labour, business associations, and *campesino* groups.

The author posits that regularly scheduled elections with the participation of opposition candidates legitimized the

rule of the PRI. Simultaneously, the regularity of elections assured rotation in power, a condition necessary for elite loyalty to the regime. The author adds that for the last 60 years the PRI successfully carried out a delicate balancing act by maintaining the relationship between hegemony and opposition.

The PRI's ability to sustain the system rested upon the expansion of the Mexican economy. Mexico registered economic growth that averaged more than 6 per cent per year between 1940 and 1970. This economic miracle, matched by very few developing countries, transformed Mexican society, creating a more complex social class structure, which included a sizable middle class, larger service sector, and industrial workforce and pressuring the political system to open up further participation. The impressive macroeconomic figures also paralleled a widening gap between the rich and the poor, resulting in sharp protest against the regime's policies, which was highlighted by the 1968 student rebellion, an event that witnessed participation from broad sectors of the Mexican population. The regime responded to the challenge with a mixture of repression and reforms designed to insure PRI hegemony.

The PRI recognized the necessity to provide a safety valve for the growing political dissent, which by 1976 had become so frustrated with the electoral institution of coercion and fraud that the official government candidate faced no opposition. The regime reacted by easing the requirements for registration of minority political parties and creating a system of proportional representation to insure the presence of an opposition in Congress. Although the chamber of deputies expanded by over 100 seats, all of which were reserved for minority parties, the reform posed no threat to the PRI's control over the electoral machinery and its domination of the government.

Bruhn contends that these political reforms were effective as long as the Mexican economy grew as a result of the

oil "boom" between 1976-1982. The end of the oil boom and the subsequent southward movement of the economy provided the political climate for the creation of the PRD. The author is emphatic in pointing out that, most importantly, the PRI's solutions to the economic crisis provoked the political challenge.

In essence, Bruhn argues, it was a crisis of the import-substitution model of development begun by Lázaro Cárdenas in the late 1930s, which by the late 1980s had exhausted its possibilities of growth. The PRI regime's adoption of a neo-liberal economic model of privatization of state-run industries, the liberalization of foreign investment laws, and the payment of the foreign debt at the expense of the living standards of the Mexican people generated the creation of the National Democratic Front (FDN) and, later, the PRD. The 1988 election, which was marred by cries of fraud, also indicated deep dissatisfaction with PRI policies, as Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas garnered a huge amount of the electorate, reflecting both popular anger and mass mobilization behind his candidacy.

A major strength of Bruhn's work is the intricate detail used to analyze the PRD's failure to consolidate itself as a viable political party. Rocked by internal divisions and its inability to develop a comprehensive economic and social program that would pose a counter-hegemony to neo-liberal order and the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), the PRD floundered politically.

If there is a weakness in Bruhn's arguments, it is her failure to provide a comparative analysis of elections in places such as Argentina and Peru, where Carlos Menem and Alberto Fujimori respectively won stunning victories campaigning on an anti-neoliberal agenda. They, however, like the leadership of the PRD ultimately embraced neoliberalism, but in contrast to the PRD have remained in power ever since. In conclusion, this reader believes Bruhn has written an important book, which in time will rival the

endurance of Laurens Ballard Perry's *Juárez and Díaz: Machine Politics in Mexico*, (1978) the classic study of 19th century Mexican politics.

Norman Caulfield
Fort Hays State University

Ligaya Lindio-McGovern, *Filipino Peasant Women: Exploitation and Resistance* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press 1997)

THIS STUDY of the political resistance of "Philippine peasant women" is welcome. I should say at the outset that the book has much to commend it as a text for teaching undergraduate courses in rural studies, international development, gender and women's studies, labour studies, also sociology, anthropology, and political science. What I like most about the book is the clarity of the arguments about Philippine development and the framing of the book's central problem: rendering visible the political capacities and actions of some Philippine peasant women — most of whom are engaged with one of the several political organizations discussed in the book — and the dire conditions they contend with. Really there is not much about the author's (good) intentions to take issue with. However, there is much more that I would like know about the lives of the women under discussion and many readers may find the singular dependency theory focus, and the homogenization of the social relationships it describes, limiting and quite possibly dated.

For example, there is an unfortunate claim made relatively early in the book (on page 11) that postmodern and post-structuralism have little to contribute to discussions of "Third World women." Given the sizeable feminist literature applying poststructuralist ideas to development issues and feminist understandings of global political economy, this is clearly a point which deserves more discussion. Ironically, this is pertinent because the

author herself is at pains to remind us of the complexities of women's experiences and their varying interpretations of their political context. These are ideas that some so-called post-modern writers have emphasized and yet others have combined with the kind of materialist framework used here by Lindio-McGovern to clear but limited effect. One of the strengths of the book is that focus upon power. One of its major weaknesses is its refusal to consider power in a more nuanced manner — the cultural politics of power and its daily negotiation by women in Philippine villages. This is something which poststructuralist work, including that which discusses rural development, contributes most obviously through the application of Foucault's ideas and those of his feminist critics. Nonetheless, it should be possible to teach this book as an example of dependent development and/or Philippine colonial history using additional materials to expand upon topics given scant attention in Lindio-McGovern's research. And this is something that I myself intend to try in a second year interdisciplinary gender studies course I teach.

Following an introduction both to the complexities of Philippine development priorities under the Marcos, Aquino, and Ramos political regimes and to organizations relevant to peasant women, the book's premises and central concepts are laid out. The remainder of the book is organized into six chapters. Chapters one and two continue with background discussion on the importance of studying "Third World Women's" political knowledge. This is necessary, Lindio-McGovern argues, to contest commonly held views about peasant women's passivity and victim-like status. I am not sure that this is a fair claim for a book published in the late 1990s since much has now been written about women's resistance in a great variety of social and political settings. Chapter two selectively reviews Philippine colonial history and political economy using a world systems theory

approach to implicate continuing American neocolonial control. The scene is then set for a discussion in chapter three of how interlocking structures of power, including "militarization," affect Mindoro peasant women's lives. Mindoro, the locus of the fieldwork for this book, is one of the larger Philippine islands located in the Southern Tagalog region. It is relatively close to the mainland of Luzon and the Philippine capital, Manila. The chapter, entitled "The Dynamics of Exploitation and Repression in the Lives of the Peasant Women of Mindoro," provides an excellent analysis of the intersection of productive and reproductive labour and the implications for women of their lack of control of land, crops, and credit. It also provides important insights into how Philippine military strategies of counter-insurgency operate at the village (or *barangay*) level. Chapters four and five detail the programme and organizing activities of KAMMI (translated as Peasant Women of Mindoro) and AMIHAN, the national organization with which it is affiliated. These chapters show how responses to the repressive politics discussed in chapter three are organized. Detailed discussion of a selection of meetings and rallies attended by the researcher are particularly interesting. Chapter six reviews the arguments of the book and its contributions to the development literature concerned with "Third World women." An appendix outlines "Organic Feminist Enquiry," the study's research methodology.

As might be apparent from this brief description, the subtitle of the book "exploitation and resistance" is more descriptive of its contents than the title *Filipino Peasant Women*. Moreover, its claim to being the "first study of the everyday lives of Filipino peasant women and their means of resisting the exploitative system in which they find themselves" (back cover) seems overly confident (there are other studies) and only partially realized. Lindio-McGovern's book is more effective in describing the complexities of

their "everyday lives." This is most likely a consequence of the comparatively short time devoted to fieldwork. There were also constraints on her mobility in the field because of "militarization" in Mindoro and other places of interest to her study.

Anthropologists might also be surprised at how Lindio-McGovern discusses the innovativeness of her approach to research because she appears unfamiliar with basic ethnographic procedures which are standard in the fieldwork practices for most anthropologists, feminist and otherwise. On the other hand, they would approve of her attempt to immerse herself in the lives of her subjects, also the flexibility of the approach she calls "organic" enquiry. While at times it is pretentious in its claims to originality, the book's discussion of research procedures, in the introductory and last chapters, is useful for teaching purposes and especially for sociologists schooled in positivistic, quantitative traditions. For this audience, it is likely necessary to describe peasant households, villages, and organizations, as Lindio-McGovern does, as "natural settings." Other researchers more inclined to qualitative research would take this for granted.

