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REVIEWS / COMPTES RENDUS

Douglas McCalla, *Planting the Province: The Economic History of Upper Canada, 1784-1870* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1993).

THIS BOOK is a myth breaker. Drawing on an expanding body of research (much of it his own), Douglas McCalla has gone far towards clearing the stump-ridden field of Upper Canadian economic history.

The central myth under revision concerns the role played by external forces in Upper Canada's economic development. That economy was not, McCalla asserts, staple driven, export led, and subservient to external demand and control. While most farmers grew wheat, they did so within the overall context of mixed farming. He estimates that wheat contributed between 12 and 21 per cent of the colony's total "income." While important, this contribution did not mean that shifts in international demand for wheat would lead to dramatic economic downswings in the simple lock-step fashion so often implied in the staple thesis. When wheat exports declined, Upper Canada's economy continued to grow because farmers could and did sell other products to local markets, to Lower Canada, to the United States and, in the case of wood products, to Great Britain. Export of wood products commenced before the stimulus provided by British tariffs and continued to grow after the revocation of those tariffs. The Reciprocity Treaty, the Crimean War, and the Civil War did not initiate new directions in growth or trade. At best, they

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reinforced trends already in place. Industrialization, often explained in terms of the linkages generated by the post-1850 wheat boom, railway construction, and reciprocity, owed as much, McCalla avers, to the pre-1850s activities in household, craft, and manufacturing, almost all of which was geared to satisfying local, not international, demands. State economic policy cannot be understood as the expression of a distinctive local culture of "defensive expansion." Rather the Upper Canadian state acted in a way almost indistinguishable from the policies pursued by Ohio and Michigan in the 1830s and by those states and Indiana in the 1850s. This was not an imitative or reflexive policy as the "defensive expansion" argument implies. Policies resulted from the demands generated by internal growth as much as, if not more than, from external pressures.

McCalla comes to these (and other) conclusions via a careful deconstruction of such abstract words as staple, wood, harvest, farmer, and industry. He is constantly attentive to, as he puts it, "the specific and complex world of actual rural production and exchange." In this world, for example, "wood" is broken down into species like oak, red and white pine; specific products like staves, squared timber, deals, boards, pot and pearl ashes; distinctive locales — the Ottawa Valley, the Great Lakes, and the St. Lawrence trades. The significance of these manifold products from various locales is computed not simply in terms of export value, but also and most revealingly by their place in the local economy as seen through the ledgers of regional stores, the output of a

proliferating number of small sawmills, the employment rates of Lake Ontario schooners, and the price of urban firewood. Wheat economy and industrialization are similarly dissected.

This micro-analysis is often, as McCalla admits, a matter of necessity given the absence of aggregate statistics for much of the colony's existence. But, and this is one of the central strengths of the book, McCalla employs this micro-level evidence to generate estimates of provincial level outputs. He then uses the newly-constructed data to contextualize the colony's economic growth as, for example, when he suggests that the internal market for firewood probably exceeded \$2 million per year, more than the value received for provincial oak exports. Or when he points out that the \$350 million capital invested in farms in 1861 exceeded the capital invested in railways by almost five times.

Statistics like these point to the extensive nature of a process of decentralized growth and lend support to one of McCalla's central contentions concerning Upper Canada's development. McCalla finds few sharp chronological divides in the colony's pattern of growth. The economy in 1850 was a more mature version of that in 1804. Similarly, in 1870 the economy represented a pattern of development evident in 1850. Only in the mid 1850s, when immigration no longer exceeded emigration, does McCalla come close to referring to a turning point, in this case from extensive to intensive growth. Even then he points out that such a shift was virtually imperceptible. Rather than speaking of transitions and the dislocations that such phrasing often implies, McCalla writes of incremental, layered growth; of gradual and extensive development. Commercial revolutions are not evident; economic downswings are carefully nuanced, if not blunted, situated as they are within a general context of gradual, if not inexorable growth.

As with his depiction of the general economy so, too, in his characterization

of the attitudes, motives, and social standing of the colony's people, McCalla eschews notions of significant transitions and sharp divides. There was, he argues, no important division between a pre-market and market economy in this era. There was, rather, an intensification of market involvement, of the integration of local, colonial, and international economies. For most Upper Canadians, McCalla strongly implies, the colony was a decent place to live. Otherwise, he wonders, why would they have stayed? The availability of credit was a positive, not a restricting or entangling process. Debtors and creditors were often one and the same. Credit relations linked people of the same class as well as those of other classes. Despite speculation in land by governments and individuals, McCalla argues that land was always available at a price the market could bear if only because speculators wanted to be sellers.

The sensitivity with which McCalla deconstructs the economy is less apparent in the areas of class formation and social relations. Operating within an environment which held out the hope of at least modest competencies, Upper Canadians, McCalla argues, enjoyed much agency and were not unduly hampered by hierarchical structures or differential social relations. In some sense, the economic system was an effective social leveller. Rich and poor existed but not in large enough numbers to disturb the system. It is somewhat of a shock when one reads on page 174 of "the insecurities of everyday economic life." That perspective is not central to the basic arguments presented in this book. McCalla focuses instead on the activities of "the successful 'ordinary' farmer." While corrupt railway contractors and promoters existed, McCalla asserts that they affected general development in no significant way. The role played by women in economic development is certainly mentioned, but no concerted attempt is made to generate a statistical measurement of that activity although American and some Canadian

literature suggest ways to do so. Even natives, a group McCalla sees as being perhaps the most marginalized of any in Upper Canada, benefitted to some degree from being a "part of the complex network of such local economies that constituted the larger provincial economy." McCalla sees society as a broad matrix, "constrained by the simultaneous and continuing expansion of many similar production units all selling into a non-farm sector that was expanding only at the same rate as agriculture." The peaks and valleys of class formation and social relations are not part of that landscape.

This is a powerful book and is must reading for anyone interested in pre-confederation history. McCalla has uprooted many of the old shibboleths that cluttered traditional economic interpretations and planted some provocative seeds of his own. That his view of society is logically consistent with his depiction of the colony's economy does not preclude the construction of alternative interpretations, perspectives more attentive to the issues of class. Far from foreclosing debate, this book will, for the foreseeable future, be at the centre of all meaningful discussion of Upper Canada's economic and social evolution.

Peter Baskerville
University of Victoria

M.C. Warrior and Mark Leier, *The First Forty Years: A history of the Tunnel and Rock Workers Union Local 168* (np: Tunnel & Rock Workers Union Local 168 [LIUNA], 1992).

THIS BOOK is a laudable attempt to write a new sort of union history. Commissioned and published by a local of the Tunnel and Rock Workers Union, it describes four decades of construction work in British Columbia, from the post-war boom to the present. At one level, then, the book follows a model familiar to many readers of *Labour/Le Travail*: an institu-

tional history complete with long lists of union members, fulsome statements by various union officers, and so on. But Warrior and Leier work hard to overcome the common limitations of such work. They describe something of the socio-political context of post-war British Columbia, for example, and do not ignore the inter-union battles which characterized the construction industry. And the book itself is an attractive one. Liberal use of quotations — beginning with a familiar Brecht poem on the first page — combined with a large format, generously illustrated, make the volume easy to read or to pick up for a quick browse.

The book's purpose is to record the contribution of construction workers (narrowly defined as the membership of the Tunnel and Rock Workers Union) to the development of British Columbia's industrial infrastructure. Chapters describe the Kemano project in northwestern BC, the drilling and subsequent destruction of Ripple Rock, as well as a series of highway, dam, and tunnel undertakings. But the book is not simply a chronicle of great works. Oral testimony enlivens the narrative, and problems with issues such as health and safety as well as union disputes (with both management and other unions) are covered in some detail.

The book was written to celebrate a specific union constituency and occasionally suffers as a result. Not everyone will agree with the authors' sweeping assertion that "the history of British Columbia is the history of these large construction jobs." (2) And the book is silent on the gendered nature of that workforce, the notable absence of Native people from its ranks, and the environmental controversies generated by many of the projects. But if complex issues do not always receive the attention they deserve, the book does a good job of tracking the changing face of the construction industry, from the glory days of the 1950s and the 1960s through to the grim 1980s. This last period is described particularly well, when

changing technology drastically cut the number of workers necessary on a large project, at the same time that the province endured the twin curse of recession and an anti-union government. The angry words of a union official capture organized labour's frustrations during this dismal period: "We had a relationship that was tough for many years with contractors, companies, but they were reasonably honest. You wouldn't get deliberate liars. The Bill Bennet era brought in the professional liar. ... two-faced lying bastards and I find them hard to deal with." (109)

Overall, the book is a fruitful collaboration between labour historians and a union local. If it fails to match the scope and sophistication of some other examples, such as McKay's *The Craft Transformed* and Zerker's *The Rise and Fall of the Toronto Typographical Union*, Warrior's and Leier's book is well worth reading for the light that it sheds on the history of the construction industry in post-war British Columbia. Particularly welcome is the way it effectively refutes the claims of Social Credit politicians and their hagiographers, who continue to take credit for building the province's transportation network. The people who built the roads, bridges, and tunnels finally receive credit for their work.

The history of BC's working people has grown considerably in the quarter century since Paul Phillips wrote *No Power Greater*, a centennial history of organized labour in BC. A handful of unions, mostly in the Lower Mainland, have produced their own histories and several memoirs — notably White's *A Hard Man to Beat* and Stanton's *Never Say Die!* — provide a lively commentary on labour in the post-war era. One of the province's leading woman organizers, Helena Gutteridge, is the subject of a recent biographical study and the province's women workers are the focus of a number of articles in the new collection by Creese and Strong-Boag (*British Columbia Reconsidered*). Students at the province's universities have filled several

shelves with BA essays, MA theses, and dissertations on labour topics, while this journal regularly publishes articles on the province. Not all this work is as faithful to the perspective of working people as *The First Forty Years*. For that reason alone it is a useful addition to the province's historiography.

Jeremy Mouat
Athabasca University

Martin Robin, *Shades of Right: Nativist and Fascist Politics in Canada, 1920-1940* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1992).

"THE FASCINATION for the abomination" is how Joseph Conrad described man's apparent abiding interest in evil. The phrase might well be applied to Martin Robin's recent study, for Professor Robin has attempted to conjure up the evil forms and describe in detail the variegated Fascist, right-wing political movements which both tormented and fascinated Canadians in the period 1920-1940. The book has been long awaited by many, this reviewer included. It is unfortunate that the wait has brought nearly as much disappointment as delight.

To begin with, the style is uneven. For the most part, Robin, who is a professor of political science at Simon Fraser University, writes with precision and controlled enthusiasm and when he does, he depicts his subject concretely and effectively. His skill as a stylist shows through. On the other hand, there are too many times when the phrases and sentences seem to slip away from him. Frequently, he exaggerates, plays for effect, tries to be sensational. One soon grows tired of reading bad alliteration as in "parades of robbed rubes" (29), "abandoned Hoosier huksters" (45), and "Buckets of fraternal fun." (49) The same applies to overdone, strained metaphors like "jump start a movement mired in a swamp of hackneyed hate." (265) Why there should have

been so much of this is hard to explain. It seems almost as if the author deliberately sought to imitate the bad journalism of the numerous newspapers he so often relied upon for his sources.

The book's organization surpasses its style. Three major sections divide the work's ten chapters. The first portion (chapters one through three) deals with the nativist Klu Klux Klan which appeared in the aftermath of the Great War and then disappeared on the eve of the Great Depression. Robin describes the Klan's activities and especially its manifestation on the Prairies in great detail. Chapters four through six, in many ways the strongest portion of the book, shifts the center of focus to Québec and Adrien Arcand. Robin's discussion of the anti-Semitic theme in Arcand's movement is telling. The book's last major section includes chapters seven through nine and deals with other forms of right-wing activity — the so-called ethnic Fascisms (Italian and German) and the English speaking counterparts which all appeared in the 1930s. Generally speaking, this is the weakest part of the book. In this section, for example, the author writes about the Italians, apparently without believing it necessary to have read any Italian sources. He relies instead upon the RCMP's accounts of what they were doing. The last chapter, the conclusion, simply adds a description of the disappearance of the several movements after the beginning of World War II.

The strength in Robin's account of Canada's radical right in the inter-war period lies in the richness of detail he provides the reader. The movements and their actors are painted with a fine brush. As a result, they assume life and plausibility. The author's depiction of the anti-Semitic theme common to the several groups illustrates this point nicely. For example, in the first chapter dealing with Arcand, Robin describes the specific excesses and distorted claims being made about the Jews. He then detours to discuss the reality of the situation for the Jewish

community in Québec and Canada. He answers slanders with figures and numbers. In so doing, he convincingly shows up the irrationality of the anti-Jewish movement. There had to be something else here, the reader inevitably concludes. If the Jews were not the devils that Arcand, Bott, and the other demagogues made them out to be, then why were they being attacked so?

This question goes to the basic flaw in the study. Put simply, Robin's book does not devote enough space to analyzing what the Fascist phenomenon meant and what it tells us about Canada. Even the conclusion, as noted, does no more than describe who was interned and how successful the government was in suppressing the reactionary radicals. At the very least the conclusion should have tried to decipher a larger meaning. The KKK, Arcand's Fascists, and the German Bund were what they were because of conditions in Canada. Robin, for example, never tries to relate the Saskatchewan Klan to the province's German Canadian Bund although the same society produced both. What were Orangemen in the Klan and Germans in the Bund sharing in common? Surely it was more than a hatred of Catholics or Jews. These were symptoms of a greater malaise. In the East what did Arcand's movement tell us about the plight of the French in Canada and how did that condition relate to Saskatchewan farmers and Germans? The book does not systematically tackle these fundamental issues. Could Canadian Fascism have had anything to do with what Porter described in his *Vertical Mosaic* some years ago — a socio-economic order in which the privileged few at the top manipulated the rest who then battled one another for places in the pecking order?

An effort to answer some of the above questions would, it seems, have required of the author a more critical and open-minded attitude toward Canadian traditions and history than he evidently possesses. Robin's uncritical acceptance of the accounts of the several movements

provided by the RCMP dramatically illustrates this problem. The Mounties did indeed have their spies and informers and these persons knew exactly what their employers wanted to hear. A more biased set of records than the RCMP files is hard to imagine. Yet the author seems completely unaware of this problem. (His too heavy reliance upon those sensational journalistic accounts already mentioned, I might add, illustrates the same methodological weakness. Moreover, while on methods, one asks why the author made no effort to interview some of the survivors and participants from the era and movements he treats. Surely, a few of them must still be alive.) But the work's most serious shortcoming derives from the fact that Robin apparently does not view the Fascist phenomenon as a serious flaw in a larger, flawed socio-economic system. Ultimately, for Robin, then, it is the benighted "rubes," the bigoted Germans, the primitive French Catholics who are solely responsible for Canada's Fascist aberrations. This is far too simplistic. For those wanting a thorough description and in-depth analysis of the Fascist problem in Canada, this book offers only half the story — the description.

Jonathan F. Wagner
Minot State University

C.H. Gervais, *People in Struggle: The Life and Art of Bill Stapleton* (Waterloo, ON: Penumbra Press 1992).

ALL ART IS POLITICAL. Art historians have demonstrated time and again that even the most seemingly benign works implicitly engage the dominant values of the society within which they are produced. Informed by the paradigms within which artist and audience operate and by the institutional system that classifies and represents it in turn, art is also the tool and the weapon of those who seek to maintain control of what French sociologist Pierre

Bourdieu describes as the cultural capital of the educated elite.

Within the systems of thought that find expression in art and its representation, of course, the artist can be a political activist. The act of making the art can take on a political dimension as well, the place in which it is made and the conditions under which it is produced reflecting the artist's political stance. An artist may be a political activist and the making of the art a self-consciously political act, but that does not necessarily mean that the art itself makes an overt political statement.

This is my criticism of C.H. Gervais' book: both author and artist have assumed that Bill Stapleton's pictures express a political stance simply by association with that of its maker. There is little discussion of the dozens of works that illustrate the text. When reference is made to Bill Stapleton's production, the stress is placed on the ideas that inform the making of his art, rather than on evidence of their manifestation in the finished works. It can be argued, of course, that art "speaks for itself," but that argument should not be used to avoid analysis and discussion that articulates the ways in which it does so.

In this sense, the book is a biography. Even as a life-history, however, the treatment of a socially active Canadian artist may be regarded as a welcome addition to the body of such literature promised, but as yet largely undelivered, by the 1972 publication of Barry Lord's survey, *The History of Painting in Canada: Towards a People's Art*. Now we have the story of Bill Stapleton, a man who has a devotion to "people in struggle." "In a quite persistent way," we are told,

Stapleton has frequented picket-lines to sketch angry strikers, and for a period of his life he devoted his evenings to depicting the "have-nots" of society as they seek relief from the tedium or sorrows of their everyday lives in downtown pubs or bars. And it is this search for underlying dignity of the downtrodden that has drawn him to Latin America to speak with

the dispossessed, with refugees from and victims of guerrilla warfare, with mothers who have witnessed terror and death in their families. His project has sent him to the Soviet Union during the Cold War to meet artists and writers and civilians who were desperate for free expression. This quest has landed him on the shores of Labrador to visit the Innu, to find out about their culture and their traditions, and to record their territorial struggle. (7)

Based on interviews with the artist, which are quoted extensively in the text, the book is also an oral history. In fact, Gervais' respect for Stapleton's narrative gives the book an autobiographical dimension. Refusing to introduce himself in the text as a mediating influence, through critical comment or probing question, he permits Stapleton's account to carry authority usually reserved for the author. He defies academic imperialism in a blanket validation of Stapleton's subjective experience and self-proclaimed autonomy. In doing so, he provides an alternative, and often engaging, narrative to the broad readership Penumbra Press hopes to attract to the latest in its series of inexpensive, soft-covered books on Canadian art.

But he also pays a price. In privileging subjectivism to such an extent, Gervais risks leaving his readers with an uneasy feeling that Stapleton may not be the best judge of his own autonomy, that unchecked subjectivity can deteriorate into a self-serving exercise, and that the reason Bill Stapleton is an "unsung senior Canadian artist" is that his rejection of the cultural mainstream has made the art he sees as "a tool for bearing witness and a weapon for effecting change" relatively ineffective as either.

It is difficult, however, for the reader to know for sure; Stapleton's account is rife with contradictions. Describing himself at various times in his life as a communist, a socialist, and a social activist, here is a man who claims he has never "compromised" the art generated by his ideologies. (123) Eschewing what he sees as the potential demands of the art market,

he has always worked at a full-time job during the day to remain what he describes as "a 'virgin' artist at night." (11) It was a decision that resulted in what Stapleton himself calls his "prostitution" — his work as a salesman for a commercial art house, as a real-estate agent, and then, for many years, as the owner of a commercial design firm. The reader is simply left to wonder how his ideologically-based art could be unaffected by such a glaring compromise in ideology. Yet, in making it, Stapleton believes he has rejected the elitist values implicit in the lifestyle of mainstream artists and in the conventional art institutions and exchange systems in which they operate.

Working in the margins of the cultural mainstream, he sees himself as "the people's artist." The problem with margins, of course, is that they define themselves in relation to the mainstream, constantly reinforcing its dominance by their subordinate place. And Stapleton does this too. By removing himself from the art scene, he refuses to engage the very structures that reflect and reinforce the class, gender, and race divisions against which he fights. Art that now rips at the very fabric of the art system from within by exposing and indicting the nature of its operations through biting critique and scathing satire is a world apart from his. Stapleton caters instead to one of the system's lesser constituencies, reinforcing the mainstream in his missionary zeal to maintain the values assigned to art and the artist in the margins as well.

