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## REVIEWS / COMPTES RENDUS

**Adelle Larmour, *Until the End: Memoirs of Sinter-plant Activist Jean L. Gagnon***  
(North Bay: Wynterblue Publishing 2010)

HEALTH AND SAFETY issues in industrial plants rarely offer an exciting story. This book provides the case study of an exception. A determined, even courageous individual quietly but persistently fought for and gained compensation for victims and their families of smelter-related deaths and diseases at a horrid workplace. The fight was long and lonely but successful. Over 135 million dollars has been paid out in compensation and pensions in the last fifty years. From the 1950s to the present, the fight was mainly carried by Jean L. Gagnon, a Mine-Mill stalwart, though he credits two individuals with crucial inspiration: Weir Reid, a Mine-Mill cultural leader, and Mickey Maguire, a local Steelworker president.

In Sudbury's nickel industry various ways of refining the metal have been attempted. One form involved making a powder from the nickel, a process called sintering. From 1948 to 1963 at its Copper Cliff plant just west of Sudbury, Inco made this dust-like powder which had to be shoveled into containers for shipment. The plant was constantly full of fine particles; few workers wore filter masks, and within a few years signs of lung cancer appeared. Eventually, detailed studies found that lung and nasal cancers were two and a half to 25 times what would be expected for the work group, depending on which part of the process they worked and the length of exposure. But

convincing health or company officials to undertake such studies took years and Gagnon did the lion's share in convincing unions, compensation boards, and health officials to investigate. He personally collected information on work times, exposure, and instances of disease. He achieved recognition of sintering plant exposure as an industrial disease. He represented hundreds of workers and widows in compensation cases.

From his first weeks on the job, John Gagnon took it upon himself to convince co-workers to follow his example and wear a filter at all times as well as questioning foremen about the lack of regulations. Eventually he received the support of the unions for his efforts since numerous sinter plant workers were dying prematurely. The struggle for that support, the conflicts with the company (names are given), and the efforts to convince the Workmen's Compensation Board of Ontario to recognize the disease and to provide pensions and compensation form the core of this book.

Presented chronologically from Gagnon's initial work experience in 1951 when he was treated as an odd outsider to his receiving the Governor General's Caring Canadian Award in 2004 and the Order of Ontario in 2009, the work is an amalgamation of Gagnon's memories and Larmour's research. The division of the tasks is not clear because no explanation about methods is included. References are provided to some archives used but they differ from each other in format. Occasionally quotations from Gagnon's

diaries appear but not consistently. Despite such reservations about the efforts of a dedicated and informed amateur, the writing is clear and the alternating of Gagnon's personal life with the larger events in the mining industry and union infighting provides for a solid account and good popular history.

Though the book's history of union conflicts, Inco's evolution from monopoly to another player in the nickel market, as well as the main commissions examining health and safety, offers few novelties. Drawing upon the relevant secondary materials, this biography is a necessary and important addition to labour history. It illustrates well what one person, ironically one believing fervently in collective action, can achieve. It demonstrates the struggles, the doubts, and costs to an individual, including his health, which such social activism can cause. John Gagnon deserved to have this biography written and hopefully all his papers will become available so that more can be known about other aspects of the fight to obtain compensation for the workers and their families.

The book thus offers three interwoven stories. It relates Gagnon's work and personal life from his poverty-ridden background to Lincoln Continental status and modest wealth. The sacrifices of wife Jeannine and their children and Gagnon's personal health struggles are well presented. Second, the fights between Mine-Mill and Steelworkers over union representation as well as health and safety struggles illustrate the difficulties of obtaining support from natural allies. Third, there is the story of the maze of bureaucrats and experts representing the interests of companies and states that had to be doggedly confronted, convinced, and overcome. Larmour has detailed all three while keeping the sintering plant compensation story, namely one of John

Gagnon's personal dogged struggles, in the forefront.

DIETER K. BUSE

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**Elroy Deimert, *Pubs, Pulpits and Prairie Fires*** (Halifax and Winnipeg: Roseway Publishing 2009)

THANKFULLY, THE 75th anniversary of the unemployed workers' On to Ottawa Trek has not been forgotten. In June 2010 Elroy Deimert, an NDP activist and instructor of English at Grande Prairie Regional College in Alberta, along with others made efforts to celebrate the Trek in each of the towns Trekkers visited in 1935 before being forcibly halted in Regina. Deimert's program included readings from *Pubs, Pulpits and Prairie Fires*, his book honouring the Trekkers, and "singing of labour anthems [and] folksongs of the era," according to his publisher.

Deimert deserves credit for trying to educate Western Canadians about the Relief Camp Workers strike, the On to Ottawa Trek and the Regina Riot. His book, unfortunately, isn't as engaging as the topic itself.

*Pubs, Pulpits and Prairie Fires* is not intended as an historical study of these iconic events of the Dirty Thirties. Rather, it's a fictional story of a present-day group of friends in Deimert's hometown of Grande Prairie who gather weekly at BJ's Bar and Cue Club to drink beer and talk about a most unlikely topic: the Trek and the Riot. Two characters, Robert "Doc" Savage and Matt Shaw, who are based on actual surviving Trekkers, visit the pub to relate their memories of these events.

Within this frame story – a kind of *Canterbury Tales* in a beer parlour – Savage and Shaw offer lengthy stories, which Deimert says are based on interviews he

conducted with them. Occasionally, their accounts are briefly interrupted by a listener ordering another beer, or reacting with strong emotion, as when one woman “introduced her grandfather [Savage] with what I suspected were tears glistening in her fierce and pride-filled eyes.” (231)

The cast of characters at BJ’s Tuesday Night History Club includes Paul Wessner, the hub of the group, a “veteran history professor at the local college” (7) (Deimert’s alter ego, who has changed his department from English to History); Daniella, a United Church minister imbued with the social gospel who ultimately provides the love interest; Sammy, an oilfield labourer and recovered crack abuser who provides both comic relief and a kind of spectral sounding board for Paul; and Charles, a West Indian ex-preacher who once struggled with the bottle and now tells Sammy, “You’re going to be awarded a Ph.D. in history from BJ’s Academy for piling it higher and deeper just like the rest of us.” (196)

Deimert’s book can’t fairly be critiqued as a work of history. What can one make of repeated references to “Big Bill Hayward,” and to US politician Joe McCarthy’s House Committee on Un-American Activities? Since this is a work of fiction, Big Bill Haywood’s name may be spelled any way the author likes, and Joe McCarthy can be transferred from the Senate to the House of Representatives. And when “Doc” Savage comments that a relief work camp “[r]eminds one a bit of Auschwitz,” (233) who can quibble? After all, it’s simply a character’s line.

Students of the 1935 protests are fortunate to have the carefully researched and well-documented *All Hell Can’t Stop Us. The On-to-Ottawa Trek and Regina Riot* by Bill Waiser of the University of Saskatchewan. Waiser’s book has the added advantages of being a judicious account

and an accessible, engaging story, and offers a more historically accurate view than Deimert’s book.

For example, while Trek leader and Communist Arthur (Slim) Evans is a romantic hero for Deimert’s Paul Wessner character, Waiser points out that the Communist Party “initially disapproved” of the Trek, did not promote the event until “some momentum” was gained, and “[e]ven then, it was more than a simple Communist event – if it ever was.” (272–73)

In a comment on his sources, Deimert says of Waiser’s book, published six years earlier than his, “I do not believe that there is anything substantial in [my] book that comes via Waiser. I have not had his book in my possession since reading it and I did not make notes. I think all the factual material was already established in the drafts. I enjoyed reading Waiser, but, of course, his is a proper academic study and very different in genre and mode.” (302)

Deimert explains that his primary sources were his interviews with Savage and Shaw, plus other Trekkers, but doesn’t mention whether transcripts or tapes of the interviews are available.

Given that the book contains elements of fiction and non-fiction, Deimert has told an interviewer that his is a work of creative non-fiction. He writes in a note on sources that “the border between historical fiction and creative non-fiction” can be “disconcerting” for “the historian, the genre critic, the academic and the critical thinker who wants to know what creative license the author is taking with the facts of history.” (301)

Most readers are not likely to be disconcerted or overly concerned with defining the genre of *Pubs, Pulpits and Prairie Fires*. However, many readers are likely to feel that, as a work of fiction, the book is not successful. Key elements of fiction

such as plot development, engaging characterization, use of symbols, and fresh, interesting dialogue are either missing or weakly executed. The writing is repetitive and often belaboured – few observations on subjects ranging from church summer camps to Prime Ministers Mulroney and Chrétien go unrecorded. Also, a better editing might have spotted “miners” for minors, “gage” for gauge, and so on.

Still, as Deimert’s character Paul Wessner imagines himself telling Sammy, “If you know so much about the rules of fiction and non-fiction, then you write the story.” (300)

The earnest, didactic tone of the book may remind historians of the thousands of popular novels, now largely forgotten, published in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries that aimed to bring readers salvation through Christ. True, Deimert’s attitudes towards beer are opposed to those in the Christian novels – not to mention that at the close of the novel Paul, the hero, is about to embark on an affair with an unmarried woman, a minister, no less. Still, there’s a relentlessly preachy tone that links Deimert’s account to older evangelical novels. Perhaps it’s no coincidence that his alter ego, Paul, grew up in a strongly evangelical Christian home.

Some critics of the book may want to give Deimert credit for attempting a romantic revival of Western Canadian radical traditions. Other critics may want to keep in mind the words, quoted by Waiser, of a Calgarian who wrote Prime Minister Bennett’s secretary in the Thirties, “I trust Mr. Bennett does not be too harsh on those lads. Some mother owns them.” (275)

GENE HOMEL

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**J.I. Little, *Loyalties in Conflict: A Canadian Borderland in War and Rebellion, 1812–1840*** (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 2008)

IT HAS BECOME almost redundant for historians to anoint J.I. Little as the foremost authority on Quebec’s Eastern Townships, given the impressive array of monographs and articles that he has published on the region over the past 25 years. His most recent book is no exception to this trend. Entitled *Loyalties in Conflict*, Little’s latest tome is an ambitious foray into the political culture of the region, and how its inhabitants responded to the two severe socio-political crises of the early nineteenth century, the War of 1812 and the Rebellions of 1837–38. The stated aims of the book are twofold; as a regional study, Little illustrates that popular responses to “war and rebellion” in the Townships were largely defined by local conditions and a developing regional civic culture. And yet Little also broadens his analysis by stating that local responses to political crises were often tempered by burgeoning regional, provincial, and imperial identities, as “the experience of British political domination, American military threat, and French-Canadian unrest ... helped to define how the “imagined” community known as English Canada came into existence.” (10) In many respects, *Loyalties in Conflict* is a companion volume to Little’s previously published *Borderland Religion*, which explored how religious experience was a powerful influence in reshaping American “borderland” identities in the Townships into English-Canadian ones, a recurring theme in his latest project.

The book is divided into two parts, the first of which illuminates the rather complex reactions of the local populace to the events surrounding the War of 1812. On the one hand, Little argues that a regional

sense of self-preservation led many of the inhabitants to flock to the local militia and protection of the British forces, particularly during repeated threats of American invasion across a border that was far from secure. However, Little also claims that this borderland conflict cemented differentiating senses of community across the boundary line within a once common people. Little marshals a vast array of archival sources such as militia records, diaries, and local histories, but critics of his approach could argue that his reading of popular responses to the War of 1812 is entirely too patrician, given his concentration on the journals and records of militia officers. Although Little does highlight the concerns of these gentlemen officers regarding the securing of commissions and the policing of border migration, his investigation reveals far more about the agency of the local populace than the hegemonic influence of the British gentry in Lower Canada. Indeed, from the refusal of "plebeians" to be conscripted or to serve in militia units outside their locale, to the continued smuggling and counterfeiting activities of Township locals, clearly the inhabitants were not averse to contesting the authority of the colonial administration. However, repeated raids and occasional looting by American troops "may not have produced a sudden outpouring of pro-British sentiment, but they did make the boundary line more tangible simply because families and local communities now felt threatened." (55) As a result, the inhabitants increasingly turned to British civic culture, the safety valve of British immigration, and even the cultural authority of the Anglican Church to construct a "British-Canadian" identity in the Eastern Townships.

Little next turns his attention to the actual formation of this identity in the Townships, and perhaps more importantly, the founding of a unique

socio-political culture that would in turn shape the response of local inhabitants to the Rebellions of 1837–38. Borrowing heavily from the work of Jeffrey McNairn on civic engagement in Upper Canada, Little argues that the establishment of Township voluntary associations such as temperance societies, Masonic lodges, and even religious societies not only ended social isolation, it also fashioned a civic consciousness amongst the populace. Along with local newspapers and political associations, the resulting development of a "public sphere" engaged Eastern Township inhabitants in lively debates all along the socio-political continuum, from liberal-minded radicals found among immigrant Yankees to more conservative British-born inhabitants. Despite manifestations of a consistently adversarial political culture, Little discovered that the politically-aware inhabitants of the region were in fact united by a desire for pragmatic reforms such as "property ownership, economic development and liberal political institutions," (64) and in their distrust of French-Canadian nationalism exhibited in the platform of the *patriotes*. These resulting factors, as well as continued trepidation among Township inhabitants regarding the ultimate aims of those across the border, "frightened" the populace – even partisan radicals – into supporting the British colonial administration during the Rebellions.

Even though this discussion on the pre-Rebellion political culture in the Townships is highly engaging, it is startlingly devoid of the more recent scholarship pertaining to the rise of a "middling-class" civic consciousness in the Canadas. In his understandable reticence to support an older historiography that embraces the Rebellions as a bourgeois revolution, Little nonetheless overlooks McNairn's contention – based on the political theories of Jürgen Habermas

– that Enlightenment civic culture in fact leads to the creation of a *bourgeois* public sphere. The formation of the “middle-class subject” during the Rebellions is also reflected in historians’ recent fascination with the rise of a liberal order in early nineteenth-century British North America. From the publication of Ian McKay’s seminal article on the liberal social order in 2000, historians such as McNairn himself, Adele Perry, and especially Jean-Marie Fecteau have viewed this period in Canadian history as a middle-class liberal project. The omission of this secondary literature is all the more odd given Little’s past curiosity with the life and career of Township resident Marcus Child – a radical politician who later became involved with the ultimate liberal project in the Townships, educational reform – who made a brief yet significant cameo in *Loyalties in Conflict*. Exposing the reader to this literature would have strengthened the argument of the book immeasurably.

Despite this brief historiographical hiccup, when Little returns to his evidence he carefully crafts a highly nuanced portrait of a local populace who, despite their continuing smuggling and counterfeiting activities, disobedience to militia officers, and adherence to political radicalism, turned to the safety of British institutions in times of peril. It becomes difficult to argue with Little’s contention that a fear of French nationalism, American retaliation, and the strengthening of British cultural ties led the local populace to construct a fairly durable “British-Canadian” identity in the Eastern Townships after the tumult of the Rebellions.

*Loyalties in Conflict* tells a complex story of interweaving local, imperial, and ethnic identities as well as the development of socio-political and cultural processes in Quebec’s Eastern Townships, and becomes another impressive publication from one of Canada’s most productive

historians. The only real drawback of the book is its length; at 182 pages, it not only eliminates some of the secondary literature debates that would add greatly to the discussion, it also limits Little’s ability to demonstrate his remarkable interpretive and analytical expertise.

DARREN FERRY

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**Albert Schrauwers, “Union is Strength:” W.L. Mackenzie, *The Children of Peace, and the Emergence of Joint Stock Democracy in Upper Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 2009)**

ALBERT SCHRAUWERS has written an important book that changes our understanding of the coming of representative democracy in Upper Canada. Many academics and graduate students will find this book extremely useful.

The author is concerned with two developments that transformed life in Upper Canada between 1815 and about 1850. First, he explores the growing integration of Upper Canadians into a trans-Atlantic market economy. Second, he discusses the democratization of the political order, a transformation that involved the loss of power by the Family Compact and the achievement of responsible government. Schrauwers employs the concept of “joint-stock democracy” to show how economic and constitutional change co-evolved: far from being coincidental, responsible government and the transition to capitalism reinforced each other. The author’s narrative incorporates a number of familiar names from Upper Canadian history (e.g., William Lyon Mackenzie, Lord Sydenham, John Strachan, Robert Baldwin, the Bank of Upper Canada), but he provides us with a fresh paradigm for understanding their actions.

As someone who teaches an undergraduate course on business history, I

find that it is sometimes difficult to interest young adults in the juridical evolution of the company. Many students find it difficult to grasp why the granting of legal personhood to business corporations is historically significant. Schrauwers' research will make it easier to illustrate this point because he shows the subversive nature of the unincorporated joint-stock companies of Upper Canada. The Family Compact oligarchy was able to use its control of the legislature to charter limited-liability corporations such as the Bank of Upper Canada and the Canada Company. Schrauwers shows that non-elite people responded by creating joint-stock companies that did not have the sanction of the state.

Joint-stock companies such as the Farmers' Storehouse cooperative played an important role in both the reform agitation leading up to the 1837 Rebellion and the subsequent struggle for responsible government. Schrauwers also explores the nature of debt in Upper Canada, showing how the Family Compact used the threat of imprisonment to control the populace.

Schrauwers' observations on assisted emigration, poor relief, and workhouses in Upper Canada are interesting because he places Upper Canadian developments in a wider imperial context. He shows that the influx of British paupers into Upper Canada in the 1830s created a crisis in Toronto. Schrauwers relates Canadian ideas about poverty to the New Poor Law of 1834, a piece of British legislation that signalled a hardening of attitudes in the mother country. The author's evidence about the intensity of the pauper problem in Upper Canada helps to address one of the unanswered questions of Upper

Canadian political history, namely why Britain appointed Sir Francis Bond Head, a civilian who lacked experience in colonial government, Lieutenant Governor of Upper Canada in 1835. Historians have

long wondered about the British cabinet's bizarre choice of Head, with some speculating that his appointment was the result of clerical confusion with Francis' more suitable cousin, Edmund Head. Drawing on research by Rainer Baehre, Schrauwers suggests that Head was sent to Upper Canada because his prior experience as a Poor Law Commissioner in Kent suited him to governing a province with a growing population of British-born paupers. It is unfortunate that Schrauwers did not follow up this very interesting line of speculation by reinterpreting the relevant Colonial Office files. Schrauwers' book is largely based on secondary and published primary sources. A scholar based in a history department probably would have made somewhat greater use of archival materials.

Schrauwers has successfully synthesized several different sub-disciplines of history: social history, political history, and business history. It is rare to find a book in which the footnotes refer to such diverse scholars as Bryan Palmer, Alfred Chandler, and John Ralston Saul. Another positive aspect of this work is its comparative or international element. Schrauwers places Upper Canada in its international context by referring to developments in other countries, such as President Jackson's Bank War in the United States or the 1834 Poor Law. Schrauwers also uses the growing body of literature on the place of "gentlemanly capitalism" in the management of the British Empire. The author, who is an anthropologist rather than a historian, draws extensively on social theory, which strengthens the book.

This reviewer hopes that this book will contribute to the ongoing revival of interest in nineteenth century Canadian politics. For many years, little was published on Upper Canada, which forced history professors to rely on increasingly dated works in writing their lectures. Recently,



historians such as Carol Wilton and Jeffrey McNairn have reengaged with Upper Canadian politics in a theoretically informed way. Jeffrey McNairn's first book used Habermasian social theory to understand the role of the press in the advent of representative democracy in Canada. Schrauwers deepens our understanding of the democratization of Upper Canada by showing how joint-stock companies, which were effectively "mini-Parliaments," (22) were part of the development of civil society.

This book will also refine our understanding of Ian McKay's "liberal order framework," a paradigm that some Canadian historians have found useful for understanding this period of history. My impression is that Schrauwers' book will strengthen the hand of those of us who believe that McKay has exaggerated the strength of classical liberalism in nineteenth century Canada. The joint-stock company certainly experienced tremendous growth in British North America. Indeed, one could argue that in the post-1867 period, it was the third most important social institution in Canada, after the Christian church and the nuclear family. However, Schrauwers' research suggests that it is a mistake to equate the rise of the joint-stock company with the hegemony of classical liberalism, for some of the companies he discusses were founded by utopians who disagreed with the hegemonic paradigm in their society.

The major flaw of this book is the inaccessible writing style. Schrauwers devotes too much space to showing how scholars such as Doug McCalla and Paul Romney were wrong about particular points. Although very interesting to the handful of historians who specialize in this period of Canadian history, these long digressions on the faults of other academics will likely confuse or annoy most readers. *Union is Strength* will not be seen in your local Chapters store. This

book is unsuitable for even the most advanced undergraduate seminars, which is a shame because the author has tackled some very important questions and probably could have written a book capable of engaging both scholars and the historically-inclined public.

Another problem is that Schrauwers does not explore how the juridical status of the company in Canada evolved after about 1850. Many American states adopted general incorporation laws that allowed firms to acquire the benefits of limited liability without a special statute naming the company. By removing the fate of each request for limited liability from the hands of politicians, general incorporation laws had a massive impact on business. During the Gilded Age, incorporation with limited liability came to be seen as the right of all firms in the United States. The Province of Canada experimented with general incorporation laws, but as the legal historian R.C.B. Risk pointed out in 1973, the idea of incorporation as a right rather than a privilege was "not asserted forcibly in Canada." To date, no historian has adequately explained why Canada was much slower in adopting general incorporation. Given the tremendous importance of general incorporation laws, it is regrettable that Schrauwers did not devote more attention to this under-researched topic.

ANDREW SMITH

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**Barry Wright and Susan Binnie, eds.,**  
***Canadian State Trials Volume III: Political Trials and Security Measures, 1840–1914***  
(Toronto: University of Toronto Press  
2009)

THE THIRD VOLUME in the *Canadian State Trials* series covers a period of immense social, political, and economic change. Such was the upheaval of the

period in question that the editors, Susan Binnie and Barry Wright, see fit to expand the definition of "state trials" to include other legal responses adopted by the post-Confederation national government to deal with emerging threats to state security. In fact, an entire section of the book focuses on how the new Canadian state dealt with collective disorder. The collective disorder section includes chapters from Eric Tucker on the strikes of street railway workers, and from Susan Binnie on how the federal government managed disorder on the Canadian Pacific Railway. These chapters point out that the security measures adopted were aimed at protecting the capitalist order as well as the state. It is hardly surprising that state security measures, whatever form they may take, should seek to protect the current economic order as well as the political status quo. Given the *Canadian State Trials* series' record of referring back to previous volumes and ahead to future volumes in order to link themes across the centuries, the failure to mention that such economic protection was nothing new seems like a glaring omission.

As with the previous two volumes frequent reference is made to the British experience in Ireland. This volume however covers the period when the Irish "problem" made itself explicitly felt in the Province of Canada, with the American Fenians' invasion of 1866–7. Two chapters by David A. Wilson and R. Blake Brown deal with the events surrounding the Fenian invasion, as well as the security responses to them. At the time, Canada was rife with sectarian tensions, and the government wished to avoid inflaming the situation further. Brown and Wilson conclude that the Canadian response achieved the stated aim of being "firm but fair," though they are both quick to point out that neither the Canadians nor the British wished to antagonize

the Americans who tacitly supported the Irish. The governing authorities also wanted to avoid creating martyrs, for there was a sizeable Irish-Canadian population who remained loyal to Canada during the Fenian attacks, and the government wished to keep their allegiance and the peace. Brown and Wilson both make reference to the patriotic rhetoric and the invocation of British justice that surrounded the Canadian and British responses to the Fenian attacks on Canada. The patriotic rhetoric in the trials points to an undercurrent of nation-building, a theme that is revisited in later essays in this volume.

Volume 3 of *Canadian State Trials* also includes, for the first time, essays about the First Nations of Canada. In previous volumes the First Nations had been notable only by their complete absence, but the series of rebellions in the North-West Territories during the latter part of the nineteenth century are not overlooked by this collection. Four chapters deal with the Canadian response to the North-West Rebellion, and, in a feat that should be commended, manage to shed new light on an area that has been the topic of much scholarly debate. In one chapter, J. M. Bumsted reexamines the endlessly studied trial of Louis Riel by engaging with recent scholarship. Bumsted critically examines Thomas Flanagan's recent attempts to exonerate the actions of the Canadian government in Riel's trial, and points out that the government had choices, and while the choices that they made may have been legal, they were not always fair. In Bumsted's analysis of the trial, none of the legal actors emerge as having done their utmost to ensure the fairest treatment of Riel.

More interesting than Bumsted's chapter on Riel, however, are the three other chapters focusing on the frequently overlooked trials of other "participants" in the rebellions. In particular, the chapters

by Bob Beal and Barry Wright, and Bill Waiser, examine the Canadian government's treatment of the Métis and First Nations. Waiser's chapter focuses on the grossly unfair treatment of the First Nations who had, for the most part, remained loyal to the Queen during the Rebellion. His chapter provides an interesting contrast to the chapters on the Fenian attacks. Although no direct comparisons are made in the book, it does raise the question of why the Canadian government recognized and rewarded the Irish Canadians' loyalty but ignored the loyalty of First Nations.

The question of which groups were rewarded for their loyalty points to one of the underlying themes of the book: race. It is surprising, given the existing scholarship on the settlement of the west and the building of the Canadian nation, that none of the essays in the book mention explicitly the racist nature of the young Canadian state. Louis A. Knafla points out, in his chapter on the trial of Ambroise Lépine, that state authority can be "reified through a state trial," but neither he nor anyone else examines the rhetoric and the procedures used in the various trials and other security measures as an expression of what the government wanted Canada and Canadians to be.

The final two essays come the closest to examining the legal responses to perceived threats to public order as a facet of state building and the creation of a national identity. As Andrew Parnaby, Gregory S. Kealey, and Kirk Niergarth point out in their short chapter on political policing, a nation's secret police provide an accurate reflection of the desires of its political leaders. Desmond H. Brown and Barry Wright also make a fleeting reference to the Canadian government's preoccupation with allegiance in their piece on the security provisions of the Criminal Code.

A few of the essays in this volume make reference to current security measures undertaken by the Canadian government; however, they resist the temptation to elaborate at length, which is appropriate for a book with a historical focus. Binnie and Wright's stated aim is that this volume, and indeed the series as a whole, will stimulate further interest in the issues of state trials and other security measures. Given that this volume covers the creation of the modern Canadian state and highlights its preoccupation with state security, Binnie and Wright have produced a book that provides much needed background to the current situation in Canada, and one that will prove to be an excellent resource for scholars of modern legal responses to security threats. The themes that are implicit and explicit in this book challenge the idea that Canada was always "strong and free." Volume three of *Canadian State Trials* highlights the importance of this series to our understanding of both Canadian legal history and the development of the Canadian state.