Finally, throughout the book, critical discussion of Philippine politics and policies is written in the present tense. This makes it very hard to discern changes that have been occurring in the Philippine context over the course of time covered in the book. Fieldwork was conducted from May to August in 1989 and in May and June of 1996; these periods are not always clearly distinguished. Also frustrating is the book's tendency to cast all Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) as positive and capitalism as taking one monolithic form. On the first point, there has been a proliferation of NGOs in the Philippines since the 1980s. These span the political spectrum from left to right and it is no longer acceptable, if it ever was, to assume NGOs, constitute by definition, a positive political intervention. This a matter for research. Moreover, there are de-

bates about both the variability of the forms of capitalism in Southeast Asian development, and, more controversially, how capitalisms might actually be engaged in women's lives. Lindio-McGovern's peasant origins are described by her as contributing to her political position, namely to advocate the concerns of the women she interviewed. The fact that, as she describes, so many women migrate overseas in search of better wages and lives, cannot be fully explained by discourses of peasant exploitation and domination. Cultural politics and class practices also need more theoretical and analytical attention. The book, however, does lay groundwork for further discussion of these issues. I encourage others to engage with this important problematic defined by this courageous monograph.

In sum, the strengths of this book are related to the careful attempts to detail the platforms and strategies of Filipino peasant women's organizations KAMMI and AMIHAN. Its main deficiency lies in its critical silences and there are a number of these. While much is made of gender, class, and race politics directed towards peasant women as a group, too little is said about how internal differences (based on locality, and on occasion, religion, ethnicity, and class fractions) influence peasant women as they determine various courses of action. More discussion on the social processing of internal differences would add richness to the analysis and remove it beyond the reaches of critics who find the homogenization implied in labels such as "peasant women" unconvincing.

Pauline Gardiner Barber
Dalhousie University

Alison Oram, *Women Teachers and Feminist Politics 1900-39* (Manchester: Manchester University Press 1996)

IN THIS SUBSTANTIVE EMPIRICAL STUDY, Alison Oram examines the tensions between being a woman and a teacher in

England and Wales from 1900 to 1939. She concludes that conflicting norms of femininity and professionalism propelled women teachers to political action on key issues such as support for the suffrage movement, demands for equal pay and promotion rights, and opposition to a marriage bar. In the early 20th century, large numbers of women teachers had time, money, self-esteem, and a sense of themselves as professionals. The work related causes they espoused before World War I challenged the discrimination inherent in normative gender practices. The same was true of the pre-war suffrage movement, in which many of them vigorously participated. The war brought changes in gender roles, but after the war feminist teachers met with widespread efforts to reconstruct traditional practices.

Oram clearly establishes that women teachers and the issues that interested them constitute an important part of British labour history. In the early 20th century, she argues, "women teachers were more densely unionised ... and took a greater part in union affairs than probably any other body of women workers." (104) Elementary school teachers joined the mixed-sex National Union of Teachers (NUT). After 1920 most continued to participate in NUT, but some women chose instead the single-sex National Union of Women Teachers (NUWT). Secondary school women teachers belonged to the single-sex Association of Assistant Mistresses (AAM). One of the strengths of Oram's work is her careful delineation of the evolving nature of these three groups. The result is a thoughtful combination of the advantages and disadvantages women found in single- and mixed-sex teacher organizations.

NUT was a professional association and, by 1910, Britain's fifth largest trade union, its leading white-collar union, and its largest public sector union. (Oram draws here on H. A. Clegg, *A History of British Trade Unions Since 1899*, V. 2, 1911-1933, 3) The majority of NUT's members were women, three of whom

served terms as president, although the executive was always male dominated. This powerful and important union exploded over the questions of suffrage and equal pay indicating the importance of gender issues in institutional labour history. Two groups broke away from NUT in the secession crisis of 1919-20. Women in NUWT pursued equal pay on the basis of "gender-free professionalism." (117) The male National Association of Schoolmasters (NAS) fought back with a demand for differentiated and higher salaries for men using the trade union demand for a "family wage." (131)

The interwar years were difficult for feminist teachers because of a general deprecation of spinsterhood. NUWT responded with "parallel, confusing, and indeed contradictory approaches: trying to ignore anti-spinster attacks, using the language of the new psychology against spinster teachers when arguing for a married women's right to work, and beginning to use the ideas of psychology to defend itself on the same terrain." (203) Before the war, women teachers emphasized their professional equality with men. In the interwar years, they defended gains already made, often on the basis of women's differences from men. Men teachers also used the language of difference to further their interests arguing, for example, that only men could inculcate masculinity in boys. At the same time, women found it difficult to base demands for professional recognition on a claim of difference. For these reasons, Oram concludes that "difference" was a less powerful analytical approach for women teachers than the claims of equality. Her evidence, though, suggests that strategy was not so much the problem as the pervasive obstacles feminism faced in the interwar years.

The interwar backlash against the wartime disruption of gender norms weakened the momentum of politicized feminist women teachers. As a result, suffrage rights gained in World War I did not extend to all women, the marriage bar

continued as a local option until 1944, and equal pay waited until 1956. Ironically, these later milestones occurred when the feminist activism of women teachers ran at a low ebb.

Oram's discussion of the marriage bar reappears throughout the book and, since it is key to much she is trying to uncover, her arguments relating to it might have benefitted from a comprehensive summation. The marriage bar was a local option. Where it was in place, Oram argues, women had to choose between a perceived "normal" womanhood (heterosexual marriage and motherhood) and job security. Revocation of the marriage bar in 1944, combined with the teacher shortages in World War II and the 1950s, led to the widespread employment of married women. Apparently the strong feminist political engagement of women teachers in the first four decades of the 20th century did not survive the removal of one of the most important sources of tension between being a woman and a teacher.

Oram conducted interviews, used autobiographies, and drew on unpublished interviews from the Essex Oral History and the Mass-Observation Archives. Her goal was to recover the lived experience of teachers and to delineate more fully the tensions they felt as women and teachers. However, she tells readers too little about the process of her interviews and much of the information she does provide takes some finding in footnotes. (90, note 36; and 144) Oram's most important sources were the voluminous archives of NUT, as well as those of other teacher associations such as NUWT, AAM, and NAS. The fine detail in her study reflects the care with which she read this evidence. Her juxtaposition of NUWT's public statements and private correspondence is particularly revealing of the complexities of feminist debate in the interwar years.

Helen Brown
Malaspina University-College

Douglas Peter Mackaman, *Leisure Settings. Bourgeois Culture, Medicine, and the Spa in Modern France*. (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1997)

THE TITLE of this concise and cogent book encapsulates its subject: how French spas made vacations acceptable to a bourgeoisie shaped by a productive ethos through a process of medicalization in the first two-thirds of the 19th century and a process of demedicalization in the late 19th century. *Leisure Settings: Bourgeois Culture, Medicine, and the Spa in Modern France* shows that spas, as redesigned by ambitious spa doctors and private investors, educated socially ambitious, often provincial bourgeois consumers in a "rational and ordered version of leisure practice" but also in "the cultural tactics necessary to live after a solidly bourgeois fashion."