There, he has dedicated himself to making what he calls "protest art" — an art meant to inspire the people to fight. His banner piece, *Massacre of the Mayans*, however, is perhaps his only work to have done so, though likely not in the way he intended. It drew complaints when it was hung in the window of an alternative gallery in 1984, and the result was its removal to the interior of the show and Stapleton's validation as a "protest" artist. It is this moment that is signalled for the reader on the frontispiece of the book

and in the advertising that accompanied its publication; a photograph of Stapleton standing with a version of the work has been reproduced for both. Stapleton's pictures, Gervais reminds us in the text, "speak honestly and truthfully about realities many of us would prefer not to stare in the face." (9)

In the eyes of women, in particular, the painting is an offensive one; it illustrates a woman being raped by one man while her arms are pinned by another. The impact of the image as a metaphor for the victimization of women in general is altered little when the content is specified by the title or by Stapleton's explanations. It conveys a message the artist did not intend to formulate to an audience he did not expect to address. While it can be argued that it nonetheless confronts women with the realities of their domination, the reaction it evokes — particularly the desire to suppress its display — may well express the feeling that the pervasive use of such images sustains the reality. Dismissed as misdirected anger, the immediate act of protest in a case such as this, of course, is censured by fear of censorship. But, isn't it ironic? The very moment Stapleton's art inspired protest is the moment he uses to glorify his own victimization in his efforts to speak for the oppressed.

Lynda Jessup
Queen's University

Michael Oliver, *The Passionate Debate: The Social and Political Ideas of Quebec Nationalism 1920-45* (Montréal: Véhicule Press 1991).

WHO IS MICHAEL OLIVER? And why is he doing this to us? Why has he waited thirty-five years to publish a perceptive and pioneering piece of scholarship on French-Canadian nationalism? Michael Oliver is a well known Canadian political scientist/activist/administrator who received his doctorate in the mid-1950s. At

the time, it seemed possible that the provincial wing of the CCF movement might stand some chance of making a small breakthrough in Québec under the leadership of Madame Thérèse Casgrain. Michael Oliver tried to provide some analysis on the parameters of a left-wing party putting down roots in the French-Canadian society of Québec. Convinced of the assumption that both Catholicism and nationalism would remain an integral part of Québec's social and political culture, Oliver concluded with considerable prescience that any successful left-wing political movement would have to seek an alliance with the embryonic left-wing elements among French-Canadian nationalists, especially those in the increasingly militant Catholic labour movement.

Determined to put his theory to the test, Oliver, as first president of the newly-created NDP, 1961-63, devoted considerable time and energy to establishing a base in Québec. He was one of the architects of the two nations policy in the party. In 1963, as a result of this sympathetic perception of Québec's francophone community, he was appointed Director of Research for André Laurendeau and Davidson Dunton's Royal Commission. Later Michael Oliver was Vice-Principal of McGill University at various times and President of Carleton University, where he now resides as adjunct professor.

That this dissertation should appear at this time is most propitious. A careful reading of his analysis of the intellectual climate of Québec during the inter-war years brings one to realize just how far the Québec intelligentsia has evolved. It really does seem light years away from the religious and rural environment which so conditioned the mentalité of traditional nationalism and the uses to which it was put. Yet, one can also hear the echo of the traditional nationalist predecessors in much of the conservative neo-nationalist rhetoric of the 1980s and early 1990s. In the aftermath of the 1993 federal election in which the separatist Bloc Québécois

formed the official opposition, Michael Oliver's long-lost study of Québec nationalism during the difficult and tumultuous inter-war years sheds some light on the problems of accommodating sub-nationalities in a federal system.

Michael Oliver judiciously decided that it was not appropriate to try and revise the dissertation in any way, shape, or form. Any attempt on his part to incorporate the vast amount of literature on Québec nationalism which has appeared over the past three decades would have required a total rewriting of the dissertation. This process would have obliterated the historiographical value of the original work. Any substantive revisions would, of necessity, reflect the evolution in Michael Oliver's perception and understanding of French-Canadian nationalism since 1956. Fortunately for students of Canadian historiography he convinced his publisher to make only minor revisions.

The book reads pretty much as I first remember the dissertation when I savoured its insights during the late 1960s as a graduate student at the University of Alberta researching an MA thesis on the political and social ideas of André Laurendeau. As with many Canadian history students of my generation, I remain indebted to Michael Oliver's work for a couple of reasons. At that time, his study helped me immeasurably by placing André Laurendeau's ideas in the dual context of Henri Bourassa and Lionel Groulx, the two giants of nationalism of their age. Perhaps more importantly, Oliver's study inspired me to undertake for my doctorate under Ramsay Cook at York University a close analysis of the ideological origins of the Quiet Revolution, that is, the ideas of the neo-nationalists at *Le Devoir* and *L'Action Nationale* and the liberal and social democrats at *Cité libre* and Radio Canada.

This study has a succinct two chapter analysis of the mentalité and ideas of Henri Bourassa which has yet to be surpassed by anyone writing about him, including Robert Rumilly, André Lauren-

deau, Martin P. O'Connell, or Joseph Le-vitt. He dissects carefully the contradictory radical and conservative strains in Bourassa's thought — the *castor-rouge* — and contrary to Rumilly and O'Connell, portrays him primarily as a moderate reformer who strove valiantly to put his ideas into action. Yet, many would still argue that it is hard to consider Bourassa much of a reformer when he "had nothing but contempt for the commercial and industrial middle class and their politics," (43) not because he despised capitalism *per se* but rather its abuse by an ignorant and immoral bourgeoisie. Bourassa also rejected systematically the Enlightenment belief in the perfectibility of man. At heart Bourassa really was a pre-industrial being who would have preferred to live in the time of Louis-Joseph Papineau when the petite-bourgeoisie was in its ascendancy and certain elements of the Catholic Church, such as Canon Lionel Groulx, were not as dominant or as stridently nationalistic. Oliver found Bourassa's adherence to the principles of British parliamentary democracy, especially his lifelong support for marginal third parties, particularly attractive.

In contrast, Oliver's portrayal of abbé Lionel Groulx and his little clique of "racists" and "separatists" at *l'Action française* and *l'Action Nationale* in the 1920s and 1930s is particularly harsh and unrelenting. His categorically negative interpretation went out of fashion for over three decades as neo-nationalists of all stripes took over control of the nationalist movement in Québec and preferred to mythologize all nationalist predecessors including Canon Groulx. Not too surprisingly, in the difficult economic and social climate of the 1990s when Québec society like much of North America is moving to the right, Oliver's interpretation finds greater resonance with that of Esther Delisle's *The Traitor and the Jew* (1993) than that of Susan Mann Trofimenkoff's *Action française: French Canadian Nationalism in the Twenties* (1975). Oliver demonstrates how Groulx and his coterie

of friends despised all politicians, political parties, and especially British parliamentary democracy with its emphasis on civil rights and individual freedoms. The one contradiction which emerges in Oliver's analysis is his portrayal of Groulx and his colleagues as separatists while arguing at the same time that their refusal of the primacy of politics prevented them from seeing "the state as the complete expression of the nation." (89) He cannot have it both ways. Groulx and his nationalist colleagues did not reject the primacy of all politics, only that of liberal democratic politics. They wanted a theocratic state that served the collective interests of French Canadians and their Catholic Church with its medieval doctrine of economic and social corporatism.

Oliver was the first to draw our attention to the incipient forms of left-wing Catholic thought emerging in Québec during the 1930s. It was this ideology which set the stage for the post-war evolution of mentalities. He analyzed *La Relève's*, André Laurendeau's, and François Hertel's struggles to redefine traditional nationalist dogma in the light of the ideology of Catholic personalism in Emmanuel Mounier's *Esprit*, Robert Aron's *Ordre Nouveau*, and Etienne Gilson's *Sept*. Slowly, and at times incoherently, new wine was being poured into the old and decrepid vessel of French-Canadian clerical nationalism. What remains clear, however, is that the ideological discourse of the right prevailed in the 1930s and found expression in the reaffirmation of the agrarian vocation of the French-Canadian nation, in a desire to buttress small- and medium-scale capitalism to the benefit of a declining francophone petty bourgeoisie at the expense of the Jewish shopkeepers and small industrialists with an aggressive *Achat chez nous* campaign. Finally, French-Canadian nationalists of all stripes adopted several varieties of corporatism as their alternative to unbridled capitalism and godless socialism. The other serious impediment which

Oliver noted to a greater cooperation between the CCF in English-speaking Canada and the incipient Catholic left in French Canada was the ugly cancer of anti-semitism which grew out of the racial exclusiveness of Groulx's nationalist ideology and permeated much of French-Canadian society in the 1930s and early 1940s. Yet, Oliver believed, like Trudeau, that French Canadian nationalists had abandoned the most overt forms of anti-semitism by the 1950s. Their acceptance of dramatically increased immigration of Jews was proof of their acceptance of an emerging social and cultural pluralism in the French-Canadian society, particularly in middle-class Montréal.

Yet ironically, Oliver was so struck by the dogged persistence of right-wing nationalist ideology throughout the 1930s and 1940s that he saw no possibility for the emergence of a left-wing ideology in French Canada except under the aegis of both the Catholic Church and the nationalist movement. He felt so strongly about his conclusion that he criticized Trudeau for his wholesale denunciation of all forms of French-Canadian nationalism, old and new, in his *La Grève de l'amiante* (1956). While nationalism would prove to be a powerful staying force in Québec society, the Catholic church would virtually collapse as a political institution by the early 1960s. Even the collapse of anti-semitism in its most virulent forms during the 1950s did not ensure, as he hoped, that left-wing nationalists while "most available as units in a constitutional political process" would of necessity be more open to "the possibilities of reworking Canadian federalism." (195) This reworking of Canadian federalism, according to Oliver, was only possible if the left in English-speaking Canada accepted the inter-related concepts of two nations and a decentralized form of asymmetrical federalism.

In this way, a perceptive young Michael Oliver foresaw the outlines of the constitutional struggle which would engage enormous time and the energy of some of Canada's best minds over the

next generation. Oliver believed that if the question of the constitutional status of Québec as the homeland of the French-Canadian nationality could be addressed and solved quickly, the country would be forced to tackle the other important cleavages of social class and ethnicity, topics which were the inherent preserve of the left and its political arm, the CCF. *The Passionate Debate* remains a seminal study in the evolution of our understanding of French-Canadian nationalist ideology and the response of Canada's left to that phenomenon. Véhicule Press should be congratulated for putting it into print.

Michael D. Behiels
University of Ottawa

Kris Inwood, ed., *Farm, Factory, and Fortune: New Studies in the Economic History of the Maritime Provinces* (Fredericton: Acadiensis Press 1993).

FOR SOME YEARS the economic development, or lack of it, of the Maritime provinces has been dealt with in terms of regionalism. One version of this approach, dependency theory, has lost support during the last decade. Nonetheless, it is still common to relate the disparity between Maritime economic development after 1867 and that of central Canada to a lack of local control. It is by no means surprising that Confederation, the most obvious example of subordination to the upper provinces, should be seen as the cause of this disparity. This collection of essays was selected in part to cast doubt on this approach by arguing that economic disparity pre-dated Confederation. While it is difficult to bring entirely new arguments to such an often debated topic, the thoroughness of the analysis, especially of agriculture, is refreshing.

Nineteenth-century agriculture, and rural society in general, have recently received increased attention. This subject is well served in this collection. Thus Alan

R. MacNeil argues persuasively that the English settlers who took over Acadian farms following the deportation achieved a level of productivity much more quickly than did the English settlers who followed later. This suggestion that Acadian farms were quite productive is in line with recent work which suggests that the Acadian settlements were far more developed and prosperous than traditional accounts have allowed.

The argument that frontier farms required several years to become productive is developed by Beatrice Craig in her piece on the development of agriculture in the upper St. John River Valley. She argues that by 1850 most residents had shifted to diversified agriculture, especially husbandry, in order to cater to local markets created by lumbering operations and by those opening up new farms. In a very ambitious study of two different farming regions in New Brunswick, T.W. Acheson points out that only those with well-developed, successful operations had the resources to supply what was a very volatile market.

Acheson's argument that farmers fell into several strata ranging from producers of large quantities of farm commodities to cottars of the community leads to the conclusion that there was no simple definition of a farmer. Instead of seeing a clear dichotomy between the rural life-style and the urban society soon to follow, he argues that farmers were integrated into a capitalistic exchange system and that the most successful appeared to embrace a highly individualistic work ethic.

The importance of a strong agricultural segment to the total economy is stressed in the study of commodity prices by Kris Inwood and James Irwin. This importance is due not only to the number of people involved in agriculture but to the fact that areas dependent on fishing, mining, and lumbering were marked by low levels of commodity prices. Thus, the poor performance of agriculture in Nova Scotia, combined with the low commodity returns that prevailed in mining

and fishing areas, raise the possibility that the economic disparity of Nova Scotia predated the colonial union of 1867 and was not created by it. New Brunswick, however, whose agricultural sector outperformed that of Québec, had a stronger economy than Nova Scotia prior to colonial union, although it declined markedly in the post-confederation period.

In a second paper, Professor Inwood analyses the much-discussed topic of industrialization in the Maritimes from 1870 to 1910 in terms of the staple theory and structuralism. Reviewing the evidence available from census material, the author indicates that while the manufacturing sector in New Brunswick and Nova Scotia had a number of similarities, New Brunswick matched or surpassed Ontario in some categories. After 1870 the efficiency of factories in New Brunswick declined markedly, while Nova Scotia, which succeeded in expanding its manufacturing from 1870 to 1890, did not manage to improve its relative position. By 1910, however, the similarities between the two Maritime provinces had increased and the differences between them and the upper provinces had become more pronounced. Rather than ascribe this situation to a lack of control created by Confederation, Inwood suggests that the economic disparity in manufacturing existed prior to Confederation and can be explained by the staple theory. Thus, in contrast to Professor Acheson's oft-cited paper on the subject, Professor Inwood suggests that the movement of capital out of the Maritimes was actually orchestrated by Maritime capitalists who were seeking better returns than were available in the Maritimes. Support for this approach is provided by Gordon P. Marchildon in his study of John F. Stairs and Max Aitken which examines whether the Maritimes suffered from a shortage of capital and financial entrepreneurship and whether some of the capital which was there was drained out of the region. While not directly addressing the first point, the author argues that the "Stairs

group" began to direct capital out of the Maritimes in the 1890s in reaction to declining profitability of Maritime enterprises. A different aspect of the same question is explored by Neil C. Quigley, Ian M. Drummond, and Lewis T. Evans in their examination of regional transfer of funds through the banking system from 1895 to 1935. They argue that there is no evidence to support the claim that banks actively discriminated against the Maritimes, and that although significant funds from the Maritimes were invested outside the region there was no net negative impact. Yet further amplification of this theme is provided by Ken Cruikshank who takes issue with an argument originating with Ernie Forbes that policies adopted by centrally controlled bodies concerning freight rates on the Intercolonial Railway were a significant factor in hindering Nova Scotian industry following World War I.

While a number of the articles discount the lack of local control as the cause of the economic problems faced by the Maritimes, Marilyn Gerriets in her examination of the General Mining Association provides a reminder that the centre of control should not be entirely ignored. She argues that the company, being an absentee owner, did not adjust its policies to local conditions and that the province did not receive the economic stimulus which might have been expected had the coal fields been under local ownership.

Analyses of economic disparities in terms of technology, location, and differential rates of return are important but so too are studies of the human impact of such factors. This point is brought into focus by Del Muise in his fine study of industry in the post-Confederation Maritimes in which he examines the nature of employment for women in Yarmouth, Amherst, and Sydney for the period 1871 to 1921. What emerges very clearly from his account is how varied were the conditions in the three towns and how this diversity has to be understood before the

impact first of industrialization and then of de-industrialization is comprehensible.

It appears obvious that the articles in this collection were selected principally to re-open the debate on the causes of the economic disparity experienced by the Maritimes and to bring into question arguments which have recently enjoyed wide-spread acceptance. While the difficulties faced by the Maritimes may not have been created by Confederation, they may have been aggravated by it. As Ernie Forbes illustrates, the federal government's preference for linking relief measures to matching provincial and municipal grants severely limited the participation by the Maritimes in programmes which were badly needed.

There is little question that the articles in this collection raise significant questions concerning the economic history of the Maritimes. At the same time this collection should be seen as contributing to ongoing work; six of the eleven articles have appeared in *Acadiensis*. They are thus not as new as the sub-title would suggest. Nonetheless, bringing them together in one volume increases their impact and makes them more accessible, raising their impact on Maritime studies.

Kenneth Pryke
University of Windsor

Stephen J. Hornsby, *Nineteenth Century Cape Breton: A Historical Geography* (Montréal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press 1992).

THERE IS ONLY ONE general history of Cape Breton Island. That one was written by the manager of the General Mining Association, Richard Brown, in 1869, and it was a typical 19th-century account of the eventual arrival of progress and development on the British North American frontier. By contrast, Stephen Hornsby's historical geography of Cape Breton Island — limited to the period from 1800 to

1891 (which is coincidentally the scope of volume 2 of the *Historical Atlas of Canada*) — is a study informed by many of the concerns of the late 20th-century about the problems of economic and social development. It is easy to see why Hornsby was attracted to the topic for this is in many respects an epic story of how one compact, though often diverse, community lived some of the big changes of the 19th century.

At the beginning of the century Cape Breton Island, with a sparse population of 2,500 people, was little more than a frontier of the North Atlantic cod fishery, its population focused around centres such as Arichat and Chéticamp; the few farm settlements were small and struggling, the growth of coal mining was extremely limited and the colonial state, isolated in the tiny town of Sydney, was almost invisible. By the beginning of the 1890s, however, the population had increased enormously — to 87,000 people — largely as a result of immigration from the western highlands and islands of Scotland. Farming had been undertaken on all of the more arable soil, with some commercial success in livestock and butter production; meanwhile, the cod fishery, supplemented by new activities such as the canning of lobster, had also continued to grow. In addition, the new staple of the coal industry, fuelled by rising demand for power and funded by British, American, and local capital, was establishing the foundations for a major centre of industry in the Maritimes.

Despite these visible signs of progress, Hornsby argues, the prospects for future prosperity were not strong. In the fisheries, as elsewhere in the North Atlantic, the resources were controlled almost entirely by a network of merchant capitalists. The industry brought few local benefits and created few economic linkages and its successes were supported by a population living in a perpetual condition of dependence and destitution. In agriculture there was no significant generation of local capital as there was in more success-

ful agricultural regions such as Ontario; instead, there was a sharp division between the minority of successful farmers and the rural majority who struggled for subsistence and were most likely to be drawn away from productive work on their farms to seek remuneration in various kinds of wage-labour. Although the coal industry seemed to have a promising future, local capitalists had failed to capture control of the industry during the decades of opportunity after the 1850s and its development was now tied to outside markets and outside investors. In the end, Hornsby concludes, local agriculture was based on a deficient resource base — “a generally niggardly land” (208) — and the two key staple trades, in fish and coal, “had created enclaves of specialized work around the coast that were more connected to external economies than to the rest of the Island.” (203) An indication of the island’s malaise at the end of the 19th century was the fact that ever since the hard times associated with the potato blight of the 1840s, there had been an exodus from the island. In the 1880s, the first decade of the National Policy, the island’s population increased only 2.8 per cent.