SARAH E. HAMILL  
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**Peter C. Bischoff, *Les Débardeurs au Port de Québec: Tableau des luttes syndicales, 1831–1902*** (Québec: Les Éditions Hurtubise 2009)

THIS BOOK IS AN important contribution to the role of male workers in the shipbuilding trades of mid- to late nineteenth-century Quebec City. Quebec socio-economic history has more often focused on the commercial decline in square timber transport, increased port activity, and demand for cheap labour in industrializing Montreal, than on this critical period in labour history. The study of stevedores, pilots, small

vessel makers, carpenters, ship, cove, and other workers reveals the vibrant union politics of the Société de bienfaisance des journaliers de navires de Québec (SBJNQ) which had a majority of Irish members from Cap-Diamant and French-Canadians from Saint-Roch. The book covers three distinct periods: the 1830s and 1840s reforms; union formation from the 1850s to the 1870s; and capitalist, government, and court attempts to discredit the organization in the 1880s and 1890s.

The author skillfully combines the intricacies of the shipbuilding political economy with working conditions. He clearly emphasizes how British-French hostilities, Napoleon's 1806 blockade of continental Europe, and the suspension of British trade with Sweden, Denmark, and other Baltic states, led to the opening up of Quebec City for business. By 1831, workers there had produced 1,000 vessels and surpassed New York, New Orleans, and Boston in the tonnage of ships sailing from the port. French-Canadian farmers from the countryside and Irish Catholics and Protestants built the ships and transported beams, boards, coal, and other cargo in the Basse-Ville (Lower Town) from 1831 to 1860. *Les arrimeurs* supervised the dangerous seasonal work of poorly paid day labourers as the Ship Laborers' Society formed in Montreal, Saint John, Halifax, and New York.

Chapters 1 to 3 begin with two petitions, one in 1834 with stevedores and carpenters vying for a mutual aid society, and another for the unionization of longshoremen in 1845. The influx of Irish immigrants from the 1832–34 Potato Famine heightened competition for jobs with French Canadians, and the lowering of the 1842 tariff on square timber prompted the 1845 petition. Merchants, ship contractors, and supervisors contested it, and day labourer agitation preceded further petitions in 1849 and 1852.

With no union archives, the author selects evidence from Canada East and Quebec government correspondence, the 1831 to 1901 federal censuses, newspapers, and the records of the Chamber of Commerce and of the SBJNQ.

An array of vested interests unfolded with the upsurge of the British market in the 1850s. Day labourer salaries dropped from \$3.50 and \$4.00 to \$1.80 a day, conflicts proliferated between supervisors and stevedores, and strikes and violence occurred in 1855. Like the Irish in New York and Boston, Richard Burke and others formed the mutual aid Quebec Ship Benevolent Society to compensate for accidents and deaths from 1862 to 1865. Wage demands led to the 1866 strike which represented an important victory for the SBJNQ.

At this point, the author's lack of a gendered and comparative perspective raises criticism. His failure to consider the effects of strikes on the family lives of women and children contrasts with Judith Fingard's studies of Halifax. He could also have incorporated Thomas Acheson's work on Saint John, New Brunswick, and Daniel Horner's analysis of the 1842–43 Montreal Lachine Canal strike and labour struggles in the Atlantic US ports in the 1860s.

Chapter 4 is especially vivid as ship captain and stevedore initiatives conflicted with the rights of day labourers: holders, swingers, winchers, and boys on stage. Montreal merchants such as Alfred Falkenberg chose their own workers, and ship captains and stevedores sustained incorporation efforts for a mutual aid society. Capital, management, and union opposition led to illegal work stoppage in 1866, a labour procession in 1868, and the Quebec City Benevolent Society expelling members working for Falkenberg and others the following year. In 1873, there was an accidental fire at the Palais

de Justice, Falkenberg died, and Archbishop Taschereau stepped in, leading to the expulsion of some Catholic members and Irish Catholics forming a separate benevolent society. Despite church intervention and ethnic divisions, the court failure to incorporate ship captains and stevedores increased SBJNQ influence.

Chapter 5 documents salary advances of up to \$4.00 a day for certain workers, improved conditions, and mounting tensions between French-Canadian and Irish members. The Ottawa Dominion Board of Trade and Edward Blake endorsed merchants seeking access to Norwegian ships. A description of the July 23, 1877 procession of 5,000 men (248–9) blends nicely with Craig Heron's and Steven Penfold's book on Labour Day parades in Canada.

Unlike Chicoutimi and Sorel, the Quebec City timber business faced serious decline by 1879, and a division occurred between the French-Canadian Union Canadienne (UC) and the Irish-dominated SBJNQ at this time. The reliance on SBJNQ records becomes apparent for it tempers the claim that this union attained a labour monopoly. Praiseworthy is the local, national, and international newspaper coverage and sketches of riots from the *Canadian Illustrated News*, the *Toronto Globe*, the *New York Times*, and the *London Times*, as well as the urban mapping of labour and ethnic disputes on city streets (268–71) and on the Plains of Abraham.

Chapter 7 investigates the Quebec City shipping demise with increased competition from Montreal and the eastern seaboard US ports, and notes that the class war escalated from 1881 to 1890. The Quebec City bourgeoisie and Montreal steamship owners joined with the federal and provincial governments and the courts to strip the union of its bargaining powers. The Knights of Labor came to the defence of the union when its 2,514

labourers and 115 stevedores faced layoffs and salary reductions. Workers presented briefs to the Royal Commission on the Relations of Capital and Labour in 1888 and to a provincial inquiry. Bread riots and bourgeois press support for management rights ensued.

Chapter 8 focuses on the special law passed by the provincial legislature in 1890 that refuted all union rights attained in 1862. The Chamber of Commerce lauded this as a victory for the merchants, and the provincial government upheld the repeal of the union charter. The concerted efforts to attract commerce and to loosen working standards induced an internal union struggle. The organization initially tried to modify the law, but eventually complied, liquidated its shares amongst members and debtors, and became exclusively a mutual aid society.

The conclusion addresses some of the comparative weaknesses raised earlier. Inspired by Sallie A. Marston and Albert Faucher, Bischoff argues that the spatial and geographic uniqueness of Quebec City prompted collective solidarity around the port and rue Champlain. In some respects, this situation was comparable to Halifax and Saint John, but it varied from the mixed circumstances of the Halifax, Portland, and Boston ports, and the entrenched power of steamship owners and railway barons in Galveston, Savannah, and Pensacola.

The argument is that the SBJNQ was one of the strongest unions in Canada and that it made significant gains in the form of an eight-hour day and salary advances for 5,000 to 6,000 workers. It denied privileges to stevedores and carpenters and established semi-autonomous linguistic divisions to successfully confront capital, state, and church interests. Entrenched patriarchy and commercialization prevailed with the economic shift to the Canadian West and a rise in wheat, cattle, and leather trade at the turn of the

century. Overall, Bischoff presents conclusive evidence to support these claims.

KATHLEEN LORD  
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**Cecilia Morgan, 'A Happy Holiday':  
English Canadians and Transatlantic  
Tourism, 1870–1930** (Toronto: University  
of Toronto Press 2008)

BETWEEN 1870 AND 1930, millions of immigrants from the United Kingdom and continental Europe left their homelands, traveled across the Atlantic, and resettled in Canada. Although these individuals have been the subjects of numerous historical studies, they were not the only people to make a transatlantic voyage. In *'A Happy Holiday,'* Cecilia Morgan examines the experiences of privileged male and female English-Canadian tourists as they too traversed the Atlantic. Yet unlike those who made this voyage in the hulks of immigration ships, these "modern tourists" traveled in modish transatlantic steamers such as the Canadian Pacific's *Empress of Britain* and the Allan Line's *Parisian*, which in 1881, transported Sir John A. Macdonald and Lady Macdonald from Quebec City to Liverpool. Other individuals including Winnipegger Mary Thomson, who traveled across the Atlantic in 1897, 1898, 1910, and 1914, as well as Montreal financier Edward Greenfield, who also made four transatlantic voyages between 1894 and 1913, recorded their experiences in private diaries. Famous suffragette and social reformer Emily Murphy published her "decidedly dyspeptic" (38) account of her travels, *The Impressions of Janey Canuck Abroad*, in 1902. Based upon published and unpublished documents such as these, as well as a large selection of newspapers and periodicals, Morgan examines how overseas tourism "grew in size and complexity" throughout the late nineteenth and early

twentieth centuries, by interrogating the role that tourism played in "forging and sharpening middle-class identities and perceptions." (19)

Nine elaborate chapters chronicle the travels of these middle-class English-Canadian tourists. Each chapter not only underlines the nuances of modern tourism, but also reveals the contradictory and ambivalent reactions these travellers had to the sights, sounds, and subjectivities they witnessed and participated in abroad. The first and last chapters examine the major transportation changes that affected the tourist industry in these years. In chapter one Morgan meticulously details the steamship passages to Europe that reaffirmed for these modern tourists their "class position and privilege," (33) while chapter nine investigates how the introduction of the automobile in the 1920s transformed travels through the United Kingdom and the European continent. Together these chapters demonstrate the "centrality of modernity to transatlantic tourism." (33) The bulk of the chapters follow the very itineraries once used by these modern, transatlantic, English-Canadian tourists. Chapters 2, 3, and 4 explore the spaces, places, and historical landscapes of Scotland, England, and Ireland that garnered the attention of these tourists, while chapters 5 and 6 take the reader onto London's busy streets and omnibuses, into parliament and drawing rooms, and on tours of palaces and poorhouses. In chapters 7 and 8, Morgan turns her attention to the "other" side of the English Channel where she found that although these tourists seldom went east of Germany or north to Scandinavia, they sought out in France, Switzerland, Germany, Belgium, and Italy important lessons about history, religion, and culture. Such sites of tourism did not only indulge these tourists' desires to analyze and classify Europeans, but, as Morgan argues, they also satisfied their desires for

sensory and emotional stimulation. Yet for all that this elite group of tourists saw, smelled, and scribbled about in their diaries, it appears that like other tourists in this period they very rarely understood, or at least not explicitly in their writings, their holiday experiences through specifically white or colonial eyes.

Cecilia Morgan firmly situates 'A *Happy Holiday*' within an expanding international body of historical literature on tourism, colonialism, and modernity. In fact, Morgan's work shares much with Angela Woollacott's *To Try Her Fortune in London*, an examination of white Australian and New Zealand women who made similar excursions "home" not as tourists, but to seek education or employment. Morgan argues that unlike the women in Woollacott's study who were well aware of, and expressed concern about, London's sexual and physical dangers, Canadian women rarely voiced much concern for their vulnerability in England's public spaces. Morgan insightfully employs the work of Tina Loo and Patricia Jasen to complement her analysis of the metropolitan tendency to conflate Canadianness and/or colonialness with Aboriginality. Such ways of "knowing" Canada reflected the particularities of the imperial project in the young Dominion where First Nations people and French Canadians, and not convicts or slaves, were used to mark hierarchies of difference, and revealed the ways in which metropolitan subjects understood Canada, Canadians, and their own place within the British world. Although many of the historiographical arguments made in 'A *Happy Holiday*' involve the differences between this cohort of English-Canadian tourists and Americans, Australians, and Britons who toured the continent, the attention Morgan pays to gender, race, and religion and their transatlantic, imperial, and national dimensions reminds Canadian historians that

these connections (and disconnections) are important routes to travel.

An undeniable strength of 'A *Happy Holiday*' is its meticulous attention to detail. Throughout her study, Morgan resists the temptation to homogenize these "English-Canadian tourists" into a cohesive group to make larger claims about English-Canadian identity. Therefore, we learn much about individual travellers and their experiences abroad. For example, Grace Denison, from whom Morgan has borrowed the title "A *Happy Holiday*," frequently depicted American tourists as uncouth and unable to truly appreciate European culture: Denison, for example, illustrated her sophistication when she correctly distinguished between a Nubian and American slave while at a Berlin exhibition. Few of these modern tourists were as opinionated as Emily Murphy, who was particularly impressed by the "swarthy, half naked men, with blood shot eyes" (40) who stoked her steamship's engine, yet was disgusted by Liverpool's working class. One wonders if Murphy's description of St. Andrews or St. Jacques wards in Montreal or the working-class slums in Toronto would have been any different. Some of the best parts of 'A *Happy Holiday*' occur, however, when Morgan unpacks the recurring cultural and racial stereotypes that these English-Canadian tourists perpetuated, such as 'Arry and 'Arriet as the embodiment of the English working class, or tour guides Paddy and Patsy who "personified a hybridity and liminality" of the Irish. (143)

Yet for all the attention to detail and the particularities of transatlantic travel that Morgan masterfully underscores, one wonders what was distinctly "Canadian" or even "English Canadian" about these travellers. How did Canada, whether it was lived in Vancouver, Winnipeg, Toronto, or Montreal, affect how these English-Canadian tourists ordered their transatlantic world and the people in it?

For example, was Leonore Gordon more tolerant of the displays of the English working class that she witnessed at Margate because, as a Winnipegger, she had more frequent and repeated encounters with working-class individuals? To characterize these “modern tourists” as “middle class” is also somewhat problematic. Although there are times when Morgan extends her class division to include both middle- and upper-middle-class tourists, she appears hesitant to call these tourists elite or upper class. The financial resources necessary to travel across the Atlantic not once, but four times like Mary Thomson, would have undoubtedly been significant and could further explain, perhaps, the absence of French-Canadian tourists not only from the archives of this study, but also from those “first class” cabins that transported so many of these English Canadians abroad. That some tourists spent over seven months in London (like Mabel Cameron), or employed nursemaids to care for their children (like Emily Murphy), or were able to mingle in London’s elite drawing rooms (like Edward Greenfield), would seem to suggest that transatlantic travel in this period was, as Morgan suggests, a “desired” pastime of the middle class, but remained a pastime that only a small group of members of an English-Canadian elite could purchase. To travel across the Atlantic to enjoy European culture, history, and landscapes was surely more expensive than honeymooning at Niagara Falls.

JARRETT HENDERSON

York University

Wendy Robbins, Meg Luxton, Margrit Eichler, and Francine Descarries, eds., *Minds of Our Own: Inventing Feminist Scholarship and Women’s Studies in Canada and Quebec, 1966–76* (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press 2008)

THE APTLY NAMED *Minds of Our Own* is a page-turner. An opening chapter sketches the social, political, economic, and academic conditions under which the first Canadian Women’s Studies projects were launched. The conclusion outlines a series of themes that emerge across the core of the volume, comprised of more than forty brief but telling first-person narratives, some co-authored, all about “inventing feminist scholarship” at various sites throughout the country between 1966 and 1976. The chosen time-frame is strategic, embracing the establishment of the Committee for the Equality of Women in Canada (CEWC) and the final days of International Women’s Year, one way to situate and account for the first decade of formal Women’s Studies in Canadian academe.

The gathered narratives are as compelling as the tale of editorial collaboration behind the work is emblematic of growing networks among scholars in the field. Three parallel efforts to document Women’s Studies’ early years are brought together in this text, which offers an archive of personal reflections on a process of academic inquiry that continues to unearth the complexities of knowledge politics. The project is indebted to similar collections by American feminists but emphasizes the Canadian situation as unique. It acknowledges that anglophone and francophone environments for Women’s Studies in Canada have remained distinctive, that finding and generating locally relevant materials for study was both daunting and an ongoing revelation from the start, and that there were and still are gaps in shared



awareness about how diversely felt and situated the experiences of different communities of women remain in Canadian and international contexts.

Graced by a cover that presents in textile art a bitten pomegranate with at least one seed airborne off the page, the book invokes a time when a sufficient critical mass had formed to defy western cultural interdictions against women's power to know in public and counterpublic ways. The assembled accounts chronicle experiences of emergence from a host of situated solitudes and advance a vision of a more-or-less coherent, multi-staged movement for social transformation, fostered through an alliance of academic and community-centered initiatives focused on improving the quality of women's lives. Amidst stories of outrageous behaviours and claims by hostile and patronizing "colleagues," apparently threatened by the prospect of Women's Studies in the academy, a spirit of generosity and mutual support often invests the ways contributors voice their appreciation for the comrades who gravitated to one another during these critical early moments.

The term "sisterhood" surfaces throughout as a name for such experiences of shared discovery and effort, as does a common feeling of "pioneering" spirit. Reflecting the historical moment, these descriptors express how invigorating and sustaining such affective and intellectual bonds became. By exposing the transformative potentials of subordinated forms of knowledge, obscured by received disciplinary approaches, scholars and students in the field understood themselves to be introducing an important new academic rigour. There was a unifying sense of creating together a more engaged and therefore "real" university, as Dorothy Smith terms it, a depiction that Jacqui Alexander has also used in *Pedagogies of Crossing* when she narrates how she and her students chose to study the

intersectional operations of racism at the New School in the late twentieth century.

Since the period under review in *Minds of Our Own*, sisterly and colonial metaphors have been "troubled" by the very principles of inclusivity and justice that characterize the commitments of the earlier period, revealing the inevitable fissures and instabilities that inform constructed social roles and categories, and efforts to organize around them. While restrictive gender norms are still lived and negotiated everywhere in everyday life, feminist theorists have grown more inclined to imagine organizing around Spivak's "strategic essentialisms," and more often hesitate to frame feminist projects in terms that invoke the assimilation processes which left such profound marks on the experiences of Indigenous peoples and settler cultures during the emergence of the Canadian nation-state. A number of the contributors speak directly to the importance of these critical developments in their essays, and affirm that related concerns were circulating at the time, even as the possibilities of who could represent feminist scholarship in the academy were over-determined by biases that continue to inform Canadian educational institutions, however altered now by the significant contributions of Women's Studies and other interdisciplinary interventions.

The narratives in *Minds of Our Own* are arranged chronologically by author's age, in order to frame shifting possibilities for feminist scholars throughout the period sampled. However, the editors have included helpful indices that also permit reading by discipline, an effective method for mapping the likelihood of interdisciplinary alliances and initiatives at the time. Because scholars in the field have been mobile among various institutions, it would have been difficult to catalogue personal, collaborative, and institutional convergences in a similar

way. Nevertheless, in the wake of some remarkable achievements over the years, as well as the University of Guelph's recent suspension of their Women's Studies program, at least for a time, it seems impossible not to scour these pages for clues that might illuminate how institutional environments can work successfully to sustain intersectional gender-focused inquiry.

Not everyone who participated in Women's Studies' formative years chose to remain in the academy. Other opportunities beckoned, and in some cases, academic environments became too hostile to stay. A number of stellar scholars were denied first bids at tenure, likely now an embarrassment to the institutions implicated. Those who left the academy altogether went on to make important contributions in other fields, as feminist writers, artists, activists, and consultants.

One of the many intriguing aspects of the collection circulates around a number of allusions to various forms of interdisciplinary practice. In some cases, interdisciplinary approaches were necessitated by the lack of relevant materials available in any single discipline at the time. As the disciplines have become more accountable to the critiques raised by feminist epistemological projects, the grounds for interdisciplinary collaborations have shifted, even as they continue to reflect the value of collaborative approaches to complex problems.

Reviewing the achievements and obstacles outlined in *Minds of Our Own*, one can imagine this volume as the first in a series, accounting not only for subsequent decades of contributions by particular scholars, but also the histories of specific programs, organizations, and related institutional developments in Canada. As the editors intimate, there are many ways to review the evolution of Women's Studies, all of which can facilitate assessments of the field along

interwoven registers of political and epistemological struggle.

As a resource for teaching, *Minds of Our Own* lends itself to qualitative analyses that would unpack some of the affinities and contradictions that surface among and within accounts. In advanced undergraduate classes, one could place selected narratives beside the galvanizing feminist voices that took on poorly informed critiques of Women's Studies in the national media recently, or the untenable claim that gender equity has been achieved in Canada, even as the gender-based disparities abroad become a cornerstone of foreign policy.

*Minds of Our Own* makes a useful contribution to the project of Canadian Women's Studies by detailing some of the groundbreaking strategies that formalized feminist academic inquiry in the mid- to late twentieth century. It points at once to past challenges and accomplishments, and the broad spectrum of critical work that remains to be done.

MARIE LOVROD

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**Sandra Rollings-Magnusson, *Heavy Burdens on Small Shoulders: The Labour of Pioneer Children on the Canadian Prairies*** (Edmonton: University of Alberta Press 2009)

THE HISTORY OF LABOUR and children in Canada, particularly in the West, still includes a great deal of unexplored territory. Sandra Rollings-Magnusson's *Heavy Burdens on Small Shoulders* is an important addition to the historiography of children and their work on Canadian Prairie farms in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Canadian scholarship on the history of children's labour includes such works as Robert McIntosh's examination of the work of Canadian boys in the coal

mines during early industrialization, Joy Parr's analysis of the labour of British immigrant children, and Neil Sutherland's various explorations of the work experiences of children. But book-length studies of farming children on the Canadian Prairies and their work have been absent. With this book, based on her earlier sociology dissertation, Rollings-Magnusson has addressed this lacuna in the historiography.

In establishing her central argument, Rollings-Magnusson contextualizes her position by arguing that in many instances, and certainly this would be the case for farming families, child labour was not considered to be exploitative. It was vital to the success of the farm and one key part of the familial role in socializing these children. She is clear in arguing that "although farm children (those aged between four and sixteen) did not receive payment or documented recognition for their economic contributions, boys and girls expected, and were expected, to work and did in fact perform essential duties and necessary tasks that contributed to the success of farms and family survival." (11) This position is augmented in her preface by likening the "similar positions of women and children within the economic and power relations of families and [arguing] that the theories developed to explain the role of women as economically invisible farmers can be extended to include farm children within their explanatory reach." (x)

The primary research for the book is impressive. Rollings-Magnusson collected and reviewed documents and sources of "diverse types including lengthy personal writings ... autobiographies, family histories, poems, and stories, plus shorter writings such as letters submitted by children and others to prairie newspapers and sent to relatives." (13) Methodologically, Rollings-Magnusson employs

a socio-historical analysis, taking historical data on child farm labour and filtering it through a sociological interpretive lens. In order to identify and quantify this data, she devised four typologies of labour contributions, based on the nature of the labour, admitting some overlap. They are productive labour (producing commodities for market); entrepreneurial (raising family funds); subsistence (producing goods for exclusive family consumption), and domestic (day-to-day tasks). For each category, Rollings-Magnusson breaks down information along gender and age lines, and provides analysis of the specific kinds of work performed.

These typologies form the structural backbone of the book. Chapter 1 explores the division of labour in the family farming economy. Chapter 2 provides a critical analysis of the attitudes toward children's labour contributions on the Prairies. Chapter 3 explores productive work, Chapter 4 entrepreneurial pursuits, Chapter 5 subsistence labour, and Chapter 6 domestic labour. Chapter 7 provides a summary of the study. The structure works adequately, though it does result in a degree of repetition across chapters.

The greatest strength of Rollings-Magnusson's book is the giving of voice and form to the silent, voiceless, and invisible. Because the book is narrow in scope, the reader gets some sense of the lives of these children, and how these lives were defined in so many ways by the farm labour they performed. Her decision to include statistical tables within the text of the book, as opposed to a separate appendix, will be appreciated by undergraduate students who often complain of difficulties in accessing such information. Additionally, the images and poems, all directly related to children's farm labour, only aid in completing the author's picture of working life on the farm. They are illustrative of the importance of children

in the farm labour process and will help those unfamiliar with farming from this era to visualize these Prairie lives.

There are some areas of weakness that should be noted. My major criticism is the lack of engagement with theory relating to childhood studies, but more broadly, with feminist theory. Because the central argument links the invisibility of women's and children's farm labour, it is problematic that there is relatively little exploration of feminist theory that discusses the underpinnings of exclusions of marginalized groups. Linked to this is the paucity of general historiography of children and youth. Granted, Rollings-Magnusson is not an historian by discipline, but this work is focused on the history of children and labour, and the reader receives fewer than three full pages of historiography and theory related to children, labour, and feminism. Although Rollings-Magnusson is quite clear in noting some of the limitations and exclusions in the book, stressing that she has made no attempt to capture the complete story of the lives of children on the Prairies, the book suffers from exclusion of discussion of children's labour on the Canadian Prairies in the growing urban centres of the period. Comparative work on at least some of the Prairie towns or growing cities could have served to contextualize the experiences of children in the region and in the farming economy more generally. The lack of consideration of race, ethnicity, and class is also noticeably absent throughout the book and may leave the reader wondering whether the sentimentalizing and romanticizing that are prevalent in the Acknowledgements have crept into her research. Finally, some readers, despite the caveat by the author that there is no attempt to capture a holistic conceptualization of childhood life in this period, may be left with a number of questions about life for these chil-

dren on the Canadian Prairies outside of their often long labour hours.

*Heavy Burdens on Small Shoulders* will have appeal for both the general reader of Prairie Canadian history and academics. The book is suitable for undergraduate and graduate student coursework in a number of sub-disciplines of history and Canadian Studies courses. Despite some shortcomings, this book is a solid addition to the growing body of rich and diverse histories of children in post-Confederation Canada.

JAMES ONUSKO  
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**Susan Boyd, Donald MacPherson,  
and Bud Osborn, *Raise Shit: Social  
Action Saving Lives* (Halifax: Fernwood  
Publishing 2009)**

*RAISE SHIT: SOCIAL Action Saving Lives* tells the untold story of drug users' community organizing efforts in one of Canada's poorest neighbourhoods, Vancouver's Downtown Eastside (DTES). Using photographs, meeting notes, poetry, newspaper clippings, and government documents, the authors weave a loose history of the collective action that brought about Insite, North America's first supervised injection facility. They pool their extensive knowledge – Boyd is a drug policy scholar, MacPherson is Vancouver's drug policy coordinator, and Osborn is a former injection drug user and one of the founding members of the Vancouver Network of Drug Users (VANDU) – to order and contextualize hundreds of texts from Osborn's extensive personal archives. The resulting product is a striking collage that does justice to some of the ongoing Insite saga's most unsung heroes: illegal drug users.