Large sections of *Leisure Settings* are devoted to spa doctors and other investors' development schemes and promotional material for several spas in the first two-thirds of the 19th century, considered less as local boosterism than as discourse. Here Douglas Mackaman draws heavily upon the work of Michel Foucault and his more empirical followers, especially Alain Corbin's study of the seashore, bathing, and vacations. Spa doctors are treated as experts not only in the battery of thermal treatments known as hydrotherapy, but also in holidays and bourgeois comportment. Spa doctors played lead roles in the social segregation of the poor (who had free access to spas in the *Ancien Régime*) through informal means such as issuing different prescriptions for the poor. As investors in and administrators of spa establishments, spa doctors approved the development of hospitals organized as veritable panopticons. At the same time, they instituted a rational time discipline, stipulating a daily rhythm, even ringing bells to mark the passage of medical and social time for all patients. For paying customers, they wrote promo-

tional literature in the guise of travel guides that insisted that thermal holidays had a serious purpose and a set of routines, which appealed to bourgeois customers' obsession with efficiency and rationality.

Mackaman adds economic, ethnographic, and gender nuances to his discourse analysis. Attentive to private investors' interest in maximizing profits, he notes that spa administrators never denied patients concerts, dances, and — after gaming was legalized under the Second Empire — gambling. As noncurists outnumbered curists in the mid-1860s, spas eased the harsher elements of hydrotherapy and spa guides emphasized the pleasures of spa vacations and the possibilities for social mobility, such as meeting and courting a marital prospect, at a spa. The author also locates his work in the emerging literature on the right kind of consumption as a social statement by the bourgeoisie and also on the redefinition of bourgeois women as consumers and cultural producers. Thus in his analysis, spa guides directly and spa novels indirectly informed their largely female readership about the morning, afternoon, and evening clothing required for the elaborate sociability at spas. And, influenced by Michel de Certeau's insistence on the importance of apparently banal everyday practices, he discusses spa literature's pedagogical depictions of hotel living, table manners, and casino protocol. The spa itself, replete with opportunities to observe proper bourgeois behaviour in a relatively open social environment, educated middle class people in gentility.

This broadly cultural approach yields some interesting information and insights. For instance, Mackaman describes how female spa-goers' complaints about the lack of privacy and decency in the mixed-sex pools built during the *Ancien Régime* persuaded competitive spa companies to install gender-specific facilities in the early decades of the 19th century. Mackaman diffidently remarks that this emphasis on modesty and respectability

predated the English middle class embrace of Queen Victoria and all she stood for — a subject worthy of further investigation.

When the new cultural approach is combined with social analysis, it yields other information and insights. We learn that many aristocrats passed the first three summers of the Revolution in familiar and comfortable spas and that (in a reversal of previous patterns) more single than married people visited spas in the Belle Époque. After a literary analysis of spa newspaper reports and spa novel narratives of courtship at spas, Mackaman links the theme to social and spatial constraints on the bourgeois marriage market. The migration of young bourgeois men to further their education and careers so that they could acquire enough capital for a bourgeois household, left many men cut off from family and community connections through which they would, in the past, have met potential spouses. Conversely, young women left behind in provincial towns with few local candidates for marriage welcomed encounters with socially-acceptable bachelors at spas and the opportunities to get to know them in the privacy of spa parks. Unfortunately, the author does not cite any examples of marriages concluded after spa courtships.

The deficiencies in this otherwise excellent study are the author's insufficient attention to spa workers and to medical developments beyond spa medicine. The only spa workers described in any detail are the shower technicians who are described as highly trained "experts in anatomy, physiology, and disease pathology" who joined their parents and siblings in the trade (and whose power over patients was highlighted in caricatures cleverly deconstructed by the author). This reader would have liked to know how they were trained, how they related to other spa workers, and, for that matter, to bourgeois patients. Although *Leisure Settings* outlines the medical establishments' acceptance of spa medicine through most of the century, it does not mention mounting

medical criticism, especially of intrusive treatments, as germ theory infiltrated medical education in the 1880s and 1890s. This criticism, which undermined the reputation of women's "orificial" treatments and quite likely other intrusive treatments, may have contributed to declining demand for water cures and rising interest in spa pleasures.

Mary Lynn Stewart
Simon Fraser University

René Leboutte, Jean Puissant et Denis Scuto, *Un siècle d'histoire industrielle: Belgique, Luxembourg, Pays-Bas, industrialisation et sociétés, 1873-1973*, (Paris, Éditions SEDES [collection *Regards sur l'histoire*, numéro 128] 1998)

CET OUVRAGE est le cinquième d'une série consacrée à l'industrialisation et à ses effets sociaux dans les pays d'Europe occidentale depuis le dernier quart du XIXe siècle jusqu'aux années 1970. Il a été écrit par deux spécialistes de l'histoire économique et sociale de la Belgique et par un troisième oeuvrant sur le Luxembourg. Il est divisé en trois parties chronologiques: "Développements industriels dans leur diversité (1870-1914)"; "Le XXe siècle syncopé (1914-1944)"; "Les 'Trente Glorieuses' (1944-1973)"; Chaque partie comprend trois chapitres consacrés chacun à l'un des pays constituant le Benelux.

Disons-le d'emblée, ce livre souffre par son caractère inachevé. Tout d'abord, il manque d'unité. D'un chapitre à l'autre, d'un pays à l'autre, devrait-on dire, les auteurs ne font pas de lien. Ils se contentent d'un bref rapprochement en introduction et en conclusion. Par ailleurs, comme ils le précisent dans l'avant-propos (p. 10), ils traitent beaucoup moins des Pays-Bas que des deux autres pays. C'est ainsi que la Belgique a droit à 152 pages, le Luxembourg à 62 pages, et les Pays-Bas à seulement 24 pages. Déséquilibre pour le moins surprenant, voire injuste pour le pays qui a vu naître Philips, Unilever et

Royal Dutch. Enfin, outre que la qualité de son écriture laisse parfois à désirer, l'ouvrage est souvent imprécis sur des points pourtant essentiels. Par exemple, aux pages 38 et 39, il donne beaucoup de statistiques sur l'évolution démographique sur la population active de la Belgique avant 1914, et cependant le chiffre même de la population totale brille par son absence! Des négligences de ce genre ternissent le livre. Il aurait fallu un travail d'édition plus soigné.

Ces faiblesses sont d'autant plus regrettables que le livre ne manque pas d'intérêt. Il regorge d'informations factuelles et statistiques (sous forme de tableaux, de figures et de cartes). Il rend compte de la recherche récente sur la Belgique et le Luxembourg. Mais surtout, il soulève deux questions majeures: les modalités nationales de l'industrialisation, et la présence de rapports sociaux qui n'obéissent pas au modèle de la lutte des classes.

L'industrie ne s'est pas implantée uniformément à travers le Benelux. La première industrialisation a favorisé la Wallonie et le Luxembourg, tandis que la seconde, qui a pourtant donné des promesses en pays wallon, a fini par privilégier les Pays-Bas et, plus tard, la Flandre. Après la Seconde Guerre mondiale, la Wallonie et le Luxembourg voient leurs industries traditionnelles s'affaiblir. Or, autant la première s'enfonce dans le déclin économique, autant la seconde trouve un nouveau souffle dans le secteur tertiaire. Il s'agit donc d'une évolution complexe.

La Wallonie et, quelques décennies après, le Luxembourg doivent leur démarrage à trois facteurs: la présence d'importants gisements houillers et ferrugineux, un milieu financier prêt à investir massivement dans leur exploitation, et un État libéral ne légiférant que pour favoriser l'implantation locale d'établissements industriels. Ajoutons à ces facteurs une politique vigoureuse d'exportation et, dans le cas belge, de gros investissements à l'étranger et au Congo. Les entreprises charbonnières et métallurgiques ont

survécu aux crises et aux guerres grâce à la concentration de leurs immobilisations. Le groupe luxembourgeois ARBED, qui a vu le jour en 1911, a pu de la sorte devenir le deuxième producteur européen d'acier entre les deux guerres.

On aurait pu croire que ces régions auraient abordé sans difficulté la seconde industrialisation. Mais tel n'est pas le cas. Le saut est fait par les Pays-Bas et la Flandre, qui appuient leur industrialisation sur des secteurs neufs et à forte teneur technoscientifique (électricité, chimie, pétrole). Ici aussi, l'exportation et, dans le cas hollandais, l'exploitation coloniale sont décisives. Mais cette fois-ci, les matières premières jouent moins; à la place, les autorités publiques encouragent l'éducation. Ajoutons également, surtout après 1945, l'intervention active de l'État et des grands investisseurs dans le financement des infrastructures et des établissements. À partir de 1960, l'économie flamande allait surpasser celle de la Wallonie.