Apart from the general argument about the failure of the staple economy, labour historians will have a special interest in several aspects of this study. For each of the three major economic sectors which Hornsby discusses, there is useful attention to methods of production, divisions of labour, recruitment and remuneration of workers, standards of accommodation and diet, problems of labour discipline, and episodes of collective action. Hornsby finds that among immigrants from the estates of Scotland who were now settled on new lands in Cape Breton, there was a resilient determination to succeed on the land — so much so that among them the collection of quit rents owed to the Crown in the 1820s was virtually impossible and at mid-century perhaps half the occupied land was held by squatters without clear title. Among Acadian fish-

ermen at Chéticamp, Hornsby uses the records of the Robin Company to describe several remarkable episodes of combination and collective bargaining on the wharf over the price of fish. In the coal industry Hornsby shows that episodes of conflict over work-discipline and wages can be seen at Sydney Mines as early as 1830. From this kind of evidence it is clear that there was a local history of popular resistance and labour conflict in Cape Breton long before the arrival of formal institutions such as the Provincial Workmen’s Association in the 1880s, which in any event limited its activity to the collieries at this stage. For those who have a distorted view of 19th-century Cape Breton as a thoroughly industrialized replica of the British coal country, there is the useful reminder that throughout the period under discussion the work force was dominated not by an industrial working class but by other groups: the principal occupations in 1881 were as follows: farmers 14,536, fishermen 3,190, mariners 1,357, servants 1,243 (many of them apparently young women in off-island employment in Halifax and Boston), and miners 1,043. Although the coal miners were obviously a substantial presence in the 19th century, the process of working-class formation was only beginning at this stage — the number of coal miners would multiply several times during the next few decades and the coming of the railroad and the steel industry, with their associated employment (and new immigration), were also still in the future.

This is a concise and well-written study, supplemented with more than 75 useful tables, maps, and illustrations. It is fair to say that in a study of this scope few individuals or local situations can be described at length, but the range of sources and local details employed is truly impressive, including along the way accounts of crop production and fish markets as well as the diaries and letters of the farmers, fishermen, and miners who are the human subjects of the story. Ques-

tions can be raised about some of the bolder generalizations. The statement that farmers "gave up an independent living on the land for industrial wage-labour" (152) seems to contradict much of the other evidence about the dependent condition of the rural majority and their early familiarity with various kinds of wage-labour, both in agriculture and in the staples. Also, labour historians will have some difficulty in recognizing "the socialist rhetoric of the Provincial Workmen's Association, with its millennial vision of the cooperative commonwealth" (204), a description that seems premature for the coal miners in the period covered by the study. Readers should also be aware that there is a disagreement among historians about the identity of one of the country merchants discussed in this study, and Hornsby's discussion of John Belcher Moore (72, 138-9) should be read in conjunction with Rusty Bittermann's comment (*Labour/Le Travail*, 31, p. 20, n. 29). In addition, there are some themes which could have received greater attention in this study. Hornsby is generally sensitive to the presence of various elements apart from the dominant Scottish population who contributed to the making of the island identity; but although the presence of the Micmac in the interior of the island is noted at the beginning of the 19th century, they subsequently disappear from the discussion and unfortunately nothing is said of their dispossession and accommodation to the new order during the remainder of the century. Similarly, while Hornsby has given considerable attention to the role of the farm household in the rural economy, there is little specific discussion of the role of women in sustaining the agricultural economy, either in dairying and weaving on the more successful farms or in the simple struggle for subsistence in the backlands, a responsibility which fell most heavily on women when men were drawn away into wage-labour.

Most of all, readers must be struck by the relative absence of the state in this

analysis. This is understandably not a political history, so there is little discussion of individual political figures or of the changing status of Cape Breton as a separate colony prior to 1820, as part of Nova Scotia prior to 1867 and then as part of the Dominion of Canada; issues such as the struggle for self-government or the debate over Confederation and the process of political integration receive little attention. All this is perhaps acceptable in a study of this kind, but it does weaken the explanatory framework, which, in the absence of alternative analysis, falls back rather easily on a form of geographic and resource determinism. As Hornsby's account itself shows in various instances, the colonial, imperial, and national governments all acted repeatedly to structure the prevailing opportunities for the control and exploitation of resources, land settlement and ownership, access to capital and markets, and the distribution of economic power on the island. Such structural weaknesses as the failure of agriculture as a motor of economic development and the limited impact of the staple trades were not simply the outcomes of the island's resource endowment but also the product of policies of access, incentive, and exclusion. As Hornsby again acknowledges, the poverty and destitution that ran through the backlands, outports, and colliery villages limited the surpluses available for development and contributed to the restriction of local economic potential. Since the central argument is that the staple industries failed to provide solid foundations for economic growth, it would seem useful to pursue a closer examination of the role of the state in maintaining the dominant economic structure. This is all the more relevant as Hornsby maintains, with some justice, that "the roots of the loss of Cape Breton and Maritime control over their industry lay in the late eighteenth- and nineteenth-century development of the region's staple and agricultural economies." (207) While he has utilized the staples approach to good effect to isolate

key questions concerning regional development in the 19th century, it is probably too soon to conclude that the staple trades were too dominant and the resource base too limited to allow any other historical outcome. After all, in the 1890s Cape Breton Island possessed more substantial local resources for the establishment of coal and steel industries than any other district in the entire country. Within the context of the developing Canadian economy at the turn of the century, Cape Breton Island was about to become one of the most dynamic industrial communities within the Dominion. Moreover, the local identity which had been under construction in the course of the 19th century would, in the 20th century, give rise to a sustained struggle to escape the dependency of the past.

Although Hornsby's explanatory framework may provoke questions, this is nevertheless a study in the best traditions of historical geography. He has successfully shown the interaction of people and place on a grand scale, incorporating insights into the physical and social environment, the organization of technology and culture, and the prevailing economic and class relations in the community. There is a rich selection of descriptive detail here and an impressive range of evidence, all of it testimony to the energy and industry which have gone into the preparation of this study. The result is an effective account of the structure of local history in 19th-century Cape Breton as well a useful case study in some of the great transformations of the 19th century.

David Frank
University of New Brunswick

E.R. Forbes and D.A. Muise, eds., *The Atlantic Provinces in Confederation* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1993).

THIS IS, despite its flaws, a landmark study which powerfully thrusts the Atlantic region and its historiography into the

Canadian historical mainstream. There are eighteen chapters in the book, each written by an authority in the field, and each, more or less, reflecting the available literature — at least that written in the pre-1988 period. As is always the case in such a multi-authored collection, there is a broad spectrum of literary and scholarly quality in the various chapters. A few of the essays are superbly written and studded with marvellous insights; they could have been published as articles in almost any first-class Canadian historical journal. Most of the rest of the chapters are confidently and well-written syntheses; a few, alas, are rather limp and tired efforts — as if the authors had lost interest in their decades somewhere in the latter stages of writing.

The decade-by-decade format of *The Atlantic Provinces*, it should be noted, results in a somewhat disjointed book — a book with too much repetition and a book with too many rough and awkward transitions. The University of Toronto Press, it is clear, could have devoted more of its resources to sensitively and carefully editing the volume (repetitiveness is accompanied by too many small factual errors and too much, far too much, thick detail); and, moreover, the Press should have ensured that the wonderful maps were larger and clearer in their presentation.

The editors, Ernie Forbes and Del Muise, have encouraged the authors to devote some attention not only to political, economic, and cultural history but also to women, the working class, Blacks, the First Nations, and the dispossessed. These hitherto largely neglected groups have become in *The Atlantic Provinces* an integral and significant part of the regional experience. In fact, it may be argued that, in terms of the broad base of analysis, this book now becomes the model for other general and regional Canadian histories.

There are two basic underlying themes in these somewhat jaggedly-integrated chapters — the slow growth and

then decline of the region within Confederation and a profound disquiet about the Atlantic region's role and future within Canada. This is not, in any way, an optimistic volume but rather it is, for many of the authors, a mournful lament for a future and a past that never was. The first two chapters of *The Atlantic Provinces*, "The 1860s" by Del Muike and "The 1870s" by Phil Buckner cover this well-plowed period — providing a formidable geographical, political, and economic foundation for the remainder of the volume. In her treatment of the 1880s, Judith Fingard makes excellent use of some of her work on the underclass of Halifax to pump life into the region's underclass. Larry McCann's "The 1890s: Fragmentation and the New Social Order," is energized by a strongly-argued thesis regarding the complex way whereby the "transition from a seaward to a landward economy" encouraged the growth of Maritime dependence. "The 1900s: Industry, Urbanization, and Reform," by Colin Howell is particularly strong on social and cultural history.

Perhaps the best chapter in the book — that by Ian McKay — deals with the 1910s and what he called "The Stillborn Triumph of Progressive Reform." The decade begins and ends with remarkable working-class discontent being manifested in the region. This labour radicalism is connected by the region's enthusiastic espousal of World War I. McKay raises some key questions in this chapter about how "conservative" the region actually was and why so many of the Maritime workers were so radical. David Frank's "The 1920s" is also a superb piece of historical writing; his empathy for the working class is both richly textured and critically based.

Ernie Forbes and Carman Miller both write authoritatively about the 1930s and 1940s respectively. These chapters are a little more political in their overall approach than the previous two and both authors seem to wonder why, with good

reason, the region was so badly represented by its political leaders in Ottawa.

Part Four has four chapters, J.K. Hillier's largely political overview of Newfoundland history from 1807 to 1949, Margaret Conrad's lively "The 1950s: The Decade of Development," Della Stanley's "The 1960s," and John Reid's "The 1970s." A brief epilogue regarding the 1980s by Forbes concludes this huge 626-page volume. More stress could have been placed in these latter chapters on public opinion surveys conducted during the past two decades in the region and what they tell us about Atlantic Canada and about Maritimers and Newfoundlanders.

Reflecting rather well the state of pre-1988 Maritime historiography, *The Atlantic Provinces* is particularly strong in the areas of political and economic history and, of course, working-class history. Some of the authors are not very convincing or very confident when they discuss religion — that is if they do. Some of them are virtually silent about the Christian churches and Christian leaders whether they are writing about the 19th or the 20th centuries. It is noteworthy, however, that in 1987, Reginald Bibby, in his *Fragmented Gods*, argued, with some passion, that the Atlantic Provinces had become Canada's "Bible Belt." And recent survey data supports this contention ("God is Alive," *Maclean's*, 12 April 1993). Apparently close to 37 per cent of all adults in the Atlantic Provinces pray daily — the national average is 29 per cent. Thirty-seven per cent of Atlantic adults attend religious services at least "once a week" — compared to 23 percent in Canada (and only 15 per cent in British Columbia). The role that religion has played and continues to play in the development of Atlantic Canada should never be underestimated — nor should it be overestimated. But it should be perceptively described and analyzed even though it may question some of the new Atlantic "historical orthodoxy."

It is too easy to criticize authors for the sins of omission rather than the sins of commission. *The Atlantic Provinces* is an important book; there is no question about this. And everyone interested in post-Confederation Canadian history is indebted to the authors for their scholarly contributions. I certainly am.

G.A. Rawlyk
Queen's University

L. Anders Sandberg, ed., *Trouble in the Woods: Forest Policy and Social Conflict in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick* (Fredericton: Acadiensis Press 1992).

FORESTS IN NEW BRUNSWICK and Nova Scotia have been dominated by the pulp and paper industry for the past 50 years. In both provinces during this same period, more pulpwood has been produced from small private woodlots than from crown lands. The eight contributors to this book ask why the small woodlot operators have been unable to acquire more equitable shares of the wealth they have generated for the pulp and paper industry. Included in the answers to this thematic question are the actions of "client" provincial governments, persistent divisions between primary producers, changing rural society, and the slowly evolving processes of mechanized pulpwood production.

The first four articles cover the period 1875 to 1950, and examine the forest policy structures which shaped the succeeding era of active social conflict. New Brunswick's crown lands (half the province) were consolidated into large blocks between the 1880s and 1930s, first by sawmillers and then by pulp and paper companies. Raymond Léger and Serge Côté establish the ultimate purpose of the consolidations — to create forest reserves for leverage over the small woodlot markets which remained the primary means for extracting forest labour. Nancy Colpitts documents the extent to which the consolidations also meant privatization,

as pulp and paper companies forced local sawmill operators to beg for "sub-licenses" when demand for pulpwood was low during the 1930s. The Nova Scotian pulp and paper industry did not develop until the 1950s, L. Anders Sandberg suggests, because it took the provincial government that long to consolidate enough crown land to assure the companies the benefits of the reserve system.

The next two contradictions focus on the extensive conflict which evolved during the 1960s and 1970s between small woodlot owners, the companies, and the provincial governments. Bill Parenteau provides a well-argued explanation for the process in New Brunswick. The decline of small-scale agriculture left marginal farmers more dependent on pulpwood markets, and thus highly sensitive to recurring recessions in the industry: low prices, rural life ideology, and community organizers administering federal grants supplied the rhetoric and activism for the woodlot interests. At the same time, pulp and paper companies and their client, the provincial government, sought new means to rationalize the pulpwood labour market. Regional pulpwood marketing boards were created to balance the conflicting interests. Most significantly, the social characteristics of the woodlot operators shifted during the 15-year process, as farmer-operators became absentees selling stumpage to full-time, mechanized pulpwood contractors. More than any other writer in the collection, Parenteau manages to capture the irony of a labour movement that succeeds, but is transformed in the process into a form which only serves to further entrench the existing power structure. Peter Clancy provides a similar tale for Nova Scotia during the same time period. The primary variation seems to be that the Nova Scotian woodlot activists tried to organize the entire province, and experienced fatal fragmentation as a result. The professional pulpwood contractors took over the bargaining sector from the woodlot movement, leaving the original activists and

the remaining farmer-operators in disarray.

The final two articles discuss Nova Scotian forest and land regulatory laws that were never enforced, but are useful for understanding the province's contemporary political culture. Glynn Bissix and Sandberg argue that the Forest Improvement Act established a forum for the politicization of forest policy. The act lost its effectiveness when the federal government funded an alternative provincial agency dedicated to servicing the needs of the pulp and paper companies. Included are interesting descriptions of the uses of royal commissions, the mixed consequences of private property ideologies, "ecocentric" activism, and similar obstacles to the development of "equitable and responsible" forest policies. Kell Antoft's short piece on rural land speculation and xenophobia suggests an important topic but could use further development.

While the editor provides useful and thoughtful introductory and concluding remarks, the collection is not comprehensive and provides only minimal theoretical exposition. Sandberg makes no effort to compare and contrast the two provinces, although a number of interesting distinctions are suggested by the articles. Similarly, the many references to Swedish practices and possibilities suggest an important element in the Nova Scotia story, but these are not developed. The pulp and paper companies and provincial governments are presented as unchanging monoliths rather than as important subjects appropriate for close examination. Significant changes in Maritime society during the last quarter-century are referred to — new rural livelihoods, continuing poverty, successful contractors, increasing tourism, and environmentalists — but the implications are not explored in detail. Overall, however, the collection makes significant inroads into a complex subject, and suggests a number of promising leads for further research. In addition, it will be useful to students of

recent forest labour conflict or of Maritime underdevelopment history.

Christopher S. Beach
McGill University

Richard Apostle, Gene Barrett, *et al.*, *Emptying Their Nets: Small Capital and Rural Industrialization in the Nova Scotia Fishing Industry* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1992).

CANADA'S ATLANTIC FISHERY, one of the world's richest, is in a state of crisis. Fish stocks are dangerously low and unemployment among fishers and plant workers is depressingly high. This book is a timely and ambitious analysis of the structure and diversity of Nova Scotia's fishing industry, particularly its coastal fishery and small capital sector, during the 1970s and 1980s.

It is a collaborative and inter-disciplinary project involving sociologists, anthropologists, and economists working under the auspices of the Gorsebrook Research Institute for Atlantic Canada Studies. The authors interviewed hundreds of managers, fishers, plant workers, and brokers. Indeed, one of the book's major strengths is the richness of the information assembled about the industry. Regrettably, the study's focus on a rather narrow period of development raises some uncertainty regarding long term trends.

The volume adopts a thematic format and consists chiefly of sector surveys and community case studies. Some of the main topics addressed include fish processing, port market relations, labour and community structures, and ideology. The volume contains numerous tables and a brief appendix describes sampling procedures. At least four of the fourteen chapters were previously published, and revised for the text.

It begins with a theoretical and historical overview of the fishing industry. One of the most surprising and significant

developments following the end of World War II was the growth and vitality of the coastal fishery and the small/intermediate scale fish processors. Contrary to some theories of economic development, this sector was not monopolized or subsumed by large capital, nor was its work force "proletarianized." The idiosyncrasies of the resource, together with modernization and flexibility, ensured its success. The writers rely heavily on differentiation theory, with its emphasis on "supply side" factors, to explore the structure of small capital and its relationship with other sectors of the industry.

The book provides an effective discussion of differentiation within the processing sector. In Chapter 4, Apostle, Barrett, Davis, and Kasdan establish a typology of plants based on their scale of operations and social organization: small, competitive, and large. They find that the small and competitive plants, for the most part, were family-owned and specialized in a few products such as fresh fish, whereas the large plants devoted more attention to frozen and canned fish. Labour management was more flexible in the former, and their workers performed multiple jobs more frequently. Women constituted nearly half of the work force, but were disproportionately represented in the larger plants where work processes were more mechanized and task-specialized. Thus, women performed "light labour" and received lower wages.

Port market relations receive considerable attention in the study. In Chapter 7, Apostle and Barrett examine the extent of economic dependency between fishing captains and buyers. They argue that the presumed "subsumption of direct producers by capital — the proletarianization process — has to be reconsidered." (162) They conclude that the position of fishers improved with "the emergence of alternative outlets for fish, alternative service and input suppliers, state based income support, and loan institutions...." (166) More information about the income and accumulated debt of fishing captains

would shed further light on the question of dependency.

Davis and Kasdan's case study of Digby Neck and the Islands (Chapter 8) is one of the volume's most interesting essays. The authors discuss how the introduction of dragger technology and government policies influenced the development of the area's fishing industry. In an attempt to "modernize" the coastal fishery the federal and provincial governments began providing financial assistance after World War II for the acquisition of dragger technology. The assistance brought mixed benefits. On the one hand, it increased fish production and processing. On the other, it inflated the cost of boats and equipment, led to an overexploitation of the fishing stocks, and caused friction between line and dragger fishers. In the long term, these changes contributed significantly to the decline in Digby Neck's coastal fishery.

The last third of the book explores labour market relations and community structures. In Chapter 10, Apostle and Barrett look at the interaction between capital and labour. Further evidence is provided regarding labour management in different types of plants. Small plants had the highest proportion of seasonal workers and paid the lowest wages. Thus, their workers were more dependent on UI benefits. Most plant managers of non-union establishments did what they could to ensure that their employees would qualify for UI. In addition, Apostle and Barrett find that most plants were situated in rural areas which contained surplus labour. This kept wages low and created a pool of labour which was responsive to the production cycles of the industry.