The collection opens with a brief history of the DTES, and reminds readers

that the neighbourhood was once the vibrant and thriving heart of Vancouver. It reviews a series of structural changes, including the rerouting of major public transit services and suburban expansion beginning in the 1950s, which drew people out of the DTES and led to its decline. Adding further context to their historical account, the authors adeptly summarize the roots of modern illegal drug policy in Canada, demonstrating the law's basis in racism and moral conviction rather than scientific evidence. In one short chapter, the authors are able to capture the complexity of the situation in the DTES where poverty, racism, violence, and disorder intersect to produce conditions ripe for drug use.

By the late 1990s Vancouver had the worst illegal drug problem in the world. Rates of HIV infection were skyrocketing and overdose deaths were increasing 800 per cent year over year with hundreds dying. The situation was so bad, the Vancouver-Richmond Health Board declared a public health emergency. Unfortunately as the authors make clear by reprinting sections of an independent evaluator's report, the response to the situation was woefully inadequate. Newspaper articles are presented to suggest that the response was the product of a highly politicized environment where most politicians and police were unwilling to recognize the potential of harm reduction – a series of strategies, such as needle exchanges, that work to reduce the harms associated with drug use, rather than focusing solely on abstinence – to save lives. This type of opposition is par for the course and has been documented by other researchers writing about various Canadian illegal drug policy debates.

Fed up with authorities' inaction and sick with the sadness of losing relatives and friends to overdose or disease, a group of drug users began an advocacy campaign to promote the importance of harm

reduction and argue for an increased say in their own lives. In one of the book's longest and most interesting chapters, Boyd *et al.* detail the initial development of VANDU. From small meetings "by the shed in the park" to large-scale protests including "1000 crosses in Oppenheimer Park," the authors lay out a blueprint of sorts explaining how VANDU was able to organize and empower some of Canada's most disenfranchised people.

The VANDU archives and discussion are particularly enlightening because they highlight user perspectives on illegal drug policy, law enforcement, addictions treatment, and social services that are often overlooked in the illegal drug policy literature. Especially of interest is evidence of the need for effective user-based peer support and advocacy efforts. Boyd *et al.* present facsimiles of notes from early VANDU meetings which detail users' dissatisfaction and mistrust of many DTES service providers and community organizations and suggest that users are best able to support their peers and look after each other. This is significant because conventionally, community-based service providers are seen as representative of their clients and often speak on behalf of drug users. Moreover, these notes offer evidence of drug users' concern for various sub-populations within the community (e.g. rice wine drinkers) and their respect and concern for their neighbours.

Subsequent chapters detail VANDU's actions, including a number of effective protests and demonstrations, the operation of an unsanctioned, user-run support centre and injection room, and the work of Bud Osborn to convince the federal health minister Allan Rock of Vancouver's urgent need for a sanctioned supervised injection facility. The authors also include additional context regarding international harm reduction advocacy and highlight the dedication of other high-profile advocates working in the

DTES, in particular Gil Puder, outspoken advocate for harm reduction and member of the Vancouver Police Force who died prematurely of cancer in 1999.

In the end, the book makes clear that VANDU offered users an effective means to advocate and speak for themselves and that these efforts played a significant role in the establishment of North America's first supervised injection facility. If anything is missing from this engrossing story, it is documentation and discussion of users' perspectives and experiences of Insite and the extent to which they informed the development and operation of the facility. Additionally, drug policy enthusiasts can only hope that Osborn is keeping meticulous archives of the ongoing legal challenge launched in part by VANDU members that questions the constitutionality of the federal government's rejection of Insite's continued exemption under the Controlled Drug and Substances Act.

*Raising Shit: Social Action Saving Lives* is an important contribution to the literature surrounding Canadian harm reduction efforts and illegal drug policy. Its emphasis on secondary source material, with measured interpretation, makes this book a brisk and enjoyable read. Its inclusion of striking photographs and personal accounts brings home the pain, destruction, and death associated with addiction and the war on illegal drugs that still mars the DTES today. However, its texts also offer salient reminders to readers that Canada's most notorious postal code still has community, strength, and passion for finding solutions to its myriad social problems.

Though at times its historical account can be disjointed, overall the book provides an excellent perspective on illegal drug users' experiences living in Vancouver's DTES from the mid-1990s to the early 2000s, and the community organizing which ultimately helped shift municipal,

provincial, and (at the time) federal policy to support the establishment of Insite. Indeed, the book helps to re-humanize drug users as individuals with opinions, hopes, solutions, and agency who can act on their own behalf and contribute to their community. This is not an easy task considering our deeply ingrained predilection to conceive of people with substance use problems as empty shells, or as Dr. Gabor Maté (physician and harm reduction advocate working in the DTES) eloquently puts it, "hungry ghosts." *Raising Shit* counters some of this stigma and leaves a sense of hope for those fighting to ameliorate the worst harms associated with illegal drug use and the war on drugs.

ELAINE HYSHKA

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**Graham D. Taylor, *The Rise of Canadian Business*** (Toronto: Oxford University Press 2009)

GRAHAM TAYLOR's *The Rise of Canadian Business* examines the evolution of business in Canada from the National Policy period to the present. Most of the book's material originally appeared as Taylor's contribution to *A Concise History of Canadian Business*, (1994) co-authored with Peter Baskerville. Taylor has revised the old material to reflect more recent scholarship and has written four new chapters: Chapter 1, which provides a broad overview of the period before the completion of the CPR in 1885, and the three chapters in Part III, covering the period from 1980 to the present. This sleek survey text is a valuable resource for those interested in post-Confederation business history.

The book combines chronological and thematic organization and highlights three interconnected themes: the evolving patterns of business organization, the distinctive features of Canadian

business, and its international setting. The last theme is deployed in a particularly effective manner throughout the text to place Canada within the framework of the broader capitalist world and to compare Canada's experience to those of other advanced capitalist nations. The well-written and measured prose outlines the major debates among scholars and important conceptual frameworks that have influenced scholars in Canada and elsewhere – especially the United States. Weighty endnotes offer guidance for further reading. Moreover, the book does not simply rehash the ideas and work of others; in many ways it offers a unique synthesis that yields useful insight on a variety of topics, including the development of regional economies as well as the complex interplay between state policies, business interests, and investment decisions.

The book is divided into three parts based upon the following periodization: "The Age of Business Consolidation" (1885 to 1930); "The Age of the Activist State" (1930 to 1988); and "The New Era of Globalization" (1980 to the present). The text is particularly strong on the period before the Second World War, providing a rich analysis of topics such as the structure of the business community, organizational transformation in business and at the workplace during the Second Industrial Revolution, the changing nature of foreign investment in the Canadian economy, the emergence of retail giants such as Eaton's, and the persistence of small business and its political expression during "the age of business consolidation." Throughout the text Taylor grounds the development of Canadian business within the broader political context that shaped the national and international scene.

The analysis of the post-Second World War period tends to focus more narrowly on the institutional histories of firms and

state development policies. Taylor does an admirable job of integrating political life into this narrative; state support, after all, was often decisive in determining business developments during "the age of the activist state." In describing the next phase in Canada's business development, "the new era of globalization," Taylor points to the newfound emphasis on global competition and the "resurgence of the idea of entrepreneurship in North America;" in this context some large, professionally managed companies appeared to be corporate dinosaurs, while conglomerate-builders such as Conrad Black signaled a new path. (216 and 222–4) Meanwhile, deregulation cleared the path for consolidation in the financial sector; the banks – the "Big Five" – swallowed up most of the major securities dealers and trusts after the barriers among financial services were abolished in 1987. The major insurance companies also expanded in the new environment. *Forbes* ranked Sun and Manulife among the top 10 insurance firms worldwide in 2005. And while Taylor cannot be described as an adherent to the "staples thesis," he devotes considerable and appropriate attention to the development of resource exports throughout.

However, Taylor provides a somewhat less balanced picture of the Canadian economy by failing to highlight the rise of the service sector in more recent years, at least outside the area of financial services. One might have expected more on the development of advertising techniques, fast-food restaurants and donut shops, the proliferation of suburban malls and later big-box stores, and other trends that have shaped Canadian business since the end of the Second World War. Of course, the balance of the text in this respect reflects, to some extent, the present state of the historiography; scholars such as Steve Penfold have only recently begun to break new ground in these areas, which are

undeniably important to understanding the history of Canadian business. Nonetheless, this imbalance results in a narrative that does not sufficiently describe the rise of the service sector and the concomitant expansion of the low-wage economy over the last few decades; only resource-rich provinces such as Alberta remained more dependent upon goods production. By 2007, the service sector accounted for more than two-thirds of Canada's gross domestic product. The political implications of this transition, of course, have been significant.

Indeed, while Taylor discusses the political effectiveness of the business elite during the early twentieth century, he largely passes over the question for the period after the Second World War. In part, this appears to stem from a methodological approach that emphasizes the study of business institutions and the state. Political activism outside these institutions is not ignored by Taylor, but more certainly could have been said about the think-tanks supported by Canadian business figures, which championed neoliberal ideas in the 1970s and 1980s. The work of sociologist William K. Carroll has suggested, for example, that the collective efforts of the country's business community, by mobilizing outside the structures of the state, helped lay the ideological groundwork for the transition to a neoliberal era. If anything, these observations would strengthen Taylor's overall argument about "the rise of Canadian business" by highlighting the political dimensions of the ascent.

Nonetheless, this history has been profoundly ambiguous in recent years. "Globalization" has, some observers will claim, de-nationalized capital and, as Taylor notes, within the last decade numerous well-established Canadian firms have been snatched up by foreign competitors. To what extent does Canadian business survive under these new conditions?

Attempts to quantify foreign ownership and the assets of Canadian firms perhaps miss a more profound qualitative transformation in the outlook of business leaders, who see themselves primarily as players in a global market with ephemeral national affiliations.

*The Rise of Canadian Business* will stand for some time as the standard text for the history of Canadian business from the National Policy period on into the early 21st century, covering the major Canadian companies and business moguls since the last spike was nailed to mark the completion of the Canadian Pacific Railway. His view – that Canadian business was on the rise – will be met with skepticism by some observers. And, as a work of synthesis, it displays both the strengths and gaps within the historiography. Nonetheless, Taylor makes a complex story understandable, and this book offers something for academic specialists, undergraduate students, and general readers alike.

DON NERBAS

University of New Brunswick

**Terry Gibbs and Garry Leech, *The Failure of Global Capitalism: From Cape Breton to Colombia and Beyond* (Sydney: Cape Breton University Press 2009)**

ONCE OR TWICE a week, while sitting in my university office, I can hear a train whistle. Long and low, the sound comes from the southwest, the neighbourhood of Whitney Pier, where a train is loaded with coal before it travels to a power station in the community of Langan, about 10 kilometres by rail to the northeast. I am struck by this sound each and every time I hear it because it is so rare. It was not that long ago that trains criss-crossed this corner of Cape Breton on a regular basis, laden with steel from the plant in Sydney, the island's largest city, or coal



from the nearby towns of New Waterford and Glace Bay. But not today. Deindustrialization here has been swift and brutal; the island's largest private-sector employer is now a call centre.

Yet as Terry Gibbs and Garry Leach suggest in this pointed and deft publication, the presence of this train, audible from my desk chair, is remarkable not only for its rarity, but also for the cargo it is carrying: coal from Colombia. Imported by Nova Scotia Power because it is cheaper and cleaner than Cape Breton coal, the Colombian coal is extracted from the world's largest open-pit coal mine, El Cerrejon. Located in the rural community of Tabaco on the country's Caribbean coast, the facility (a "massive hole in the ground") was constructed with significant assistance from the Canadian Export Development Bank and is owned by a consortium of multinational mining companies, one of which – paradoxically – is also active in Cape Breton, exploring the feasibility of exporting dirty local coal to India and China. (65) These transnational connections between peripheral Canada (Cape Breton) and peripheral Colombia (Tobaco) provide Gibbs and Leach with an opportunity to examine the ways in which neo-liberal economic policies – a "conscious, ideologically chosen set of policies" – have drawn workers and communities from different parts of the world together into a "single, global economic process." (15, 11) Those policies, the authors argue in four lively chapters, undermined Cape Breton's industrial economy, priored open Colombia's natural resources, and created gross inequality and environmental devastation in both locales.

The book begins with an examination of the rise and fall of Cape Breton's industrial economy. It highlights the bone-grinding poverty among steel workers and coal miners in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the union struggles mounted by both groups to

redress these conditions, and the decline of labour radicalism on the island after the 1920s, as the pressures of union bureaucracy, industrial legality, and anti-communism grew too heavy. Throughout the 1930s, 40s, and 50s, the authors illustrate, the viability of coal and steel production in Cape Breton waxed and waned. Owned by a single private-sector corporation, the fate of the former was inextricably linked to the success of the latter, as the only market for local coal was the local steel plant. By the late 1960s, however, both operations were in government hands, where they remained, largely unprofitable and environmentally reckless, for the next 30 years. The beginning of the end for coal mining came in 1992 when Nova Scotia Power, which used to purchase Cape Breton coal for its local generating stations, was sold by the provincial government to Emera, a private-sector corporation with energy interests in Canada, the United States, and the Caribbean. Seven years later, in 1999, Emera started to purchase its coal from Colombia. By then, Gibbs and Leach argue, with neo-liberalism guiding both provincial and federal governments in Canada, the state-owned steel plant and coal mines had become "quintessential examples of the failure of Keynesian policies." (41) Both were closed by 2001.

That Colombian resources, such as coal, were available to multinational corporations from the global North at rock-bottom prices reflected the extent to which neo-liberal economic policies had reconfigured the Colombian economy since the 1980s. As Gibbs and Leach maintain in what is the book's most engaging chapter, it had a lot to do with coffee: when free trade replaced managed trade in that sector in 1989, the price of coffee on international markets plummeted. As the coffee industry collapsed, cocoa production grew, drug cartels flourished, and government revenues contracted. In

exchange for loans, aid, and military support from the United States, World Bank, and International Monetary Fund, Colombian officials agreed to open up their country's energy resources to foreign corporations, among other acts of neo-liberalization. In the specific context of coal, Gibbs and Leech write, this meant selling off the assets of the state-owned coal company (Carbocol) in 1999 and rewriting the country's mining code to relax environmental regulations and drastically cut royalty rates. This was completed in 2001, with the help of the Canadian International Development Agency and the Canadian Energy Research Institute. While coal exports and coal profits have jumped considerably under this new neo-liberal framework, the authors observe, life for rural Colombians has only gotten worse: poverty has deepened, rural communities have been forcibly removed to make way for bigger mining operations, and repression of union and human activists has intensified. All the while, the Colombian government's "dirty war" against the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, the country's largest leftist rebel group, has continued with renewed vigour, drawing energy from the need to police coal and oil facilities owned by multinational corporations and soothe the nerves of international investors.

Gibbs and Leech's indictment of neo-liberalism continues in the book's final two substantive chapters, which examine the broader remaking of the Atlantic Canadian economy in the 1980s, 90s, and 2000s and the challenges to neo-liberal orthodoxy posed by state and non-state actors, including Venezuela's "Bolivarian revolution" under president Hugo Chavez and the Las Gaviotas experiment in eastern Colombia. Not content to merely catalogue the many failures of neo-liberalism, the authors have identified possible alternatives to the political and economic status quo – thus drawing

their trenchant, empirically rich critique to a cautiously optimistic conclusion: nothing is inevitable. Yet today at least, I feel hardpressed to share the authors' sense of hope. The local newspaper is reporting that Cape Bretoners will, once again, be going underground to mine coal, this time around at the behest of Xstrata, a multinational mining corporation with a stake in El Cerrejon, to supply Asian markets; I can also hear the faint sound of a coal train, headed to Langan with its Colombian cargo.

ANDREW PARNABY

Cape Breton University

**Thom Workman, *If You're In My Way, I'm Walking* (Winnipeg: Fernwood 2009)**

THE DECLINE OF the Canadian left, the continued erosion of trade union rights, and debates about how to improve the lives of working people in Canadian society in this context are issues that perpetually vex sympathetic academic and non-academic commentators and activists. Thom Workman's volume is an addition to the work that has been done on the left in Canada, and it explores both the losses suffered by the left and the problem of crafting methods of revitalizing it. Workman begins his analysis by covering what are frequently considered the origins of the left's problems in Canada. More specifically, he focuses on the period from 1970 onward with an emphasis on the fate of Fordism, the post-war compromise between capital and labour. Fordism both enabled and accompanied comparative peace within the labour movement. Unionization increased in the post-war years, but the movement was also purged of those members viewed as radical. The Canadian state oversaw labour-management relations, and Canadian capitalists prospered prior to 1970. Anti-Communist rhetoric was not

as prominent in Canada as it was in the United States during the McCarthy years.

The rise of neo-liberalism helped to discredit the post-war Keynesian state. The economic norms that had predominated in the first three decades after the war altered. For example, capital became much less willing to accommodate labour. Governments, inspired by Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher, began to reduce social programs and privatize services. Groups like the Cato Institute in the United States and the Fraser Institute in Canada pushed governments to implement neo-liberal policies, often with considerable success.

Workman's narrative to this point is fairly standard, as similar observations are made by authors like Leo Panitch, Donald Swartz, and David McNally. He considers the impact of neo-liberalism on both unionized and non-unionized workers. Fordist workers were, as he correctly notes, protected by unions and other mechanisms like labour laws. (34) Working life gradually changed after 1970, and became more associated with material accumulation within a neo-liberal context.

What conditions have emerged since the 1970s? Workers are continually encouraged to retrain in order to remain competitive. Their unions are comparatively weak, when they have unions at all, and employers use ever-more sophisticated methods to avoid unionization. Walmart, a perennial target of organized labour and the anti-globalization movement, is referenced in Workman's analysis. Corporations have markedly changed since the 1950s, a time when they faced strong unions and engaged in collective bargaining.

All of what Workman says is basically accurate within the accepted discourse of those who criticize neo-liberalism, lament the decline of unions, and otherwise search for ways of countering these

trends. The main problem is that these are large, seemingly intractable problems, and it is difficult to fully unpack them in a one hundred and fifty page book. For instance, although a post-war settlement/accord/compromise has been identified by writers in Canada and the United States, there are debates over its meaning. As recently noted by Jane D. Poulsen, industrial relations practitioners have generally viewed the accord in positive terms, while labour historians have invariably cast aspersions on it. Further, there is considerable evidence that capital did not willingly accept labour's influence in the immediate post-war years. For instance, the Industrial Relations Disputes Investigations Act (IRDIA), the successor of PC1003, was devised with no input from unions. The employers whom Workman and others consider to have accepted labour in the post-war years were most often in goods-producing industries like automotive or steel. Employers in those industries accepted collective bargaining and chose to confront unions within its confines. However, service sector employers furiously resisted unionization in the 1950s and beyond. For example, Jeremy Milloy's work on unionization at the Royal York Hotel shows the extent to which employers in the service sector had no use for the alleged post-war compromise in capital-labour relations.

Workman's analysis of the rise of neo-liberalism is also somewhat problematic but, then again, so are many analyses of it. The standard narrative presented in many undergraduate courses, worker education seminars, and articles in left-leaning publications is that Keynesian economics combined with a strong labour movement to raise working-class living standards. Then, something went awry in the mid-1970s and neo-liberal economics appeared along with Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher. This is partly true, but

the actual process was more complex than is often suggested. Friedrich von Hayek, arguably the progenitor of neo-liberal economic thought, was a contemporary of John Maynard Keynes. They shared some of the same influences – principally a concern about fascism in inter-war Europe – but came to vastly different conclusions on how to cope with social and economic conflict. Neo-liberalism was always an influence in the post-war years; it did not just come out of nowhere along with Reagan and Thatcher.

Workman devotes a lot of attention to how the Canadian left can be revitalized. The NDP has not been able to stop neo-liberalism, and the left continues to be plagued with internal divisions. Many groups – environmentalists, feminists, unions, anti-globalization activists – are championing issues that concern the left in a broad sense, but they cannot quickly coalesce into a unified front. At times, they find themselves at odds with each other over issues like reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Workman suggests that the Council of Canadians, which has had some notable policy successes like stopping the Multilateral Agreement on Investment (MAI), could be a model for how the left could proceed with challenging neo-liberalism. However, as even Maude Barlow of the council admits, it has not stopped neo-liberalism. So, the left is still searching for a definitive answer.

This book is based on secondary literature, and academic readers may find its arguments somewhat brief. However, its strengths still outweigh its weaknesses. This is a book that an average worker could peruse and learn something about his/her working life without getting overwhelmed with academic jargon. It also includes a similarly accessible bibliography. The complexities of issues like the post-war accord and the rise of neo-liberalism can be further pursued in other works.

This is a study that will find its way on to the reading lists of many worker education courses. Ultimately, research on topics like neo-liberalism and the decline of organized labour has to find its way into the hands of those who have been most disadvantaged by social and economic change. This book will certainly help meet that objective.

JASON RUSSELL  
Empire State College

**Robert C. Paehlke, *Some Like it Cold: The Politics of Climate Change in Canada***  
(Toronto: Between the Lines 2008)

ON JANUARY 29, 2010, the Stephen Harper government announced that it had reduced its climate-change policy goal, in order to harmonize it with that of the US, from 20 per cent below 2006 levels, to be achieved by 2020, to 17 per cent below 2005 levels. Both goals are substantially less than the formal Canadian Kyoto goal (ignored by the Harper government) of a 6 per cent reduction below 1990 levels by 2012. The goals are meaningless in any case, since the Harper government is taking no active steps, beyond funding carbon sequestration research while waiting to see what the US does, to slow the annual increase in greenhouse gas emissions. Some Canadian provinces, most notably British Columbia, are putting in place potentially effective policy measures, but others are not. Alberta, for instance, has a policy goal which leaves ample room for expansion of its oil industry, which means growth in Alberta emissions will undercut any policy action taken by other provinces or the federal government. At the meeting of parties to the Kyoto regime in Copenhagen in December, 2009, Canada played no visibly active role, beyond suffering the gibes and scorn of environmentalists. Canadians need to know why their federal and

provincial governments are failing them so abysmally on this issue.

Fortunately, Robert Paehlke's recent book provides them with answers. Paehlke was born in the US, moved to Canada in 1967, and in the book uses the word "we" to refer to Canadians. For many years he has been one of our leading scholars in the domain of environmental politics. *Some Like it Cold*, however, is a bit of a departure, in that it is not a book intended exclusively for an academic audience. Instead, Paehlke has written a personal, highly accessible work, drawing on his life experience as well as academic expertise to speak directly to his fellow Canadians. In a concise, eminently readable format, with use of ample documented evidence, this book lays out the basic challenge facing Canadian citizens, their governments and all others, humans and other species, living on our planet today. Paehlke does not pull his punches. The global transition from a fossil-fuel economy will entail major short-term costs, in order to avoid long-term consequences. In perhaps the most frightening sentence of the book he says: "I do not think there is any precedent for this anywhere in human history." (149)

The book provides an historical account of the continuing policy failure which has unfolded over the past twenty years. In 1988, the Government of Canada led by Prime Minister Brian Mulroney played a lead international role, working with two international agencies to host the Toronto Conference – the event which put climate change on the international policy agenda. Twenty-one years later, Canada was ignored or laughed off the stage in Copenhagen. The book does an excellent job of explaining how we lost our way between those two events.

Paehlke provides an accurate, detailed account of the twists and turns of Ottawa climate-change politics in those intervening years. It is a story of posture,

rhetoric, and government spending, with the only consistency being a steadfast refusal to use effective policy instruments such as law or tax. Above all, it is a story of the unwillingness of the Chrétien, Martin, and Harper governments to face up to the provinces which are dependent upon oil revenues. His basic argument is that Canada has the material means, technological capacity, and popular support needed to begin taking effective action. The problem, he says, lies in three aspects of our political system. The first is the fact that under the Canadian constitution it is provinces, not the federal government, which own the natural resources – with the result, noted above, that efforts of individual Canadians and other governments are "overwhelmed by one export-oriented industry operating in one Canadian province." (123) Secondly, he points to fragmentation of the party system, with five parties competing for votes, four of which now favour effective action, while the fifth has ruled since 2006. The third factor is economic integration with the US and consequent reluctance to adopt a climate-change policy which differs from that of Washington. Paehlke provides this summary of the problem: "As a nation Canada functions very well in many ways, but it is highly prone to the pull of regional power and to weak and ineffective national governments." (118)

His specific recommendations are to complete the coal phase-out in Ontario; sequester carbon in Alberta and put a moratorium on new tar sands development; provide incentives for greatly increased use of public transit; and legislate building code improvements and significantly more rigorous efficiency standards for appliances and motor vehicles. Many have been making similar recommendations for some time. The value added by Paehlke is his analysis of the political stumbling blocks which prevent us from

implementing them. The book repeatedly returns to the issue of the Alberta tar sands which, he points out, require three times as much energy to produce a barrel of oil as do conventional oil sources. "How do you solve a problem like Alberta?" is the underlying theme.

The political explanation of failure to date, set out above, is convincing but I cannot help wishing it had been developed a bit further. Certainly the strength of the provinces is a major problem, but more might have been said about the underlying cause: the weakness of our system of intergovernmental relations. Sovereign countries feel more pressure to comply with international agreements than our federal and provincial governments do with the agreements they have laboriously negotiated. How can such agreements be given teeth? Given the impossibility of coalition, should we not seriously consider doing away with the Green Party, or the NDP, or both, in order to strengthen the left wing within the Liberal Party caucus? How could we revive the Canadian economic nationalism of the 1970s, in order to provide a political base for a climate policy independent of Washington? Most importantly, how can the rest of Canada persuade Albertans that they would be better served by a very different economic and environmental program?

I am sure many of Paehlke's readers will want to add their own contributions. The strength of the book is exactly that it invigorates that kind of debate. In closing, Paehlke strongly makes the case that Canada, if it is to be true to its self-image of a force for good in this world, must play a leadership role, both in trying to facilitate US policy and on the global stage. Canada, he says, has the international "aptitude and experience" (149) which allow it to do far more than it has done to date to contribute to global climate-change governance. We must first reverse

our own failed policy and then, leading by example, make a positive contribution to the future of our world. Paehlke has given Canadians the facts and analysis they need. It is now up to us to act.