La venue de nouveaux concurrents internationaux, le vieillissement des immobilisations, l'émergence de nouvelles sources d'énergie, autant de facteurs à avoir contribué, à partir des années 1950, au déclin des industries de la Wallonie et du Luxembourg. Les charbonnages wallons ferment graduellement leurs portes. En 1977, ARBED fait l'objet d'un plan de sauvetage. Bruxelles, avancent les auteurs, n'a pas été à la hauteur de la situation (p. 220). Ses politiques ont même quelquefois nui au secteur charbonnier. Or, pendant ce temps, l'État luxembourgeois diversifie son économie, notamment du côté du secteur bancaire; il en est résulté un franc succès. Ce qui a fait dire aux auteurs, en conclusion: "la Belgique souffrirait d'un XIXe siècle prolongé, tandis que le Luxembourg bénéficierait d'un XXe siècle anticipé" (p. 271).

Cette comparaison montre bien qu'il n'y a pas d'effet cumulatif dans l'industrialisation d'un territoire. Le mouvement peut s'essouffler et il importe d'assurer sans cesse son renouvellement. En outre, la concentration industrielle n'est pas un

gage de développement ni même de stabilité économique pour une région. La Wallonie, pour avoir mis trop exclusivement sur un système oligoindustriel, fait les frais de ce choix. Par ailleurs, il convient de noter le rôle essentiel de l'État à toutes les étapes de l'industrialisation, même à l'époque où régnait le libéralisme. Ce rôle a certes changé au fil des années, mais son importance n'a jamais été mise en doute. La passivité du gouvernement belge à l'endroit du déclin wallon confirme, bien que négativement, ce fait. Enfin, il va de soi que la création du Benelux en 1944 ne reposait pas sur l'homogénéité industrielle des pays concernés, mais sur leur complémentarité financière et commerciale.

Si les disparités dominent l'économie, il n'en va toutefois pas de même pour la société. Deux traits marquent la vie sociale des trois pays. D'une part, au siècle dernier, une grande misère sévissant jusque dans la petite bourgeoisie et suscitant la formation d'organismes de défense. D'autre part, une classe ouvrière peu homogène, notamment sur le plan linguistique et religieux, mais aussi en raison d'une forte immigration dans certaines régions, et en raison du contraste créé par la concentration industrielle et la persistance des PME. Si bien que malgré les moments de graves conflits sociaux, comme en 1886 et en 1960-1961 en Belgique et en 1921 au Luxembourg, il n'y a jamais eu de situation révolutionnaire dans le Benelux. Le communisme lui-même n'y a exercé qu'une modeste présence.

Le principal facteur avancé pour expliquer cette situation se résume en un concept: la pilariisation. Les auteurs rendent compte de ce système social en Belgique et dans les Pays-Bas. S'ils n'en font pas mention au sujet du Luxembourg, ils relèvent néanmoins certains traits qui y font supposer son existence. La pilariisation juxtapose des systèmes sociaux reposant sur des organismes à vocation publique, comme des coopératives, des mutuelles, des syndicats, des journaux, et

qu'animent des causes idéologiques ou religieuses mutuellement exclusives. Ces systèmes, que l'on appelle des piliers, ne suivent pas la division en classes de la société. Ils peuvent ne concerner qu'une partie d'une classe, ou encore transcender les classes. Ces piliers, à la fin du siècle dernier, ont créé des institutions locales destinées à soulager la misère; de la sorte, ils ont contribué aussi bien à l'affaiblissement des partis et des syndicats de gauche qu'à limiter les réformes sociales à l'échelle nationale. Après 1945, la pilariisation a facilité la concertation entre les classes et la venue de l'État providence. Mais, sous l'effet grandissant de la société de consommation, elle a commencé à donner des signes d'essoufflement en Belgique (avec le déclin du mouvement coopératif), alors qu'elle a totalement disparu des Pays-Bas à partir de 1960.

La théorie de la pilariisation ne manque pas d'intérêt. Elle n'est d'ailleurs pas sans rappeler la thèse de la mosaïque verticale de J. Porter. Elle rejoint en partie les idées de G. Crossick et de H.-G. Haupt sur les différences nationales de la petite bourgeoisie européenne et sur la nécessité de multiplier les études régionales des rapports sociaux. Il est même permis de se demander si l'on peut rencontrer ce phénomène ailleurs en Europe, et notamment dans le nord de la France.

Au total, malgré ses défauts de présentation, ce livre a l'avantage d'être informatif et de proposer d'intéressantes réflexions.

Pierre Lanthier
Université du Québec à Trois-Rivières

Gilla Dölle, *Die unheimliche Macht des Geldes: Finanzierungsstrategien der Bürgerlichen Frauenbewegung in Deutschland zwischen 1865 und 1933*, (Frankfurt am Main: Difa Verlag 1997). Vol. II in *Siegener Frauenforschungsreihe*, Universität Gesamthochschule Siegen.

GILLA DÖLLE'S WELL WRITTEN and generously illustrated account and analysis of the financial strategies of first wave feminist organizations in Germany from 1865-1933 is an important work casting light on the virtually unexplored issue of the role finances played in the politics and survival strategies of this bourgeois feminist movement. Her wide ranging archival research and clear exposition should ensure that this book finds its way into the libraries of all students of first wave German feminism.

Dölle's approach is to analyze the finances and financial strategies of the movement and its most prominent leaders. The first section discusses the personal finances of some well known feminists such as E. Lüders and A. Solomon, whose families were wealthy enough to enable them to avoid paid labour for substantial parts of their careers. They typically donated their work to their organizations. Others such as H. Lange, G. Bäumer, and H. Stöcker worked for wages (i.e. as teachers) outside of the movement and contributed their time to feminist causes, again largely without pay. This established a pattern of voluntary labour which would become a problem for a younger generation of feminists who were unwilling and unable to donate their time to "the good cause" due to the financial upheavals of the post World War I era to the same extent as the older feminists had done. There were also several women such as Lida Gustava Heymann and Hedwig Heyl who used their substantial fortunes to further feminist causes, including, in the case of Heymann, the radical wing. Not surprisingly,

their influence was commensurately great within the movement.

Next, Dölle turned her attention to the finances within the Bund deutscher Frauenvereine and its subsidiaries. The majority of these groups were plagued throughout their existence by chronic under funding, especially if they had a clear political orientation and emancipatory goals. As a general rule, the women's groups which were conservative, unpolitical, and mainly devoted to charitable activities were much better funded than the others. Their sources of funding from donations and special drives were much higher than the income of the more political groups, whose resources consisted mainly of membership fees and sales of pamphlets and newspapers.

Despite endemic poverty, however, the first wave feminists supported a large variety of institutions, from traditional charitable works to clearly feminist foundations which provided money to female students and old age pensions for activists within the movement. These hitherto neglected achievements of the women's movement yield some interesting new insights, including the attempt by feminist leaders to use these foundations to maintain feminist contacts after the Nazi seizure of power in 1933, which had led to the dissolution of all feminist groups. Dölle also discusses the creation of the short-lived and virtually undocumented *Frauenbank*, which while not directly supported by the movement or its leaders provided an early attempt to set up a "countercultural" financial system.

Money tended to be an area around which feminists maintained discreet silence: conflicts over finances were rendered largely invisible. Bourgeois and Protestant attitudes combined with constant lack of funds led women in the movement to be parsimonious with available resources. Many refused honoraria or other payment for their work; journeys were often privately financed, and organizational expenses were kept to an absolute minimum. The bourgeois Protestant

ethic of the private self-sacrifice of women in not spending family resources on themselves while contributing to the family well-being through unpaid labour was reflected in the inability of women in the movement to spend money on themselves while engaged in work for feminist causes. It is Dölle's great achievement to shed light on these financial underpinnings of feminism, thus making it possible to view the movement's inner workings from a totally new and important perspective.