Apostle and Barrett examine the "social economy" of fishing communities in Chapter 12. They assess the level of community attachment among plant managers, fishing captains, and plant workers. Most managers were dependent on the communities in which their plants operated; they felt obligated to offer work to local residents first. Fishing captains

maintained the highest level of work satisfaction and community attachment, whereas plant employment generated few "economic and cultural rewards." This seems fairly obvious. Perhaps a more interesting question is whether the socioeconomic distance between the groups changed over time? Here, the inclusion of empirical evidence regarding income and wealth would be useful.

The final chapter considers populism and alienation within the fishing industry. Apostle and Barrett find that the small capital sector disliked "big government and big companies" and felt politically alienated. Furthermore, the marginality of plant employment left workers alienated as well. These conclusions are based on a series of personal interviews. Fair enough. However, Apostle and Barrett then assert that "they [private enterprise sentiments] may represent the roots of a right wing populism that is the dominant ideology of much of rural Nova Scotia." (301) Regrettably, little evidence is offered in support of this sweeping statement.

Despite its shortcomings, this is an impressive collaborative effort. The volume not only provides many fresh and significant insights into the sociology, economy, and history of Nova Scotia's fishing industry, but it also draws attention to the importance of small capital in economic development.

Alan R. MacNeil
Toronto

B. Curtis, D.W. Livingstone, and H. Smaller, *Stacking the Deck: The Streaming of Working-Class Kids in Ontario Schools* (Toronto: Our Schools/Our Selves Education Foundation 1992).

STREAMING, perhaps more than any other school practice, is responsible for the persisting inequalities that characterize our education system. Children from working class and poor backgrounds

have suffered immeasurably as a result of streaming. Narrowly defined, it refers to the practice of placing secondary school students into different programs which provide them with different kinds of preparation for further education or work. However, streaming is far more complex. It involves the systematic segregation of children (along social class lines for the most part) in ways that determine the quantity and quality of their education. It starts as soon as children enter school, and the effects remain long after they have graduated from high school or dropped out — usually for the rest of their lives.

Curtis, Livingstone, and Smaller thoroughly describe and analyze the subtle and not-so-subtle ways in which streaming works in Ontario schools and its effects on students. They do this by first outlining the history of streaming in the province and then detailing the specifics of streaming at all levels of public schooling (including elementary, which is usually seen as not involved in the practice of streaming). Finally, they offer recommendations for "unstacking the deck." The recommendations take the form of guidelines for democratic schooling and a strategy for realizing them.

Although the book is about streaming in Ontario schools, the practice of streaming is unfortunately not confined to just one province. The historical facts may vary from one place to another and a few of the details about how streaming is currently played out in the schools may differ somewhat, but the practice can be recognized across the country. And so can its devastating effects.

In tracing the origins of educational inequality in Ontario, the authors show that the history of education is in fact the history of streaming.

Since the creation of mass public schooling, students from working-class families have chronically received less schooling and a different quality of schooling than have students from upper-class and professional families. (8)

Indeed, the ultimate in streaming was evident in the establishment of publicly supported education in Ontario nearly two centuries ago when the poor were excluded altogether by fees beyond their reach.

Since then, an imaginative range of techniques has been developed to ensure the continued segregation of children by social class: different programs (technical, commercial, vocational, academic) within the same high school; guidance programs to assist students in making their program (stream) "choice"; separate schools for different programs; "ability grouping" into different classrooms and within the same classroom in the elementary and junior high schools; private schools; and, in more recent years, French immersion programs, classes and programs for "the gifted," "the learning disabled," children who are judged to be "slow" or to have "behavioural problems," to need "remedial work" or "special education," and on and on. This says nothing of the fact that most urban and suburban elementary schools are themselves segregated by social class because children go to the elementary school in their already segregated neighbourhoods.

Furthermore, a number of other standard school practices feed directly into these more formalized streaming practices. They support and justify streaming and in so doing become an integral part of the streaming process. High on the list is IQ testing, that absurd practice which has been thoroughly discredited for decades but which nonetheless survives, probably because, as Curtis *et al.* point out,

the history of intelligence testing can be seen largely as an effort to devise more efficient means to sort people for their social destinies on the basis of supposedly fixed intrinsic capacities. (14)

Standardized testing serves the same purpose. This is buttressed by the invidious competition which pervades our schools.

Perhaps most elusive of all are the usually subtle and often unconscious

teacher expectations, which can be highly motivating or completely devastating for students. These are often built into the teaching materials. In one study reported in *Stacking the Deck*, elementary school-teachers were asked what knowledge was important for the children to learn. Teachers in an "executive elite school" emphasized reasoning, problem-solving and learning to think; the grade 5 science program and materials were "designed to be 'intellectually stimulating and scientifically authentic.'" But teachers in a "working-class school" talked about the importance of the children learning facts, basic skills, the three R's; the grade 5 social studies textbook guide in this school focused on "the importance of 'eliminating extraneous subject matter and excessive details' so that students will 'feel secure in doing routine tasks' and not have 'great demands' placed on them." (71-3)

Then there are differences in classroom atmosphere, facilities and activities. These show up early. The authors quote from a study of a middle-class grade 1 classroom that was a

hodge-podge of colour ... book-racks, chalkboard designs, listening terminal and ear-phones, autumn centre and seed centres, a whole range of alcoves and tiny nooks ... surroundings for a small fleet of tables and chairs" [where] students were engaged in a number of different individual and group activities ...

compared to its inner-city counterpart where children

were kept "in tidy rows" and the class rules [were] written on the blackboard ("1. We must be quiet in class ...") ... and the emphasis ... was much more weighted to "proper" behaviour, obedience and order. (71)

Obviously, these practices which directly stream or support streaming guarantee sub-standard education for most working-class and poor kids. But *Stacking the Deck* gives us a glimpse beyond that by showing us how children also have to endure the labelling and stigmatizing that go with streaming and the resulting

humiliation, low self-esteem, and hatred of school, teachers and learning.

The authors back up their claims by citing numerous studies and statistics to show who gets put in what streams, who ends up with what levels of achievement, who is considered "gifted" and who is in need of "special education," who gets how much schooling and who drops out, who gets what kind of jobs (or none at all) based on the amount and type of their schooling. Overwhelmingly, we see the working class and the poor as those who suffer from the streaming practices in our schools. Streaming in school is, in fact, streaming for life. The studies and the figures show without a doubt that streaming serves to reproduce the social classes.

This is not new information. Although "systemic class differences have been ignored or denied in many studies of educational inequality" (7) and thus the connection has not always been made with streaming, social class discrimination has been unavoidably clear throughout:

[E]very study of schools that has paid attention to class differences has found that working-class kids have always fared much worse in school than middle- and upper-class kids. Working-class kids always have, on average, lower reading scores, higher grade failures, higher drop-out rates and much poorer employment opportunities. (7)

Curtis, Livingstone and Smaller have undertaken the frustrating task of saying all over again and documenting all over again what was said and documented long ago but has never changed — at least not on any substantial scale. Unfortunately, it is as necessary as ever that they do this. While at long last there is at least the beginnings of recognition of the insidious racism and sexism that exist in our schools, the same cannot be said about classism. My own students well illustrate this point. I teach a Race, Class, and Gender in Education course to people who are going to be teachers. They are an unusually keen and thoughtful group of students, the approximately 10 per cent se-

lected into the teacher education program from a huge batch of applicants (highly streamed!). Almost all of them have an undergraduate university degree and may have advanced degrees. While each year many students have some sophistication about gender and race when they enter the course, most know virtually nothing about social class, to the point of not even recognizing that the existence of classes in our society is real and that it has serious implications for schooling — including their presence in a teacher education program.

The book is couched in what the authors call "a 'class-power approach,' ... which combines ... structures-of-dominance and elite-politics theories." (20) Curtis, Livingstone, and Smaller quite accurately see the problems of the school as inextricably tied to economic and political power in the society at large. Consequently, they recognize that the schools cannot solve the problems in isolation from the underlying social realities that give rise to the problems.

[W]e do not expect a reformed school system alone to be able to create a better world. The school system cannot overcome differences in wealth, property ownership and political power, nor can it erase sexism or racism. It did not create these conditions in the first place. But we do expect the school system, in concert with reforming social policies in other areas, to challenge people to develop their abilities, and encourage them to seek democracy. The school system can start to do this by stopping its efforts to convince a large majority of working people that they deserve boredom and stultification at school in preparation for boredom and low pay at work. (102)

The authors mention in passing that the changes they propose can only be realized with appropriate support within the school system. However, this point needs more emphasis. We have seen educational reforms come and go. Many of them fail simply because of inadequate supports and lack of connection to a broader educational vision. This problem stems, when not from outright sabotage,

from an insufficient grasp on the part of those who are to implement the changes of why they are being made and therefore how to make them. You can unscrew the desks from the floor (as was done in many schools in the 1960s and 70s) but if you don't know why you did it, and if everything else remains as it was, all that happens is that by the end of the day, the teacher is backed up against the wall and is surrounded by a sea of desks (as happened in many elementary school classrooms). Then comes the cry that the "reform" didn't work and that the desks should be screwed to the floor again. We cannot simply eliminate the streams in the high schools without also doing away with ability grouping in the elementary grades, without making the classrooms cooperative rather than competitive, without getting rid of IQ and standardized testing, without helping teachers to learn new ways of teaching that are appropriate to these new settings, and without following the many other thoughtful guidelines provided in the last chapter.

Curtis, Livingstone, and Smaller quite sensibly recognize that all this represents a major change, and therefore a program of action is needed. Their strategy calls for "a democratic class alliance" of parents, community organizations, the labour movement, and teachers and their organizations. (120-2) To really unstack the deck, progressives within the school will have to link themselves to broader political forces.

Ruth Gamberg
Dalhousie University

John Cavanagh, John Gershman, Karen Baker, and Gretchen Helmke, eds., *Trading Freedom: How Free Trade Affects our Lives, Work and Environment* (Toronto: Between the Lines 1992).

ANYONE WHO has ever carefully assembled a file of clippings on an important topic will feel familiar and comfortable

with this collection. *Trading Freedom* consists of very brief excerpts from newspaper and magazine articles, speeches and testimony to congressional and parliamentary committees, and newsletter briefs to environmental and labour organizations. The book has precisely the strengths and weaknesses of a good clipping file. Taken together, these pieces, which average two pages in length, provide a vivid picture of the unhappy consequences that are the most likely outcome of a free-trade agreement among Canada, Mexico, and the United States. The assembly of highly qualified authors does give us many, varied, and generally persuasive reasons to feel concern about the process that has brought the three North American governments to strike an agreement. However, the collection does not provide enough analysis to enable us to understand how the world got to be the way it is and, specifically, why the Bush, Mulroney, and Salinas regimes have been successful in pushing an initiative that is so damaging in so many different ways to perhaps a majority of Americans, Canadians, and Mexicans.

John Cavanagh's "Foreword" is very useful in defining the terms in which the discussion is conducted. John Gershman follows with an introduction that sets the debate about free trade in the context of the changes in patterns of world trade and the process of internationalization of production. Excerpts from the work of Bruce Campbell and other Canadian observers outline the problems inherent in the US-Canada accord. Adolfo Aguilar Zinser, David Brooks, and the Ecumenical Coalition for Economic Justice very effectively sketch the arguments against free trade with Mexico. In particular they emphasize the negative impact on the Mexican poor, especially in the rural areas. The myths surrounding the *maquiladoras* and the "low wage boomtowns" of Mexico are exploded by Sandy Tolan and Jerry Kramer. The environmental dangers and human rights implications of the free trade agreement are the focus of another

two sections of the collection. Finally, contributions by Arnaldo García, Jorge Castañeda and Rafael Alarcon dispense with the argument that a free trade agreement will put an end to illegal migration from Mexico to the United States.

The book closes with a section on "Continental Alternatives." It is perhaps here that the superficiality of the collection is most frustrating to the reader. Because the authors have not provided an analysis of the alignment of class forces underlying the push for free trade, it is difficult for them to identify meaningful alternatives to this project. What does the "One-World Strategy for Labor" proposed by Jeremy Brecher and Tim Costello mean in an historical moment in which the US labour movement has suffered one defeat after another and the relatively tiny number of Mexican workers who are organized by independent unions live every day of their working and private lives under threat of savage repression? In what terms can we understand Cavanagh, Bello, and Broad's proposals for debt relief for Mexico and other Latin American countries if the book does not provide an analysis of how the "debt trap" developed and is sustained? The "Development, Democracy and Dignity" referred to by Gaventa, Smith, and Willingham seems little more than a hopeful slogan in the absence of a more profound exploration of what, exactly, is the link between the democratization process, economic development, and redistributive justice. The cases of Argentina and Brazil indicate that the relationship between the move from authoritarian rule to democratic institutions and economic development is anything but simple. How, then, is the reader to interpret calls for a "new participation" that "transcends class, racial, gender and community lines," (112) in the context of the political authoritarianism that persists in Mexico even as Salinas attempts to "streamline" the economy?

Overall, the editors of this collection have assembled some very stimulating, well written, short pieces that critically

evaluate the most immediate problems associated with the drive toward the NAFTA. *Trading Freedom* would make a wonderful briefing book for anyone who had to address a largely sympathetic audience on the topic, "One Hundred Good Reasons to Oppose Free Trade." However, for a more profound and satisfying analysis of why we now stand on the brink of a North American free trade agreement and what is to be done about its negative consequences, we will have to search for more sustained analyses than this collection can provide.

Judith Adler Hellman
York University

Louis Fournier, *Louis Laberge. Le syndicalisme, c'est ma vie (Montréal, Québec: Amérique 1992).*

LOUIS FOURNIER NOUS livre ici la biographie du militant syndical le plus connu au Québec, hormis peut-être Michel Chartrand. Louis Laberge, en effet, est resté 27 ans à la tête de la plus importante centrale syndicale du Québec, la Fédération des travailleurs (puis des travailleurs et des travailleuses) du Québec, la FTQ. A ce titre, il méritait qu'on lui consacre une biographie. Le lecteur y découvrira le bilan d'un chef ouvrier important de l'histoire syndicale du Québec, une personnalité attachante et une mine de renseignements et d'anecdotes qui font de cette biographie une espèce de portrait intimiste et affectueux de celui que l'auteur appelle le «Vieux lion.»

Louis Fournier a bien connu Laberge: il a été vice-président aux communications pour le compte du Fonds de solidarité de la FTQ pendant plus de sept ans. Il en a rédigé l'histoire, d'ailleurs (*Solidarité Inc. Un nouveau syndicalisme créateur d'emplois*, 1991) et cette proximité de l'auteur et de son sujet pose certainement le problème de la complaisance: certes, son amitié avec Laberge a permis à Fournier d'interroger 62 personnes, dont

les proches de Laberge — sa première femme, sa deuxième, ses trois fils, ses collaborateurs immédiats, notamment Fernand Daoust et Jacques Brûlé, ses secrétaires, ses amis personnels — en plus de réaliser des entrevues avec Robert Bourassa, Jacques Parizeau, Jean Campeau, Marcel Pepin, Chislain Dufour, et plusieurs autres. Mais il trace le portrait de celui qui a été son patron et l'on ne se surprendra pas devant le regard tendre, amical, affectueux et admiratif que Fournier a posé sur la carrière et la personnalité de Laberge. Mais peut-il en être autrement dans le genre biographique? Qui entreprendrait la biographie d'une personnalité qu'il excède? Cela dit, Fournier mentionne les jugements critiques qu'ont posés ses adversaires sur Laberge: les Mulroney, Bourassa, Marcel Pepin (ex-président de la CSN), Michel Chartrand (ex-président du Conseil central de Montréal) et Chislain Dufour. L'ensemble donne toutefois un portrait largement favorable du «Vieux lion.»

Laberge naît le 18 février 1924, à Montréal, huitième enfant d'une famille ouvrière qui en comptera dix. Son père, Ephrem Laberge, est charpentier-menuisier et syndicaliste de la Confédération des travailleurs catholiques du Canada ... Dès l'âge de 19 ans, Laberge est congédié pour activité syndicale, mais c'est le début d'une carrière de cinquante ans de militantisme syndical. Le profil de Laberge en fait le prototype du syndicaliste nord-américain qui a gravi tous les échelons de la base au sommet: délégué d'atelier puis secrétaire de la loge 712, Laberge devient «agent d'affaire,» c'est-à-dire permanent du syndicat des Machinistes.

Il milite ensuite au Conseil des Métiers et du Travail de Montréal (CMTM), dont il devient membre de l'exécutif en 1950 et président, en 1955. Puis, il devient le président fondateur du nouveau Conseil du travail de Montréal, en 1958, avant de succéder à Roger Provost à la tête de la nouvelle FTQ, en 1964. Il demeure à la présidence de la FTQ jusqu'en

1991, et il reste actif dans le syndicalisme comme président du conseil d'administration du Fonds de solidarité de la FTQ.

Au travers les 23 chapitres de ce livre, c'est toute l'histoire du syndicalisme moderne qui défile sous nos yeux, de la syndicalisation massive du temps de guerre à la création, controversée du Fonds de solidarité, en passant par les batailles contre Maurice Duplessis et Jean Drapeau, la révolution tranquille et l'émergence du syndicalisme dans le secteur public, les batailles du Front commun de 1972, 1975 et 1982, les durs conflits à Seven-Up, *La Presse* et United Aircraft, la crise d'octobre 1970, la commission Cliche sur la criminalité dans la construction, les rapports avec le Parti québécois, le référendum de 1980 et les réalignements imposés par les crises économiques de 1982 et 1988.

L'ouvrage de Fournier est bien écrit. Les phrases sont courtes, le style est vif et l'auteur n'est pas avare de ces anecdotes qui rendent le personnage de Laberge si vivant. Laberge est caractérisé ainsi par Fournier: force de la nature, bourru mais avec du cœur, travaillant, possédant un franc-parler, privilégiant les liens d'amitié envers et contre tout, franc, direct, parfois matamore, joueur invétéré un peu trop porté sur la bouteille, Laberge est l'opposé du bureaucrate froid ou de l'idéaliste dogmatique: il personnalise ses rapports avec les ouvriers de la base comme avec les grands de ce monde. Il fait jouer ses contacts pour régler les conflits, car il est constamment à la recherche d'un compromis pour faire avancer les choses. Laberge est aussi en constante évolution: ouvertement antiséparatiste au début des années soixante, Laberge est un militant souverainiste au début des années quatre-vingt dix. Tour à tour conservateur, socialiste, puis social-démocrate, pro-Américain puis farouche défenseur de l'autonomie syndicale québécoise, partisan du NPD puis ami de Mulroney, Laberge ne s'enferme pas dans des tours d'ivoire idéologiques.

Pragmatisme et réalisme: tels sont les deux qualificatifs employés par Fournier pour décrire le leadership de Laberge, ce «parrain» du syndicalisme québécois. En effet, on ne trouvera pas de longue dissertation sur l'idéologie de Louis Laberge dans ce volume, mais plutôt une longue liste de ses réalisations. Il a été au cœur de l'affirmation de la FTQ comme centrale syndicale à part entière, indépendante du Congrès du Travail du Canada et aussi des grands syndicats américains. Il est à l'origine de la FTQ-Construction, du programme Corvée-Habitation et du Fonds de solidarité de la FTQ. Son dernier projet, l'édifice de la FTQ et du Fonds de solidarité, boulevard Crémazie à Montréal, témoigne du succès de celui que Fournier n'hésite pas à qualifier de «figure dominante du syndicalisme québécois pour la deuxième moitié du XXe siècle.» (382)

Bien entendu, l'ouvrage de Fournier ne peut aborder toutes les grandes batailles syndicales ni examiner en détail le rôle de Laberge dans chacune d'elles. Ainsi, Fournier décrit longuement la crise initiée par les agissements de Dédé Desjardins et ses confrères du puissant Conseil des métiers de la construction, responsables du saccage de la Baie James (1974) et de l'établissement d'un système de banditisme organisé dans les syndicats de la construction affiliés à la FTQ. Laberge, dont Desjardins est l'un des amis, est blâmé par la commission Cliche pour son «aveuglement» et sa «méconnaissance des hommes.» Fournier nous apprend que Laberge a été également blâmé par l'exécutif de la FTQ (258), mais nous ne saurons pas comment il a fait pour demeurer à la tête de la FTQ dans de telles conditions. Pour durer ainsi 27 ans à la tête de la FTQ, Laberge a dû être un batailleur, un «survivant,» conclut simplement Fournier.