DOUGLAS MACDONALD  
University of Toronto

**James W. Russell, *Class and Race Formation in North America* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 2009)**

A FOLLOW-UP TO Russell's last book *After the Fifth Sun: Class and Race in North America* (Prentice Hall 1994), this book is about class and racial inequalities ("class being causally prior to race," according to him) as they are manifested in Mexico, the USA, and Canada, the three nations in North America. Despite a rather flawed conceptualization of both "class" and "race," the book's strength lies in careful historical research on colonialism, slavery, immigration, and nation-building processes initiated by colonial powers starting from the fall of the Aztec empire in 1521 to the current conjuncture. Chapters 2–5 present historical research complemented with statistical analyses about contemporary class and racial structures in all three countries. Russell sheds light on the nature of the economy and changes in the modes of production that accompanied the destruction of pre-colonial societies based on feudal agricultural and petty commodity production in what is now Mexico and subsistence economies based on hunting, fishing, trapping, and agriculture in what are now Canada and the USA.

Indigenous societies were destroyed through war, disease, and the violent imposition of colonial structures, including private property in land and nation-building projects, leading to the incorporation of the countries carved from appropriated Indigenous lands into

today's global capitalism. Reference is also made to resistance by Indigenous and enslaved communities. Chapter 5 is a fascinating study of how differently racialized groups developed in the three countries within the frameworks of colonial nation-building policies, including the rise of racially mixed populations. In Chapter 6, the relationships of capital accumulation among the USA, Mexico, and Canada are discussed. The author illustrates how access to cheap labour through the establishment of *maquiladoras* in Mexico and the access to primary resources such as oil and food in Canada have facilitated the growth of a dependent capitalism in the two countries, dependent that is on the USA. The war of independence from British colonial control on the other hand freed the USA for full-blown capitalist accumulation. At the same time, data is presented to show how the states in the USA, Canada, and Mexico have played different roles in their redistribution policies or lack thereof, thus structuring different standards of living and different class formations in these countries. The current phase of capitalism marked by globalization and facilitated by NAFTA is discussed in Chapter 7.

In general, the American and Mexican discussions are stronger throughout compared to the Canadian one. In this regard, there are some sweeping generalizations made about Canada which are questionable. For instance, there is the unexplored assertion that "in all three countries, the indigenous peoples have suffered severe injustices, but they have suffered the least in Canadian history."<sup>(46)</sup> Elsewhere, referring to race relations in Canada compared to the USA, Russell states that Canada has had "different protagonists – Indians and Asians rather than blacks."<sup>(148)</sup>

While all three countries have colonial pasts and are built on lands inhabited by

indigenous peoples, Russell interrogates why they have developed into such different societies, economically, socially, and racially. One of the most significant factors contributing to the difference according to him is demographic, i.e. the ratio of the indigenous population to white European population at the point of colonial contact and in its aftermath. He argues that since what is now Mexico had much larger and settled agricultural indigenous societies compared to white colonizers, European institutions could not penetrate as hegemonically as they did in the USA and Canada. Thus, the capitalist mode of production which had already rooted itself in European countries (more strongly in Britain than in Spain according to the author) could not establish itself in Mexico as it did in Canada and the USA. Other factors that caused a different trajectory among the three countries were the role played by the Roman Catholic Church, the significance of the religion itself (i.e. the Weberian notion of Catholicism being antithetical to capitalism, etc.), and the nature of immigration.

Through the ten chapters in the book, Russell seems to be advancing a Marxist notion of how the organization of economic life, i.e. the mode of production, in each of these colonized regions is the key to understanding the kind of societies they have grown into. Although he emphasizes the fundamental role played by colonization and capitalism in the way these economies have developed, he occasionally lapses into a very modernist or culturalist explanation of why Canada became a "First World" country while Mexico became a "Third World" country. He quotes Mel Watkins to emphasize the point that Canada's path to development was "not fettered by feudal and pre-existing Indian institutions as was that of Mexico."<sup>(99)</sup> Russell also mentions a few times that "Mexico is at a different stage

of capital accumulation than the United States and Canada" which seems to harken back to a "stage theory" of development, long critiqued by theorists like Andre Gunder Frank and Samir Amin. The latter have argued that colonized societies have been fundamentally underdeveloped, misdeveloped, or unevenly developed as a result of colonization and imperialism and that this process must be understood as historical rather than natural or cultural.

Interestingly, although he does not develop the thesis in full, Russell hints that the ethnic and linguistic affinity of English-speaking colonialists in the USA and Canada helped in the development of profitable capitalist trade between these two countries, while the same did not happen with the non-English-speaking Spanish colonialists to their south. One could take this argument further by saying that there was indeed a racial affinity between British colonialists while the same did not exist among their Spanish counterparts, many of whom intermarried with indigenous peoples and became a highly mixed society, racially speaking. The research presented in the book could be used to further such a thesis. After all, both Canada and the USA were conceptualized as "white" nations which was reinforced through their immigration policies while Mexico was much more ambivalent in this regard with its majority mestizo population.

As mentioned before, some of the terminology and concepts used in the book are highly problematic, and this is recognized by the author in the introductory chapter. Nonetheless, he still uses them with confusing and problematic results. For instance, he recognizes that "race" is being used in a social/popular sense rather than a scientific one; however he still seems to reify its eugenicist genealogies. For instance, he refers to "the four races-Indians (referring to Indigenous People),

Europeans, Africans, Asians," "mixed race products," and the majority of African-Americans carrying "caucasoid as well as negroid genes." Further, "Asians" (whoever they are) are described by the author as "the fastest growing immigrant race" and African Americans are said to have a "biological identity," referring to their "biological descent," in contrast to their social identities. In one table, he refers to "Indo-Europeans" and my immediate association of this was with people from South Asia. But I soon realized that the author was referring to people with mixed Indigenous and European ancestry. Overall, I found the book to be informative and interesting in terms of its historical information but very limited theoretically and analytically.

TANIA DAS GUPTA  
York University

**Margaret Washington, *Sojourner Truth's America*** (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press 2009)

RECENT HISTORIANS, such as Marcus Rediker and Gary Nash, have fruitfully reexamined the pre-Civil War tradition of black resistance to slavery, first taken up by historian Herbert Aptheker in his much-neglected investigation of 1941. As slaves in the South lived in the double bind of slaveholder paternalism and repression, the main centres of resistance were in the North, among escaped slaves and among African Americans of the North who had experienced gradual emancipation. Since the 1830s, African-American abolitionists in the North (with the backing of a few steadfast white abolitionists such as William Lloyd Garrison) formed a social underground, which protected runaway slaves or assisted them in crossing the border into Canada, where they could be safe from the operations of fugitive slave laws. Washington's biography



of Sojourner Truth, who was born a slave in 1797, is a significant contribution to the literature, as well as an intimate treatment of the life of one of these antislavery activists.

Washington strives, with some success, to give expression to Sojourner Truth's voice. Apart from the famous *Narrative of Sojourner Truth* (a second-hand account based on Truth's transcribed testimony), Washington makes good use of newspaper accounts, and the letters and diaries of Truth's contemporaries, to capture her power as an orator.

Washington engages with earlier biographers, such as Carleton and Susan Mabee, and Nell Irvin Painter, who have been dismissive of Sojourner Truth's agency as an historical figure. Washington observes for instance that the *Narrative*, although penned by white antislavery activist Olive Gilbert, was based on Truth's consent to the creative choices that went into the making of the *Narrative*. Gilbert was a woman who adhered to conventions of female morality. She was thus inclined to portray a saintly figure and suppress Truth's sexual history, which indeed Washington handles with a gossipish relish that, unfortunately, is inadequately substantiated by the evidence. Washington nevertheless persuasively argues that Truth participated in the decision not to divulge the "moral improprieties" of her youth. (186) Against the doubts of modern historians, Washington observes that Truth affirmed the *Narrative* as her authentic voice, a seemingly minor point best appreciated in light of Washington's vigorous assertion of Truth's disputed claim to participation in the Underground Railroad. (198)

In standing by Sojourner Truth's agency as a significant antislavery activist, Washington also draws attention to Truth's tireless activist travel. Truth travelled to both welcoming and more hostile urban and rural communities across the

Northeast and West, selling her *Narrative* with an acute business sense remarkable for a woman who had no literacy. Washington makes a determined and admirable effort to demonstrate Truth's formidable qualities as a public speaker. In Washington's *Sojourner Truth*, we see a woman gifted with a combative and sharp wit. Truth was effective at using a combination of religious metaphor and humour to challenge African-American men who presumed authority over women on religious and political matters.

Among the white women who dominated the National Women's Convention formed in 1850, Truth advocated for women's rights, but proved also to be a vigorous opponent of a tendency in the Convention to place women's issues above race reform and abolition. Typical of Sojourner Truth's proficiency as a speaker is a talk she gave at a July fourth gathering in 1850 in which she played on white women's maternal sentiments to remind them of their common humanity with black women. Washington reports Truth as having said: "Do not white women ... love their infants?... Are not we colored women human?" Black women had the same feelings as whites, she asserted: "We suffer as much when our little ones are torn from us, as you white mothers." (201) Though backing down when challenged by leading feminist Lucy Stone, and thereby agreeing – with a fine touch of sarcasm – to propagate women's issues on weekdays and antislavery issues on weekends, Sojourner Truth would re-emerge fully confident of her own position at the Worcester, Massachusetts, convention in October that year. With the militant Frederick Douglass and numerous other African-American activists present, she boldly exerted pressure from the platform to have a resolution adopted, which declared that "among women, those in bondage were 'the most grossly wronged of all.'" (205)

Sojourner Truth's preference was for forms of agitation that involved "peace and forbearance" rather than the kind of violent standoff in which a biracial community of abolitionists had a shootout with US marshals and slave catchers at Christiana, Pennsylvania, in September 1851. (245) Like Martin Luther King in a far distant time and place, Sojourner Truth did not let her proclivity for peaceful resistance tame or silence her. In her speeches, as Washington adroitly observes, Sojourner Truth fervently urged her African-American listeners fearlessly to speak out for their rights (despite the threat of white mobs that often disrupted abolitionist gatherings), while denouncing "smug-do-nothing blacks who were seemingly satisfied with their lot and caring nothing for others." (255) After the Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854, which allowed electorates in newly incorporated western territories the right to decide on slavery within their borders, the struggle over slavery intensified and became more violent. In this situation, even pacifist abolitionists would revere John Brown as a martyr after his execution in the wake of his attack on the federal arsenal at Harper's Ferry, Virginia, on 16 October 1859, an attempt to encourage slave revolt. Sojourner Truth was not unaffected by this militant turn in abolitionism. According to Washington, despite Truth's previous tendency to renounce hatred and violence, she "identified with the biblical proportions of Brown's actions, including his prediction that war was inevitable." Significantly, says Washington, "After years of peaceful agitation, Sojourner Truth preached that God would rain down destruction on the unrepentant nation for its sins against her people." (291–292)

During the civil war, Truth was actively engaged. She participated in the work of the Michigan Ladies' Freedmen's AID Society, soliciting much needed

donations for the war effort. Though she would eventually go on a journey to meet President Lincoln at the White House to thank him for his deeds toward her people, Truth was never uncritical of Lincoln. She agreed with her radical peers "that he had to be pushed into checkmating the anti-emancipation Democrats." In 1863, she also supported the call to enlist African-American men, although numerous states in the North "greatly opposed black enlistment." (305)

Washington's biography is a well-documented tribute to a steadfast antislavery activist that also succeeds in humanizing her rather than presenting her as a righteous saint. Also, in showing Truth to have been an effective agitator, Washington inadvertently provides a strong case for an open-minded assessment of people's potential. Sojourner Truth is indeed a fine study of learning that can be achieved without literacy, as Washington suggests against a biographer who disparaged Truth for her "lack of ... culture and ignorance." Washington defends Truth's legacy with a moving statement on her "cultivation of exceptional verbal communication in English [and] an equal lucidity in Dutch – her first language. The manner in which she challenged her adversaries reveals that she was highly articulate, not to mention intelligent." (133) Printed on acid-free paper, this book is well illustrated with photographs of Truth and her abolitionist generation.

JOE KELLY

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**Thavolia Glymph, *Out of the House of Bondage: The Transformation of the Plantation Household*** (New York: Cambridge University Press 2008)

IN THIS IMPORTANT book, Thavolia Glymph reconceptualizes the history of women and slavery and debunks the

notion that former slaves sought to emulate the domestic ideals of white America. In place of this explanation, Glymph argues that freedwomen sought a separate selfhood that kept them apart from white women and the Victorian gender conventions that served white supremacy.

Key to Glymph's argument is her focus on "relations of power between women, and contests over that power." (235) In the context of the nineteenth century US South, such a focus puts slavery at the centre of the story. This shift may seem uncontroversial, but Glymph convincingly shows that white women's roles as slaveholders and enslaved black women's fight against their white mistresses have been neglected by scholars. While recognizing white slaveholding women's privileges, historians have nonetheless treated planter women as "suffering under the weight of the same patriarchal authority to which slaves were subjected." (23) To advance these claims, historians have deployed the concept of paternalism – an ideology of the family that extols the benign authority of fathers over women, children, and, in the antebellum South, slaves. Glymph argues that such interpretations, which posit a solidarity between black and white women based on the gendered structure of power, "rest ultimately on uncritical acceptance of a huge assumption: that a gentle and noble white womanhood had once existed in fact, together with a cult of domesticity to which enslaved and free women mutually ascribed." (135)

To combat this outlook Glymph looks beyond slaveholding women's self-justifying narratives to consider how "mistresses' violence against slaves provides a useful lens through which to examine their feelings about slaveholding." (25) Rather than treating violence as an exception to slaveholding women's conduct, Glymph asserts that "physical punishment seems to have occurred much more frequently between mistresses and slaves

than between masters and slaves." (36) White women regarded physical abuse as an essential tool for extracting labour from enslaved women. Instead of the proslavery ideal of paternal harmony, Glymph says that "A kind of warring intimacy characterized many of the conflicts between mistresses and slave women in the household." (37)

Foregrounding slavery in southern women's history also informs Glymph's challenge to portrayals of the Civil War as a crisis in gender relations. These accounts treat "the difficulties mistresses faced ... as a symptom of their general inexperience in managing slaves ... and as a product of gendered rules of conduct." (122) For Glymph the wartime stresses on Confederate women focused on their "status as slaveholder, not simply on their predicament as helpless females," and slaves' "resistance to white women derived from a hatred of their position as slaveholders ..." (122–23) In this outlook, women slaves' wartime resistance to household mistresses was identical to male bondsmen's fight against the same slaveholders in the fields. In both cases, slaves exploited the war's "unprecedented opportunities for resistance to the notion of 'one family, black and white' with mistresses as the matriarchal heads." (132)

In discussing black women's resistance to slavery, Glymph highlights their quest for "dignity ... displayed in their preparations for death, in their attempts to maintain love relationships and protect their children, and in their day-to-day struggles to restructure and lessen their workloads." (91) Pursuing dignity was inseparable from struggles for the vote, civil rights, and land that have been the main focus of Reconstruction historiography. Although sometimes hard to see in the latter conflicts, the agency of black women is more visible in their daily defiance of white women's demands for obedience to the norms of southern domesticity.

After emancipation black women aspired to establish "black homes" apart from former mistresses and to dismantle the domestic ideals that had oppressed them under slavery. Glymph shows how actions that might be viewed as proof of African-American women's aspirations to Victorian domestic ideals such as staging teas, wearing fine dresses, and attending formal balls, make more sense as weapons aimed at destroying white women's claims to racial supremacy. Instead of believing they would gain respectability, black women thought that by associating bourgeois habits with blackness they could wreck the symbols of stays that had been wielded against them for generations. Black women joined these acts of self-definition to their job struggles for higher pay, shorter workdays, and fewer tasks. Just as their fight for dignity under slavery necessitated that black women undermine white women's identity as civilized ladies, their postwar fight for free homes also "required the dismantling of antebellum notions of southern white womanhood." (191)

Glymph's attention to the relationship between better known moments of collective action and day-to-day resistance helps her document white women's postwar campaign to "reclaim black women's labor and their former privileges" and shows how "the subjugation of black women – as workers and as women – was as important as the defeat of black men's political rights." (165–66) Yet while the white South's counterattack against Reconstruction prevented black women's complete escape from white women's management, freedwomen nonetheless won lasting victories. White southern women believed that they should control black women's work, but black women's defiance of those demands insured that the white households remained "a space of contested labor and gender relations" (235) rather than a platform for

displaying white supremacy. Furthermore, post-emancipation white women often had to bargain with black women rather than beat them; perform manual tasks formerly reserved for slaves; and learn from "the raw stuff of experience ... that black women's ambitions and actions projected a sense of self radically at odds with their own." (224)

As have other historians of slavery, Glymph looks for the "hidden transcripts" of black women's agency that must be pieced together from the fragmentary references to them in sources mostly crafted by whites, including the WPA narratives which were mediated by white interviewers eager to hear former slaves celebrate the plantation myth and who glossed over or otherwise muddled African-American women's telling of a different story of slavery.

Although Glymph takes issue with several influential studies, her work fits with other trends in the field. *Out of the House of Bondage* draws on the scholarship of Elizabeth Fox-Genovese, who denied the existence of an inter-racial sisterhood and argued for the importance of work to relationships within the plantation household. It also resonates with Steven Hahn's account of black politics in the rural South, which defined politics broadly and finds continuities in pre- and post-Civil War battles over white racial supremacy. Glymph's emphasis on the interconnections between the seemingly separate categories of public and private and work and leisure fits with Stephanie Camp's recent study of enslaved women. Glymph achieves something unique, however, in her attention to the prewar and postwar eras and her juxtaposition of enslaved women's politics of dignity against the claims of white women's domesticity.

*Out of the House of Bondage* presents a theoretically sophisticated, tightly argued challenge to the existing scholarship on black and white women in the

nineteenth century South. Anyone interested in that topic as well as slavery, emancipation, and American history in general will benefit by reading it.

FRANK TOWERS

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**Steven K. Ashby and C.J. Hawking,**  
*Staley: The Fight for a New American  
Labor Movement* (Champaign, IL:  
University of Illinois Press 2009)

IF ANY HISTORIANS still think that the 1990s was a period of labour quiescence, *Staley* should convincingly disabuse them of that notion. If any commentators still believe that the 1990s represented the period when “new voices” finally regenerated organized labour, this book will present a devastating challenge. That paradox is at the centre of this important book, which ranks alongside Richard Brisbane’s *A Strike Like No Other* and Kate Bronfenbrenner’s *Ravenswood* as a major contribution to the history of modern American labour. The authors have presented a compelling analysis of a decisive moment in the struggle for social democracy. Equally important, they present an astute analysis of the central conundrum facing American labour today: the tension between front-rank militancy and institutional conservatism.

Ashby and Hawking weave these themes into the analysis of a labour movement buffeted by forces that would have intimidated the likes of John L. Lewis. Staley manufactured high fructose corn syrup, the revolutionary substitute for sugar that sweetened everything from Pepsi to Pop-Tarts in the consumer-fuelled 1980s. The demand for the product was insatiable – by 1992, the company was turning a \$400 million profit. But in the “greed is good” decade, profitability wasn’t simply a function of demand. Hawking and Ashby outline

the deliberate campaign for the restoration of corporate control that began when Chrysler demanded massive wage and benefit concessions from the UAW in 1979 and received a major stamp of approval when President Reagan liquidated the Professional Air Traffic Controllers Organization in 1981. The era of shareholder entitlement, leveraged buyouts, corporate consolidation, and Hormel-style anti-unionism provides the background for the analysis of the Staley struggle. For example, by the time that the multinational Tate and Lyell absorbed A.E. Staley in 1988, the company had already experimented in “cooperation” schemes designed to rationalize production and reduce employee control. The Tate and Lyell acquisition eliminated a competitor and made an already concentrated industry even less competitive.

The irony, of course, is that the company used the rhetoric of global competitiveness to justify demands for massive concessions. The imperative was clear: to render the whole idea of a collective agreement meaningless. Ashby and Hawking establish the political and economic context for the company’s draconian demands. In the same period that Caterpillar (also in Decatur), Hormel, Greyhound, International Paper, and Staley were demanding concessions, real wages for US workers were on a steady decline. Following a four year wage freeze (!), the Staley local of the Allied Industrial Workers arrived at the bargaining table to discover that the new owners expected them to accept “rotating shifts, the deskilling of jobs, the elimination of most safety procedures, and other major concessions.” (22) Wholesale firings of union-friendly managers, the elimination of one-fourth of the company’s white collar employees, and the adoption of non-union contractors signaled the company’s determination to restructure. Yet it is the death of employee Jim Beals

in a preventable industrial accident that highlights the company malfeasance at the core of restructuring. This is never simply the numbers game that corporate reengineering gurus presented.

Discussing Local 837's remarkable outreach campaign, which saw teams of "road warriors" traversing the country to generate support and foster independent solidarity committees, the authors quote an AFL-CIO strategist commenting on its significance: "When Road Warriors go out in any campaign, they touch people in a way that union newsletters don't, magazines don't, phone calls don't, staff to staff don't, staff speaking to members don't. These Road Warriors ... touch people in their heart and soul, not just their head, and it makes a very big difference ..." (95) The sensitivity to the lived experience of workers raises the calibre of this study considerably.

Yet it's the authors' attention to how this lockout evolved into a social movement that distinguishes Staley from Stephen Franklin's *Three Strikes: Labor's Heartland Losses and What They Mean for Working Americans*, itself a provocative portrait of how the simultaneous strikes at Staley, Caterpillar, and Bridge-stone Firestone rocked Decatur and organized labour. Franklin covered the story from a sympathetic reporter's perspective, but Ashby and Hawking were both directly involved, the former as a co-chair of the independent Chicago solidarity committee, the latter as an ordained Methodist minister who organized religious outreach and participated in nonviolent civil disobedience. They maintain necessary, though sometimes stilted, scholarly detachment, but they do a marvelous job of humanizing this struggle. In effect, Ashby and Hawking document three stories: the movement for internal union democracy, the regeneration of a moribund labour movement, and the awakening of workers to how

threatening the corporate globalization agenda was to basic American values of equality and freedom. Ashby and Hawking capture workers' thinking in terms reminiscent of 1934. Ashby and Hawking quote Dan Lane, a militant Staley unionist who would conduct a hunger strike to protest Pepsi's continued patronage of Staley, commenting on the lockout experience: "It was scary. But still, it's that kind of exhilaration, and you are exceeding all power that you ever thought you had. It was like being free. You broke the shackles. It was an emancipation." (76) For all the attention paid to anti-globalization resistance movements in the Clinton years, scholars often shy away from a direct discussion of class consciousness and class conflict. Ashby and Hawking do not; their examination of how American workers confronted the limits of their inherited worldview is refreshing.

The authors' engagement also explains the exceptional bank of interviews they've accumulated. They use these sources to develop finely-wrought portraits that illustrate the larger ideological and political transformation of Staley's workers. Jeanette Hawkins' experience is representative. An African American hired in 1974, Hawkins was stunned by the racial antipathy of management and workers alike. The authors recount a harrowing episode of racial harassment that encapsulates the intolerant, antidemocratic tendencies of far too many unions in the postwar era. At one point, Hawkins found herself "precariously positioned four stories above a concrete floor, hanging on to nothing but a rope," while a group of white workers poured buckets of cold water on her. "One slip and Hawkins could have easily fallen to her death." (153) Hawkins appealed to management as well as union leadership for relief, only to be met by the kind of stonewalling historically responsible for so much African-American disenchantment with

organized labour. The authors are careful to point out that Hawkins' experience was not uniformly characteristic of the black experience at Staley. Still, it's a wonder that Hawkins, and by extension, African Americans, African-American women, and white women, for that matter, could ever support a union campaign for anything, considering the level of racial and sexual harassment that Ashby and Hawking document. But they do. Even more surprising, Hawkins joins the Road Warriors and ends up serving on the negotiating team, becoming the first African American to serve in union leadership. That's a measure of how transformative the anti-lockout movement became.

As much as any organizational or tactical question, the alteration of working-class consciousness through collective protest is at the centre of the book. The lockout, the mass rallies, the organized civil disobedience, the unfettered police brutality, the instruction in labour history, the corporate campaign, the astonishingly ambitious solidarity drive, the linkages formed with other striking unions, and the mobilization of religious support transform the conflict from an exercise in picket-line protocol to a grassroots social movement. What this remarkable demonstration of working-class solidarity could not transform was the sclerotic bureaucracy, territorialism, and timidity of the AFL-CIO. The Staley workers' desperate, and ultimately futile, effort to enlist the AFL-CIO leadership in what had become the defining struggle of the era is a sobering and indispensable chapter in this important book. The questions it raises about the future of labour in a country where the Democratic Party pays it lip service, and where major labour organizations expend millions on electing presidents while leaving millions unorganized, are that much more com-

elling when set against the backdrop of this momentous fight.

MICHAEL DENNIS  
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**Paul Robeson Jr., *The Undiscovered Paul Robeson, Quest for Freedom, 1939–1976***  
(Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons 2010)

WHEN PAUL ROBESON sang and spoke, thousands of working people in the United States and Canada listened. His popularity was worldwide and his name remains revered amongst an older generation of political/cultural activists. His recordings still sold 34 years after his death.

While rock stars today are often admired for their work on issues of social justice, the esteem that Robeson earned at a time when he was so openly political and identified as a communist was offset by his vilification by the official media and government, and by his experiences as a black man when the colour bar reigned supreme. What is it that drew so many working people to his performances when his repertoire included African-American spirituals, freedom songs, Russian folk songs, operatic themes, songs of the Spanish Civil War, and union songs, hardly the stuff of popular culture?

Paul Robeson Jr. provides us with not only a biography of his father from 1939 to his death. He places Robeson's personal life, struggles, work, and study within an historical context. This was the era of the Cold War and the civil rights movement, and an era when labour struggled to make gains despite rabid counter-attacks by the bourgeoisie and the state in the name of anti-communism.

The biography goes beyond the too common understanding of the Cold War as a struggle between two emerging

superpowers. Growing anti-colonial struggles in Asia and Africa provided an essential dynamic. Important too were the political struggles within the US. Anti-communism was not just a singular attack upon the Communist Party and worldwide communism. It was a continued attempt from the era of the First World War to rid the labour movement of all radicalism and to reimpose industrial discipline upon the US working class after the industrial union insurgency of the 1930s. The Taft-Hartley Act of 1947 was a milestone in that anti-union battle. The working class meanwhile was changing with the rise of an African-American industrial working class and consequent rising demands from that community after World War II. Robeson became a symbol of communities defined by class and race that were under attack.