Rosemarie Schade
Concordia University

Brigitte Studer, Regina Wecker, and Beatrix Ziegler, eds., *Frauen und Staat/Les Femmes et l'Etat* (Basel: Schwabe & Co. 1998)

THIS IMPORTANT TRILINGUAL collection of comparative essays grew out of the *Schweizer Historikertag* of 11 October 1996 and represents the work of leading international feminists around the general themes of gender, state, and society in France, Quebec, Sweden, Switzerland, and Austria. As such, it provides welcome insights into less familiar German-speaking areas of Europe as well as enabling some useful comparative work between linguistically French and linguistically German welfare states in different national contexts. By focusing in general on smaller countries (and in the Quebec case on a distinct society within another country) the study provides a valuable corrective to the usual focus on the larger countries (Germany, England, and France) of Europe.

The book is divided into three general headings. The first examines women's right to vote in Switzerland (a right only received in 1971) from various perspectives. That the fight for political rights was not enough to create equality emerges clearly from several of the papers presented here, and also from the work on Austrian parliamentarians found

in another session. The second workshop addresses issues around women, the state, and politics in a broader national and thematic context. The final workshop on the welfare state explores the complex interactions between existing gender norms and their institutionalization in state policies and laws in various national contexts. It became clear through the papers and subsequent discussions that the institutionalizing of gender norms in welfare legislation also helped to clarify, construct, and reinforce these. Brigitte Studer in her introduction to the workshop (148) points out that there are three general models of the "welfare state"; those which base their policies on the idea of the man as the head of the household (Great Britain, Switzerland); those which only partially subscribe to this (France); and those from which a dominant masculine position in the family is almost absent (Sweden). Furthermore, while there were significant national differences both in terms of the ideas underlying state funded welfare and the provisions made for social services, one constant remains: no state realistically valued women's unpaid labour in the home and in reproductive labour.

Andrée Lévesque's "Les Québécoises et les débuts de l'État providence" explores the ironic connection between the two World Wars and the origins of the welfare state, a state that would reflect the expectations of feminists, reformers, and the peculiarities of Quebec, which until the 1960s saw social services largely in the hands of female religious institutions. Welfare legislation in that province also tended to reinforce the nuclear family with its emphasis on women as homemakers and mothers rather than as workers. While much of the post World War II era discourse was dominated by Keynesian economics, in the neo-liberal 1990's the first victims of the state's retreat from social welfare were women, whether as providers or recipients of social services.

The book will be of interest to scholars in such fields as comparative women's

history, gender and politics, and the rise and decline of the welfare state. There are no theoretical breakthroughs here, as the authors all appear to be social or institutional historians who are (mercifully) jargon-free and empirical in their approaches. Instead, the book provides an enlightening entry into some less explored European and North American welfare states.

Rosemarie Schade
Concordia University

Neil Gregor, *Daimler-Benz in the Third Reich* (New Haven: Yale University Press 1998)

THIS IS A VERY GOOD BOOK on the development of Daimler-Benz during the Third Reich. It is based on extensive access to company archives, in particular the management board minutes and the papers of leading executives in the firm, including the two management board directors of the company during the period, Wilhelm Kissel and Wilhelm Haspel. The author also consulted records in the relevant Federal Archives in Germany as well as the *US Strategic Bombing Survey in the National Archives*.

The book makes a number of useful points that it defends very well with considerable evidence. First, it shows that Daimler-Benz pursued a rational strategy of corporate self-preservation throughout the Nazi Period. By this he means that Daimler-Benz consistently resisted the Nazi regime's entreaties to invest in increased armament capacities (primarily in aero-engine and tank production) at the expense of its traditional truck and car production lines when the managing board believed that such an investment would sacrifice long-term stability of the company for short-term gain. The company continued to produce cars until well into the war — and when it was finally prevented from producing full automobiles it even made a successful argument for the continued production of certain

engine types that could be used to operate search lights. The crucial success of the company, however, was in trucks, where it was able to maneuver itself into the maintenance of continuous production of truck models in its Mannheim factories throughout the war. Maintaining the integrity of factories, retaining workers and machinery was crucial: if production was allowed to lapse or workers and machinery lay idle due to the shift of resources to other locations, it would literally mean the death of the factory as both workers and machinery would be conscripted to other areas and other producers. Gregor plausibly insists that the managing board was guided by this long-term concern for peacetime production throughout the entire period of war mobilization and war because they always believed that the war — whatever its outcome — would be of short duration. Indeed, it seems that the only period in which this was not the case was between December 1941 when the Nazi's invasion of the Soviet Union Operation Barbarossa failed (that is, did not end quickly as anticipated) and February 1943 when the defeat at Stalingrad turned the tide in the war for good. During this brief period, the managing board believed that the war would probably last quite a long time.

The second point that Gregor makes is that the strategy of rational self preservation on the part of the firm led it to engage in absolutely deplorable and morally reprehensible labour practices during the war. The same principle noted above of maintaining the integrity of production in its factories to avoid what Gregor at several points describes as their "de facto dissolution," caused the managing board during the wartime period of extreme labour shortage to not only condone the deployment of forced and slaved labour in Daimler-Benz plants, but to actively seek out this kind of labour power. Gregor presents devastating quantitative evidence of the extent of this rationally barbaric practice: "Under the impact of call-ups to the Wehrmacht on the one hand and

the continuing influx of prisoners of war and foreign workers on the other, the proportion of forced workers at the core plants rose from 9.8 percent in December of 1941 to 25.4 percent in December 1942, 32 percent in December 1943 and 35.2 percent in December 1944. In December 1944, at all plants controlled by Daimler-Benz, a total of 26,958 forced foreign workers, 4887 prisoners of war and thousands of concentration camp inmates in both production and at dispersal sites were being put to work, for the most part under dreadful conditions." (183-4) But the qualitative accounting of the practices both in Daimler's German plants as well as in a Polish facility is even more powerful. Gregor provides considerable detail about how inhumane the working and living conditions of these slave labourers actually were by using company documents on the amount and quality of food made available to workers, the cruel policies for the regulation of slave labour hygiene, and the extent of violence and terror deployed at the workplace to maintain work levels. Chapter six of the book, which provides all of this detail, is stomach-turning.

The third point that Gregor makes in the book is that there was considerable continuity between the organization of production in Daimler-Benz plants before, during, and after the Nazi period. There was not "*Stunde Null*" after the war where companies had to start again from scratch to rebuild the economy. The company's strategy of rational self-preservation under the Nazi regime, in particular in the area of truck production, ensured that the company was able to resume production soon after the war was over. Gregor also shows well how the strategies of rationalization at the level of production pursued by the company followed a coherent line from the 1920s to the 1950s: Daimler was never able to move fully into high series mass production using semi and unskilled labour and special purpose high-volume machinery. Uncertainty in both its product and supply markets con-

sistently prevented moves in this direction. Instead, the company consistently rationalized where it could, but never by cutting back seriously on its reliance on skilled production labour or on its use of highly flexible general purpose machine tools. The changing political context and the shifting balance between capital and labour that it entailed enabled the company to make significant rationalizing changes. One significant area in which this was true was in the manner in which wages were paid (more wage categories were created and payment was increasingly tied to performance and uncoupled from social considerations). Another was in specific areas of production itself where it was possible to implement standardization and shift to the deployment of unskilled, frequently female, labour. But the core of production in both automobiles and trucks throughout the period remained reliant on skilled workers and flexible production machinery.

The value of Gregor's book is that it very rigorously outlines the way in which Daimler-Benz management grappled with the management of production and the survival of the firm during every critical phase in the development of the German economy during the end of the Weimar Republic and throughout the Third Reich. Gregor does not make much of whether or not the individual managers of the firm were Nazis themselves (most were enthusiasts, some were party members, others were neither). His concern is with what the documents that they have left behind show about how they strategized to maintain the long-term viability of the private company throughout the tumultuous period.