L'ouvrage de Fournier comble ainsi une lacune évidente en histoire du syndicalisme québécois. Les biographies sont rares — à quand celles de Michel Chartrand, de Fernand Daoust, de Claude Jodoin, de Madeleine Parent? — et il faut

se réjouir de la parution de celle de Laberge. De tels travaux permettent de situer les chefs ouvriers dans leur époque et dans la dynamique des organisations qu'ils ont dirigées. Cet égard, le livre de Fournier livre la marchandise, sans pour autant épuiser le sujet. Mais il est bien difficile d'écrire la biographie d'un vivant, surtout quand ce dernier occupe encore des fonctions importantes. Qui sait si les témoignages seront les mêmes dans vingt ans?

Bernard Dionne
Cépeg Lionel-Groulx

Roch Denis et Serge Denis, *Les syndicats face au pouvoir. Syndicalisme et politique au Québec de 1960 à 1992* (Ottawa: Les Éditions du Vermillon 1992).

DANS CET OUVRAGE, les auteurs rendent compte de l'évolution des rapports entre le mouvement syndical et le pouvoir politique au Québec, depuis 1960. Renouant avec une tradition historiographique longtemps reléguée au second plan, voilà un livre centré sur ce qu'on appelait l'«action politique ouvrière» — mais qui, en fait, ne concerne ici que les organisations syndicales.

Le développement se divise en trois parties. Dans une première partie, la plus longue, on relate le développement tumultueux du syndicalisme québécois durant les vingt ans qui vont de l'arrivée au pouvoir des libéraux de Jean Lesage jusqu'au premier mandat du Parti québécois. Les auteurs, notamment en comparant cette époque avec les années 1950, démontrent bien comment la croissance des effectifs — particulièrement ceux du secteur public — et l'émergence du syndicalisme comme force sociale de premier plan ont généré durant cette période un nouveau type de rapport avec l'État et les gouvernements, qui ne peuvent plus ignorer sa présence et sa voix. Les grandes étapes et les principaux phénomènes et développements de cette époque de gloire

du syndicalisme québécois sont présentés et resitués dans leur contexte. Au delà de l'analyse des facteurs internes et externes ayant conditionné ce développement, le fil conducteur privilégié ici est l'attitude des syndicats à l'égard de la politique partisane, et plus précisément de la formation d'un parti des travailleurs. Cet égard, bien que cela ne soit pas dit explicitement, les auteurs semblent reprocher l'incapacité des syndicats à s'engager dans la voie du troisième parti et leur choix de miser plutôt sur les formations en place, les libéraux d'abord et le PQ par la suite (exemples: 36-7, 55, 57, 74, 189). Ce biais agace quelque peu, justement parce qu'il n'est pas explicitement déclaré et assumé par les auteurs qui ont semble-t-il voulu marquer leur analyse du sceau de la neutralité et éviter les prises de position idéologiques trop marquées. Nous y reviendrons.

Dans un deuxième temps, les auteurs se penchent sur la période allant du référendum de 1980 jusqu'à l'accord du Lac Meech, en passant par la rapatriement de 1982. Cette partie est en fait consacrée à une analyse comparative des positions respectives des mouvements syndicaux québécois et anglo-canadien à l'égard de la question constitutionnelle. On y décrit avec force détails comment le CTC et le NPd sont passés d'une attitude de relative ouverture d'esprit à l'égard du droit à l'autodétermination du Québec, pour devenir, à l'époque du référendum, des alliés fidèles de la stratégie constitutionnelle du gouvernement Trudeau. L'inverse, bien qu'aucune centrale n'appuya officiellement l'indépendance, le mouvement syndical québécois adopta des positions s'opposant diamétralement à celles des organisations anglo-canadiennes puisque, grosso modo, il s'aligna sur les positions du Parti québécois. Bref, pour les auteurs, la question nationale — ou plus précisément le nationalisme respectif des uns et des autres — est devenue plus que jamais, durant les années 1980, le grand facteur de division entre les deux solitudes syndicales cohabitant au sein du Canada.

Enfin, dans leur troisième partie — la plus faible, selon nous, parce que la démonstration y est trop embryonnaire et appuie peu les conclusions — les auteurs analysent les effets de la stagnation économique des années 1980 sur les structures, les attitudes, et les pratiques des syndicats au Québec. Partant de l'hypothèse selon laquelle «les crises économiques ont tendance à favoriser l'intervention politique du mouvement ouvrier,» les auteurs s'attachent principalement à décrire le «processus des différenciations, des clivages et des contradictions internes» que ce phénomène aurait provoqué au sein du mouvement. On développe d'abord l'idée que l'impact profond de la récession et des grèves de 1982-1983 dans le secteur public aura deux effets opposés: d'un côté, l'alliance informelle avec le gouvernement péquiste se brise et conduit à une méfiance et une certaine autonomie à l'égard des gouvernements; mais d'un autre côté, afin de défendre les intérêts de leurs membres durant une conjoncture particulièrement difficile, les appareils syndicaux mettent de l'avant une attitude de concertation et de dialogue, recherchant ainsi l'implication et la participation au processus de décision politique. Abordant la question des divisions et des contradictions internes résultant de cette évolution contradictoire, les auteurs font état des tensions entre une base présentée comme plus «radicale» et critique à l'égard de l'État et du pouvoir politique — attitude militante découlant principalement de la grève de la fonction publique de 1982-1983 —, par opposition à des leaders syndicaux qui auraient plutôt cherché à courtiser les gouvernements en adhérant à leur discours de concertation et de partenariat tripartite. Par ailleurs, on voit dans le fait que les centrales soient devenues ouvertement souverainistes au tournant des années 1990, non seulement une étape importante de leur attitude face à la question nationale, mais le signe de leur affranchissement et de l'autonomie retrouvée face au pouvoir politique. L'ouvrage se

clôt sur une esquisse à peine ébauchée de prospective quant à l'attitude du syndicalisme à l'égard de son implication politique. Dans l'ensemble, l'analyse du syndicalisme actuel tel qu'il se développe depuis le retour des libéraux est chiche et l'évaluation de la crise actuelle du syndicalisme, malgré les promesses de l'introduction et de la quatrième de couverture, déçoit par sa minceur, son manque d'originalité et son manque d'achèvement. Dans cette optique, ajoutons en passant qu'il aurait été plus fertile selon nous de rapatrier dans cette dernière partie l'analyse de la nouvelle idéologie de partenariat prévalant depuis 1984-1985, qui se trouve curieusement à la fin de la première partie. (86-9)

L'ouvrage de Serge et Roch Denis a comme grand avantage d'offrir une synthèse relativement à jour du mouvement syndical québécois — et, dans une certaine mesure, canadien — à une époque où l'on écrit beaucoup moins qu'auparavant sur le syndicalisme. Comme l'affirment à juste titre les auteurs, leur ouvrage comble donc une lacune justifiant dès lors sa parution. Nos réserves touchent leur approche analytique qui, si elle est cohérente, est parfois discutable et comporte quelques ambiguïtés.

En effet, le grand absent de leur interprétation reste la masse des syndiqués anonymes dont l'impact pourtant fondamental sur l'évolution du mouvement semble inexistant. Dans l'ensemble, la différenciation reste trop souvent floue entre ces trois niveaux distincts que sont la haute direction des centrales, le groupe des militants actifs et la base des membres, ce qui conduit parfois à des glissements analytiques agaçants. Par exemple, on ne situe pas le rôle non négligeable du membership dans le virage des années 1980 vers une certaine modération dans le discours et les pratiques syndicales. L'arrivée au pouvoir du PQ puis la crise économique ont certes déterminé cette évolution, mais il reste qu'un certain raz-le-bol des membres à l'égard d'une rhétorique anti-capitaliste dans laquelle

ils ne se reconnaissaient pas a aussi joué un rôle en creusant un fossé entre eux et leurs dirigeants. De même, avec l'obtention de très bonnes conventions collectives durant les années 1970, suite à de très durs conflits dans le secteur public, plusieurs ont été amenés tout naturellement à estimer que le retard initial avait été comblé et qu'il fallait remettre en question les pratiques antérieures, d'autant plus que la frustration croissante de la population, privée régulièrement de ses hôpitaux et de ses écoles, concourait également à une réflexion en ce sens. Toujours dans cette optique, l'emploi par les auteurs de l'expression «radicalisation politique» (i.e., dans le titre du chapitre IX, 149), pour désigner l'attitude de la base syndicale suite aux grèves de 1982-1983, prête à confusion. Selon nous, il faudrait plutôt parler d'une sainte colère des employés du gouvernement, alors en processus de négociation et qui, habitués aux succès des rondes précédentes, ont mal digéré le refus ferme et cavalier de leurs demandes par un gouvernement qu'ils croyaient jusque là «de leur bord.» Cet épisode a certes détourné plus ou moins temporairement beaucoup de syndiqués du Parti québécois et aiguisé l'esprit critique de certains militants à l'égard de la stratégie de concertation prônée par les hautes instances, mais il ne faut pas exagérer selon nous la dichotomie entre une base qui serait devenue soudainement plus idéologiquement lucide et critique envers l'État et des hautes instances devenues quant à elles plus «collaborationnistes.»

D'autre part, cette absence, dans l'analyse, du poids des membres de la base hypothétique également la compréhension qu'ont les auteurs des rapports du syndicalisme québécois envers le PQ et le néo-nationalisme. Comme nous le signalons plus haut, les auteurs déploraient implicitement de voir les syndicats adopter le PQ comme leur parti, plutôt que de se doter d'un parti bien à eux. Ils semblent présenter le PQ et l'adhésion au néo-nationalisme comme un cheval de Troie,

un leurre ayant détourné le mouvement syndical de sa voie «normale» vers un parti autonome. Or, plutôt qu'une aberration erratique et moralement condamnable, cette évolution des appareils syndicaux ne vient-elle pas — au moins en partie — de la pression de la grande majorité de leurs membres, notamment ceux du secteur public? Comme ces derniers ne se percevaient pas d'abord et avant tout comme des syndiqués, mais bien plutôt comme citoyens individuels d'une société québécoise en voie d'affirmation, c'est en tant que tels qu'ils ont massivement adopté le néo-nationalisme et que plusieurs d'entre eux — tout comme, d'ailleurs, beaucoup de militants et de hauts dirigeants syndicaux — ont appuyé le parti qui en poussait la logique jusqu'au bout.

Ces commentaires nous amènent à revenir sur une autre ambiguïté que nous relevions dès le départ. En effet, on ne comprend pas pourquoi les auteurs, qui s'inscrivent de longue date dans le courant de pensée marxiste, n'explicitent pas clairement l'origine théorique et idéologique de leurs attentes et postulats de base, tels que la nécessité de l'implication politique et d'un parti autonome des travailleurs, ou la perception du nationalisme comme facteur de division de la classe ouvrière. Ces conceptions et *a priori* guident implicitement leur approche globale, mais ne sont pas discutés ouvertement dans les remarques préliminaires au début du livre où elles auraient pu facilement figurer, ce qui aurait clarifié les choses dès le départ. Faute de l'avoir fait, le lecteur non-initié — le livre, affirme-t-on, est destiné aux étudiants — se demandera pourquoi les auteurs ne semblent pas aimer l'alliance des syndicats avec le PQ, ni pourquoi ils semblent déplorer la division des syndicalismes québécois et anglo-canadien sur la question constitutionnelle. Sur ce dernier point, d'ailleurs, on pourra contester la tendance des auteurs, dans leur deuxième partie notamment, à pousser la logique de l'unité de la classe ouvrière au point de

présenter le mouvement syndical du Québec et celui du reste du Canada comme étant les deux composantes d'une même entité, d'une même classe ouvrière qui serait pan-canadienne. Les deux syndicalismes sont distincts pour la simple et bonne raison que les deux sociétés desquelles ils sont issus le sont tout autant. Dès lors, les positions opposées des deux mouvements quant à la question constitutionnelle ne surprend plus et s'explique sans problème.

En terminant, mentionnons que l'objectif fort louable des auteurs de fournir un instrument de synthèse accessible aux étudiants (13) n'est que partiellement atteint, selon nous. Si la table des matières et l'abondance de titres permet de «naviguer» assez facilement dans le texte, on se doit cependant de déplorer l'absence de bibliographie et d'un index de base. Par ailleurs, le niveau de langage et d'abstraction reste élevé, et nombre d'allusions et de références à des événements, des personnages ou des réalités propres aux relations de travail de cette époque ne pourront être saisies des non-initiés, à défaut d'avoir été bien situées dans le texte.

Jean-François Cardin
Université de Montréal

Denis Goulet et André Paradis, *Trois siècles d'Histoire médicale au Québec* (Montréal: Collections Études québécoises, vlb éditeur 1992).

DEPUIS UNE DÉCENNIE, de nombreuses études ont été consacrées à l'histoire de la médecine au Québec. Il est pourtant curieux de constater qu'aucune chronologie des institutions et des pratiques médicales n'avait été mise à jour depuis 1928. Dans cet imposant volume, les auteurs tentent de combler cette importante lacune en rassemblant les différentes informations présentées dans les sources et l'historiographie sur la généalogie de la pratique médicale entre 1639 et 1939.

Pour raisons de commodités, les auteurs ont regroupé leurs informations dans cinq sections différentes. La première partie porte sur l'histoire des institutions hospitalières depuis la fondation en 1639 de l'Hôtel-Dieu du Précieux-Sang de Québec. Cet hôpital a d'ailleurs été la première institution hospitalière en Amérique. Sous cette rubrique, les auteurs notent l'origine non seulement des hôpitaux mais aussi de tout établissement (asile, dispensaire, sanatorium, etc.) où a été pratiqué, soit temporairement, soit sur une base permanente, un quelconque traitement médical.

Durant l'époque coloniale, l'hôpital remplissait ici les mêmes fonctions qu'en Europe. Alors que l'Hôtel-Dieu est voué à la guérison autant de l'âme que du corps, l'Hôpital Général était plutôt un lieu d'enfermement des pauvres. L'augmentation de l'indigence au 19^e siècle entraîne la création des premiers dispensaires, qui peu à peu se spécialiseront. Ce sera à la fin du 19^e siècle que les hôpitaux deviendront d'authentiques machines à guérir.

Le lecteur ne manquera pas de remarquer que les dates de fondation des diverses institutions hospitalières varient souvent selon les auteurs. Ce fait vient de l'absence d'un consensus de la part des historiens sur ce que signifie la fondation. Alors que certains auteurs ont retenu la journée d'ouverture de l'institution, d'autres ont retenu au contraire le moment où l'institution a obtenu son incorporation comme date de fondation.

La seconde partie porte sur les épidémies, l'hygiène et la santé publique. Si la Nouvelle-France a connu, dès le 17^e siècle, des mesures visant à contrôler la maladie, comme la quarantaine, c'est au milieu du 19^e siècle avec les fameuses épidémies de choléra et de typhus que ces mesures jusqu'alors exceptionnelles s'installeront définitivement. Comme le soulignent avec justesse les auteurs, la forme que prend le combat contre les maladies épidémiques ne peut se comprendre sans une connaissance des théories médicales

dominantes à l'époque. Or, au début du 19^e siècle, les médecins sont divisés au sujet de la cause de choléra ou du typhus et par le fait même sur la manière d'éliminer ces maladies. Alors que les partisans des théories contagionistes prétendaient que la maladie se propageait par contact, les partisans des théories infectionnistes croyaient au contraire qu'elle se propageait par l'air. Si la première thèse amenait la nécessité d'isoler le malade et de pratiquer la quarantaine, la seconde soulignait plutôt l'obligation de désinfecter les lieux infectés, de ramasser les ordures, d'assécher les marais, etc. Ce ne sera qu'avec l'introduction de la bactériologie durant les décennies 1880-1890 que les moyens de prévention proposés par contagionistes et infectionnistes trouvèrent un terrain d'entente.

La troisième partie porte sur la structuration de la profession médicale. Sous ce titre, les auteurs indiquent l'ensemble des lois touchant le fonctionnement des corporations professionnelles ainsi que les dates de fondation des diverses sociétés médicales, des associations ou des périodiques médicaux qui ont joué un rôle dans le développement de la pratique médicale. Goulet et Paradis indiquent que la séparation de la médecine en trois corps professionnels différents (médecins, chirurgiens, apothicaires) présents dans l'ensemble de l'Europe n'exista jamais au Québec en raison de la rareté des praticiens et du peu de contrôle de la pratique médicale avant la conquête britannique. Ce n'est qu'en 1788 que fut adoptée la première législation de la profession médicale. La lutte des praticiens locaux pour dominer leur profession conduira à la création du Collège des médecins et chirurgiens en 1847. Invoquée au nom de la lutte contre le charlatanisme, la consolidation de la profession médicale conduisit toutefois à la subordination des autres praticiens de la santé comme les sages-femmes, les pharmaciens et les homéopathes. Si les sages-femmes sont peu à peu soumises au contrôle du collège

et si les facultés de médecine n'admettront des femmes qu'à la fin du 19^e siècle, la profession des infirmières sera de plus en plus reconnue au fur et à mesure que l'on avancera dans le temps. Dominée d'abord par le clergé, cette discipline se laïcifiera de plus en plus à partir du 20^e siècle.

L'histoire de l'enseignement médical fait l'objet de la 4^e section. Pendant longtemps, l'apprentissage auprès d'un maître formait l'essentiel de la formation chirurgicale et médicale au Québec. Le début du 19^e siècle a marqué le début des premiers enseignements dans les dispensaires. Mais la non-reconnaissance officielle de cet enseignement et la difficulté d'avoir de la « matière première » (c'est-à-dire des corps pour étude de l'anatomie pathologique) nuiront longtemps au développement de l'enseignement médical. C'est pourquoi les premières écoles de médecine et de chirurgie durent s'affilier avec les hôpitaux qui devinrent le cadre privilégié de la formation pratique au cours de la seconde moitié du 19^e siècle.

La dernière section porte enfin sur l'évolution du savoir médical. Pendant toute la période étudiée, la médecine québécoise ne fait qu'importer le savoir venant de la métropole et des grands centres médicaux. Cette dépendance de la médecine québécoise face à l'étranger se démontre très manifestement par le peu de découvertes et d'innovations locales.

Goulet et Paradis ont produit ici un ouvrage qui intéressera autant le grand public que le spécialiste. Pour le profane, il permet en effet de saisir rapidement les grandes étapes de l'évolution du savoir et de la pratique médicale en termes simples et accessibles. Sans être totalement exhaustif, le répertoire des sources et des ouvrages de référence présenté par les auteurs est particulièrement impressionnant et offre une bonne idée des instruments disponibles pour tout chercheur intéressé à en savoir plus sur un aspect précis de l'histoire de la médecine au Québec.