While Robeson was regarded by many on both the left and right as singularly owned by the Communist Party of the US, Robeson Jr., who himself became a party member, records the complexity of his father's political thought. Robeson characterized himself as an anti-fascist and anti-colonialist. Fascism existed not only as Nazism, but also in Jim Crow laws, racism in the US, and colonial attitudes of white European powers to developing countries. In conversation with his son he spoke of himself as "a human being first, a Negro second, and a Marxist third. But all three of those levels are inseparably connected." (56) As an artist, educator, and activist, he was not only a precursor to the forthcoming civil rights movement but also prefigured the division between the more conservative elements of that movement, and the rise of independent and militant Black self-organization. He advocated the need for such independent political action of "his folk."

J. Edgar Hoover and the FBI judged that Robeson was an internal threat to the US.

Working from files released from government sources, Robeson Jr. shows the intricate attempts to silence, marginalize, restrict, and even jail his father through a network of spies and informants, as well as the deliberate smear campaigns in which the FBI passed on fabrications of his speeches to a press that then condemned Robeson as a traitor and a tool of Kremlin policy. His freedom to work and travel were restricted in a constant battle to secure a passport.

Robeson Jr. also reports on his father's years of sickness and depression that undermined his ability to carry on activity. While the strain of constant work and political battle took a heavy emotional and physical toll, Robeson Jr. suggests that US officials, in an effort to render him incapable of work and public life, may have knowingly played a part through COINTELPRO by having doctors administer hard drugs and shock treatment that exacerbated his disabling condition.

Although not a focus of the biography, Robeson Jr. does reveal the organizational abilities of the left despite the intense attack against it. Surmounting extraordinarily difficult restrictions, the left was still able to call out immense public support for Robeson's constant challenges to the government's efforts to restrict his freedom to work and travel, to challenge those who vilified him in the official media, and to gather the audiences to hear him perform so that his work and message could continue.

Robeson Jr. gives us a portrait of an artist as a cultural/political activist, organizer, and symbol. The biography examines the critical juncture and dynamic links between social class and race, revealing important issues of political organization and strategy that pitted radical and conservative elements within both the labour and civil rights movements against each other nationally and internationally, and



explores the role of state policy in exacerbating such disputes. It importantly reveals, through the focus on the work and personal beliefs of Robeson, the intrinsic relationship between cultural/artistic work and political work, treating culture not simply as an adjunct to politics but as a critical method of politics. In the person of Paul Robeson they truly were inseparable.

LEN WALLACE

University of Windsor

**Ann Norton Greene, *Horses at Work: Harnessing Power in Industrial America*** (Cambridge: Harvard University Press 2008)

CHARLES ELTON, one of the founders of the discipline of ecology, once noted that when an ecologist exclaims "there goes a badger," he has in mind some reflective idea of the animal's place in the community to which it belongs, just as if he had said, "there goes the vicar." What Ann Norton Greene has done in this book is say "there goes a horse" and has then shown us the horse's place in broader society. She presents nineteenth century North America not simply as a society that used horses but rather as a society of horses and humans living and working together.

Any ecologist would also point out the other ingredient in understanding an organism's place in society – be it the vicar, a badger, or a horse – is understanding its competition. In this case the horse's competition has been seen conventionally as the machine. Greene demonstrates, however, that this was not the case in the nineteenth century. It was undoubtedly the Age of Machines but it was also the Age of Manure. The average horse produced 20 to 50 pounds of manure and a gallon of urine daily. So, by the end of the nineteenth century, the 131,000 horses in

New York City, for example, were producing 1,300 to 3,300 tons of manure a day or 5/12 tons per square mile. Greene's focus is on draft horses' traction power in cities like New York, and on farms and factories, in which horses were ubiquitous (a small point that might rankle, however, is the sweeping use of "America," in the title, to mean regions of the United States – the Northeast and Midwest).

The book does not locate itself in "animal studies" but rather in the nexus between energy studies and classic social history, drawing on work from environmental history and the history of science. The author shows that, in a sense, energy history is environmental history, as developments transformed the socio-physical landscape. The key to the argument is that technology does not exist in isolation but as part of the "wider community," each influencing the development of the other. Much of the focus is on the history of social choices about economic growth. Greene deftly argues that such choices were not simply rational selections by a coldly logical *Homo economicus*. Instead, they were vested in very emotional ideas of national pride. She contends that the deployment of horses had to fit "into a pattern of beliefs about technological change... tying energy consumption to national prosperity and progress." (9) Greene shows that the very model of American life, "the energy landscape of horse power," became a template for "American expectations about energy abundance." (82) Thus the draft horse performed not only physical labour but also "cultural work." (39) In this way, Greene delineates the replacement of horses by mechanical power as a non-linear, uneven process and teases out the complexities of change. By the end of the century, she notes, "Americans pondered the meaning of the horse" as they "sought to become self-consciously modern." (243)

Agency has not been a key feature in most historical analyses of animals. Robin Law, for example, who wrote a pioneering study of horses in West Africa, was at pains to point out that he had no particular enthusiasm for horses *per se* and did not treat them as subjects in their own right – Robin Law, *The Horse in West African History: The Role of the Horse in the Societies of Pre-Colonial Africa* (Oxford: Oxford University Press 1980). Equally, McShane and Tarr have sculpted an excellent biography of the urban horse but their focus was not on the horse as an animal possessed of agency. Instead, they discuss the horse as a “living machine” in an urbanizing society. A similar approach is observable in Africa, in the work of Humphrey Fisher, James Webb, and Martin Legassick. For Greene the horses’ agency lies in the “substance of their existence,” “the physical power they produced, and the role of that power in shaping material and social arrangements.” (xi) She is at pains to ensure humans are not granted diachronic status at the expense of relegating horses to synchronic entities. Instead, she shows how they were creatures with histories of their own, changing (and being changed) over time to suit evolving niches in human societies. Reshaping horses was, of course, a very ancient practice but was now infused with the nineteenth century’s spirit of improvement. In discussing horses as organic beings, she challenges the “conventional nature-technology divide.”(7) She explores ideas about the intelligence of horses, finding them “just smart enough to be a perfect worker” who can “follow directions without taking too much initiative.”(22) She dissects the effect of the horse’s fast-working but ineffective digestive system and the concomitant impact on their effective use by humans. The viscosity of their lives is captured in vignettes, like that of the horses suffering the great epizootic of

1872, standing in their stalls “shivering, coughing, runny-nosed, streaming-eyed, and weak.”(167)

The key argument is that horses were not peripheral in the industrial economy: they defined it. To make this argument, Greene has had to defamiliarize history and depose the nostalgic notion of horses, long set up as the symbols of the pre-industrial period. Instead, Greene finds a surprising correlation between expanding industry and an increasing need for horses. A cursory review would lead one to expect an inverse relationship, as machines replaced horses and moved “horse power” to the periphery of the industrializing state. She demonstrates that sheer numbers of horses increased and that more power was derived from horses than from any other source. Thus the horse was not immediately replaced by the steam engine, and steam power actually created many new jobs for horses. Census returns showed the horse population increased 12 per cent between 1840 and 1850, and an astonishing 51 per cent in the subsequent decade. (72) Roads, canals, and ferries all increased the nation’s dependence on horses. The railways needed horses in their construction and in moving passengers and freight between railheads. Yet, the move to the periphery of importance occurred nevertheless. Greene demonstrates how developments in the late nineteenth century undercut the power of horses as a technology. “Contradictions would mount between the different roles of the horse – prime mover, worker, status symbol, and sentient being – and erode the momentum of urban horse technology by the first decade of the twentieth century.” (240)

*Harnessing Power* appears at a time when the conversation between historians over the shifting role of horses is both lively and international. In a seminal work, Peter Edwards, in *Horse and Man in Early Modern England* (London:

Hambledon Continuum 2007), offers the best synopsis of the early English arena of the inter-species relationship that transformed the history of transportation, commerce, leisure, warfare, agriculture, art, and diplomacy. For a ground-breaking wider European perspective, see Karen Raber and Treva J. Tucker, eds., *The Culture of the Horse: Status, Discipline, and Identity in the Early Modern World* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan 2005). In North America, several publications offer recent, careful, and nuanced studies. See Clay McShane and Joel A. Tarr, *The Horse in the City: Living Machines in the Nineteenth Century* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press 2007); and Margaret Derry, *Horses in Society: A Story of Animal Breeding and Marketing Culture, 1800–1920* (Buffalo: University of Toronto Press 2006). For a history of horses in southeast Asia and southern Africa, see Greg Bankoff and Sandra Swart, *Breeds of Empire: The 'Invention' of the Horse in the Philippines and Southern Africa, 1500–1950* (Copenhagen: Nordic Institute of Asian Studies Press 2007). Frustratingly, however, *Horses at Work* offers neither a bibliography nor a literature review. This is a shortcoming, as the book needs grounding in a stimulating new literature on horses in human society, and one misses the sense of a conversation among scholars. But even listening to just Greene's voice is fascinating. The book is written in a gentle, intelligent tone buttressed by robust argument and evidence. Her points are thus made with both elegance and a lot of muscle – much like the draft horses themselves.

SANDRA SWART

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**Jim Norris, *North for the Harvest: Mexican Workers, Growers, and the Sugar Beet Industry*** (St. Paul, MN: Minnesota Historical Society Press 2009)

*NORTH FOR THE Harvest* traces the symbiotic relationship among Mexican migrant workers, beet growers, and the American Crystal Sugar Company in the Red River Valley from the decade after World War I until the 1990s. Norris recognizes that *betabeleros* (sugar beet workers) were exploited, abused, and subjected to racist treatment. But his book goes beyond this over-simplistic portrayal of the relationship between growers and their workers. Instead, he portrays a complex relationship among three actors involved in shaping labour relations in the sugar beet industry: the company, growers, and migrant workers. He observes that sometimes the sugar company, sometimes the growers, but sometimes the *betabeleros* had the upper hand in the negotiation of pay and working conditions. Drawing on archival materials, such as reports, transcripts of public hearings, scrapbooks, committee records, contracts, meeting minutes, school records, newspaper articles, and oral history project interview transcripts, Norris weaves a complex and nuanced portrayal of the relationship among major players involved in the sugar beet industry. As a historian, Norris *describes* this relationship. As a sociologist, I draw on his discussion to *analyze* the data he presents.

It would seem that the relative balance of power among these three players depended on many factors. Among them are economic conditions (e.g. the fluctuating demand for beet sugar, given the broader geopolitical environment); federal government regulation of agricultural production (e.g. quotas on particular crops); presence of federal foreign migrant recruitment programs (more specifically, the *bracero* program);

federal government regulation of labour conditions, such as minimum wages and child labour; labour recruitment regulation by the state of Texas; levels of mechanization; availability of other labour recruitment programs (e.g. Youth Beet Program); presence of grower associations; and rights activism within the Mexican community as well as militancy of agricultural workers' unions.

The relationship among the sugar company, then known as American Beet Sugar, growers, and Mexican migrant *betabeleros* cemented in the 1920s. The company established a contractual relationship with the growers that stipulated the number of acres of sugar beets to be grown as well as the manner in which sugar beets were to be produced. At the same time, American Beet Sugar provided field workers to those growers who were short of labour. By the late 1920s about one third of the beet workers were composed of Mexicans. Some of these Mexican workers immigrated through legal channels while others preferred to cross the Rio Grande without legal sanction. Still other recruited workers were Mexican Americans from Texas. Until 1929, the recruitment of *betabaleros* in Texas was unrestricted. Yet, in 1929 under the pressure from growers and agricultural corporations, the state of Texas passed a law that required labour recruiters to purchase a licence and pay other fees, thus making recruitment costly and cumbersome.

Following the stock market collapse in 1929, sugar beet prices dropped to very low levels. Low market prices, compounded by environmental problems, resulted in significant losses for American Beet Sugar. Yet by the mid-1930s, the company, which now changed its name to American Crystal Sugar Company, started showing profits. New Deal legislation, and particularly the Jones-Costigan Act and the Sugar Act, created

new opportunities for the sugar beet corporation, beet growers, and *betabeleros* by allocating high quotas to beet sugar production, providing subsidies to growers, and legislating minimum wages for workers.

During World War II, because of the growing demand for sugar and shortages of labour in the sugar industry, the *betabeleros* were initially able to gain major improvements in their working conditions. But the importation of large numbers of Mexican workers through the *bracero* program launched in 1942 significantly undermined the ability of *betabeleros* to negotiate better wages and working conditions. By 1942, the percentage of Mexican workers among sugar beet workers in the Red River Valley had risen to 75. (60) By the 1950s, the bargaining power of *betabeleros* was once again undermined by the growing wave of undocumented migrants, known as "wetbacks."

In the 1950s, the demand for sugar beets expanded as a result of the Korean War. Yet, increased mechanization significantly reduced the dependency on migrant harvesters. At the same time, growers continued to rely on seasonal workers in the spring months. The growing number of permanent settlers, as well as an increased use of machines and local youth, reduced the need for migrant *betabeleros*.

Overall, throughout the 1950s and 1960s Mexican migrants benefited from improved wages and living conditions and many migrants from Texas chose to stay permanently in the valley. Living conditions of Mexican workers improved for several reasons. Among them were the ability of Mexican *betabeleros* to negotiate better wages; the emergence of social services for Mexican migrants in Minnesota and North Dakota; paternalism on the part of sugar beet growers (which, despite the power asymmetry, guaranteed improved living arrangements for

the workers); permanent settlement of Mexican immigrants in the valley (replacing seasonal migration); and activism by Mexican Americans. In addition, under the increased public scrutiny of the conditions under which *betabeleros* lived, American Crystal put pressure on the growers to improve migrant housing conditions.

Growers resented the interference and partiality on the part of the company. In fact, in the 1960s the relationship between American Crystal and the growers grew increasingly tense. As the demand for sugar increased due to the Cuban embargo, valley growers wanted the company to increase the number of acres for the growers who were members of the Red River Valley Sugar Beet Growers Association (RRVSBGA). Instead, the company signed contracts with growers who were not members. Furthermore, the company could not expand its processing capacity quickly enough to keep up with the growing demand. Feeling increasingly more resentful of the company's inability to meet their needs, RRVSBGA formed a cooperative and purchased American Crystal, bringing the four-decade-long relationship between the growers and the company to an end. Furthermore, finding the recruitment and employment of migrant workers costly and bothersome (because of the licensing requirements mentioned above and the responsibility to cover transportation costs of the migrants), RRVSBGA closed down the labour recruitment agency in Texas, leaving it up to the growers to find workers and negotiate their working conditions.

*North for the Harvest* tells the story of the germination and termination of the triangular relationship among American Crystal, growers, and the migrant workers. Norris tells this story by drawing on archival materials. As a sociologist I couldn't help but wonder about these archival sources. For instance, I would have

liked to know more about the oral history project transcripts. How many of the interviews were conducted with growers and how many with workers? Were all the workers Mexican? Were the stories told by Mexican Americans from Texas different from the stories of Mexican immigrants? How many among them were *betabeleras* (feminine for *betabelero*)? And were the women's perspectives any different? A short reflection on the archival sources would have allowed the reader to place the presented data in appropriate context.

TANYA BASOK

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**Teresa Healy, *Gendered Struggles against Globalisation in Mexico***  
(Aldershot, UK: Ashgate 2008)

THE VIOLENT IMAGES of life on the US-Mexico border fill the daily news. Thousands of women in the border city of Juarez have been murdered or have disappeared since the early 1990s, while hundreds of young men are gunned down in drug-related gang activity every month. Desperate people from Mexico and Central America daily flood across the border in search of jobs and a minimum of economic security. At the centre of this humanitarian crisis is the new global economic market which allows all manner of goods and services to cross international borders with one exception: the men and women whose cheap labour provides the foundation of this new world order. In her work, *Gendered Struggles Against Globalisation in Mexico*, Teresa Healy addresses some of the causes for this contemporary crisis in Mexico through an exploration of the decline of labour rights between 1968 and 1992. More specifically, the book focuses on the car industry and one particular union, the *Confederacion de Trabajadores de Mexico* (CTM) and its

inability or unwillingness to represent the concerns of its members. At the core of this phenomenon, Healy argues, are the specifically gendered ways in which power relations were constructed, which in turn, have conditioned the country's relationship with globalization.

Mexico's border region with the United States has experienced dramatic economic changes since the 1960s. In 1964, a twenty year *bracero* program (Mexican Labour Program) with the United States ended. In response to the rapid increase in unemployment along the border, Mexican president Gustavo Diaz Ordaz developed the Border Industrialization Program (BIP). The program depended upon *maquiladora* factories built on the Mexican side with their "twin" factories just a few miles north across the border in the United States. This new manufacturing structure did not resolve the problem of male unemployment, however, and instead a highly feminized labour force appeared. The oil boom of the late 1970s only served to strengthen Mexico's corporatist economic model, boosting foreign earnings to a full 75 per cent of its GNP. (81) By 1982, in the face of plummeting oil prices, Mexico was forced to admit that it could not repay its considerable foreign debt. Its financial crisis brought Mexico's ruling elite into a direct relationship with the International Monetary Fund and an even deeper economic complicity with corporations centred in the United States. As a result, until the 1994 NAFTA agreement, Mexican labourers were pressured to accept reduced wages, to work longer hours, and to give up the little job security they enjoyed. Of course, since NAFTA has been implemented, the crisis has only worsened.

The feminization of the *maquiladora* factories has been well documented since the early 1980s, establishing a clear gender hierarchy which privileges men and disadvantages women. What Healy

brings to this well studied region is an analysis of the male factory worker. She argues that working-class men have been just as enmeshed within gendered social relations as women. Expanding her analysis beyond the usual class argument dominant within labour studies, Healy identifies prescribed notions of masculinity within Mexican culture as one of the central foundations for its modern economic structure. The *caudillo* is a familiar political figure within Latin American politics who is defined by Eric Wolf and Edward Hansen as "a man, or men, who could assert their masculinity before other men by demonstrating their dominance over women, as well as their willingness to use violence to control others."<sup>(4)</sup> The *caudillo* plays a central role as political and social father within the patriarchal nation. While patriarchy by definition always privileges male over female, Healy suggests that it predominates within a far more complex social structure within the Mexican nation. Utilizing R.W. Connell's term, hegemonic masculinity, she identifies the hierarchy of relations among different groups of men. While she maintains that hegemonic masculinity is so pervasive as to be invisible, Healy convincingly argues that it is the cornerstone of Mexico's patriarchal and national gender structure. (151) Although patriarchy privileges all men relative to women, identifying hegemonic masculinity within this national social structure deconstructs male privilege to reveal that not all men benefit from it in the same way. (658)

Healy tests Connell's theory of hegemonic masculinity on Mexico's auto industry and its official labour union, the *Confederacion de Trabajadores de Mexico* (CTM), through three key movements of economic crisis and union resistance between 1968 and 1994. Each of these movements represented an effort by trade unionists to transform the character of

labour representation in Mexico and the defeat of each movement signified a deepening in the economic crisis. The first period explores the workers at the Nissan plant in Cuernavaca, Morelos from the massacre of students in the Tlaltelolco square in 1968 to the debt crisis in 1982. Labour came increasingly under pressure during the 1980s as Mexicans experienced a fifty per cent drop in real wages. At the Ford factories, workers in the centre of the country were forced to accept longer working hours, lower pay, and less job security as Ford opened new and cheaper factories along the Chihuahua-Texas border. On the eve of the NAFTA agreement, another conflict emerged among the workers at Volkswagen in Puebla in 1992. In each of these situations, the workers were unable to effectively maintain their seniority or wages in the face of Mexico's growing shift to new export-oriented manufacturing. When the CTM was unable to control the workers or arbitrate a successful end to labour strikes, they repeatedly resorted to violence against workers to maintain dominance. In the end, Healy notes, the long revered masculine figure of the *caudillo* father-worker was discredited. That role, so central to political power in Mexico, and to power within the trade unions, came under increasing pressure thanks to the new world economic order following the signing of the NAFTA agreement in 1994.

Healy effectively demonstrates that Mexico's former ruling party, the PRI, utilized violent forms of masculinity to maintain political control over its citizens during a prolonged period of economic crisis. She reminds us that masculinity has its own internal hierarchy in which some forms of masculinities and some men are more privileged than others through an exploration of the male-dominant labour unions of the car manufacturing industry. While the

analysis is sound and represents an exciting new field of study, Healy's gender categories do not always fit neatly into the economic changes. Furthermore, recent works on twentieth century Mexico suggest that the ruling PRI government did not represent as neat a break with the past as Healy might suggest. Nor does the 1968 massacre represent so radical a change in the forms of repression. The assumption that the PRI ever represented the interests of the working class is a concept increasingly under scrutiny as Mexico marks the revolution's centennial. Therefore, the political character of the *caudillo* has remained more of a constant than Healy's work might suggest.

The complexity of Healy's argument also makes it difficult to follow at times. She incorporates a variety of disciplines including gender analysis, history, labour studies, and globalization into a single narrative. I do not suggest that Healy's analysis is wrong but rather that it could be tightened and interrogate more closely the ability of any state to impact the global economic structure that is currently dictated by global corporations. Furthermore, Healy's work is exactly what is needed to fully address the complexity of the new global order. One can only hope that more such analyses will develop.

PATRICIA HARMS

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**Jana K. Lipman, *Guantánamo: A Working-Class History between Empire and Revolution* (Berkeley: University of California Press 2008)**

AS I WRITE THIS review, in the wake of a devastating earthquake in Haiti, some observers and commentators have suggested that the United States's naval base in Guantánamo Bay, Cuba ought to be used to house some of the thousands of Haitians who lost their homes in the

destruction. To put the base to this use might conceivably overwrite or at least attenuate the image many have of Guantánamo today. It stands for brutal imprisonment, illegal torture and, many have argued, the violation of basic rights of prisoners taken in war. Recent steps to dismantle the prison have faltered, and so at best the base continues to be a place in limbo. It has become a battleground for anti-war activists, anti-terrorist bureaucracies, human rights lawyers, and the prisoners themselves, many of whom have remained detained for years without trials. Yet for all of the attention the base and its prison have received of late, historians have either neglected it altogether, or made it part of broader narratives about Cold War politics or military diplomacy. Jana Lipman's book has been published at an opportune moment. It is a welcome corrective to the silences surrounding both the base and the adjacent town of Guantánamo, particularly in its emphasis on the working people who cleaned, repaired, typed, drove, and fulfilled many other duties as employees, as she writes, of empire.

The base formed part of a deal struck between Cuba and the United States in the wake of the Cuban Wars of Independence (1895–1898), in which Cuba won independence from Spain but acquired a relationship with the United States that would come to include outright occupation, interference in politics, extensive investment, and a growing intimacy involving exchanges of intellectuals, musicians, athletes, and workers. Occupying forty-five square miles on the very easternmost part of the island of Cuba, American officials conceived of the base as part of a strategy to protect growing interests in the Caribbean. Attracted by high wages and the promise of a US pension, workers vied for jobs on the base. Even the jobs with private contractors, which didn't include pensions, were highly sought after.

The competition increased during World War II, as Cubans struggled with high levels of unemployment in the shadow of the Depression. During the war, the base employed up to 13,000 workers. Lipman points to the ways the contradictions of empire played out in hiring practices. In addition to Cubans, Puerto Ricans also sought jobs on the base. But they were regularly turned away in favor of English-speaking Jamaicans. This angered both Cubans, who claimed priority as neighbours, and Puerto Ricans, who claimed priority as US citizens. In creating a work force on the base, US military officials regularly confronted the subjects of empire demanding to be heard, or hired.

During the Cold War these subjects became even more vocal. Lipman argues that in the early 1950s, the new political climate facilitated the creation of a labour union on the base, as a way to stave off radicalism. Workers seeking ways to improve their working conditions gained new leverage as both US officials and the Cuban labour establishment sought ways to mute emergent radicalism. A base workers' union conceived of as an antidote to communism resulted from these reconfigurations of power. Lipman rightly notes that these histories ought to reframe Cold War histories that too often insert Cuba into their narratives only after the Cuban Revolution.

Lipman's story moves beyond the base, to the town of Guantánamo itself. Largely ignored by popular and official histories, this distinct place experienced a deep entanglement with the base. While she notes the roles of elites whose businesses depended on American dollars, her analysis is rooted in the category of sexuality. Taking a cue from the writings of scholars like Ann Stoler, she seeks out the intimacies and relationships that both depended on and confounded empire. This approach yields some fascinating tales of the production of race and



sex in eastern Cuba in the shadows of the base. While both American and Cuban racial hierarchies might easily collude and overdetermine the barriers between black servicemen and white Cuban women at dances, they were also clearly challenged in numerous relationships, many of which ended in marriage. She notes that many US servicemen had familial connections to Cuba, Puerto Rico, or the Philippines, and by the same token, many of the Cuban women they married had some family in the United States. The use of this data to argue not only about the fluidity of national identity, but also about the multiethnic nature of the United States military at the time is an adept utilization of the sources available to her.

Drawing on oral histories, newspapers, and archival sources from both the US and Cuba, Lipman navigates the vagaries of the Cuban missile crisis and the increasing tensions between the two states through the experiences of base workers. Once enmity set in, the US military began to fire its Cuban workers and seek out replacements, turning to Jamaicans as the basis of a new workforce. But some Cubans remained, and these are a fascinating category, forced to choose sides and subject to suspicion by all. As of the book's publication, there were three Cuban workers remaining, whose job was mostly to courier US dollars to former Cuban workers still drawing a pension from the US government.

This book is replete with detail and anecdotes that offer a vivid sense of the strangeness of this history, even as they support valuable arguments that ought to encourage historians to dismantle their assumptions about the Cold War, US imperialism, or Cuban politics. Curiously, it declines to tell readers much about the working lives of the thousands of base employees. Occasional glimpses recount the experiences of women who

began as domestic workers but were promoted to secretarial or administrative duties. Although she asserts that many different skill levels and capacities were needed on the base, these receive scanty attention. What's missing is an account of what these workers did, the rhythms of their days, the dynamics of hierarchy and performance that characterize many workplaces, and the obstacles or negotiations encountered in their daily lives. That would have made a fascinating account even richer. In addition, it raises questions that remain unanswered. Why, for example, when the order came down from President Lyndon Johnson to purge the ranks of Cuban workers on the base, were some workers let go and others retained? Presumably, some were more highly skilled and less expendable than others. Or perhaps they were imagined to be more loyal because of the nature of their relationships to their superiors. What's at stake is the ways these workers came to be identified as specific individuals with particular skills.