Indeed, if the book deserves to be criticized, I would say that its primary strength is also its biggest weakness. Gregor relies so intensively on the managing board's understanding of the company's situation that other possible descriptions of the same situation are given short shrift or simply ignored. For all of the discussion of the situation in production and the

company's changing capacity and interest in rationalization, Gregor never considers the view of the trade unions prior to the coming of the Nazi regime, or of workers on the shop floor of the same situation in Daimler plants. Similarly, the views of Daimler competitors regarding industrial structure, the character of competition, the organization of product markets, etc. are never presented. Indeed, there is not a single discussion of the overall structure of competition in the German automobile industry anywhere in the book: competitors enter into the narrative in cameo appearances as they pose particular challenges to the Daimler board or have factories that the Daimler board is concerned with. But one gets no sense of how Daimler fits into the automobile industry or even what the automobile industry looked like. This is a problem because it makes it impossible to understand whether or not Daimler's experience was characteristic of a larger phenomenon or not, or to what extent it was or was not.

This is a serious defect in the character of analysis and interpretation that the book presents. But it should not obscure the real contribution that the book makes to our understanding of Daimler-Benz and to the Nazi industrial economy. This is significant indeed.

Gary Herrigel
University of Chicago

Francesca Bray, *Technology and Gender: Fabrics of Power in Late Imperial China* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press 1997)

THIS VOLUME takes a close and comprehensive look at several fundamental aspects of China's social history over a period of 700 to 800 years: house building, weaving, and reproducing a new generation of Chinese. The author conceives of these as technologies and traces how preconceived notions of women's roles shaped the development of each and how women's lives often times were con-

strained by them. But this is by no means, a feminist indictment of China's patriarchy; it is rather an eye-opening disclosure of the complex relationship between Chinese women and these developing technologies. The author painstakingly documents the differing interactions of women of different economic and social standing with the growth of these technologies, correlating women's roles in society with advances in China's material culture and comparing and contrasting men's and women's relationships with the technologies. The outcome is a volume that sheds new light on China's social history using technology as the instrument to do so.

Before embarking on her investigation of the influence of these three technologies on the lives of Chinese women, the author lays the intellectual groundwork and discloses her own biases in the introduction. Most interesting to this reviewer was the way that she distanced herself from the various ideological interpretations of China's economic history. Citing the numerous complexities and inconsistencies revealed in recent studies, she advances the eminently sensible observation that official proselytizing of "the tradition of frugality, order and appropriate social roles and relations" neither inhibited nor reflected actual changes, it simply "tamed, contained and addressed" them. (31)

Part one of this study analyzes the construction of domestic living space from the Song Dynasty (960-1278) to mid-Qing (c. 1800). Observing that the neo-Confucian orthodoxy formulated in the Song provided for the separation of male and female spheres as the foundation of the social order, the author demonstrates that this is reflected in Chinese domestic architecture from the Song onward but notes that this was not simply a "walling off" and suffocation of female talent in the women's quarters. She differentiates three levels of male attitudes toward females: the official and the gentry views that women's moral nature was in no way

inferior to men and the view within the family where strict patriarchal control was *de rigueur*. Though this nuanced analysis of class perspectives is derived from the broad inferences of her study and is not universally accepted, the author argues persuasively that the freedom accorded gentry women within the women's quarters facilitated the development of self image and identity. The hierarchical implications of the separation were of less importance, a view that might resonate well with contemporary advocates of single-sex education.

Given the virilocal pattern of Chinese marriage and the uprooting and relocation of Chinese women, the author concludes that secluded domestic space could serve not only to confine but also to protect women from male control in their new families. Most importantly, however, this space was the workshop in which Chinese women did the weaving and reproduction work that won for them such status as they enjoyed in the traditional social order.

At the outset of the late imperial period the virtual monopoly that rural women held on the production of textiles linked them to the state and society for it was they who produced the cloth for tax payments. Furthermore, weaving was a significant boon to family finances. In the 16th century, as the Ming Dynasty attempted to rationalize its tax collections through commutation of taxes in kind, women gradually lost their roles as providers of cloth for tax payment and sought more profitable activities. At the same time, in situations where weaving continued to be profitable, men increasingly took over the looms. In the 17th and 18th centuries commercial production of cotton cloth took root in the market towns and suburban villages of economically developed regions while subsistence production continued elsewhere. Both commercial and subsistence production was conducted principally in peasant households. Cotton competed successfully with silk and production of the latter became confined to the lower Yangzi where it was

produced by peasant households and to the urban centres of South China. In both urban and rural households where textile production was the principal economic activity, women were consigned to the technologically less demanding and economically less profitable operations.

Not only in silk production but throughout the textile industry the intrusion of the market spurred technological adaptation that displaced or marginalized the role that women played and reduced their contribution to the household finances. The author, however, qualifies the familiar interpretation that this turn of events consolidated the basis of China's patriarchy, citing official and elite writings advocating the restoration of women's functions in the production of textiles. In an insightful discussion of neo-Confucian values, she shows that these writings were prompted by the Confucian belief that the preservation of both the male and female sphere through activities such as weaving was essential to maintenance of balance in the moral order. Nevertheless, she concedes that, in practice, the widespread seclusion of women and the diminution of the material value of their work contributed to the growing popular affirmation of male dominance and the consequent consignment of women to the principal role of human reproduction.

In part three, the author narrows her focus on reproduction to the functions of motherhood set in the broader context of being a wife. Drawing on the rich medical literature, especially the abundant case histories, she demonstrates that elite women had at their disposal a number of methods for regulation of the menstrual cycle that were, in effect, methods of controlling the process of reproduction. A high degree of reproductive freedom lay well within their grasp. Not only did traditional gynecology place the welfare of the mother before that of the fetus, the traditional practice of polygyny allowed principal wives to appropriate the children of concubines or secondary wives.

Functioning as a mother clearly carried more meaning than the biological link to one's offspring.

One could quarrel with some aspects of this volume. Occasionally the author's assertions seem to be light on documentation; sometimes her observations, for example, those concerning the fertility and robust health of maids in well-off families, (351) seem a bit of a stretch; and her narrative style is demanding of her readers. But these quibbles do not diminish the importance of a work that introduces and illuminates the development of China's civilization by examining the interaction of women with the developing material culture. The result is a greatly enriched view of the Chinese past and especially Chinese women.

Thomas L. Kennedy
Washington State University

Samir Amin, *Spectres of Capitalism: A Critique of Current Intellectual Trends* (New York: Monthly Review Press 1998)

AMIN'S LATEST BOOK takes the occasion of *The Communist Manifesto's* 150th anniversary to affirm the ongoing relevance of Marxist analysis and point the way beyond a variety of intellectual and political dead-ends faced by the left in an era of ascendent global capitalism. The book's title, in part an ironic allusion to Derrida, reflects Amin's wariness of attempts to exorcize Marx's critical and historical understanding of capitalism from both mainstream economics and many quarters of the "post-socialist" left. In Amin's view, recent crises in the global economy have undermined established complacencies, drawing renewed attention to the irrationality of an economic system decoupled from democratic control and heedless of its own social and ecological consequences. In this respect, as Amin argues, the collapse of "actually existing socialism" and the aggressive neoliberal programme of globalization have amounted to a "paradoxical victory"

for capitalism, for deepening socio-economic crises have thrown many of its perennial contradictions into increasingly stark relief.