Seuls les spécialistes peuvent apporter certaines critiques sur le fond. Si, lors de divergences trop fortes entre certains historiens sur les dates ou les causes d'émergence d'une institution hospitalière, Goulet et Paradis expriment leurs opinions sur la thèse la plus probable, on peut regretter qu'ils n'aient pas vérifié les sources quand un seul auteur s'est penché sur l'histoire d'une institution ou d'une pratique. Permettons-nous ici de préciser quelques points portant sur l'aspect qui nous est le plus connu, celui de la psychiatrie; L'école La Jemmerais fondée en 1928 « destinée aux patients souffrant de maladies nerveuses ou mentales » (Goselin, 1983) est pour être plus précis une école vouée à l'éducation sensorielle et psycho-motrice des jeunes déficients mentaux. Par ailleurs, la lecture d'un ouvrage non utilisé par les auteurs (H. Hurd, 1917) nous confirme que l'asile Saint-Benoit-Joseph de Longue-Pointe (fondé en 1884 selon certains auteurs) et le Saint-Benedict Asylum (fondé en 1885 selon Haegerty) sont en fait un seul et même établissement fondé en 1885. Ces quelques coquilles, comme toute autre que des recherches ultérieures pourraient démontrer, n'enlèvent rien toutefois à la qualité d'une oeuvre qui ne doit être vue comme étant décisive.

Et c'est justement en prenant cet ouvrage sur cet angle que le spécialiste y trouvera son compte. Ce livre nous permet en effet de découvrir rapidement les divers territoires encore peu explorés par les historiens de la médecine au Québec. Ainsi, de nombreuses institutions thérapeutiques, spécialisations médicales ou professions para-médicales n'ont pas encore fait l'objet d'études historiques. Peu d'études comparatives ont été faites jusqu'à maintenant également. L'histoire du savoir médical est, de toutes les sections présentées par Goulet et Paradis, de loin celle qui jusqu'à maintenant a été la moins étudiée. Enfin, plusieurs autres aspects comme la médecine en milieu rural, le charlatanisme, les médecines populaires, le comportement du patient face à

l'hôpital ou au traitement sont encore des territoires totalement vierges.

Le livre de Goulet et de Paradis est à notre avis appelé à devenir un instrument de base non seulement pour les historiens de la médecine mais aussi pour toute personne intéressée à n'importe quel aspect de l'histoire québécoise. Car après tout l'histoire d'un individu ou d'un peuple ne se résume-t-elle pas en fait à la lutte pour sa survie?

Guy Grenier
Université de Montréal

Pierre Lanthier et Guildo Rousseau (sous la direction de), *La Culture inventée. Les stratégies culturelles aux 19e et 20e siècles* (Québec: Institut québécois de recherche sur la culture 1992).

SI L'ON SE FIE à la remarquable cohérence des actes, ce colloque tenu au Centre d'études québécoises de l'Université du Québec à Trois-Rivières fut à la fois une réussite et l'occasion, pour le Centre, d'identifier ses secteurs d'excellence.

L'ouvrage offre des analyses «des stratégies culturelles au sein des rapports sociaux» et des moyens pris par les classes dominantes «pour défendre leurs intérêts.» Ces études illustrent à souhait comment «on forge la mémoire historique.» comment on récupère des symboles pour créer des ralliements idéologiques et promouvoir des idées et des groupes sociaux. Elles s'insèrent dans une trame de recherche internationale de déconstruction qui, en Histoire, renvoie aux travaux de Hobsbawm en Angleterre, d'Agulhon et d'Ozouf en France et de nombreux historiens américains.

Les résultats de ces enquêtes sont mis en forme selon quatre types de stratégies: identitaires, sociales, économiques et pour l'avenir. Les stratégies identitaires sont celles mises en place pour constituer Garneau et Fréchette comme historien et poète nationaux et que Manon Brunet rend explicites. François Landry, avec un

recours au concept plutôt grossier de «dressage idéologique» (45-6), montre toutefois avec habileté et originalité la collusion entre l'édition, l'école et le pouvoir politique dans l'histoire de la maison Beauchemin. Le jargon de Louis Francoeur n'aide guère à comprendre sa notion sémiotique de «série culturelle» à laquelle les historiens portent pourtant un intérêt tout particulier; les lecteurs se feront leur propre idée à propos de cette tentation généralisatrice et de certaines notions comme «l'interprète collectif.» Jean-Marc Paradis présente des résultats très préliminaires de ses recherches sur le sport en Mauricie; la variante régionale de cette histoire, mieux connue pour Montréal, promet d'être intéressante en particulier en raison de l'hypothèse de l'acculturation du village et du collège où, parmi les sports, au tournant du siècle, domine le baseball étatsunien. Jacques Beauchemin, Gilles Bourque, et Jules Duchastel se livrent à une analyse du «discours» constitutionnel de M. Duplessis, à la recherche des modes de rapport entre la tradition et la modernité. L'intitulé de leur contribution, emprunté à «la stratégie discursive duplessiste,» «Les traditions de la province de Québec sont immuables mais elles ne sont pas immobiles,» suggère la difficulté de la tâche.

Parmi les stratégies sociales, deux études sur la littérature: Judith Cown fait voir comment Mazo de la Roche a inventé un univers romanesque de refus des États-Unis et d'adhésion à l'Angleterre qui aboutit à un Ontario rural, seigneurial, stéréotypé, et anachronique, et Lucie Joubert explore la mise en scène sociale des femmes dans la dramaturgie québécoise récente. Puis trois textes sur l'association, L'école et la Caisse populaire. René Verrett étudie les conditions d'émergence du phénomène associatif à Trois-Rivières, mais la stratégie culturelle de ces associations reste à être détaillée, même s'il appert que des élites parfois libérales et démocrates y trouvaient leurs intérêts.

Serge Gagnon se tourne actuellement vers l'histoire de l'éducation des masses en se concentrant sur l'école élémentaire. C'est avec l'alphabétisation, LA stratégie culturelle publique ou de masse incontournable et préalable à toute histoire culturelle. Fin analyste, Gagnon va à contre-courant: il fait voir ce que l'Etat a néanmoins retenu de son combat avec l'Eglise; il évoque le maternage d'une institution peuplée d'institutrices, susceptible d'assurer «une transition en douceur de l'univers domestique vers la sphère publique.» Et, question de mettre le suspense qu'il faut à une recension, le lecteur aura plaisir à lire les conclusions stimulantes de S. Gagnon à propos de la responsabilité sociale du «retard» scolaire. (148-9)

Les organisateurs du colloque ont vu loin en faisant place à des études sur un phénomène «populaire»: les Caisses populaires créées par Alphonse Desjardins. Ronald Rudin montre bien comment Desjardins a inventé une tradition à la fois pour maintenir le pouvoir de la petite bourgeoisie et pour donner à la masse la conviction qu'elle était associée à l'initiative.

Cette analyse introduit à la section sur les stratégies économiques, la plus neuve et la plus cohérente de l'ouvrage. On y aborde le vingtième siècle, l'émergence de la société de consommation et des stratégies publicitaires selon une séquence d'études présentées dans une dynamique chronologique. Michel Bellefleur, Roger Levasseur et Yvan Rousseau décrivent la libéralisation du crédit dans le Mouvement des caisses Desjardins qui, centrées sur le petit producteur, s'ouvrent après 1945 au consommateur. Les auteurs ont visé un objectif décisif: la marche à la consommation du Québécois moyen. Claude Tousignant et Vincent Dubost s'intéressent au discours publicitaire sur les produits pharmaceutiques entre 1900 et 1950 centrant leur analyse sur les actes de langage et l'énonciation plus que sur les énoncés.

L'article de Luc Côté et de Jean-Guy Daigle sur «la publicité de masse et la masse publicitaire dans la presse quoti-

dienne au Québec (1929-1957)» constitue l'un des plats de résistance de l'ouvrage. La recherche est impressionnante: corpus, échantillon, légitimation de la périodisation, analyse de la croissance des ventes au détail, des agences de publicité, du pouvoir d'achat et de ses contextes, étude des types d'annonce selon les secteurs de consommation permettent des conclusions fascinantes sur la privatisation de la vie sociale et de la consommation culturelle et, enfin, une définition un peu explicite de la culture de masse. Cette analyse sur la genèse et l'évolution de la consommation de masse au Québec est poursuivie par Mario Désautels qui scrute la structure budgétaire des familles montréalaises entre 1938 et 1959 et qui met en valeur une consommation qui passe de l'univers des besoins à celui des aspirations. Ces dépenses qui s'accélérent vers 1947 confirment l'analyse de Côté et Daigle qui datent de l'après-guerre le décollage de la consommation. Enfin, Simon Langlois, qui dirige à l'IQRC une équipe qui suit les tendances de la société québécoise, explore les nouveaux rapports sociaux engendrés par la consommation depuis 1960 et propose de voir dans la consommation récente un des lieux de formation de l'individualisme contemporain.

Dans «L'évolution du marché des best-sellers au Québec dans les années 1980,» Denis Saint-Jacques, critique sur les sources disponibles et sur leur valeur, en vient à constater à propos de la lecture de loisir que c'est la France qui sert de «relais de l'américanité sur le marché francophone au Québec.» Le best-seller étatsunien est traduit en France et diffusé au Québec via des distributeurs français ou québécois. L'absence même d'un journal couvrant l'ensemble du territoire québécois, l'absence de liste fiable de best-sellers dans la presse, une critique élitaine faite pour la critique et le milieu plutôt que pour les lecteurs et la difficulté à vivre l'appartenance à l'Amérique font écrire courageusement à l'auteur: «Pour une raison difficilement explicable, il est

important de savoir avec assez de précision ce que nous regardons à la télévision, ce que nous écoutons à la radio, ce que nous lisons dans la presse, médias de masse où se joue notre culture, mais pas dans la lecture de loisir, marché où aucune obligation de propriété nationale, ni de quotas de produits nationaux ne joue. A vrai dire, il n'est pas évident qu'on veuille même savoir ce qui s'y passe.» (273)

Dans les «stratégies pour le Québec de demain,» Marcel Fournier, Lucie Robert et Heinz Weinmann proposent leur réflexion de même que Gérard Bouchard qui confronte ses lecteurs à deux impératifs: l'américanité du Québec qui a fait du Québec une nation à deux cultures, l'élitiste et la populaire, et ce face à face pour les intellectuels d'une société où la culture savante traditionnelle est en déclin et exige de nouveaux modes de communication entre l'université et Monsieur Tout-le-monde.

En ce qui concerne le travail d'édition, les auteurs cités ne sont pas toujours dans les notes: c'est le cas de l'étude pionnière de Jean Gagnon à laquelle on fait allusion. (57) Des «*Ibidem*» apparaissent sans référence préalable (58) ou des références sont incomplètes. (59, n. 23 et 31) Des «compilations personnelles» sont mentionnées sans que l'on sache quelles furent les sources et les méthodes. (96, n. 12, 13, 18, 19) Dans un autre cas (158), le lecteur voudra peut-être connaître précisément les sources utilisées pour commenter telle polémique. Un graphique des pourcentages eut facilité la lecture et l'analyse des données. (285)

L'ouvrage constitue une percée intéressante dans l'analyse de la culture de la majorité; il donne sa place à une culture populaire gommée, occultée, biaisée par des élites. Il ouvre sur des horizons de données et de questions susceptibles d'arrimer enfin la connaissance historique de la culture à l'expérience actuelle de la vie quotidienne. Les lecteurs de *Labour/Le travail* apprécieront.

Yvan Lamonde
Université McGill

Lucia Ferretti, *Entre voisins. La société paroissiale en milieu urbain: Saint-Pierre-Apôtre de Montréal, 1848-1930* (Montréal: Boréal 1992).

EN 1982, LUCIA FERRETTI avait présenté avec Daniel LeBlanc un mémoire de maîtrise sur une paroisse ouvrière de Montréal, Sainte-Brigide, entre 1880 et 1914, dont j'avais retenu — je ne sais pourquoi, un détail parfois nous marque — que les ouvriers s'y mariaient le plus souvent le lundi entre 6 h et 7 h du matin. (La modestie de l'A. lui fait omettre de sa bibliographie l'article qu'elle en a tiré pour *RHAF*, 39 (1985), 233-51.) Elle s'intéressait alors en priorité à la condition ouvrière en milieu populaire.

Six ans plus tard paraît sa thèse de doctorat (UQAM, 1990), qui traite de même quartier du centre-est montréalais et des mêmes ouvriers, mais se présente sous des vêtements différents: ceux de l'histoire religieuse (la société paroissiale) et de l'histoire urbaine (en milieu urbain). Pourtant, la trajectoire entre ces différentes préoccupations est en ligne droite et c'est ce qui fait de cet ouvrage un grand livre, qui vient révolutionner l'historiographie québécoise et défaire plusieurs poncifs ancrés depuis trop longtemps dans la mémoire collective.

Ferretti étudie la paroisse Saint-Pierre-Apôtre, érigée en 1900, mais qui était depuis 1848 la chapelle des Oblats dans le faubourg Québec. Elle veut montrer que la paroisse a été le lieu de médiation entre ses habitants, venus de la campagne, et la ville: elle liait autant les fidèles à la ville qu'à l'Église. Cette démonstration est menée de main de maître d'abord à cause du recours à un ensemble de sources très diversifié, qui va des cahiers des prônes et du *Codex historicus* des missionnaires oblates aux rôles des valeurs locales et fichiers d'état civil, mais surtout grâce à une maîtrise de l'historiographie et à une réflexion d'ensemble qui lui permettent de dominer son sujet et de livrer une interprétation qui renouvelle complètement l'image des re-

lations entre milieux populaires, paroisse et ville.

L'arrière-plan est d'abord campé par un portrait sociologique des habitants, dans un quartier qui passe progressivement de l'état de faubourg qui s'industrialise à celui de centre-ville qu'on quitte parce qu'il se paupérise. Un signe qui ne trompe pas: le pourcentage des locataires augmente pour atteindre 92 pour cent en 1931, tandis que les gros propriétaires habitent de plus en plus à l'extérieur du quartier. Vient ensuite un portrait des Oblats, qui compteront jusqu'à 12 ou 13 vicaires à la fois dans cette petite paroisse, religieux disponibles, plutôt larges d'esprit, assez proches des gens simples.

Deux grands moments se partagent l'ouvrage. D'abord la période 1848-1870, où la paroisse permet aux migrants qui y arrivent d'intégrer la ville. Ils le font grâce à la piété ultramontaine, c'est-à-dire populaire, exubérante, que promeuvent les Oblats, appuyés par Mgr Bourget: processions, décorations, prédications, retraites. Vitalité religieuse d'autant plus forte qu'elle est en rivalité avec l'austère piété des Sulpiciens de Notre-Dame. Cette vitalité s'appuie aussi sur toute une organisation sociale: confréries ou congrégations d'hommes et de femmes, de jeunes gens et de jeunes filles, conférences de Saint-Vincent de Paul, cercle de loisirs. Une étude détaillée des familles les plus engagées montre que les plus actives aspirent à la notabilité et se recrutent dans la bourgeoisie du faubourg, commerçants et artisans surtout.

Le deuxième grand moment, l'âge d'or de la paroisse urbaine, se situe entre 1870 et 1914. La société paroissiale prend alors sa pleine signification et joue à fond son rôle d'intégration. Certes, Saint-Pierre est, surtout après 1900, une paroisse ouvrière, pauvre, où la ville est présentée avec ses dangers. On demande beaucoup d'argent aux fidèles. Leur réponse est inégale: selon l'une de ces formules bien frappées dont l'A. a le

secret, «Les missionnaires peuvent toujours attendre, l'église parfois, mais les pauvres jamais.» (133) Et Ferretti de montrer comment la participation massive aux activités paroissiales de toute sorte, loisirs, bazars, banquets, parties de cartes, organisées le plus souvent par les Dames de Sainte-Anne au profit des pauvres, tisse entre les paroissiens des liens qui constituent le ciment de la communauté. Et d'analyser en détail la participation aux associations pieuses et l'ouverture des conseils de confréries aux nouveaux arrivés et, dans une moindre mesure, aux employés et aux travailleurs.

Mais ce tissu social, fragile à bien des points de vue, commence à se défaire. A cause des transformations sociales du quartier, tout périclité dans la paroisse entre 1914 et 1930. L'A. esquisse rapidement la courbe de cette érosion. En somme, les Oblats et les paroissiens n'y peuvent pratiquement rien: c'est le changement sociologique du quartier qui transforme le rôle de la paroisse.

Parce qu'elle lie si bien l'étude concrète de la condition ouvrière à celle des sources paroissiales, notamment par l'étude de l'implication de 2 500 laïcs aux diverses oeuvres, cette étude renouvelle profondément notre connaissance des relations entre les milieux populaires, l'Église (ou la paroisse) et la ville. Le point de vue est neuf, équilibré, intelligent.

Ajoutons que la langue et le style sont d'une rare élégance: on reprend goût ici à la lecture de travaux savants. Les notes sont si riches de notations et citations de toute sorte qu'on regrette qu'elles aient été rejetées à la fin de l'ouvrage, ce qui oblige à un va-et-vient incessant. Un autre petit regret: l'absence d'une liste des sigles. Il n'est pas donné à tout le monde de savoir ce que signifie M.P. O.M.I. (Maison provinciale) ou RVL (Rôle des valeurs locatives).

Au total, voilà donc un ouvrage bien enlevé, stimulant, neuf, je dirais surtout, profondément honnête, un livre qui donne

du sens à la réalité. On s'y référera longtemps.

Guy Laperrière
Université de Sherbrooke

Marianne Kempeneers, *Le travail au féminin. Analyse démographique de la discontinuité professionnelle des femmes au Canada* (Montréal: Presses de l'Université de Montréal 1992).

LE SOUS-TITRE DU LIVRE de Marianne Kempeneers, évoquant les activités professionnelles, crée une légère ambiguïté en regard du titre. Le travail au féminin dont il y est question est celui que les femmes exercent tant sur le marché de l'emploi que chez elles; la discontinuité professionnelle servant ici à cerner l'articulation entre ces deux composantes du travail des femmes.

la base de la démarche de l'auteure: un constat, un postulat, une question. Le constat: persistance des inégalités salariales entre les hommes et les femmes et des ghettos d'emploi féminins malgré une scolarisation croissante des femmes. Kampeneers affirme même qu'on observe actuellement un renforcement de cette situation inégalitaire. Le postulat: le travail des femmes occupe une position charnière entre la famille et l'emploi. «Les femmes [...] se trouveraient à assurer la jonction, posée comme une nécessité pour la cohérence relative du système, entre les besoins constamment modifiés de la production et de la reproduction.» (20) La question: comment s'articulent vie professionnelle et vie familiale? Y a-t-il un lien direct — et si oui dans quel sens? — entre la présence et l'âge des enfants et la participation de leurs mères au marché du travail? La réponse à cette question est loin d'être aussi évidente que le sens commun pourrait le laisser croire; c'est ce que ce livre s'emploie à démontrer.

Pour répondre à sa question, l'auteure utilise une méthode usuelle en démo-

graphie, mais appliquée à un matériel inhabituel: elle effectue une analyse longitudinale de la participation au marché du travail salarié et de l'âge lors des interruptions successives, à l'aide de tables d'extinction. En effet, ce sont plus de 60 pour cent des femmes qui ont vécu au moins une interruption de travail d'au moins douze mois, alors que cette proportion n'est que de 16 pour cent chez les hommes. Une série de données, tirées de L'Enquête sur la fécondité au Canada de 1984, sert de support à la démonstration.