This book demonstrates a wonderful grasp of the complexities and ironies arising out of a naval base that has an unending lease, is located within a nation with which the United States has one of the longest standing and most futile feuds, hosts Cuban-American friendship celebrations, and is tightly controlled and monitored by the United States yet has recently been declared to be outside the United States for legal purposes. Lipman brings labour history and the history of empire together with intelligence and care. This book ought to be required reading for historians of the United States and Cuba, and students and scholars interested in an exemplary discussion of neo-colonial labour regimes.

ALEJANDRA BRONFMAN

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**Nara B. Milanich, *Children of Fate: Childhood, Class, and the State in Chile, 1850–1930*** (Durham: Duke University Press 2009)

IN THIS BEAUTIFULLY written and well-crafted book, Nara B. Milanich convincingly argues that the family served as the nexus for class formation in late nineteenth and early twentieth century Chile. Combining poignant vignettes that bring to life the hardships faced by plebeian children with sharp analyses of civil law and elite discourse, this study makes a major contribution to the burgeoning historiography of children in Latin America. In addition, *Children of Fate* should become required reading for students of class and state formation beyond Latin America.

In a country where elite and popular narratives figured Chileans as uniformly mestizo, class, not race, emerged as the primary determinant of someone's place in the social hierarchy as the republican state took hold in the early nineteenth century. It was precisely at this juncture that the state came to confer rights and entitlements on practices and legal structures surrounding the family. As a consequence, the family came to establish a person's class location. Children from working, middle, and upper class families would be placed in their respective class positions based on filial ties; illegitimate children would consequently find themselves as part of a kinless underclass.

The Civil Code of 1857 figures prominently in Milanich's story. The brainchild of Andres Bello, one of Latin America's greatest intellectuals, the Code abolished colonial Spanish legal codes that had remained Chilean law throughout the first half century after independence. Chapter 1 examines how the civil code transformed family law, revolutionizing "the gender, generational, and class dynamics

of filiation." (42) Most notably, the Code provided a legal structure for a liberal economy and for a patriarchal society. In the process, the code transformed the relationship between citizens and the state.

Milanich argues that the key difference between colonial and republican law focuses on the issue of paternity. While both laws disinherited illegitimate children, they acknowledged paternity differently. Colonial law granted paternity when there existed sentimental or economic ties between a man and a child or a man and the mother of the child in question. Drawing on 102 paternity suits, the author finds that women or children who took men to court over paternity claims won 53 per cent of the time. Since the Crown entrusted the colonial court with protecting the empire's children, the colonial court often settled in the plaintiff's favour, conferring on the man responsibility for his offspring.

The liberal Code proved detrimental to illegitimate children and their mothers filing paternity suits, as the Code came to reinforce the patriarchal liberal order. Based on liberal precepts that emphasized individual rights over collective obligations, the Civil Code configured paternity as a free and voluntary act on the part of the man, granting fathers the right to choose whether to acknowledge extramarital offspring. Paternity investigations were prohibited, and paternity status of extramarital children would now be acknowledged through contracts, with parents appearing before courts to declare kinship ties. As a result of this new requirement for establishing filiation, countless more children were deemed illegitimate. Deprived of property and socially stigmatized, they joined the ranks of the underclass. In short, the liberalization of family law had a profound role in class formation in modern Chile. Tracing the trajectory of the

impact of this change in family law provides a major contribution to the literature on Latin American state formation.

In adjudicating cases contesting kinship ties, by the 1870s the court came to interpret the Code through the prism of class. Chapter 2 demonstrates how paternal recognition came to define an offspring's class position. Drawing on over 90 paternity suits filed after the enactment of the Code, Milanich demonstrates how family law reproduced class differences in republican Chile. Paternity status came to be based on the actions that a biological father undertook regarding his offspring. "If a man," writes Milanich, "had made manifest efforts to assimilate his alleged offspring into his social status through class-appropriate education and upbringing, then it said he possessed the will to recognize." (74) If he permitted his alleged offspring to become impoverished, then the court would rule that no kinship ties could be proven. Hence, the court itself became an instance for the legal affirmation of class distinction.

Part II, "The Children of Don Nobody," examines the enduring importance of kinship in republican Chile. Chapter 3, "Kindred and Kinless: A People Without History," explores the lives of a kinless underclass, poor children who grew up without natal ties. The socioeconomic consequences of illegitimacy underscore the importance of kinship to individuals, particularly children. Moreover, this discussion illuminates how laws and customs regarding kinship continued to shape the overall class structure.

Chapter 4, "Birthrights: Natal Dispossession and the State," argues that as the state secularized marriage, kinship, and legal identity, the family came to determine someone's *estado civil*, or civil status. According to the Code, the *estado civil* defined "one's status as a parent or a child; legitimate or illegitimate; married, widowed, or single; or as an adult or

minor still subject to parental authority." (134) Hence, the state based civil personhood on an individual's kinship ties. Illegitimates had no civil status and were thus denied kin-based benefits, such as social security, worker's indemnity, and inheritance. In short, the state buttressed a social and legal category – "illegitimate" – that deprived those without legally recognized kin of economic benefits, resulting in their impoverishment.

Milanich makes a key contribution to the study of Latin American state formation by showing how Chilean liberalism departed from classical liberal thought, which constructs the autonomous individual as constitutive to state-civil relations. In contrast to the idealized liberal state, the Chilean government held enormous power over establishing the civil subject, as it, in effect, produced legal kinlessness, or the category of the orphan. The Casa de Huérfanos, entrusted by the state with caring for many orphans, further established the children in its care as orphans by denying the existence of their illegitimate fathers. In sum, social institutions along with the Chilean state drew on family law to deprive illegitimate children of civil status, producing a people without kin and without history.

Part III, "Other People's Children: The Politics of Child Circulation," describes the lives of children dispossessed of natal kinship by exploring the practice of child circulation, defined loosely as the placement of children outside of kin networks. Chapter 5, "Vernacular Kinships in the Shadow of the State," explores the informal practice of child fostering for working-class family formation, showing how plebeian families negotiated liberal law, while Chapter 6 explores child circulation from the angle of domestic servitude.

Chapter 5's investigation of circumstances that led to child circulation throws light on a common but understudied practice. Using court and notary

records, Milanich focuses on families that took in kinless children, as well as the children themselves, to conclude that child circulation constituted a form of welfare provision for illegitimate children. At the same time, however, the practice often led to the exploitation of children, as they became a source of cheap labour for host families. Most important, the chapter reveals the sharp divide between the Civil Code and the fictive kin relations that developed as a result of child circulation. Reflecting the elite worldview of its authors, the Civil Code held no provisions for addressing the practice of child circulation, which primarily affected the poor. In short, Milanich's study of child circulation underscores the marginalization of a kinless underclass of children.

The last chapter, "Child Bondage in the Liberal Republic," describes the tutelary domestic servitude of poor children as a form of bondage that the author groups with other types of unfree labour, such as penal labour and debt peonage. Drawing on documents from the Casa de Huérfanos, Milanich argues that the state helped produce paternalistic relationships between kinless children and adults by endorsing seemingly benevolent institutions, such as charities and the Church, to take in children.

The state did not however intervene in children's lives. On the contrary, by offering no legal provisions for regulating child circulation while recognizing charitable organizations, the state relegated the phenomenon of kinlessness as a problem to be addressed by the private sphere. As a consequence, illegitimate children found themselves in new webs of exploitation and dependencies, as they became domestic labourers in plebeian households. In the process, the underclass reproduced itself, as kinless children grew up to become peons and servants, not just to the middle and upper classes, but to the working class as well.

*Children of Fate* ends with an epilogue that provides an overview of the legal reforms enacted in the early twentieth century that altered illegitimacy and child circulation. Despite the emergence in the early twentieth century of a national discourse among the middle and upper classes on the plight of poor children, it was not until the New Filiation Law of 1998 that an end was put to "the historical distinction between illegitimate and legitimate children from civil law." (234) Milanich's masterful study provides the context for understanding the 1998 law as a victory for Chilean illegitimates.

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**Jasmin Hristov, *Blood and Capital: The Paramilitarization of Colombia*** (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press and Toronto: Between the Lines 2009)

JASMIN HRISTOV's book, *Blood and Capital: The Paramilitarization of Colombia*, makes valuable contributions to the study of contemporary Colombian politics, as well as to interpretations of the Colombian conflict, the role of the state, the role of paramilitary forces, and relations among them.

Colombian President Álvaro Uribe Vélez has been linked to political terrorism on an order unseen in Latin America in more than a generation. This *parapolítica* scandal, as it is known in Colombia, has been ignored by European and North American leaders. Instead, President Uribe has been acclaimed and rewarded for his hard line against insurgent groups. The governments of Canada and the United States have defended Uribe and sought to negotiate free trade agreements with Colombia during his tenure. According to Hristov, President Uribe has overseen the integration of criminal paramilitary networks with formal politics, rather than the

defeat of the guerrillas. The Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) merit a mention in Hristov's book. As she makes perfectly clear, social movement and human rights activists, students, progressive intellectuals, indigenous peoples, and the urban poor have been the main targets of paramilitary violence.

Hristov commands the reader's attention with her bold and well-documented arguments. Her tone is appropriately impassioned and engaged. The book will be of interest to researchers, students, and activists interested in contemporary Latin America. Completed while Hristov was working on her doctoral dissertation in political science at York University in Toronto, *Blood and Capital* reads like an urgent treatise on a very contemporary and constantly changing crisis.

The book is divided into seven chapters, the first of which deals with the interlocking themes of capitalism and violence. Hristov is critical of the mainstream contemporary social science literature on Colombia. She argues that the main thrust of scholarship on Colombia has overemphasized the concept of armed conflict as a "meganarrative" for explaining Colombian history. The focus on armed conflict among belligerent forces has had the effect of overestimating the role of armed actors, just as the focus on drug trafficking has tended to exaggerate the role of the United States. She then makes a brief but important appeal for students of Colombia to recognize the contributions of socially engaged Colombian intellectuals such as trade unionist Francisco Ramírez, journalist Alfredo Molano, and sociologist Eduardo Pizarro Leongómez. Inspired by these authors, Hristov proceeds to discuss how the rise of paramilitarism has paralleled the rise of neoliberalism in Colombia.

Hristov's points are well taken. For many years, the idea that violence is pathological or endemic in Colombia, without

remedy, even without explanation, has indeed become mainstream.

One of the most important contributions of Hristov's book is that it discusses paramilitarism as a complex set of inter-related phenomena, rather than a singular force. Hristov takes the reader on a journey deep into the details of political violence in Colombia. This allows the reader to imagine paramilitary groups as complex networks. For decades Colombian civil society groups working on the front lines of the dirty war have been insistent that paramilitary forces work in collaboration with Colombian state forces, with the acquiescence of high-level government officials. Under the government of Álvaro Uribe Vélez, whose top aides have been linked to paramilitary financing and intelligence systems, there is an opportunity to demonstrate that collusion has been practised by people at every level of government. Against all evidence, the veracity of civil society claims concerning paramilitarism are often questioned by the international community. Many observers have instead attempted to explain the Colombian conflict as the outcome of the breakdown or weakness of the state. Hristov delves into this key debate in Colombian social science by laying out systematically the main features of paramilitarism and how these relate to Colombian economics, politics, and justice.

The second half of the book deals with the nature of paramilitary crimes, recent judicial measures introduced by the Colombian government to obfuscate these, and the case of the undeclared war on Colombia's most influential indigenous organization, the Regional Indigenous Council of Cauca. Newcomers to Colombian studies and experienced Colombianists will appreciate the breadth of these chapters. Particularly useful is Hristov's synthesis of the much-criticized demobilization of paramilitary forces that

has taken place in recent years. While it is true that the book is more focused on the roles played by policymakers and security forces personnel than on capitalists, Hristov's discussion of the struggles of indigenous peoples in southern Colombia manages to bring these diverse threads together.

One of the book's strengths is that it uses mainly Colombian sources, and interprets these for an international readership. Hristov has drawn on a terrific volume of reports by the many progressive Colombian social activists and prominent leftist intellectuals who daily report on the abuses of the Colombian state and its paramilitary allies. This is no small feat. Imagine trying to keep up with frontline reports from a war with no obvious front, where the main perpetrators of violence change names and reinvent themselves regularly in order to obfuscate their identities and objectives.

Colombian social activists have made invaluable contributions to our understanding of the Colombian conflict precisely because they understand the ways in which decisions are made by a wide range of local actors, from political authorities to paramilitary leaders. Their observation and documentation of political violence has elucidated the phenomenon of paramilitarism and the relationship between the state and private armed groups in Colombia. International scholars working on Colombia owe a tremendous debt to these cutting edge knowledge producers. Hristov is one of the rare academics who acknowledge that debt.

Hristov's writing is always substantive. She combines a mix of broad theoretical analysis, concrete examples, and revealing anecdotes. Some of the more compelling passages in the book are built around excerpts from interviews with state functionaries who shed new light on paramilitary activity and the repressive strategies

implemented by state security agents. Indeed, these interviews are remarkable. These individuals have shared important details about the *modus operandi* of paramilitary forces, and compelling personal stories about their brushes with death and their own crises of conscience. If there is a critique to be offered here, it is that these stories merit more in-depth treatment. Hristov's sometimes casual treatment of her oral sources is surprising considering that in the book's introduction she reproaches authors who use oral interviews to "attain credibility." (12)

Hristov's extensive use of bullet points to illustrate particular points and catalogue human rights abuses also detracts from the overall effectiveness of the book. These sections, dispersed throughout the text, total nearly 40 pages. In some cases, particularly at the beginning of chapters, this device may help guide the reader through the details to come. In other cases, the information detailed in these points is difficult to digest. For those unfamiliar with Colombian current events and geography, it may prove difficult to appreciate the significance of some of the events cited.

For more than five decades Colombia has been embroiled in what is now most commonly described simply as "*el Conflicto*." It is somewhat misleading to speak of "The Violence" or "The Conflict" in the singular. In Colombia multiple forms of social and political violence occur simultaneously, shaped by national and transnational forces such as judicial reforms, the expansion of extractive industries, and military assistance from the United States. *Blood and Capital* helps to make intelligible the underexamined economic, social, and legal dimensions of paramilitarism in Colombia.

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**Francisco Panizza, *Contemporary Latin America: Development and Democracy Beyond the Washington Consensus***  
(London and New York: Zed Books 2009)

THE TURBULENT history of Latin America since the 1970s has included revolutions, civil wars, military dictatorships, United States invasions, and now the rise of left and center-left elected governments. At the same time there have been fierce policy debates over how the region should progress to overcome enormous problems of poverty and economic underdevelopment, debates which have mostly centred on the contention between neo-liberal and socialist prescriptions. History and policy debates were related since much of the former reflected fights over the latter.

Francisco Panizza, a senior lecturer in politics at the London School of Economics and Political Science of Uruguayan background, has written a nuanced description of the evolution of development policy beginning in the late 1980s, when it seemed like socialist prescriptions were no longer a threat to what he calls the economic orthodoxy.

He begins with the origins of the expression "Washington Consensus." John Williamson coined the term in a 1990 edited book, *Latin American Economic Adjustment? How Much has Happened?* (Washington, DC: Institute for International Economics). Williamson listed as "the common core of wisdom embraced by all serious economists of the time" a series of policy recommendations, including liberalization of interest rates, trade, and foreign direct investment flows; privatization; and deregulation. These prescriptions were in line with laissez-faire neo-liberalism. Other prescriptions, though, including directing public investment toward social programs, were not. Williamson was agnostic on the question of which model of capitalism

– Anglo-Saxon (closest to neo-liberalism), European social market, or Japanese-style – provided the best guidance for developing societies. At the very least, in Panizza's judgment, the main thrust of the Washington Consensus was consistent – if not totally identical with – the main thrust of neo-liberalism.

From the late 1980s to the late 1990s the Washington Consensus achieved clear hegemony among policy makers. But then it began to unravel as economic crises in Mexico, Argentina, and elsewhere broke out. Privatization and free market reforms, while initially promising to their proponents, did not usher in a new epoch of clear sailing economic growth.

As a result of those crises, policy makers began to rethink the Washington Consensus, resulting in the development of what Panizza calls the Post Washington Consensus, a development that he sees as more of a refinement than rejection of the original paradigm. There is now a more serious focus on poverty alleviation through state action, and on the need for some steps toward developing equality of opportunity, though not of outcomes.

Policy, though, is one thing, politics another. In the latter there was a significant Latin American backlash against neo-liberalism and the Washington Consensus, which were blamed for causing the crises and aggravating the traditional problems of poverty and inequality as well as allowing an explosion of crime, drugs, and other social problems. Many politicians ran on anti-neo-liberal platforms. Panizza accurately notes that a number of these, including Carlos Andrés Pérez in Venezuela and Lucio Gutiérrez in Ecuador, used bait and switch tactics: they ran against neo-liberalism but then, once in office, adopted economic shock programs. Pérez and Gutiérrez were subsequently forced out of office for those reasons.

In large part because of failures of Washington Consensus policies, the late

1990s and the 2000s saw a resurgence of left-wing governments. These broadly divided into two camps. Venezuela, Bolivia, and Ecuador sought to completely break with neo-liberalism and the Washington Consensus and, in the case of Venezuela, adopted the goal of creating socialism for the twenty-first century. Brazil, Chile, and Uruguay, by contrast, continued many free market policies while attempting to more aggressively reduce poverty than had previous regimes.

Panizza devotes considerable time to comparing the opposite trajectories of Venezuela and Brazil. Luiz Ignácio da Silva (Lula) and the Workers Party in Brazil began with a platform of complete opposition to neo-liberalism. But once in office, Lula accommodated to many neo-liberal prescriptions to the consternation of many in his party. When Hugo Chávez began his rise to power in Venezuela in the early 1990s, he envisioned a kind of third way endogenous social capitalist development. But he moved steadily to the left, especially after the 2002 coup, and in 2006 ran on a platform of socialism for the twenty-first century.

In telling this story, Panizza is knowledgeable and his references are extensive. He has produced a good synthesis of the evolution of part of the debates around market reforms; and his treatment of the left-wing governments is fair despite his not appearing to share their goals. But he has not provided the whole story, and that is my problem with his book. Despite often referring to external constraints as being important for explaining policy choices, he does not more than abstractly note their importance. He does not explain and give due explanatory weight to the actual events and contexts that shaped the evolution of Latin American development policy. He leaves readers with the impression that policy develops according to its own logic and validity for reflecting economic realities and

predicting successful courses of action – a kind of idealism that neglects material circumstances.

But the widespread adoption of Washington Consensus economic prescriptions in the 1990s did not come about just because of evolution of economic thinking, nor because it had popular support from those who thought it would lead to economic stabilization and growth. It occurred in the aftermath of brutal Washington-supported military dictatorships and massacres of left-wing activists who had promoted socialist alternatives. As Naomi Klein put it at the 2007 American Sociological Conference, “We were defeated by army tanks and think tanks.”

There is no analysis, even in passing, of the enormous power that the United States has exercised over Latin America. This is a staggering omission that constrains any discussion of the context of policy-making. The United States through the Central Intelligence Agency, the influence that it wields in international financial institutions such as the World Bank and International Monetary Fund, and Pentagon-coordinated alliances with Latin American militaries insured that Latin American development would not be inimical to its own interests. When revolutionary threats to its interests broke out, it aligned itself with the most reactionary sectors of Latin American elites and political forces to put them down.

Is it any wonder that the neo-liberal-inspired Washington Consensus would appear to be “the common core of economic wisdom embraced by all serious economists” after ten years of Reagan and Bush governments in the United States? Is it any wonder that Washington in its traditional imperial mode would seek to impose that set of prescriptions after it had been complicit in the killing or intimidation into silence of potential opponents?

Strangely, there are only two in-passing references in the book to the whole



Cuban revolutionary experience. Yet Cuban socialism represents the most consistent alternative to neo-liberalism and the Washington Consensus; and Cuba's accomplishments in health and education remain as inspirations for the Latin American left. Ignoring Cuba in the book is the intellectual parallel to Washington's economic blockade of the island.

Overall, the policy discussion in the book is useful but only if read with an understanding of crucial background and contextual factors that it does not provide. Much better works in those respects include Ximena de la Barra and Richard A. Dello Buono, *Latin America after the Neo-liberal Debacle* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield 2009), Greg Grandin, *Empire's Workshop: Latin America, the United States, and the Rise of the New Imperialism* (New York: Holt 2007), and Naomi Klein, *The Shock Doctrine: The Rise of Disaster Capitalism* (New York: Picador 2008).

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**Susan B. Whitney, *Mobilizing Youth: Communists and Catholics in Interwar France*** (Durham and London: Duke University Press 2009)

IN THIS IMPORTANT study, Susan B. Whitney looks at the history of French politics during the interwar years from an unusual angle, the youth movements sponsored by the Communist Party and the Catholic Church. Both sponsored vibrant youth organizations during the 1920s and 1930s, and both wrestled with how to incorporate young people into their ideological vision, while at the same time incorporating new ideas that youth could bring to them as a way of ensuring their organizations' popular appeal and future success. In *Mobilizing Youth*, Whitney uses political, social, and

cultural analysis to portray the evolution of working-class youth culture during this period, focusing in particular on the legacy of World War I and on the Popular Front. She argues convincingly that both Communists and Catholics devoted much attention to youth politics, though both insisted upon adult control of youth organizations. In effect, especially when compared with the youthful transformation of the country after 1945, *Mobilizing Youth* gives a portrait of a new France struggling to be born, yet restrained by old patterns and practices.

Whitney places her book within the historiography of youth in interwar Europe, a topic that has received much attention in recent years. As she notes, "youth" is a slippery concept, one that varies greatly according to time, place, and social status. The idea of a period of life between childhood and adulthood, symbolized in particular by the increased amount of formal education required of young people, has usually been considered not just a recent phenomenon but a hallmark of modernity. Consequently, much of the scholarship on youth has focused on the children of the middle class, in particular young intellectuals and college students. In contrast, Whitney studies working-class young people, in part because they were so much more numerous. For them the transition from childhood to adulthood was much more abrupt than for their bourgeois peers, and yet, as the author notes, even when they went off to work they had an identity distinct from their more mature peers. The author generally looks at the period from the ages of 13, when most working-class children left school for good and took up full-time work, to the mid-20s. Yet as she notes, this span of years encompassed a multitude of different experiences and perspectives. The Communist and Catholic youth movements she studies confronted the challenge of addressing these

differences yet at the same time crafting a common social and political identity for young workers, one that would simultaneously address the workers' primary concerns and buttress the organizations' political strength.

In focusing on Communists and Catholics, Whitney considers two major institutions in French society that have often been opposed and yet have had some important qualities in common. The idea of Communism as a kind of secular religion is an old one, and a broader comparison of these two polities would be very useful for this study. Both had important claims to be parties of youth. The Communist Party was the newest major political organization in France, born in the aftermath of World War I, and moreover claimed to be creating a new world. While certainly no newcomer, the Catholic Church had a very long history of involvement with education and youth causes in general. As Whitney demonstrates, their positions at opposite ends of the French political spectrum during the interwar years underscored the centrality of youth to visions of French renewal. In an aging Third Republic that seemed to have sacrificed its *élan vital* in the trenches of the Great War, both Communists and Catholics fastened upon young working people as the key to building a new France.

Whitney starts her tale with World War I, a conflict that in many respects created the modern concept of "youth," and in particular served as the cradle of the French Communist Party. She notes how the war politicized two generations, those who fought in the trenches and those who experienced the conflict as children observing its impact on their fathers. Young people led the rejection of prewar Socialism and the creation of the new party, in general symbolizing the postwar radical insurgency. Throughout the 1920s, the Communist Youth organization operated as a radical vanguard,

emphasizing staking out the most radical positions rather than appealing to the masses of young French workers. Both the war and the birth of French Communism alarmed the Catholic Church, prompting it to mount its own efforts to organize working-class youth. For the Church, youth represented perhaps the best opportunity to "re-Christianize" French labour in general, and thus both fight the Communist threat and ensure the moral health of the nation. Both Communists and Catholics sought to protect young people from the temptations of mass culture, such as dancing and the movies, and to rein in the ever-present threat of adolescent sexuality. With the rise of the Popular Front both groups shifted their approach to youth organizing, embracing a broader view of working-class life that included things like fashion and romance. As a result, both Catholics and Communists succeeded in building mass youth movements that helped them survive the dark years of Vichy.

*Mobilizing Youth* pays particular attention to the ways in which youth movements and the experience of youth in general were gendered. For both Communists and Catholics organizing young working women presented some difficulties: the former tended to promote a masculine vision of youth activism that had little place for women, while Catholics were very hesitant to embrace the idea of involving women in politics at all. Again, the years of the Popular Front brought important changes in this regard, leading the Communists to create a separate young women's organization and young Catholic women to take part in the sit-down strikes of June, 1936. For women in particular, and for the youth movements in general, Whitney makes the point that although adult hierarchies worked hard to control them, youth movements also empowered young people to develop their own ideas and abilities. For some,

these movements sparked life-long commitments to political activism, even if those commitments ultimately took different paths.

In general, this is a fine study that adds a good deal to our knowledge of French youth, and of politics and society in interwar France. It is well written, cogently argued, and uses a wide variety of source material. While on the whole Whitney's perspective is sound, some of her arguments are less convincing than others. For example, she notes that during the 1920s the Young Communists failed to recruit many women because their culture was heavily masculinized, prizing toughness and virility. Yet the Soviet Communists certainly also embraced martial values and they had much more success in reaching out to both sexes. More broadly, the extent to which French young people embraced the social identity of "youth" is not clear, so that perhaps a widespread failure to do so limited the appeals of both Catholics and Communists. I also wonder why the Catholics chose to address working-class youth in particular, or if they had similar programs for other young people. Moreover, one group curiously absent from these pages is parents: young people usually define themselves (positively or negatively) in relation to their mothers and fathers, and many of them must have lived at home. Did the youth movements explored here function as surrogate parents, and was there a need for them to do so?

Such questions underscore the importance of this topic, and the richness of Whitney's research and narrative. *Mobilizing Youth* will hopefully inspire new studies of the political and social history of generations, social formations whose history is central to that of twentieth century France.