In attempting to relate the otherwise novel predicaments of contemporary "globalization" to "the basic and permanent features of capitalism," (46) Amin grants paramount importance to the abiding reality of "economic alienation." Harkening back to the work of the young Marx, he analyzes the means by which the religious and metaphysical alienation of pre-capitalist societies acquires under capitalist conditions a peculiarly economic form. Divorced from the political arena and disembedded from traditional socio-cultural norms, the capitalist "economy" emancipates itself from communal control and takes on the appearance of an alien force ruling over human society. As Amin argues, this alienated form of economic life remains more than evident in the world of late capitalism, in which the arbitrary edicts of "the market" provide the final horizon of possibility for nominally democratic communities, and the meddling human will is met with retributive scourges of financial "contagions," "flus," "storms," and "meltdowns."

For Amin, this brand of alienation is expressed today most forcefully in the abstract domain of economic theory known as "pure economics." In his opinion, the elaborate formal apparatus of "pure economics" betrays a dehistoricized and depoliticized understanding of economic process, and is most notable for its magisterial ability to override empirical details which contradict its "utopian" premise that "'the market' rules with the force of natural law, producing not merely a 'general equilibrium' but the best of all possible equilibria." (143) To this extent, as Amin underscores, whether dubious claims to objectivity the "parascience" of pure economics might possess, it has succeeded dramatically in its primary effort to "legitimize the unrestricted predations of capital." (143)

Here, as elsewhere, Amin demonstrates a keen awareness of the ways in which economic discourse has functioned in recent years to legitimize and extend essentially undemocratic patterns of social decision. It is on these grounds that he indicts neoliberalism for ensuring that social priorities and policies are effectively determined by "a minority ... pretending to legitimacy on the basis of its ability to make the economy conform to the requirements of economic law." (84) Economic pragmatism in this regard becomes indistinguishable from what Amin refers to as "reactionary utopianism," in which the quest to make society conform to the "mythical rationality" of the free market provides a seemingly politically neutral rationale for what is necessary on a variety of social fronts. In this manner, the possibility of democratically creating a more just and humane world increasingly cedes place to the need to curb democratic citizenship and adapt society to the capricious will of "the market" or "the economy."

In focusing on the historical tendency of capitalism to restrict the scope of popular democracy and progressively subordinate social life as a whole to the imperatives of private capital, Amin provocatively reframes conventional approaches to the question of "economic determinism." While Amin acknowledges the inadequacies of mechanistic Marxism, he is at pains to argue that "economic determinism" is best thought of as a legitimizing form of capitalist ideology in direct conflict with core Marxist ideals. Indeed, where neoliberalism and other bourgeois ideologies "would practically wipe out any room for the construction of a human civilization different from that governed by the inherent laws of capitalism," (86) the "Marxian spirit" holds that "the human enterprise ... is not foreclosed by some necessity that is tied to the development of either the productive forces of any other metasocial force." (11) For Amin, the essential insight of Marxism is that capitalism is not a given and eternal

fact of nature, but a flawed, historically specific, and hence surpassable means of organizing socio-economic life. To this extent, the promise of socialism lies in the possibility of overcoming forms of alienation peculiar to capitalism and "reimbedding" economic activity in political institutions which can direct it towards democratically defined human ends.

In renouncing such emancipatory goals, Amin argues, "postmodernism" presents itself not so much as a worthy historical successor to Marxism as an enfeebled complement to neoliberalism. In light of this bold thesis, it is regrettable that Amin did not allow for a more differentiated account of the social, philosophical, and political underpinnings of "postmodernism," which in this book often simply seems to represent everything he finds politically suspect or personally distasteful. From what can be surmised, Amin regards postmodernism as a politically timid oppositional stance whose disillusionment with grand projects of social transformation symptomatically reflects, rather than critically illuminates, basic features of the "post-socialist condition." In its claustrophobic focus on the local, contingent, and fragmentary aspects of contemporary life, Amin asserts, postmodernism has effectively reached a rapprochement with the totalizing logic of global capitalism. Lacking any vision of human emancipation beyond capitalism, postmodernism can at best hope to pragmatically manage and cope with the innumerable noxious manifestations of a system whose basic imperatives it takes as given.

The most stimulating aspect of Amin's critique of postmodernism is his effort to understand it in relation to other emergent forms of anti-modernism which place decisive limits on the human capacity to both understand and change the world. From Amin's humanistic perspective, "modernity" marks a historical break with traditional forms of "metaphysical alienation," a "rupture through which humanity escapes the commandments of a

cosmic order: and discovers its ability to make its own history." (95) In this respect, current forms of religious fundamentalism, in their attempts to "step outside" of modern history and into the timeless reality of God's law, provide our readiest image of anti-modernism. However, Amin argues, similar tendencies can be found in the regressive social ideals of western neo-conservatism, and in our ostensibly "rational" acceptance of the unassailable authority of quasi-natural economic laws.

For Amin, postmodernism's own diagnosis of modernity's failures betrays a similar temptation to return to the essentially pre-modern belief that "what happens goes in no direction that anyone can ever discover, let alone hope to influence by constructive and consequential action." (99) Here, Amin insists upon the need to distinguish "modernity" as such from the forms it has taken under historical capitalism, focusing on the perversion of modern ideals that has resulted from the need to make them conform to the requirements of an exploitative and undemocratic system. Like Habermas, Amin challenges the regressive impulse within postmodernism by arguing that modernity is "an unfinished project" which "can progress further only by going beyond capitalism." (103) It is on this account that he reaffirms our vital need to wrest our collective future away from the blind and destructive imperatives of global capitalism and "give birth to the enormous human possibilities carried by that world-haunting spectre of communism." (11)

Dennis Soron
York University

Ellen Meiksins Wood, *The Origins of Capitalism* (New York: Monthly Review Press 1999)

FEW DEBATES WITHIN MARXISM have been more significant than the controversy that surrounds our understanding of the tran-

sition from feudalism to capitalism. In an age when markets serve to increasingly act as the pimp between people and their most fundamental needs, discussion on the nature and limits of capitalism, let alone its origin, seems akin to screaming into a vacuum.

Ellen Meiksins Wood's newest book seeks to rekindle the debate on the origins of capitalism in a political and intellectual climate that seeks to either evade the issue, or theorize it away entirely. Positioning herself between liberal scholarship that presumes the natural and transhistorical nature of capitalism and a postmodernism that often fails to sufficiently confront it, Wood attempts to frame the debate in terms that emphasizes the quantitative as well as the qualitative break between capitalism and what came before it. In other words, Wood seeks to highlight what makes capitalism a specific form of social organization.

To do this, Wood begins by bringing her readers up to speed with the history of the transition debate. Initial attempts to explain the origin of capitalism — what Wood calls the Commercialization Model — presuppose exactly what needs to be explained. The Commercialization Model itself contains a vast plurality of views, including the bourgeois political economists, Henri Pirenne and Max Weber. What they all have in common is an understanding of the origin of capitalism that seeks to explain it in terms of the extension of commercial activity. Capitalism is thus an urban phenomenon that emerges out of the gradual and inevitable expansion of commerce, culminating in the establishment of global networks of trade and markets.

Such an understanding of the emergence of capitalism, argues Wood, treats the capitalist market as an arena of opportunity rather than as an imperative. As such, history is seen in terms of the perennial rise of the middle class, the gradual removal of feudal obstacles serving to hinder the innate profit-maximizing nature of the rationally self-interested indi-

vidual. The coercion of market forces are replaced with opportunities or "life chances". The second failure of the Commercialization Model is that it also adheres to a conception of technological determinism that sees the historical process as being driven by advances in technology and technique: an expanding division of labour and the introduction of labour-saving devices are said to account for the necessity of increased productivity. Capital intensive machinery leads to the increasing exploitation of labour to secure the greater returns that are needed to pay for the high costs of employing such machinery. Such explanations, however, fail to address the social relations that underpin the application of technology, and therefore cannot account for the discrepancies in the outcomes of the employment of technology at different historical times and in different social spaces.