Ce compte-rendu prend une tournure didactique? En cela il reflète bien l'esprit qui a présidé à la rédaction de l'ouvrage, véritable modèle du genre, qui en quelque deux cents pages pose une question cruciale, fait le tour — et la critique — de la littérature sur le sujet, formule sa problématique, analyse les données et répond à sa question, de façon systématique et rigoureuse, sans jamais laisser flancher l'intérêt de la lectrice ou du lecteur.

Le premier chapitre brosse un tableau rapide de la situation des femmes sur le marché du travail et de leur fécondité dans les années 1950-1990. Rien de nouveau ici, mais le fond de scène sur lequel se situent les analyses qui suivent: ghettos d'emploi; persistance des inégalités de revenus entre les sexes; croissance des emplois atypiques, i.e., autres que réguliers-à-temps-plein, surtout pour femmes; diminution de la fécondité; éclatement des formes de vie familiale, mais peu de partage des tâches domestiques qui reviennent encore aux femmes.

Le second chapitre ramasse bien (dans les deux sens du terme!) les études antérieures sur les liens entre fécondité et activités professionnelles des femmes. Ce chapitre établit en premier lieu que les concepts et les méthodes qui conviennent pour étudier l'activité professionnelle masculine ne conviennent pas pour les femmes: les hommes, *grosso modo*, une fois entrés sur le marché du travail s'y maintiennent alors que près des deux tiers des femmes qui y entrent (et elles sont plus de 90 pour cent à le faire) en sortent

un jour ou l'autre. Ainsi est-on amené à réexaminer la hausse de la participation des femmes à la main d'oeuvre globale. Signifie-t-elle que de plus nombreuses mères s'insèrent sur le marché du travail, ou qu'elles s'en retirent moins? Bref quels sont les changements réels en la matière? La «complexité des biographies professionnelles» des femmes a été négligée ou évacuée par les études antérieures qui ont toujours pris pour acquis que c'était la présence des enfants qui motivait le retrait des femmes du marché du travail. Celles-ci «reposent sur un postulat commun, à savoir que l'activité salariée et l'activité maternelle seraient incompatibles par essence» (59), conception totalement injustifiée selon l'auteure.

Le troisième chapitre présente la lecture féministe «classique» du travail des femmes puis celle que retient l'auteur, ainsi que les données sur lesquelles se base l'analyse. Pour Kempeneers, «une logique commune, celle de la division sexuelle du travail, [est] à l'oeuvre simultanément dans la sphère du travail et dans la sphère de la vie familiale.» (64) Ceci oblige le décloisonnement entre la sociologie de la famille et la sociologie du travail, ce que permet l'analyse des interruptions de travail. Ici encore Kampeeneers propose une lecture à la fois éclairante, synthétique et décapante des travaux antérieurs: «Au-delà des divergences fondamentales qui opposent les deux premiers courants (néo-classiques et acquisition du statut) aux deux derniers (segmentation et théories marxistes) quant à leur vision de l'organisation sociale, les quatre partagent une caractéristique commune: aucun d'eux ne remet en question la division sexuelle du travail, qui laisse aux femmes la responsabilité première, sinon exclusive, des tâches accomplies dans le cadre de la famille.» (78)

Le quatrième chapitre présente les caractéristiques de la population étudiée. Il apparaît que contrairement à l'idée reçue, les jeunes femmes n'échappent pas aux ghettos d'emploi et n'ont pas nécessairement des emplois plus intéressants que

leurs aînées; «qu'une proportion plus forte de femmes célibataires que de femmes mariées travaillaient à temps partiel en 1983» (115); que le nombre d'emplois à temps partiel va en s'accroissant; que près de la moitié des femmes sans enfant ont également connu des interruptions d'emploi; d'ailleurs les enfants ne sont invoqués que dans la moitié des premières interruptions de travail. Tout ceci, bien entendu, est modulé par le secteur d'activité. Ainsi les travailleuses du secteur public, dont les conventions collectives garantissent le retour en emploi après un long congé de maternité sont plus nombreuses à relier leur interruption de travail à la venue des enfants.

Le cinquième chapitre porte très précisément sur les interruptions d'emploi. Inversion de la question habituellement posée qui est pourquoi les femmes travaillent-elles? Revenu d'appoint ou nécessité? Interroger les aller-retour entre le marché du travail et la maison à ceci d'intéressant qu'on ne prend pas l'un ou l'autre pôle comme point de départ de cette dynamique. On note qu'en général les femmes plus jeunes sont plus longtemps actives sur le marché du travail que les plus âgées, ce qui n'exclut pas des interruptions d'emploi; une tendance nouvelle est le maintien plus continu en emploi des femmes ayant au moins un enfant; aussi les plus jeunes réintègrent davantage le marché du travail après une première interruption.

Marianne Kempeneers en arrive à la conclusion que non seulement les interruptions d'emploi ne sont pas toutes dues aux enfants, mais qu'elles sont davantage liées au fait d'être femme qu'à la maternité; en ce sens, dans une large mesure, ces interruptions sont intimement liées à la structure du marché du travail actuel. En résumé, on peut dire des femmes que «leur position dans la famille apparaît le meilleur alibi de leur position instable dans l'emploi, et leur position instable dans l'emploi renforce leur position dans la famille.» (173) Et l'auteure se demande si la «distinction entre les deux sphères

demeure opératoire pour analyser les grandes transformations contemporaines, et, surtout, si cette distinction permet vraiment d'éclairer ce que l'avenir réserve aux femmes.» (174) la lumière des analyses pénétrantes des chapitres deux et trois on aurait aimé voir l'auteure développer ces réflexions. Elle touche ici en effet à quelque chose de fondamental, impliquant la division sociale du travail, pour parler comme Durkheim, entre les sexes.

Je souhaite que cet ouvrage, dans la mesure où il soulève d'importantes questions sur le partage social du travail, ne soit pas lu que par des femmes et des féministes. Car s'il les intéressera certainement, il propose une analyse décapante et mettant à mal, comme je l'annonçais plus haut, le sens commun et même le sens commun sociologique.

Andrée Fortin
Université Laval

Renée B.-Dandurand et Francine Descaries, dir., *Mères et travailleuses. De l'exception à la règle* (Québec: IQRC 1992).

EN CES TEMPS DE COUPURES dans les services sociaux, de menaces de fermeture des garderies et de précarité d'emploi, le thème du colloque «Maternité et Travail,» dans le cadre du congrès de l'ACFAS 1991, tombait à point. Il est utile de faire le bilan à la fois des acquis des dernières décennies et de la persistance des lacunes sociales concernant l'adaptation au travail rémunéré des mères. Les six communications présentées au colloque mettaient donc l'accent sur l'articulation des rapports travail/maternité dans le contexte de l'évolution de l'accès au travail rémunéré «quel que soit le statut matrimonial ou parental des femmes.» (10)

Plusieurs des auteures s'appliquent à réfuter certains mythes ou idées reçues. Ainsi, dans son étude des principaux pays industrialisés, Marie-Agnès Barrère-

Maurisson démontre qu'il n'y a pas coïncidence exacte entre l'évolution de la famille et celle de l'emploi. Elle offre une «typologie de l'articulation entre structures familiales et structures de l'emploi» qui présente un net décalage entre pays méditerranéens et pays nordiques au point de vue de la fécondité, de la participation des femmes au travail rémunéré, du rôle de la famille et de la présence de services aux familles. La maternité et le travail rémunéré possèdent chacun leur cycle, d'où décalage entre les comportements démographiques et la participation à la population active. Une telle analyse ne devrait toutefois pas négliger l'impact de l'économie et des classes sociales sur l'évolution des structures familiales.

Se fondant sur l'Enquête sur la population active du Canada de 1976 à 1988, Marianne Kempeneers et Marie-Hélène Saint-Pierre établissent que l'irrégularité du travail des femmes est moins imputable au nombre d'enfants qu'à l'emploi des mères. Dans une contribution plus qualitative sur l'évolution des rapports travail-maternité, Denise Lemieux et Lucie Mercier analysent trente-huit récits de vie de Québécoises portant sur les années 1950-1983. S'appuyant sur la typologie de Barrère-Maurisson, famille patriarcale, famille conjugale et famille associative, elles montrent l'absence de progression linéaire d'un modèle à l'autre et comment, dans une même vie, on passe de l'une à l'autre et parfois dans les deux sens. On aurait cependant aimé plus de précisions sur le concept de partage des tâches qui caractérise le type contemporain de famille associative, à deux salaires. Ce partage est-il équitable? Comment est-il négocié? Comment reflète-t-il les différentes classes sociales?

Les rapports au travail et aux enfants varient sensiblement selon les professions et le milieu social. Renée Dandurand et Françoise-Romaine Ouellette présentent les résultats d'une recherche portant sur trois quartiers montréalais de niveaux socio-économiques différents. Une étude subtile de soixante entrevues

laisse transparente des variations marquées entre les attitudes et les comportements ayant trait au travail féminin et aux stratégies de garde d'enfants et d'aide domestique. Les ménages de la classe ouvrière peu qualifiée de Saint-Henri expriment le plus de méfiance envers les garderies et comptent beaucoup plus sur les voisines et les parents que les familles bourgeoises professionnelles d'Outremont. D'autre part, sûrement sensibles à la critique, les pères bourgeois expriment le discours le plus égalitaire même si dans la pratique leur participation est inférieure à celle des travailleurs de Saint-Henri. La non-participation des grands-parents distingue nettement Montréal des pratiques européennes: dans aucun quartier se fie-t-on aux grand-mères de façon continue pour assurer la garde des enfants dont la mère travaille hors du foyer.

Si le travail rémunéré des femmes est en grande partie sorti du foyer depuis plusieurs décennies, il reste encore des ménagères qui se consacrent exclusivement aux travaux ménagers et à l'éducation des enfants. C. Corbeil, F. Descaries, C. Gill, et C. Séguin se penchent sur un groupe de femmes fidèles au modèle père pourvoyeur-mère au foyer. Les auteures font bien de dissiper certains mythes sur le profil social de ce groupe. On retrouve les mères au foyer non pas tant dans la bourgeoisie que dans les familles défavorisées où la situation économique plutôt que le choix individuel motive leur présence à la maison.

Mères au foyer ou mères au bureau, toutes aimeraient pouvoir compter sur l'aide de leur conjoint. Michelle Duval étudie la mobilisation de trois groupes de femmes désireuses de réorganiser leur travail en vue de permettre une plus grande reconnaissance de leur rôle de mères. Il s'agit des efforts de membres de l'Association du Jeune Barreau de Montréal, du comité de la condition des femmes de la Centrale de l'enseignement du Québec (CEQ) et de travailleuses dans des maisons d'hébergement pour femmes violentées.

Chacune de ces études empiriques ajoute à notre connaissance des différentes stratégies adoptées pour concilier maternité et travail; elles soulèvent toutefois une foule de questions quant à la problématique et aux informations recueillies. On aimerait souvent connaître la composition ethnique des groupes étudiés: quelques détails laissent entendre qu'il ne s'agit pas toujours de catégories homogènes, qu'une informatrice vient de l'étranger, mais sans plus. Si la variable ethnique est occultée, celle de classe est parfois négligée et certaines auteures sont portées à généraliser à partir de comportements spécifiques à une classe plutôt qu'une autre. Enfin, qu'en est-il des femmes rurales, ou même de celles qui habitent des petits centres urbains? Les problèmes liés au travail rémunéré hors du foyer sont bien documentés, on aborde aussi ceux des mères au foyer, mais on laisse de côté le travail rémunéré à domicile qui requiert lui aussi des stratégies de garde d'enfants ou d'intégration des enfants au milieu de travail.

Comme l'indique le sous-titre «de l'exception à la règle,» le travail des femmes à l'extérieur du foyer est maintenant chose acquise. la diversité des arrangements et des compromis échappe souvent aux règles et chaque stratégie demeure soumise à l'articulation de multiples facteurs.

Andrée Lévesque
Université McGill

Jocelyne Lamoureux, Michèle Gélinas, Kety Tari, *Femmes en mouvement. Trajectoires de l'Association féminine d'éducation et d'action sociale, AFÉAS, 1966-1991* (Québec: Éditions du Boréal 1993).

CET OUVRAGE ÉCRIT EN collaboration ne se veut au départ ni un livre d'histoire, ni une monographie de l'une des principales organisations féminines du Québec. Il se propose plutôt d'esquisser un portrait

critique de l'AFÉAS dans ses dimensions historiques et actuelles. Pour ce faire, les auteures tentent de saisir la dynamique particulière du mouvement en mettant l'accent sur les projets et cheminements de l'organisation aux moments-clés où les membres se mobilisent autour d'enjeux sociaux précis. En second lieu, elles cherchent à cerner comment l'AFÉAS devient un groupe de pression significatif dans la vie publique québécoise, représentant les aspirations principalement de «travailleuses au foyer» (expression que le mouvement contribuera à propager) habitant hors des grands centres, bref de femmes pour qui la visibilité publique ne va pas de soi. Si les auteures n'hésitent pas à dévoiler à l'occasion les réticences des membres de la base face aux stratégies des dirigeantes du mouvement, il n'en reste pas moins que l'image du mouvement qui nous est transmise reste celle des instances dirigeantes (présidentes, ex-présidentes). Peut-être est-ce dû aux sources utilisées (les archives du mouvement et les entrevues avec les ex-dirigeantes)? On en vient finalement à écrire ... l'histoire d'un mouvement.

La date retenue de fondation de l'AFÉAS (22 septembre 1966) est celle de la fusion officielle des membres de l'Union catholique des femmes rurales (UCFR) et des Cercles d'économie domestique (CÉD). Le chapitre 1 relate l'histoire des origines mouvementées du mouvement, soit les événements ayant entouré la scission «douloureuse» des Cercles de fermières (création de l'État) et de l'UCFR (produit de l'offensive de l'Église québécoise pour les concurrencer). La position adoptée par les auteures sur la manifestation d'autonomie démontrée par les femmes lors du passage des Cercles de fermières à l'Union catholique des femmes rurales laisse toutefois perplexe. (25-35) L'argumentation ici est loin d'être convaincante.

Il est difficile en effet de considérer le refus des subsides de l'État par l'UCFR comme une preuve irréfutable d'autonomie des femmes quand on sait que cette

position les place automatiquement sous la coupe de l'Église, dont le poids est peut-être plus lourd encore que celui de l'État. Quel est d'ailleurs ce contrôle de l'État sur les Cercles? On ne le précise jamais tout en le posant comme *a priori* (comme dans le discours ecclésiastique). Sans aller jusqu'à transformer les femmes de l'UCF et de l'UCFR en victimes passives des luttes de pouvoir Église-État, il ne faut pas ignorer que les «résistantes-autonomistes» se trouvent peut-être davantage du côté des Cercles que des Unions catholiques ... Les CÉD, comme les UCFR, sont le pur produit de l'action sociale catholique. Si la fusion des deux mouvements (suggérée par l'Église) évolue vers la formation d'un corps intermédiaire féminin proche de l'Église sans y être totalement inféodé, on le doit davantage, à mon avis, au contexte sociopolitique du Québec qu'à la volonté des membres. Comme les auteures, on peut toutefois reconnaître que, indépendamment des structures, les femmes adhèrent à l'une et à l'autre des organisations pour leurs propres raisons (socialiser, apprendre et agir sur elles-mêmes, leurs familles, leurs communautés).

C'est graduellement que l'AFÉAS construit sa propre personnalité en s'écarrant «prudemment et modérément» des positions de l'Église (92) ... et devient féministe. C'est l'objet du chapitre 2. Cette évolution s'affirme dans les positions qu'adopte le mouvement lors de mémoires présentés à diverses commissions gouvernementales et dans les sujets d'étude privilégiés par les membres. Alors qu'en 1970 par exemple, l'AFÉAS s'oppose à toute modification de la loi sur l'avortement considérant le droit à la vie comme fondamental (sans consulter la base), le mouvement adopte une position de compromis en 1975 disant non à l'avortement sur demande mais oui à la formation de comités thérapeutiques dans les hôpitaux. Les tiraillements de la base trahissent les interrogations des femmes dont la culture catholique imprègne encore fortement le vécu et explique leur

position modérée sur l'échelle du féminisme militant.

La contribution la plus originale du mouvement à l'histoire des femmes est sans contredit celle de la cause des femmes collaboratrices du mari. «Rendre visible le travail invisible des femmes» passe par la reconnaissance sociale des partenaires ou mercenaires (95) qui contribuent à l'entreprise du conjoint autant qu'à la valorisation du travail domestique au foyer. Sur ces deux dossiers, le travail de conscientisation et d'action de l'AFÉAS sera crucial. Concrètement, la loi de 1989 sur le patrimoine familial (loi 146) et les transformations successives de l'exemption des personnes à charge en crédit d'impôt sont considérées comme des victoires conduisant à l'autonomisation des femmes. Elles sont le résultat d'enquêtes menées par l'AFÉAS qui avaient révélé l'étendue de la pauvreté des femmes et leur dépendance à l'égard de la bonne volonté du conjoint en cas de séparation ou de divorce. Malgré toutes ces démarches «autonomistes», les membres hésitent encore en 1981 à s'afficher en tant que féministes et préfèrent conjuguer une forme de féminisme à la fois social et égalitaire, où les valeurs familiales et conjugales restent prioritaires.

Le plan adopté pour l'ensemble du volume est thématique plutôt que chronologique. S'il permet aux auteures de bien cerner la transformation d'un mouvement d'action sociale en mouvement de revendication, il contribue aussi à multiplier les redondances. Cet aspect ressort particulièrement dans les chapitres 3 et 4 qui pourraient, à la limite, être réduits à un seul chapitre.

«Rejoindre madame tout-le-monde» et lui donner la parole, voilà le premier objectif éducatif de l'AFÉAS. Le membership de l'Association étant constitué majoritairement de femmes au foyer, défavorisées par le système, la prise de parole sur la scène publique passe d'abord par l'éducation à la parole ou la conquête de la confiance en soi... et conduit à une lutte à finir contre les stéréotypes sexistes en

éducation. On retrouve des témoignages très révélateurs sur les réticences des membres à s'impliquer dans l'action sociale versus les activités sociales. (217-8) «Sortir les femmes de la sphère domestique» exige à la fois une démythification du pouvoir politique et l'investissement des lieux de pouvoir. (230) Cette réflexion amorcée en 1985 par le mouvement conduira l'AFÉAS à développer une aile lobbyiste active et à favoriser les candidatures féminines en politique (1990).

En conclusion, les auteures reprennent les avenues privilégiées par l'Association face à son action dans le milieu soit celles des «gestes pragmatiques» par opposition aux contributions théoriques (voir les annexes 1 et 2 traitant des sujets d'étude et des sessions d'information aux pages 191-4). Face aux enjeux d'un mouvement des femmes pluriel, la part de l'AFÉAS aura été de «donner une voix à des femmes qui n'en avaient pas.» (243) Mais en même temps, les auteures ne soulignent pas assez comment le mouvement reste un phénomène de génération car le renouvellement du membership connaît peu de succès auprès des jeunes générations qui affrontent d'autres réalités.