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**Tiantian Zheng, *Red Lights: The Lives of Sex Workers in Postsocialist China*** (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press 2009)

ALTHOUGH PROSTITUTION was banned and effectively eliminated in Mao's China, the sex industry quickly reestablished itself once China moved towards a consumer economy in the late 1980s. *Red Lights* is an ethnographic case study of this modern form of prostitution in the large northern port city of Dalian. It focuses particularly on the rural migrant women who formed the overwhelming majority of workers in the karaoke bars where the new sex industry was located. It explores not just the working lives and identities of these women, but also analyzes the role that consumption of sex plays in the shifting definitions of masculinity in postsocialist China. Zheng is also concerned with the ways in which the sex industry intersected with the state and the increasingly globalized economy in which China participated from the 1980s.

Tiantian Zheng was born and educated in Dalian before moving to the United States to undertake the PhD research, which forms the basis of this book. While she is an academic anthropologist, her engagement with her subject is intensely personal: in the course of becoming a participant-observer in the karaoke bars, she identified closely with the women workers. As she explains in the introduction, "I do not see myself as any different from them. Even though I did not sell my body, I, too have pawned my identity in deference to the patriarchal ideal of a Chinese woman. We all live and work for our parents, who are part of a culture that exploits and cages their children." (20)

Zheng's quest to understand the plight of Dalian's sex workers led her to share their lives, living with them in the bars and posing as a hostess. She also

accompanied several of the women when they returned to their home villages for visits in order to illustrate the enduring concept of filiality as it played out in the women's relationships to their families. The result of her research is a rich description and analysis of an important institution in postsocialist China. Zheng shows us the harsh realities of working in the karaoke bars: the long hours; the forced consumption of large amounts of alcohol; the violence from owners, clients, and criminal gangs; the vulnerability to police harassment. She also offers plausible explanations for the women's involvement in this work: the lack of remunerative alternatives; the desire to support poor families in the countryside; and the hope of finding a wealthy man to rescue them from poverty. The women in this account appear both as victims and as agents: victims of patriarchy and the state, but also skilled actors whose performances manipulate their clients. Zheng argues that unlike Western sex workers, whose identities risk being fractured by the multiple personas they adopt in their personal and professional lives, the identities of Dalian's hostesses have a unifying axis in the persona of the filial daughter. So long as they used the money earned in prostitution to fulfil their responsibilities to their parents, hostesses could live with the stigma attached to sex work. However, she argues, in using filiality in this way, prostitutes have reinforced the structure that oppresses them.

*Red Lights* is concerned with the male patrons of the karaoke bars as well as with the hostesses, and Zheng's embedded position as a hostess allowed her plenty of scope to both interview and observe these clients. She concludes that the conspicuous sexual consumption of the bars played an important part in the new masculinities that emerged in post-Mao China, as certain men demonstrated their prowess by their ability

to buy and control hostesses. Chinese men's attraction to the pleasures of the bars is also shown as a reaction to the disillusionment they felt with socialism: as one informant put it, "Everything we were taught in school is such a huge joke and a lie! We need to enjoy ourselves right now because there's simply nothing else worthwhile to do." (124) The masculine realm of the bars also played a key role in the Japanese strategy to access Chinese markets for their products by providing opportunities to corrupt Chinese officials with a modern, sexualized form of leisure.

This study is important on many levels. The first-hand nature of the investigation provides unprecedented insight into the world of the karaoke bars. The author has taken enormous risks to undertake this research, including being forced to hide during police raids and to flee violent gangsters and irate clients. Her own background as a Dalian woman also afforded her rare access to the language and culture of her subjects, and her discussion of the linguistic subtleties is especially rewarding. Her conclusions challenge much of the existing literature on prostitution in China in this period, and on rural migrants more generally. Most importantly, she shows that the Chinese state was complicit in the expansion of the sex industry and contributed to the exploitation of these women. This contradicts the findings of scholars such as Elaine Jeffreys, who argue that police interventions in this period were beneficial to workers in the industry and welcomed by them. Her study of the role of local networks in providing a basis for support and collective action likewise challenges the findings of previous studies of migrant women. Rather than such networks providing a basis for solidarity, in the case of sex workers any tendencies women might otherwise have had to support each other were undermined by the

possibility of breaking out of the group through marriage, and also by the potential costs of any collective action. The latter included violent retribution by owners and managers.

The difference between sex workers and other female migrant workers is also evident in their complex relationship to their home villages. Unlike women in other studies who often come home to stay after a period of working elsewhere, Dalian's hostesses did not return home. Rather, they treated their homes as places of temporary refuge and an opportunity to flaunt their prosperity and modernity. But their ambiguous status in the eyes of villagers as sex workers and the attractions of urban autonomy mean that hostesses have preferred not to return permanently to their homes.

Although there is no doubt that this is a rare and important study, I do have reservations about the extent to which the author's personal investment in the subject may have sometimes led to uncritical acceptance of the testimony of her informants. We are told, for instance, how hostesses manipulated clients by making up stories about the ill treatment that led them to take up their current occupation. Yet Zheng does not seem to consider that these consummate actors may also have been performing for the academic anthropologist.

*Red Lights* is produced in paperback, has a clear font, and is refreshingly free of proofing errors. However, a little editing would have removed some of the repetition in the text. A bibliography would also have been useful, in addition to the endnotes.

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**Geoff Robinson, *When the Labor Party Dreams: Class, Politics and Policy in New South Wales 1930–32*** (North Melbourne: Australian Scholarly Publishing 2008)

HISTORIES OF STATE politics in Australia are not especially common, book-length studies of a particular government very rare indeed. One usually needs to turn to biographies of individual premiers to locate detailed research of this kind, with the result that politics is seen through the careers of leaders whose role and influence in the events being narrated might be exaggerated.

Geoff Robinson's *When the Labor Party Dreams* is therefore welcome as a study of a state government that briefly occupied the centre-stage of national politics during capitalism's greatest crisis, the Depression of the 1930s. While state government in Australia even today impinges on the daily lives of its citizens in all sorts of ways, it's less common for these sub-national regimes to matter deeply to anyone outside their jurisdiction. But the election of the second Lang Government late in 1930 mattered not only for the people of Australia's most populous state, New South Wales, but ultimately for the whole country. For, as Robinson shows in this valuable study, the Lang administration emerged as the most powerful centre of opposition to the more orthodox economic policies pursued by the federal Scullin Labor Government, as well as by the governments of the other states. This opposition was most famously expressed in the Lang Plan's controversial proposal to suspend interest payments on overseas loans.

Robinson is insistent on the radicalism of the Lang Government, its commitment to socialization, and its refusal to concede the logic or justice of deflationary solutions to the Depression. Its adherence to the essentially deflationary Premiers' Plan of 1931, for instance,

became "increasingly nominal;" (159) in its industrial policy, the government undermined employers' property rights; and in its taxation policy, it increasingly sought to create jobs through higher duties. Near the end, in 1932, it tried unsuccessfully to introduce a confiscatory capital levy.

The author attributes this radicalism not to Lang himself but to the government as a whole, the particular balance of class forces that underlay it, and the left-wing union base on which its power rested. Robinson's focus on power bases is an approach to interwar New South Wales politics pioneered by Miriam Dixon in the 1960s, and it has a great deal to commend it, not least because it challenges the stereotype of Lang, the millionaire real estate agent, as some kind of crypto-socialist. That idea never really added up, and if it needed putting to rest, Robinson's study will help to do so.

It's barely an exaggeration to call Lang a bit-player in this account. We learn much about his ministers, as well as about the union leaders who, whether quietly, like Oscar Schreiber, or noisily, like Jock Garden, influenced policy behind closed doors. But Robinson also usefully reveals the limits of the power of both Lang and the government's inner group. Internal party processes remained reasonably fair and democratic, in contrast with later in the decade; and effective defiance of the will of the leader and his immediate circle was still possible.

Yet I also couldn't help feeling that Robinson might have taken the approach further than was warranted. The author warns us early on that for the purposes of this book, he accepted "the classical Marxist formulation: that there is an economic base which ultimately determines the political superstructure."<sup>(3)</sup> But there are plenty of passing references and historical judgements in the text that seem to contradict the author's basic stance,

and rather suggest Lang's own character, personal wealth, and political style actually *did* matter, and that we cannot reduce this famous government to the sum of its factional parts. In one place, we learn that in explaining the greater power of the left in New South Wales compared with other states, "personalities were significant." (23) Elsewhere, Lang is described as having a "rhetorical sympathy" for the idea of farmers themselves having control over organized marketing of their produce, but "his populist style implied a distrust of ... brokerage politics." (124) A few pages later, the reinstatement of a particular ex-parliamentarian to the Meat Board is "a classic Lang gesture of defiance." (136) Robinson also cryptically refers in passing to the "hyper-masculinism of the Lang group" (102) but unfortunately fails to elaborate. There are indications elsewhere in the text that some of the Lang government's policies around food relief, public works, and female employment would lend themselves to more serious gender analysis than undertaken here.

The effect of this account is to undermine many stereotypes of Lang and his government, but I could not help but feel that this emphasis also leached the story of dramatic power. The opening of the Harbour Bridge is mentioned only in connection with an extra day's pay being granted to police as a reward for their work on that occasion; not the extraordinary events that saw the ribbon cut by a mounted member of the New Guard, a right-wing paramilitary group, before Lang was able to perform the ceremony himself. This is indeed a serious-minded political history, so serious-minded that Robinson seems (almost) to deliver with a straight face the news that a businessman who had some corrupt dealings with the government in relation to licences for greyhound racing had the name Swindell.

While meticulously researched and structured sensibly around various issues

with which the government grappled over its short life, the book was also badly in need of both further editing and proof-reading. Quite apart from a large number of typographical errors, words omitted or misused, poorly formed sentences, and instances of confusing punctuation, there were far too many traces of the doctoral thesis on which it is based. Perhaps the presentation of capitalist crisis as a series of equations might be warranted in a dissertation (although I have my doubts); I'm certain they performed no useful purpose in this book. There were occasional errors in rendering the names of individuals, such as the rechristening of Commonwealth Bank Board Chairman Robert Gibson as Alexander (54), and of the Commissioner of Road Transport and Tramways, Aubrey Maddocks, as Samuel (71). It was also unfortunate, although presumably not the author's fault, that somebody seems to have bound the index for another book into this one, so that it contained references to the nineteenth-century clergyman J.D. Lang but none to his later namesake. Finally, although as the author explains at the outset, his interest in the Lang government was stimulated by the problems faced by the Labor Government of Victoria in the early 1990s, in a book published over a decade and a half after the demise of that administration references to it seemed rather forced, if not mouldy. I was far more impressed with Robinson's occasional comparisons with Europe, Latin America, and the United States, which did much to help to illuminate the peculiarities and dynamics of the New South Wales situation.

One of the book's highlights is a particularly valuable statistical analysis of voter behaviour in the 1930 and 1932 elections. It was useful to learn that, despite the poor reputation of the Lang government among large numbers of voters after its dismissal by the governor, Sir Philip Game, in 1932, in the subsequent

election it did rather better than defeated Labor governments in South Australia and Victoria. Clearly, the government's radicalism succeeded in keeping a substantial core of working-class voters inside. This was a time when Labor voting remained a badge of working-class identity, and over 63,000 members of branches and affiliated unions voted in a Lang Labor Senate preselection contest, amounting to over sixteen per cent of the eventual state Labor vote. About one in 30 Labor voters actually belonged to the party, a far cry from the virtually moribund branch structure of today.

There are many useful facts and insights of this kind in *When the Labor Party Dreams* that make it a worthwhile addition to the literature on how Australian Labor governs.

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**Roger Moody, *Rocks and Hard Places: The Globalization of Mining* (London: Zed Books 2007)**

FOR MANY IN the West, the evils of the mining industry are symbolized by the blood diamond, a subject that in recent years has received a good deal of attention thanks to a high-profile international campaign waged in the late 1990s and early 2000s by civil society and non-governmental groups to end the bloody carnage in the African gem trade. Similarly, the activities of the international petroleum industry tend to dominate popular perceptions of environmental despoliation owing both to the metonymic centrality of oil to modern life and the lurid, all-encompassing nature of its technological disasters, ranging from discrete events like the Exxon Valdez and Deepwater Horizon tragedies to the broader effects of war and global warming. Veteran mining activist, researcher, and

author Roger Moody considerably widens the scope of corporate and bureaucratic malfeasance in his latest book, showing the activities of the global hard rock mining industry to be at least as constitutive of the modern consumer lifestyle, and as pernicious.

Part of Zed Books' Global Series, *Rocks and Hard Places* addresses themes familiar to readers of John Pilger, Naomi Klein, and Noam Chomsky among others. Moody recognizes mining as a prerequisite of modern civilization. But it becomes pathological, he writes, when guided by the precepts of neo-liberal capitalism, a contradictory doctrine that has underpinned the historic movement of wealth from labour to capital over the last 40 or so years. On the one hand, exponents of free trade trumpet the virtues of open borders and privatization. On the other, large mining companies routinely accept an array of public subsidies including political risk insurance laundered through the World Bank and International Monetary Fund, giving them overwhelming advantages in newly deregulated developing economies.

Moody eschews geographical determinism, noting that the matter cannot be seen as a conflict between north and south, the developed versus the developing world. The governments of Brazil, China, India, and Russia and the private companies they sponsor have extracted bauxite, coal, copper, gold, iron, lead, nickel, platinum, silver, uranium, zinc, and a host of other substances with at least as much reckless zeal as their Western counterparts. Companies headquartered in Australia, Britain, Canada, and the US have laid waste great swaths in their home countries. Nevertheless, transnational miners have succeeded in shifting much of the risk from the core industrialized countries to feeble states with weak civil institutions, areas disproportionately concentrated in the south.

For Moody, the dynamics of modern mining are ultimately governed by class, gender, and race conflict. Perhaps the most valuable aspect of this book is its attempt to relate labour and environmental issues. Moody acknowledges that there are no easy answers in reconciling the imperatives of employment and ecological sustainability. Underground mines have always been labour intensive, providing jobs for millions of people. These extremely hazardous environments have in turn engendered the most radical cohort of the labour movement in many countries, a fact of which the Conservative Thatcher government was only too aware when it smashed British coal unions in the 1980s.

On the other hand, open-pit mines provide far fewer, relatively safer jobs while devastating vast areas, with potentially genocidal consequences in some cases, particularly in the lands of certain indigenous peoples. Not all of the destruction is wreaked by multinationals. Local construction and mining elites in societies that have long been organized along semi-feudal lines or that have been "structurally adjusted" join major firms in enforcing the de facto slavery of bonded labour, with the worst-paid and most dangerous jobs often going to women and children. In addition to the immediate dangers of the work environment, these workers face extortion, beatings, rape, and murder at the hands of overseers, criminal gangs, and "security details," often a synonym for death squads. In much of the world, writes Moody, small miners and mine labourers who produce luxury residential stone, precious metals, and gems bear the burden of the lifestyle of middle classes of a multitude of nationalities.

Moody records a harrowing toll. Choking clouds of particulate matter, vast rubble dumps, toxic leachate, sulfur dioxide emissions, collapsed tailings dams, and



torrents of acidic and alkaline or otherwise poisoned water released into rivers, estuaries, and oceans are business as usual at mines around the world. Each year, 100,000 people die from products made from asbestos, a material that Canadian and Russian firms continue to mine and market, mainly to southern countries, despite overwhelming evidence of its carcinogenicity. Mining-related silicosis is probably the world's most pervasive industrial disease. The reader is struck by the *regularity* and *ubiquity* of disaster in an inherently dangerous industry, one needlessly exacerbated by neo-liberal imperatives.

One of Moody's most interesting revelations are the alliances that allow mining conglomerates to operate with impunity. Unlike the oil industry, notes Moody, miners have had a more sophisticated view of the potential of green public relations. Rather than deny the damage they cause, firms like Anglo American, Rio Tinto, and Shell have sought high-profile partnerships with non-governmental actors like the World Wildlife Fund, adopted voluntary best-practices codes, and attempted inclusive multilateral negotiations with their opponents. Such efforts, notes Moody, are largely greenwash. The practice of referring to detractors as "stakeholders," he holds, is one of the industry's more insidious euphemisms, implying power symmetry among the actors. The reality, he writes, is that giant companies easily divide local opponents by supporting comprador elites who claim to act on behalf of the interests of whole communities.

The lessons for progressive activists are that Western-style plebiscites and lobbying campaigns for stricter regulation are of limited utility when states will not enforce their own laws and instead allow industry to regulate itself. Moody cites John Bray, research head of Control

Risks, an advisory agency specializing in corporate risk. Companies win, says Bray, when their opponents agree to enter into "dialogue." What industry fears most are groups that will not compromise. Here is where the prescriptive and descriptive aspects of Moody's thesis coalesce. For him, the solution is direct popular action at the local level. Recent years have witnessed successful indigenous democracy movements, especially in Latin America, but also on the Papua New Guinean island of Bougainville, where in 1998 local armed resistance stopped Rio Tinto, a company that for years had ruthlessly exploited copper and gold resources. No Luddite, Moody accepts the necessity of mining if it serves the interests of local communities. Refreshingly, and against trends in some ostensibly progressive circles, he defines costs not strictly in environmental but in socio-ecological terms. For him, society is inextricably linked with nature. As such, mining economies must account for the natural systems that sustain human life, not simply the market value of ore and refined products.

If this book has a shortcoming, it is that it is somewhat vague on the demand side of mining in the global macro-economy, those forces that helped unleash the resource bonanza supplying manufacturing industry at a time when consumer spending was in a long period of decline. A treatment of the massive expansion of the computing and personal electronics industry and the concomitant demand for rare metals beginning in the mid-1980s, as well as the role of finance capital and the growth of consumer credit in this period, would have helped fill out the picture. Some analysis on precisely how so many state mining entities around the world collapsed and had their assets stripped by private actors in the 1990s would also have been welcome. Nevertheless, this gripping, revelatory book

makes a fine addition to the libraries of progressives committed to social and environmental justice.

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**Jeffrey S. Juris, *Networking Futures: The Movements Against Corporate Globalization*** (Durham and London: Duke University Press 2008)

IN 2001 AND 2002, Jeffrey Juris, a University of California, Berkeley doctoral student in anthropology, actively participated in the burgeoning anti-corporate globalization movement in Barcelona. In addition to attending meetings, networking on the Internet, socializing with fellow militants, and building various small and large protests throughout Spain and Europe with Catalan activists, Juris also took meticulous notes on his activities, interviewed key activists, and began to think through theoretically and concretely the nature and characteristics of the diverse anti-globalization movements that arose after the intense mobilizations against the World Trade Organization in Seattle in 1999. The result is *Networking Futures*, a highly sophisticated ethnographic study of the Barcelona-based Movement for Global Resistance (MGR) and allied coalitions and autonomous movements that helped build a series of large-scale anti-capitalist mobilizations in the first half of the 2000s.

Juris views groups such as MGR as examples of innovative network-based organizational forms involving “horizontal coordination among autonomous groups, grassroots participation, consensus decision making, and the free and open exchange of information ...” (14) although he emphasizes that these are ideals and are not always realized in

practice. Nevertheless, he distinguishes rigorously throughout the book how such network-based movements, “Networks as an Emerging Ideal,” differ from the representative democratic models practised by the traditional social democratic, Marxist, and socialist left based in political parties, unions, and united front mobilizations. His central argument is that decentralized, autonomous, and grassroots horizontal networks, represented by groups such as MGR, offer a new and better way of doing radical politics that not only frontally challenges corporate globalization, but also conventional representative democracy, prefiguring new radically democratic forms and practices.

Central to these network-based movements are new Internet-based technologies which allow widespread, open, and more democratic information-gathering and decision-making processes. Actively maintaining web sites, listservs, and other interactive Internet tools, activists throughout Europe and the Americas were able to maintain relatively cohesive local, regional, national, and international resistance networks.

Methodologically, Juris practises “militant ethnography,” an approach that stresses “1) collective reflection and visioning about movement practices, logics, and emerging cultural and political models; 2) collective analysis of broader social processes and power relations that affect strategic and tactical decision making; and 3) collective ethnographic reflection about diverse movement networks, how they interact and how they might better relate to collective constituencies.” (23) This is no neutral approach to scientific investigation: the author is politically committed to the radical anti-capitalist movements in which he participated and he sees his study as a contribution to future radical network-based anti-capitalist mobilizations. To his credit he never

succumbs to the supposed academic necessity to remain completely detached from his objects of study. Indeed, he stresses the importance of “affective solidarity” – the social contacts, comradeship, and friendship among the activists – as a glue that helped politically sustain the movements. It is refreshing in an academic study to read of the very practical and human activities that Juris and other activists engaged in through their efforts to resist capitalist globalization.

*Networking Futures* includes a sophisticated theoretical introduction and conclusion that engage with the ample theoretical and empirical literature on social movements as well as eight substantive chapters that intersperse dense description of the myriad of activities in the anti-capitalist globalization movement and theoretical reflection. After a detailed opening chapter which lays out his approach, Juris usefully traces the critical importance of the Battle of Seattle in 1999, the first large-scale effort against corporate globalization. Subsequent chapters explore the specific dynamics of various radical movements in Barcelona and the importance of Catalan political and cultural traditions in such groups; larger European actions in which Barcelona activists participated such as the anti-G8 protests in Genoa which were brutally repressed by the police; and the World Social Forums in Porto Alegre, Brazil and their smaller European-based counterparts. Juris’ scope is ample: he reflects on a myriad of organizational, cultural, and political themes in these chapters, including the innovative politics of performance (theatre, clothing, tactics, etc.) utilized in protests, the nature of police violence and the (sometimes violent) responses of some activists, the internal tensions within the horizontal networks and the often tense relations with the traditional left, and the importance of digital, cultural, and social spaces in

which activists nurtured alliances and mobilizations. In these chapters we are introduced to the personal and political history of many particular Catalan and European activists (the majority from the horizontal networks), as well as the organizational history of many groups and coalitions that built the actions and fascinating narratives of particular meetings and demonstrations. Throughout these narratives and analyses, Juris always returns to his larger central argument: the radical promise of grassroots horizontal networks of resistance.

At this point, it is necessary to disclose that this reviewer is a long-time militant in the “traditional” revolutionary socialist parties that are strongly contrasted in the study with the horizontal-based movements. With this in mind, it is by no means clear in Juris’ study that such horizontal network-based movements have resolved the tensions of developing a truly democratic decision-making process that allows everybody to equally participate. The decentralized, grassroots decision-making of the heady days of the early 2000s made sense as the movements were just taking off and required a level of common trust and consensus to move forward. The author is not uncritical of certain aspects of the horizontal networks, and he sometimes questions their strategies and tactics, lack of coordination with other groups, and the Eurocentric limitations of Internet-based organizing. For example, he notes that the politics and practices of such radical network activists from Europe were not shared by mass social movements such as the Movement of Landless Rural Workers (MST) in Brazil, the largest social movement in the world, who maintain traditional methods of representative democracy and socialist politics.

Yet the “tyranny of structureless” identified many years ago in the women’s movement and which Juris notes as

an obstacle to the network-based movements is never fully resolved in the book. Without formal structures and with an overly decentralized consensus-based decision-making culture, informal elites (usually the tiny minority of those with the resources and time to devote to such processes) have arisen that effectively control the process. The author shares the highly critical perspective of the radical Catalan activists regarding the limits of the representative democracy used by the unions and left political parties, but never really confronts why the much larger numbers of people in such organizations maintain a representative voting structure which allows them a say in decisions. This is not to pander to the sometimes antidemocratic and reformist cultures of (some) on the traditional left, but it is puzzling at best and patronizing at worst to condemn the much larger masses of people involved in the anti-capitalist movements for not adopting the effectively vanguardist forms of consensus organizing of a minority in the movement. It is fair to ask if such attitudes represent just another form of sectarianism, a charge frequently leveled by the network- and autonomous-based movements against the traditional left.

This leads to the problem of the "anti-politics" of the horizontal-based movements, something Juris never really tackles. Notwithstanding the many creative contributions of the network-based movements to the magnificent mobilizations of the 2000s, the truth is that the vast majority of participants in these events did not share their politics; indeed, they were mobilized by the unions and traditional left parties, whether in Seattle, Genoa, or the various Social Forums. It is necessary to understand the relationship among the political parties, the unions, and the various social movements, including the newer, horizontal-based networks. As Alex Callinicos has argued in

various studies, cooperation among these disparate groups strengthens them all and it should come as no surprise that the high points of the European and international movements (Genoa, the European Social Forums, the World Social Forum in Mumbai, and the antiwar movement) occurred when the various left parties in these countries, unions, and social movements made serious efforts to work together on the basis of a strong anti-imperialist consciousness as well as to prioritize struggles involving socio-economic questions in their respective countries and regions. Indeed, in the absence of coordinated efforts of movement building with broadly-shared political goals, the anti-capitalist movement was considerably weakened in the last years of the decade, including the demise of many of the groups that Juris studied. Moreover, with all their limitations, it is the new anti-capitalist parties such as the Left Bloc in Portugal, Die Linke in Germany, the New Anti-Capitalist Party in France, and the Party of Socialism and Freedom in Brazil that have largely formed the backbone of the anti-capitalist resistance in the last few years. United fronts and so-called traditional left politics have by no means been surpassed.

Nevertheless, the fact that Juris engages with the contradictions of the horizontal-based networks, that he has seriously thought about the future tasks of the movement and the academic study of anti-capitalist mobilizations, makes this a welcome contribution to an important and burgeoning literature and practice. This book will surely be a major point of reference in future debates in social movement and political theory. We can only hope that he will continue to dialogue with a range of anti-capitalist movements when we enter *The Fire Next Time*.

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**Richard Wilkinson and Kate Pickett, *The Spirit Level: Why More Equal Societies Almost Always Do Better* (London: Allen Lane 2009)**

THERE WAS A RECENT article in *The Globe and Mail* that mentioned in passing that the homicide rate in the state of Kerala in India, which has much the same population as Canada, is only half that of the Indian average. The literature on this state in southern India indicates that its social statistics generally are far better than the Indian average. Life expectancy and infant mortality rates resemble Western figures rather than Third World ones. Most encouraging of all the ratio of men to women in all age groups matches Western figures while in most of rural India, as in rural China, there is a huge imbalance that results from many family's decisions to kill baby girls and place the family's future in the hands of baby boys. Such decisions are often made as a way of insuring that parents will have someone to look after them in old age in jurisdictions where provision for seniors is slight or non-existent. In Kerala, families look to the state, not their children, for aid in old age.