The Marxist intervention into the debate seemed to shift the focus away from the Commercialization Model and towards an analysis rooted in the struggles between antagonistic social classes. Maurice Dobb and Rodney Hilton sought to locate the prime mover of the transition in the struggle between the rural classes. This entailed a marked shift from town to countryside, a move that dispelled the conventional wisdom that capitalism was an inherently urban phenomenon. While Dobb's and Hilton's findings certainly were significant, they still viewed the market in terms of an opportunity. Once the petty rural producers struggled free of their parasitic feudal landlords, they would inevitably seek to increase their fortunes by engaging in capitalist forms of production.

Although this is a significant step beyond the orthodox Marxist Bourgeois Revolution paradigm that saw the transition as a struggle between a nascent bourgeoisie overthrowing an anachronistic feudal aristocracy, it still takes us back, argues Wood, to the underlying assumptions of the Commercialization Model.

The transition is still theorized in a way that sees it as the gradual removal of feudal obstacles that hitherto hindered the innate profit-maximizing tendencies of petty commodity producers. What has merely changed is that the transition occurs in the countryside rather than the town, and it centres around petty agrarian production rather than trade.

Wood argues that it was the work of historian Robert Brenner that finally broke decisively with the underlying assumptions of the Commercialization Model. Building on the work of Hilton and Dobb, Brenner situates the transition not only in the countryside, but in the English countryside. The emergence of coercive market forces was the accidental outcome of the actions of the landed aristocracy and their tenant farmers. In England, there existed a basic market in leases due to the fact that the landed aristocracy had given up its extra-economic rights of surplus extraction for strictly economic powers. No longer could they rely on judicial, political, or military powers to squeeze the peasantry of surplus like their continental counterparts did. Rather, they relied on their money rents as the basis of their income. As a result, increased rents necessitated increased profits on the part of the tenant farmers. Thus, both landlord and tenant had an interest in the improvement of agriculture; more profits for the tenant meant greater rents for the lord.

It is in this relationship between lord and tenant that the competitive imperatives of the market were born. Wood emphasizes the fact that the emergence of these market imperatives resulted from the actions of each class to reproduce their mode of existence *as they already existed*. As such, Brenner refuses to theorize the transition in terms of a battle between two antithetical modes of production and refuses to conceive of the market as a sphere of opportunity.

The significance of English agrarian capitalism is that it became the basis not only of new forms of imperialism and international trade, but also of the indus-

trial revolution itself. The differentiation of the peasantry that resulted from the competition that epitomized these new market forces created a large mass of dispossessed peasants that would soon become transformed into the English working class. Not only did this dispossessed peasantry become the basis for the industrialization of England, they developed into the first large-scale class that became entirely dependent upon the market to secure their basic existence. The spread of capitalism eliminated their non-market access to food, forcing them to become a market for agrarian capitalism itself. In fact, Wood goes so far as to suggest that, without the emergence of agrarian capitalism in England, capitalism itself may never have emerged.

Perhaps the only disappointment of the book is that Wood, as fans of her work will immediately notice, is not breaking any new ground here. Most of the historical record has already been covered by Brenner himself, and the book itself is a collection of essays that Wood has written over the last five years. But as she herself points out in the preface, her intentions of writing this book is as much political as it is scholarly. Like *A Trumpet of Sedition* before it, *The Origins of Capitalism* is a perfect introductory text, either at the undergrad level or on one's own prerogative that initiates even the most unfamiliar reader into a very important historical debate. Finally, her conceptualization of the market as a sphere of coercion is an important insight that workers need to incorporate into their strategies; rather than struggling to place obstacles in the way of the market opportunities of individual capitalists, unions need to strike at the very imperatives that *compel* capitalists to accumulate *as a class*. In any case, this is essential reading for anyone seeking an understanding of capitalism.

Geoff Kennedy
York University

Pierre Bourdieu, *Acts of Resistance: Against the New Myths of Our Time*, trans. Richard Nice (Oxford: Polity Press 1998)

AS PIERRE BOURDIEU REMARKS in *Acts of Resistance*, the Germans have a wonderful word, *Regressionsverbot* — a ban on retreat from workers' past social gains. It's not an idea much in favour these days with politicians. In a joint statement on 8 June 1999, Tony Blair and Gerhard Schroeder spelled out their vision of a social democratic agenda for the next century. After a nod towards "achievements of the past" (the wording is significant), like public health care and pensions, they warned European workers that they risked losing out in the new global economy unless they accepted more workplace "flexibility" (read: McJobs, layoffs, lower pay, longer shifts) and the "modernization" (read: abolition) of their social benefits. The doublespeak and uncritical deference to market logic are typical of what Bourdieu calls the "strong discourse" of neo-liberalism that now completely suffuses the media and public policy to the exclusion of progressive alternatives. In this collection of his recent speeches, interviews, and essays, Bourdieu seeks to smash the consensus and supply weapons to those "striving to resist the scourge of neoliberalism."

Chair of Sociology at the Collège de France, Bourdieu is nearly alone among leading French intellectuals in his commitment to the fight for social justice, reflected here in forthright polemics against racism, unemployment, and the casualization of labour. But his main target is the "new economism" that fosters these problems by presenting unrestrained market competition as an irresistible law of nature. According to this view, taxation and capital controls are "structural barriers to competition," and welfare systems and job security "rigidities in the labour market" that must inevitably be swept aside in the interests of "growth" and "productivity." Put into practice by

central banks, multinationals, and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the new dogma has extracted an intolerable price from workers in the industrialized countries and those in less favoured parts of the world against whom they are increasingly forced to compete.

Bourdieu has several proposals for resistance. A job that falls especially to intellectuals is demystification, and he reserves his harshest criticisms for the academics and media pundits whose collaboration with the new order endows it with its symbolic power and air of inevitability. Stripped of the scientific aura it derives from economics and the progressive overtones of its buzz-words ("reform," "globalization," "flexibility," "deregulation"), neo-liberalism is revealed as nothing more than a slick repackaging of capital's oldest dream, a utopia of unlimited exploitation. Its translation into reality over the past twenty years was not the product of economic destiny, but a political project, the most recent in a series of conservative "restorations" engineered by business and political elites. Bourdieu's proposal to map and quantify its real effects in the form of lost jobs, suffering, and violence is a first step towards replacing neo-liberal fatalism with an alternative "economics of happiness" that puts social, environmental, and cultural costs at the centre of calculations now governed solely by considerations of shareholder profits.

As a political project, neo-liberalism can ultimately be countered only by political mobilization. With the parties united in their backing for the new order, this must come from workers and their organizations. Speaking at a mass meeting of rail workers, whose strike over working conditions paralyzed France in December 1995, Bourdieu urges for a start the defence of the "left hand" of the state — public services, health, education — which historically represents "the trace in reality of past social conquests" and not simply a tool of elites. But beyond this what's needed is a "new internation-

alism" that can resist on a global level the transnational forms of exploitation and social dumping opened up by agreements like NAFTA and the proposed MAI. In addresses to Greek and German trade unionists, Bourdieu argues for closer cross-border links between unions to pool knowledge and coordinate mass actions like the recent protests in Greece, Germany, Italy, Spain, and Korea. European workers must unite in demanding social guarantees as the precondition for further integration. Instead of acquiescing in the right's vision of a Europe reduced to a central bank, they should insist on a European code of social rights, a definition of minimum income and the right to work, work redistribution through a shorter work week, measures against corporate tax fraud and social dumping, and an investment policy that subordinates the common market to the common good in the form of public housing, health, education, and transit. Success in Europe will be a step in the direction of a global social state that can reverse the race for the bottom fueled by the international mobility of capital.

Speaking last year during the occupation of the elite *École Normale Supérieure* by unemployed people, Bourdieu celebrated their militancy as a reminder that under neo-liberalism the interests of workers and non-workers are the same. Only the joint action of the unemployed and those with the doubtful privilege of increasingly insecure work, and workers and non-workers of different countries, will force the "right hand" of the state — the finance ministries, the central banks, and the political masters — to confront the historic choice "between the confidence of the markets and the confidence of the people." And, as Bourdieu makes clear, the people are impatient.

Lawrin Armstrong
Simon Fraser University