Yet Kerala is not one of India's wealthier states. Indeed it is one of the poorer states. Why then are its social statistics so much closer to those of advanced capitalist countries? The answer, in brief, is that for much of the period since 1957, Kerala has been governed by elected Left-wing coalitions led initially by the Communist Party of India (CPI) and later by the Marxist Communist Party of India (CPI-M). The Left governments have implemented an array of social programs, including guaranteed food rations for all residents, and have supported the trade union movement's efforts to improve wages and working conditions. The Kerala example is a Third World example that demonstrates that it is levels of social equality, rather than levels of economic

development, that determine how successful a jurisdiction will be in improving the lives of the majority of the people, from reducing crime to providing greater gender equality to extending the average lifespan to maintaining low rates of obesity. Cuba, of course, is another shining example.

Wilkinson's and Pickett's *The Spirit Level* demonstrates, with abundant statistical evidence, that the same principle applies to advanced capitalist economies. If you want to know how well a particular country is likely to do in achieving lower rates of violent crime, longer lifespans, lower incidences of physical and mental health problems, less use of narcotics, and slimmer waistlines, one question will yield most of what you want to know: how much wealthier are the top 20 per cent of residents than the bottom 20 per cent? The smaller the gap, the better the social outcomes. That's true regardless of how a country goes about distributing or redistributing wealth to produce a smaller income gap. In Scandinavia, decades of social democratic governments and strong labour movements have produced a myriad of social programs, which in turn employ an army of generally well-paid employees. Progressive taxation to pay for these programs has further redistributed wealth. But Japan, where the social wage is unimpressive relative to most European countries and the labour movement is weak, has achieved, via corporatist policies, an income gap that is no greater than Scandinavia's and can boast social outcomes at least as good as those of Norway or Sweden.

It is little surprise that Wilkinson and Pickett are able to demonstrate that the poor in more equal countries are less poor than their counterparts in the most unequal long-established capitalist democracies, the United States and the United Kingdom, and have better social outcomes than the poor in these unequal

countries. What is perhaps more surprising is that the poor in Scandinavia, Holland, and Japan actually have better social outcomes than the rich in the most unequal countries. It would seem, ironically, that the very people who campaign hardest against government policies, including taxation, minimum wages, and support for trade unions, that could redistribute wealth, do themselves no favours in the process. Yes, they live longer than the poor in their own country and may have lower rates of obesity and mental health issues than the destitute, but not by enough that they manage to catch up to the poor in more equal countries. As Wilkinson and Pickett demonstrate, the jungle ethic of capitalist countries that have done the least to cage the worst excesses of the economic system creates grief for everyone in these countries, though the poor suffer the most. When people in the United States are asked if they trust other people, fewer than 40 per cent say that they do, and British residents are even less trusting, while 66 per cent of Swedes claim to be trusting of others. No doubt as well, for those who live in countries with great material differences, fear of losing both income and with it, status, is greater than it is for citizens of countries with smaller income gaps, and a high social wage that compensates for losses of work income.

Such differences cannot be explained away by reference to culture though cultural differences, for example between Sweden and Japan, may help explain why some countries that have made major efforts to redistribute wealth go about it differently. Even within the United States, social statistics suggest that the degree of inequality in a particular state correlates with social outcomes. And though these authors do not deal much with the Third World or the former communist countries of eastern Europe, neither Cuba nor Kerala had impressive social

statistics before they had left-wing governments. The former Communist countries that gave way to societies with great inequalities have poorer social outcomes than their predecessors, with the Russian Republic providing the most glaring examples. The transition to capitalism has resulted in earlier deaths, meaner streets, lack of access to health services, and even greater problems of drunkenness than existed under communism in the Soviet Union.

Why then, given the poor social outcomes of wealthy but unequal countries like the US and the UK, are so many countries fixated on economic growth rather than redistribution of wealth as the solution for the current economic crisis of capitalism? It obviously makes more sense to accept lower rates of growth, to tax the rich and big corporations to help the victims of the economic crisis, and not to worry much about whether the economy in macro terms is sluggish. As Wilkinson and Pickett suggest, countries reach a certain point of economic development beyond which increases in overall wealth play no important role in creating wellbeing; by contrast, decreases in inequality contribute mightily to wellbeing. The problem in the Wilkinson and Pickett analysis is that the structural realities of capitalism are set aside. For the small group of individuals who have truly inordinate shares of wealth and of power in countries like the US, UK, and Canada, as opposed to the merely comfortably off who are also part of the top 20 per cent of income earners, there are no limits to desirable individual wealth. Supported by the logic of capitalism, they have managed, particularly since the 1970s, to unburden themselves of the post-war Fordist welfare state consensus in which they recognized the need to accept some limits to prevent the repeat of the Great Depression. To some degree, they have succeeded in persuading

European countries and Japan to allow the growth of greater inequalities in the name of promoting economic growth. So it is by no means clear that, assuming the continued existence of capitalist systems in the advanced capitalist countries for the next generation or so, that there will not be some convergence between the formerly less unequal countries and the more clearly unequal countries such as the US and UK. Much will depend on the ability of working people in various countries to again find voice and strategies to defend and extend their rights, and to recognize that they gain most collectively by pressing for policies that promote greater equality and less reliance on market forces and therefore greater assurances of collective economic protection. Wilkinson and Pickett's exhaustive data and perceptive analyses demonstrate forcefully the fraudulence of neo-liberal claims that a weak state sector and unregulated market forces will produce happier populations.

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**Susanne Freidberg, *Fresh: A Perishable History*** (Cambridge: Harvard University Press 2009)

THIS IS A BOOK about an idea – the idea of freshness. Susanne Freidberg, Associate Professor of Geography at Dartmouth College, investigates the place of freshness in the North American and European imagination. She argues that the understanding of “fresh” has not only changed over time, but that its meaning is contingent on the circumstances being discussed. In other words, the consumer's definition of freshness depends on the product they are thinking about. As well, if a product is grown or raised in a far-away location, the public makes constant

trade-offs between the time it will take to arrive, thus affecting its freshness, and the desirability of the product as a food item. Cultural assumptions about time and freshness, or appearance and freshness, have all influenced the marketability of food. Sometimes the freshness of a particular product is considered less or more important than freshness in another product. These shifting perceptions are the subject of *Fresh*, and Freidberg has approached this very timely addition to the ever-growing field of Food Studies from the point of view of a dietitian, an historian, and a geographer.

The dietitian's approach can be seen in the structure of this book. It is organized according to six food items that one might find today in the refrigerator of an average North American home – beef, eggs, fruit, vegetables, milk, and fish. Here too, habits related to frequency of food purchasing intersect with ideas of freshness. Not everyone buys food in large quantities, expecting to keep items refrigerated for extended periods of time. In some places, the consumer is accustomed to purchasing food on a daily basis, cooking and consuming it on the same day. Each chapter examines the idea of freshness as it applied to one food product, and how the public was willing to eventually accept that some foods might be still considered fresh a long time after leaving their place of origin.

Through the development of food preservation technology, pre-packaged vegetables, chilled eggs, and frozen beef could be presented as “fresh,” changing the meaning from a product that was just-picked or just-killed to a product that was not yet spoiled. Of the six foods under consideration, milk alone eluded the reinterpretation of freshness. Americans still value the sight of dairying operations close to home, and expect milk and milk products to be local. This has meant that

dairying has become a labour destination for Hispanic workers who are not well-paid and are often illegal immigrants. As Freidberg notes, "Vermont's Mexican dairy workers would probably agree that localness has its limits." (234)

As an historian, Freidberg establishes the invention of refrigeration as the central event in the discussion about freshness. Without methods of cooling or freezing, not a single product would have had its life extended. The author's identification and discussion of the "Cold Revolution" opens the book and details the rivalries, triumphs, and failures of inventors, promoters, and entrepreneurs who were inspired by thoughts of producing cold environments where food could be preserved.

From the smelly ice boxes of the 1830's to the chemically-driven non-electric fridges made by General Electric, Kelvinator, and Frigidaire in the 1920's, the road was paved with extravagant advertising campaigns, and a persistent backlash from the ice companies. However, with the advent of Freon in 1930, as well as the widespread availability of electric service, the refrigerator became entrenched in consumers' minds as a safe, modern necessity in the kitchen. One popular American magazine went so far as to write: "It is not extravagant to say that our present form of civilization is dependent upon refrigeration." (47)

As a geographer, Freidberg outlines the development by which refrigeration made possible the transportation of food from increasingly distant locations to the tables of middle- and working-class Americans. Even during the Great Depression of the 1930's, New York City restaurant patrons were impressed at the thought that the food they were about to order had traveled thousands of miles for their delectation. Food journeys set the stage for the development of the frozen

beef industry, which owed its inception to the unsuccessful French visionary Charles Tellier and the very successful Gustavus Swift. Freidberg presents a vivid portrayal of millions of tons of edibles criss-crossing the globe in an endless race against time and decay.

The late twentieth century popularity of pre-packaged baby vegetables meant that countries such as Burkina Faso, Guatemala, and Zambia became the suppliers of baby corn, micro-zucchini, and baby green beans. As the author points out, the irony of these pint-sized vegetables' odyssey was lost on consumers, whose desire was linked to the image of freshness and taste associated with eating the small, first spring vegetables from the local garden.

Ultimately, geography has made a difference, as the growing concern with every product's carbon footprint has encouraged those whom Freidberg calls "foodies" to dedicate themselves to a diet that comes from no more than between 100 to 150 miles away. Thus the global foodcourt is being challenged by "locavores" who advocate a return to eating only what can be found in one's own community.

Although it has much historical content, *Fresh* is not strictly a history, since it does not ask a question of the past. It really starts from the present, and looks to the past to understand the context of contemporary conditions. That being said, it is a very good example of multidisciplinary in scholarly writing, combining the disciplines of geography and history quite well. The author also pays some attention to the aesthetics and visual attributes of food and advertising, as indicated by the choice of a striking cover illustration that speaks to the multiple ideals that freshness promoters hoped to sell to consumers. Freidberg's work would be a very useful addition to any



course on nineteenth and twentieth century food and eating habits in the United States and to some extent in France. The book has an excellent bibliography, meticulous endnotes, and a very good Index.

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**Bruno Gulli, *Earthly Plenitudes: A Study on Sovereignty and Labor* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press 2010)**

BRUNO GULLI'S *Earthly Plenitudes* is a sophisticated attempt to rethink our understanding of labour in the context of a capitalist modernity that uses notions of sovereignty to undermine the dignity and uniqueness of human life and activity. It is so sophisticated, in fact, that it treads perilously close to being inaccessible to the very people whose lives and labour it seeks to revalue.

To be sure, Gulli is a philosopher and he has written a book for philosophers. Though he builds his arguments most prominently on the work of Karl Liebniz, he skillfully navigates his way through an impressive dossier of theorists from a variety of traditions. While somewhat grounded in a Marxian analysis, Gulli is quite comfortable bending Heidegger, Bataille, Kierkegaard, Rawls, and countless others to his particular aims and rarely appears to be citing popular theorists for the sake of name-dropping.

Nonetheless, he has a penchant for wordiness that makes some chapters – in particular the first few – almost impenetrable. And while, in some cases, the arguments are complicated and the hard work expended to understand them is worthwhile, there are a few too many instances where Gulli is unnecessarily difficult. “Voluntary contingency is contingently contingent; the involuntary type is necessarily so,” (110) says Gulli in

Chapter Four. Quite a mouthful. Even if I were to assume that I am the most block-headed of academic theorists, the difficulty I had with Gulli's work still suggests that *Earthly Plenitudes* will not be accessible to many people outside the academy, especially given the breath of reading one needs in order to follow Gulli through centuries of critical theory.

I open with this admittedly uncreative critique primarily because I think Gulli's work is actually very important and could be a useful tool in building broader class- and labour-based critiques of capitalism. For, while I struggled with the opening chapters that lay out his theoretical framework, I was deeply impressed by the following chapters which applied his framework to concrete historical realities. In particular, Gulli's treatment of the problem of contingent labour in the academic sector (the above quotation notwithstanding) is of tremendous value to anyone caught in the increasingly vicious world of the corporate university.

Indeed, this is my most immediate entry-point to Gulli's work, in part because I spent three months on strike at York University in 2008-09 fighting out the very problems Gulli is describing. In fact, this chapter could act as a formidable piece even as a stand-alone; it is certainly one I will have my students reading. It is effective because it concretizes the theoretical work Gulli labours over in ways that actually make the otherwise obscure theory quite sensible and even urgent.

Central to Gulli's project is the notion that emancipated labour – labour that is not devalued and alienated from human dignity – is a cornerstone of a free society. Using the case study of contingent academic labourers (he is referring most prominently to “adjunct,” “sessional” or “contract” faculty – individuals who teach university courses on a piece-meal basis rather than under the tenure

structure) Gulli demonstrates the extent to which contemporary capitalist social relations break down and even destroy human potentiality. Indeed, he makes a compelling case that regimes of contingency in universities are destructive to everyone involved – contingent faculty ourselves, but also tenured faculty, students, and society at large. He goes even further, insisting that change must be unequivocally radical. “This mode of domination and exploitation amounts to a violation of basic human rights and this violation cannot be remedied by the same system that creates it” (p. 130.)

Gulli is, in effect, theorizing the lived experiences of contingent labourers in a context where we are often ourselves so alienated from our own labour that we are tempted to buy into the mythologies created to legitimate our own contingency (e.g. the idea that the university functions better if teaching is made “flexible,” when in fact this is only true if “functionality” is defined by profitability). Many of the insights he offers – drawn sometimes from his own experiences and from a thorough reading of the existing (though insufficient) literature – echo in the experiences of my own colleagues in Toronto and in the theorizations we’ve built around our own situation. Through his critique of the corporate university, Gulli’s entire project becomes clear and it deserves to be quoted at length:

In truth, what the institution does is injure [its labourers], harm their potential. For instance, many promising scholars (after years of abnegation and study) will reach a point where they are forced to renounce their aspirations – for lack of time, energy, resources ... what the institution does is consume their lives, destroy their dreams and concrete possibilities... if we take seriously the notion that each individual life has irreplaceable dignity, and if this dignity is thwarted wherever one’s potentiality is compromised and disabled, with the dire

consequence that one’s life is reduced to the finitude of powerlessness and servitude, of unfreedom and nothingness, then speaking in this context of delinquency and crime, of defying morality and disfiguring humanity, is no rhetorical exaggeration.(121)

As the above quotation indicates, Gulli is insisting upon a redefinition of “human rights” that takes into account far more than the traditional narrow liberal conception. For Gulli, the fundamental human right is the freedom to pursue what he calls the “dignity of individuation,” a concept that valorizes individual human dignity within a broader collective humanity (setting it apart, again, from traditional liberal fetishizations of the individual). Under contemporary capitalism, that dignity is under constant assault primarily by oppressive structures of sovereignty – delineations of ownership, possession, and control which have, as Gulli describes, “the only purpose of crushing labour, not simply the employed labour force, but all labour, *all doing* that does not accept a Hobbesian command, a superimposed order, an external law bent to ruthless domination.” (21, italics added)

Labour, for Gulli, is human activity. And it is through activity – which is necessarily social – that human beings achieve their dignity of individuation. Anything that inhibits our ability to fulfill this potentiality is a violation of our most fundamental right as humans and, as such, Gulli takes very seriously the threat that regimes of sovereignty impose upon such individuation. For that reason, Gulli’s work deserves to be taken up seriously. Indeed, the strength of the arguments he presents merit a concerted effort to build upon them, with the important caveat that this be done in a language and manner that is accessible to even the most blockheaded among us.

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**Antonio Negri, *The Labor of Job: The Biblical Text as a Parable of Human Labor*** (Durham, NC: Duke University Press 2009)

NEGRI BEGAN TO WORK ON *The Labor of Job* while still in prison. As he explains in the preface, his confinement concentrated his attention on the inescapability of suffering. His careful reading of the Book of Job does not bemoan, in a clichéd existential manner, the necessary link between human finitude and suffering. Instead, he sees in the struggle of Job against God a metaphorical foundation for human sociality and solidarity. "It is not the divinity ... that descends from above, but suffering and pain, which come from below, that construct the very being of the world."<sup>(93)</sup> Suffering is not borne in isolation, but is always witnessed. To witness suffering is to feel compassion, and to feel compassion is to stand with the sufferer against its cause. Negri thus claims to find in the Book of Job the core values for a new ethical foundation for the communist project.

Negri's argument proceeds from two assumptions: that the labour theory of value can no longer explain the functioning of the capitalist economy and that, as a consequence, the contemporary world lacks a universal measure of value, economic and moral. We exist in a world which is without measure, where only Power rules to maintain the given social structure. "Value has become immeasurable at the same time that all measure fails ... the fact that the criterion of measure is lacking does not remove the measured phenomenon. The suffering of the man who labours, who is sacrificed himself to wealth, remains."<sup>(10)</sup>

The truth or falsity of these assumptions directly affect the overall acceptability of Negri's argument. Yet, he does not provide empirical support for either, but proceeds straightaway to unpack

their ethical implications through his commentary on Job. A wide-ranging interpretation it is, linking Job with Spinoza, with existing Jewish and Christian readings, with liberation theology, and with the future of communism. However, as a political and philosophical argument the book is only partially satisfactory.

There is no doubt that Negri's argument is bold, original, and worthy of careful consideration. It is often strikingly insightful and philosophically profound. As one works through the text one sees more and more clearly what Negri thinks is the "materialist" centre of Job's struggle. God is the faceless and nameless power that rules arbitrarily over human life ("The Lord giveth, and the lord taketh away"). The mortal human being stands mute beneath this power, executing its commands and hoping for the best, but always in the knowledge that the way things actually turn out is beyond his or her control. This relation to a faceless power does resemble the relation between the individual labourer and capital: market forces are known through their effects, but are unpredictable, and can consign millions to unemployment and misery without warning or ethical justification. The destitute worker does indeed stand like Job, dumbfounded, with no face to pin the blame on.

But Job does not stand silent; he revolts. He demands to see God; he demands an accounting from God. What is more, God appears. This moment of the book is crucial for Negri. When Job's revolt forces God to abandon his transcendence and account for himself, God becomes a face, matter, and thus ceases to be God, that is, ungraspable arbitrary Power. As soon as Power ceases to be arbitrary, it ceases to be Power. To make the real causes of suffering appear, in other words, is already a victory over them, because once out in the open, they can be overcome. "I have seen God, thus God is torn from the

absolute transcendence that constitutes the idea of him. God justifies himself, thus God is dead.”(97)

With the death of God, i.e., the appearance of the cause of suffering, a new basis to human society becomes possible – the positive basis of the creativity of collective labour as the real secret of world-constitution and happiness. Creativity is the real value of labour and the ethical basis upon which to mount political resistance to the contemporary Power of capital.

“But man reorganizes himself so as to resist the disease. Creation is the going beyond death.

*Creation is the content of the vision of God. Creation is the meaning of life.”* (97) Thus, for Negri, the communist project can only be rebuilt today on the ethical basis of the affirmation of the creativity of labour, against its reduction to a mere tool of capital expansion, the handmaiden of money-driven science and technology. “The problem of the Book of Job is that of modernity – of the alternative between the totalization of the rule of technology and science over the world, and the liberation of a new subjectivity.”(103) True as this opposition might be, it also raises two important problems. First, it stands in tension with his opening claim that the world today is without any measure of value. Second, and perhaps more importantly, it exposes the extreme ambiguity – if not moral vacuity – of his notion of creativity.

It is not clear to me how Negri can argue consistently both that the world is suffering from a crisis of the loss of all standards of measurement (economic, ethical, etc.) and, at the same time, that the main threat to the world is the “totalizing rule of technology and science.” For what is capitalist science other than measurement in the service of productive “efficiency?” This standard has hardly disappeared; it has spread like a weed in

spring. All forms of labour, not only industrial but also in the so-called “service” industries and so-called “creative” work like academic research and, indeed, the conduct of science itself, are more and more subject to time-measures calculated so as to maximize quantitative output. It seems to be more *a propos* of Negri’s main thesis to claim that what the world suffers from is not a loss of standards of measurement, but the tyranny of one standard of measurement, money-value, to which all other forms of measure are subordinated.

Is the alternative to this tyranny of money-value rule a new communism based upon “creativity?” Perhaps, but before one accepts this move one needs to know far more about what exactly Negri means by “creativity.” Does he mean the “creative capital” championed by Richard Florida? The undeniable creativity of Craig Ventner and his associates who claim to have “created” a synthetic life form? Capitalism is nothing if not creative, as Marx himself made unambiguously clear in his unforgettable paean to it in *The Communist Manifesto*. What Marx affirmed against capitalism was not, therefore, “creativity” in the abstract, but rather the conscious governance of human creativity by service to life-engendering ends – the overcoming of human suffering by democratically planning production for the sake of satisfying human life-requirements. I doubt Negri would disagree, but his sometimes soaring rhetoric needs to be brought down to earth if his argument is to inspire a practical politics.

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**Richard P. McIntyre, *Are Worker Rights Human Rights?*** (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press 2008)

BEGINNING WITH two examples of on-the-job deaths of workers employed by sub-contractors, Richard McIntyre highlights the growth of the modern-day "sweating system," a system of sub-contracting in which "... the real employer takes no responsibility for the wages and working conditions of the employees." (1) The outsourcing and subsequent sub-contracting of production to low-wage countries, as well as the sub-contracting of what remains of the North American manufacturing industry, has had significant adverse effects on workers, their communities, and their unions. In response to the corporate strategy of "sweating," we have witnessed the rise of workers' rights as both a defensive tool and an alternative to neoliberal globalization. It is within this economic setting that McIntyre begins his investigation.

As the title suggests, the central research focus of McIntyre's book is a determination of whether or not worker rights are human rights. While this may seem like a basic question in an increasingly popular field of academic study, it represents an important and much needed contribution to the growing literature on the intersection of workers' rights and human rights. While considerable ink has been spilt on the broader topic, especially since the passage of the International Labour Organization's (ILO) *Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work* in 1998, few scholars in this area have provided any sort of theoretical background explaining why workers' rights should or should not be considered under the broader rubric of human rights. Despite the rise in construction of workers' rights as human rights, this fact has been assumed, but not fully explored. As McIntyre notes, "...

merely reasserting the core labor rights of the ILO as basic human rights is not going to accomplish [a process of change]." (152) He chides many colleagues working in this field, arguing that "perhaps [they] believe that by designating something as a human right they are resting on a firmly established body of theory and research, but they are not." (152) As such, McIntyre pays considerable attention to basic, yet important, questions such as the formation of rights, the shape they take, their objectives, their effects, and their enforcement mechanisms.

Relying on heterodox economics, a theoretical approach which draws on elements of Keynesianism, feminism, Marxism, and institutional economics, McIntyre argues that "worker rights are best understood as the interactive result of convention and class." (6) More specifically, he draws from the Marxist and institutionalist traditions and, in so doing, "develop[s] [John] Commons' ideas directly and put[s] them into conversation ... with Marx who recognized that the institutions, norms, and traditions of each country must be taken into consideration when analyzing the possibility of eliminating exploitation." (6) This hybrid theoretical approach is described in the book's first chapter and is developed further in Chapter 2. Although the second chapter is largely theoretical, he suggests that "the policy oriented reader, impatient with intramural debates among social scientists, may want to skip ahead to the next chapter." (13) Despite this caveat, the chapter serves as a useful window from which to view the growth and limitations of constructing workers' rights as human rights.

However, McIntyre does not simply ask if workers' rights are human rights. In the event that it is determined that workers' rights are human rights, he subsequently asks in Chapter 4 whether or not it even matters. It is at this point that the

formation and substance of human rights is developed in more detail. He notes that despite the growth of "rights talk" since World War II, rights are not self-evident and are instead "purely human creations." (54) Also, "recourse to the language of rights alone may not be any more successful than appeals to moral sympathy in promoting workers' well being." It is at this point that McIntyre begins to offer a less than optimistic view on the effects of constructing workers' rights as human rights. Viewed in this light, rights are not simply benevolent constructions, but are packed with overarching ideological beliefs. McIntyre asserts that there is little division between neo-classical economics and contemporary human rights. (67) This overlap leads to a situation in which rights are individualized, and thus collective responses which rely on rights-based arguments to countervail corporate globalization are made impossible.

While rights may be symbolic, their effectiveness is greatly limited if there are no mechanisms for meaningful enforcement. In the case of workers' rights, unions that claim that their members' rights have been violated must file appeals to the ILO, which then determines whether or not the government in question has violated their responsibilities as a member state. Problematically, however, the ILO lacks the proper enforcement mechanisms to uphold workers' rights and to hold states which violate them accountable. McIntyre notes that "the [ILO] is not yet an adequate enforcer of international labor standards" (42–43) and "... the process by which standards are enforced does not involve economic sanctions or the threat of violence, which is ultimately necessary for an authoritative institution." (95) At this point, it seems as if workers' rights are not really human rights, and if they are constructed as such, it does not matter much as the ILO has little to no effect as a result of

the lack of enforcement mechanisms. In short, the ratification of ILO conventions does not guarantee the fair treatment of workers.

Despite this pessimism, McIntyre does not fully dismiss either the construction of workers' rights as human rights or the ILO as a meaningful enforcement agent. Although noting that "a number of governments have ratified ILO conventions for show with no intention of enforcing them," (104) McIntyre asserts that the ratification of Conventions 87 (Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organize) and 98 (Right to Organize and Collective Bargaining) by the United States "... would positively affect U.S. labor policy." (128) However, if the United States ratifies only the conventions that already conform to its laws, as McIntyre asserts, (119) then there is little indication that they will ratify either Convention 87 or Convention 98. Furthermore, their reluctance to ratify these conventions is also linked to class interests of employers which are also unlikely to change. This may suggest that there is little transformative potential in constructing workers' rights as human rights.

Nevertheless, McIntyre argues that there may be some benefits in claims of workers' rights, though he admittedly sees this as a long-term project. As such, he is unwilling to simply throw the baby out with the bath water. While recognizing the inherent limitations of rights discourse, McIntyre concludes that "a debate over freedom of association and collective bargaining could galvanize the forces of democracy and social justice against corporate-led globalization." (130)

McIntyre's intervention represents an important contribution in the emergent scholarship surrounding the growth and effects of constructing workers' rights as human rights. He has identified a

significant gap in the theoretical underpinnings of labour rights discourse and has worked to fill that void. His nuanced approach recognizes the limitations of rights discourse, but he is unwilling to simply ignore it as a potential tool to improve the lives of workers. He ultimately answers his original research question – “Are Worker Rights Human Rights?” – with a qualified yes, and provides a convincing argument to that end.

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