Dans l'ensemble, malgré les meilleures intentions des auteures, le volume se présente comme une histoire institutionnelle, du moins par le style adopté et les sources privilégiées, ce qui en rend la lecture lourde par endroits. En dépit de plusieurs tentatives de remise en contexte (18, 40, 59), les auteures ne réussissent pas toujours à faire ressortir les tendances lourdes du mouvement dont les modes d'action s'inspire largement du militantisme d'action catholique, dans une société qui l'est de moins en moins. Au fil de la lecture, on a souvent l'image d'un exécutif qui «tire» sa base vers l'action. Néanmoins, malgré ces quelques réserves, l'ouvrage permet de connaître un aspect important du

mouvement des femmes au Québec des trente dernières années.

Odette Vincent Domey
Institut québécois de recherche
sur la culture

Bill Cecil-Fronsman, *Common Whites: Class and Culture in Antebellum North Carolina* (Lexington, Kentucky: University of Kentucky Press 1992).

SOUTHERN ELITES have always captured the fancy of historians, and more recently enslaved and free African-Americans have also attracted their attention. The majority of those outside planting, mercantile, professional, and governmental circles whom Bill Cecil-Fronsman calls "common whites" are by comparison the understudied and misunderstood men and women of the Old South. Cecil-Fronsman seeks to shed light on this diverse group, "to discern what their norms and expectations were, whether the social reality afforded them the chance to fulfil these expectations, and the causes and direction of cultural change." (5) He also wishes to determine "both the extent of common-white class consciousness and the factors that prevented it from developing to the point that it would support a movement that questioned planter hegemony." (7) He offers compelling answers to these important questions, and though he does not always fully persuade he invariably provokes thought. He uses census and economic data sensibly and to good effect. He employs folklore and popular culture imaginatively to probe the values and aspirations of his subjects. His research is exhaustive and his writing engaging. The result is a fascinating study that deserves a wide readership.

Eschewing familiar terms like "plain folk" and "yeomen," Cecil-Fronsman employs the far more expansive category of "common white" and places it in the 80 per cent of North Carolinians who were neither considered nor considered them-

selves members of the elite. Probably a quarter of them were poor and propertyless, and others owned land and a small number of slaves, but the majority farmed their own plots, were relatively comfortable, and produced most of what they consumed. Most lived in the countryside or in tiny villages, and they tended to be clannish and suspicious of outsiders and of innovation. Their culture was broadly egalitarian, though patriarchal and racist. The songs and stories of their British ancestors praised Robin Hood types, scorned wealthy misers for neglecting the poor, and taught that strong emotions like love should overcome differences based on wealth and status. In North Carolina these imported values flourished before and especially after the revolution. "The belief that poor men were as good as rich ones was drilled into common whites at an early age through various means," the author observes. (52) Those means included songs and stories about the triumph of true love, the political culture of republicanism and the practices of democratic electioneering, and the recruitment of sinners by the converted in the fast growing evangelical Christian churches. Common whites cherished equal rights, independence, and self-reliance: they insisted that boundaries separating classes be permeable but that the chasm separating the races by unbridgable.

North Carolina was by no means an egalitarian society, however. An elite dominated by planters controlled local and state governments and ruled very much in their own interests. Conflicts between commoners and governing elites over matters like taxation and legislative apportionment erupted frequently, and those seeking greater fairness scored important victories. Yet none of the reforms either proposed or acted upon even remotely threatened the economic and political power of the elite. Thus, though conflict between commoners and elites was by no means rare in North Carolina it only occurred on terrain acceptable to the

latter. Popular grievances were articulated by political parties that were ideologically opposed to a class analysis, and thus class issues tended to mutate into partisan squabbling. The common whites' "political struggles lacked a clear sense of class consciousness," the author claims. (61) The religious sensibility of white evangelical Christians differed from that of Blacks in that it tended to be individualistic and otherworldly, rather than based in the group and focused on deliverance in this world. Common whites were quick to fight against unfair privilege or abuse of power, "but so long as planters, merchants, and other members of the elite accommodated themselves to the common whites' sense of personal equality, there was little in their culture that would suggest that something was wrong." (65) They objected to elite malefactors, not to the elite itself.

Much else about the culture and outlook of common whites tended to lend direct or inadvertent support to the status quo and especially to slavery. Cecil-Fronsman argues that in the long term slavery worked against the economic interests of common whites, but that emancipation without forced colonization was definitely against their immediate economic and social interests. Common whites counted on planters to protect them from black economic competition and to uphold their racial privileges. In thousands of tiny, isolated, largely self-sufficient villages bound by close ties of familial obligation and communal reciprocity, the culture viewed outsiders with suspicion, enforced conformity to accepted norms, and legitimated extra-legal violence against abolitionists and other dissenters from the status quo. Furthermore, two distinct economies and societies co-existed in antebellum North Carolina: the one commanded by planters produced goods for distant markets; the other, which aimed at self-sufficiency and produced relatively little surplus for distant markets, busied most common whites. As long as they remained within

their separate economic spheres, planters and the majority of commoners had relatively few opportunities to injure each other and develop enduring enmities.

The rapid spread of the railroad network in the 1850s and the concomitant introduction of capitalist market relations into common white counties shook the status quo to its roots. It instigated a kind of cultural war in many white counties, pitting the forces of tradition (self-sufficiency, ethic of mutuality, folk beliefs) against the encroachments of modernity (commercial agriculture, individualism, rationality). It shattered the buffer between the two economies that had dampened criticisms of the elite. Although common whites opted for secession and fought for the Confederacy, wartime hardships and impositions fuelled popular disenchantment with the governing elite. The war accelerated the breakdown of cultural values and economic structures that had protected the old rulers. Cecil-Fronsman suspects Reconstruction might have succeeded had the economy been healthy in the late 1860s and the elevation of freedmen not been accompanied by a decline in the economic position of common whites. Without significant support from common whites, the reconstruction experiment was doomed. Here, and throughout his book, Cecil-Fronsman's judgment is sound.

John T. O'Brien
Dalhousie University

Stephen Stein, *The Shaker Experience in America: A History of the United Society of Believers* (New Haven: Yale University Press 1992).

STEPHEN STEIN'S ACCOUNT provides an impressive synthesis which challenges many of the assumptions central to existing Shaker scholarship. Through a vigorous reassessment of traditional Shaker history and the sources used to construct it, Stein is able to distance his account of

the United Society of Believers from those romanticized appropriations of "Shaker values" which are common in modern studies of the sect's material culture. While other historians have concentrated on specific Shaker settlements or periods, Stein takes a comprehensive approach to the two centuries of Shaker history. His work follows the Shakers from their Manchester origins through their removal to America, their formal establishment as the United Society of Believers, their expansion, decline and rebirth in the 20th century. Five chronological divisions give the book its structure. But because Stein emphasizes diversity and dissent within the Shaker tradition, the story he tells does not fit a simple linear model of declension. Instead, the Shaker experience is woven through the pattern of American life, sometimes drawing near to the world outside, sometimes pursuing a course guided by the Believers' own logic and imperatives.

In his discussion of the early period (1747-1787), Stein tries to distinguish reliable sources from the stories used by later generations of Shakers to create a spiritual past. A critical analysis of materials from the "Age of the Founders" undermines the notion that Ann Lee was the primary source of spiritual authority, and leads Stein to conclude that Lee was "not the only charismatic force in the young society." He assigns less overall importance to the age of the founders, and more importance to the "formative period" from 1787-1826. Given the fact that the Shakers' communal organization and first authoritative theological statements emerged from the formative period, Stein's attention to developments in the generation after Lee's death seems justified. But a sense of ambiguity about Lee's place in Shaker history pervades the book. It is difficult to pin down the connection between "Mother Ann" — considered to be a manifestation of the second coming of Christ — and the Ann Lee who emerges from Stein's portrayal as one 18th-century enthusiast among many,

with little about her theology that might prepare us for the development of Shaker belief and practice.

Nonetheless, Stein's account of the formative period captures the ironic possibilities in Shaker history. Corporate organization, celibacy, and the conviction that the United Society of Believers represented the first-fruits of Christ's kingdom set the Shakers apart. Yet as Stein points out, their sectarian opposition to the "host culture" was balanced by the remarkable convergence of many Shaker values and the preoccupations of other Americans in the young republic. At that moment when, as Emerson said, Americans were "all a little made with numberless projects of reform," the Shakers were far from isolated by their optimism, their interest in expansion across the continent, and their desire to remake the world.

The middle period (1827-1875) brought an extraordinary revival of spirituality known as the "Era of Manifestations." Stein's expertise in the reading of apocalyptic texts opens a fascinating world of ritual and "gifts," mountain-top feasts, and spirit-drawings. Even more intriguing is the description of conflict associated with the revival and the rise of a progressive Shakerism in its wake. These developments strengthen Stein's case against the myth of Shaker simplicity. Although the middle period brought prosperity, it exacerbated old tensions between the outward pressures of geographic and financial growth on one hand, and the centripetal force of communal spirituality on the other. Such tensions would ultimately subject Shaker life to the vicissitudes of the modern American economy and generate new questions about the Society's relationship to the outside world.

This becomes even more apparent as Stein follows the "transformation of the United Society of Believers" into the 20th century. Marked by infrequent worship services, modern dress, and reliance on outside labour, the attenuated United So-

ciety of Believers appeared to be all but lost. It is perhaps not surprising, then, that the final section of the book — optimistically titled “The Rebirth of Shakerism” — reveals as much about America in the late 20th century as it reveals about the fate of the Shakers’ theological experiment. When placed in the context of the renaissance of commercial interest in Shaker artifacts, the account of the two surviving Shaker villages (and the mysterious Shaker Trust Fund) makes a curious denouement to the United Society’s history.

Throughout the book, Stein insists that the boundaries of Shaker historiography must be pushed beyond sentimental and uncritical evaluations of the Shaker experience. Others who write of the Shakers will now be compelled to address Stein’s interpretive assumptions as well as his conclusions. Regrettably, beyond a citation in the endnotes Stein does not engage recent feminist scholarship on Shaker theology and the practice of celibacy. A consideration of this promising body of work would sharpen the historiographical edge of the book, and would support Stein’s discussion of female leadership and the “feminization” of the Society.

While the Shakers in Stein’s work retain their peculiarities and their separateness, their story is an instructive one for historians of American religion and culture. The need to balance “gift” and “order,” the challenge of declining membership, of being in the world but not of it — these are questions which resonate beyond the bounds of the communal Shaker village, even though the United Society of Believers’ version of such debates has had an intense and hyperbolic character. Stein recalls a history complete with doctrinal strife and the frequent intrusion of worldliness. In the process of restoring the full sweep of that history, he has managed to find a place for the Shakers within the larger fabric of American Protestantism.

Nina Reid-Maroney
University of Toronto

Marilyn Rhinehart, *A Way of Work and a Way of Life: Coal Mining in Thurber, Texas, 1888-1926* (College Station: Texas A & M University Press 1992).

TRADITIONALLY, LABOUR historians have focused their attention on trade unionism and the politics and economics of labour relations, examining how these elements work together to define an elusive working-class consciousness. Recent scholars, however, have regarded union activity as but one facet of working-class lives, and have suggested that the role of labour relations represents only one arena in which class consciousness might be explored. Pursuing the local study in which efforts are concentrated on one industry, this new generation of labour historians offers an intricate exploration of myriad aspects of working-class lives. Marilyn Rhinehart attempts to synthesize these two approaches in her study of the coal-mining town of Thurber, Texas, integrating sensitively the history of union development into the day-to-day experiences of the miners of Thurber.

Rhinehart has three goals: first, to trace the development of trade unionism in Thurber as one element of miners’ experience; second, to explore life in Thurber in a multi-faceted way, examining racial and ethnic diversity, the impact of company paternalism, as well as labour protest and resistance beyond the framework of the union; and finally, to place Thurber in the larger context of the industrial Southwest and turn-of-the-century America. Like many of the “new” labour historians, Rhinehart acknowledges the organization of the United Mine Workers of America in Thurber as “the most dramatic and recounted episode in the community’s history.” However, she is quick to point out that there is more to working-class history in Thurber than union development. The daily experience of coal miners involved surviving the hardships and dangers of their occupation; adapting to the domination of the Texas & Pacific Coal Company; and resolving racial and

ethnic differences in order for family and individual needs to be met. It was in the underground community of the mines, Rhinehart argues, that these goals were met as miners developed a strong sense of cohesion based on their common experiences.

In many ways, Rhinehart argues, Thurber was "not very different from hundreds of coal mining towns across America" at the turn of the century; what made the town unique, she claims, was the group consciousness developed by the miners. She argues that in spite of ethnic and racial diversity, Thurber miners created "their own community" in the mine. "Ultimately," she continues, "this sense of occupational community proved to be the primary link between [the miners] that enabled a diverse population successfully to challenge the company's control over their at-work and after-work lives." She cites many situations in which miners had ample opportunity to develop their identity below ground. For example, the miners resembled each other: they were "pale" with "stooped backs," "second knees," and skin streaked with coal dust; they "smelled alike," exuding common odours of oil, blasting powder, smoke, sulphur and sweat; they dressed and carried their equipment in the same manner, and those who did not were quickly singled out as novices.

More than a common appearance, though, the miners shared common attitudes: an air of independence borne out of a system of limited direct supervision and a keen sense of fair work and fair pay. Common grievances were voiced on the train ride home, which Rhinehart suggests "actually served as a kind of 'melting pot' where 'men from all nations sat' and 'strong friendships grew.'" Cohesion was nurtured in the mine during periods of slack time waiting for the elevator or empty coal cars. With increased mechanization and specialization, miners developed a mutual dependence for productivity and for safety.

Rather than trying to define an elusive class consciousness among Thurber's coal miners, then, Rhinehart concentrates her efforts on discovering a sense of community based on an occupational consciousness. She argues that in spite of ethnic diversity, language barriers, and potential racial discord, miners in Thurber developed a sense of belonging based on their shared fears, mutual dependence, and common goals and grievances in the mines. Key to Rhinehart's thesis, though, is the notion that this "subterranean community" was reconstructed by the miners in their daily lives above ground in the company-owned town.

Although Rhinehart makes a strong case for the notion of occupational identity, the notion that the subterranean community was transplanted above ground is not as convincing as it perhaps could have been. True, miners did endure many common circumstances in their daily lives: they drank together in the company saloon, shopped at the company store using company scrip, lived within the company's guarded wire fence surrounding the town, and occupied company houses. These facts of life, Rhinehart argues, demonstrate that "the network of relations that developed in the environment of a company town further solidified the bond of common interest among [miners]."

Nevertheless, Rhinehart can not escape the fact that miners and their families lived in ethnic enclaves, spoke their own languages, and boarded with members of their own ethnic or racial group. Furthermore, she glosses over the potential volatile situation created when black miners were imported as strike breakers. That blacks were later admitted into the union, Rhinehart argues, implies that the potential for racial discord never erupted into violence; thus, racial harmony prevailed. However, it could be argued that the decision to grant union membership to potential strikebreakers was a pragmatic one on the part of union executives. Even underground Rhinehart can not escape this ethnic solidarity: when choosing a

"buddy," or apprentice, miners selected their relatives or fellow countrymen.

Although these issues are not fatal to Rhinehart's thesis, they leave the reader with some doubts. These doubts could have been erased if she had delved deeper into many of the areas she only touches upon, such as church membership, fraternal organizations, and mutual aid societies. For example, Rhinehart does not examine whether fraternal organizations had a multi-ethnic membership. If membership in these organizations surpassed the boundaries of race and ethnicity, then this would support her thesis. But if these boundaries persisted in the same way as residential patterns did, then one could conclude that ethnicity and race, not occupation or even class, shaped the community identity above ground.

Still, this is a valuable contribution towards understanding the connections between occupation and class, ethnicity and race; the relationships between employees and employer in the context of company paternalism; and the role of industrial capitalism in company-owned, single-industry towns. More significantly, though, this book contributes to the task of making sense of how identities are formed among the working class. Rhinehart suggests how class, ethnicity, and race only serve as elements of an individual's identity. This underscores the fact that all facets of workers' lives need to be explored in order to fully understand the history of the working class. Race, ethnicity, occupation, and class all work in tandem to form an individual's sense of personal identity and his or her place within a larger group, indeed, within many larger groups — the family, the ethnic or racial group, class. Rhinehart has made substantial progress towards comprehending how these elements work together to form a sense of community among Thurber's coal miners. All in all, this is an important book, but it is also only a beginning. It remains to be seen whether Rhinehart's conclusions will

hold firm in other coal towns and within other occupations.

Glenda D. Noseworthy Davis
Simon Fraser University

Peter C. Seixas, *"Shifting Sands Beneath the State": Unemployment, the Labor Market, and the Local Community, 1893-1922* (New York and London: Garland Publishing 1993).

AMERICANS IN THE PROGRESSIVE ERA inaugurated the country's first comprehensive attack on the problem of modern industrialism. Old beliefs in laissez faire and social Darwinism had seemingly disintegrated during the great depression of 1893-96 and critics started to formulate new ideas for the reform of society. Paul Seixas examines the changing perceptions and actions of the Progressives toward unemployment, particularly as exemplified by the city of Yonkers in New York.

In the late 19th century local elites had long assumed responsibility for the unemployed. Five family-owned businesses in Yonkers, for example, played a major role in confronting the employment crisis of the mid-1890s. As labour militancy, strikes, and violence mounted in the early years of the 20th century, each of these firms settled their problems in their own self-contained way. Family enterprises, however, slowly evolved into stockholder-owned public corporations; their managers tended to lose interest in community affairs. For a time women's organizations, such as in Yonkers, filled the vacuum created by the abdication of male elites and devoted themselves to the promotion of education, housing, health, recreation, and employment but as time progressed they increasingly sought the aid of salaried professionally-trained social workers.

External influences played an ever greater role in shaping attitudes toward the unemployed. Edward T. Devine,

General Secretary of the New York Charities Organization and founder of the magazine, *Charities* (later *Survey*), rejected the old notion that weakness of moral character caused unemployment. Environment and industrial organization, he insisted, really lay at the heart of the question. Paul Kellogg, Managing Editor of *Survey*, with the aid of the Russell Sage Foundation, conducted the famed Pittsburgh Survey, which modified an extended Devine's analysis and helped to mould Progressive social thinking. Economist William Leiserson urged establishment of a nationwide system of unemployment exchanges to facilitate systematic management of the labour market.

City and state reformers now sought to put these new concepts into action. Mayor John Purroy Mitchel of New York City convened the first National Conference on Unemployment and sponsored a Municipal Employment Exchange. Its successor, the Public Employment Bureau, served both as an employment agency and as a clearinghouse for information. New York State passed some 25 new labour laws and created the Factory Inspection Commission, which profoundly affected labour administration in the state. It also inspired formation of the Industrial Commission, which wrote codes, enforced workmen's compensation laws, provided mediation and arbitration services, and compiled labour statistics.

During World War I, new federal agencies directed all phases of the economy including transportation, production, fuel, food, and energy. The War Labor Board, co-chaired by ex-President William Howard Taft and Frank P. Walsh, former Chairman of the US Commission on Industrial Relations, dealt with working conditions, wage standards, and collective bargaining. At the end of the war most business leaders wanted to dismantle all wartime structures while reformers strove to enhance government regulation of the economy. Progressives regarded the United States Employment

Service (USES) as the centrepiece for a planned approach to handling unemployment. USES had claimed considerable success in finding jobs for returning servicemen and reformers wished to develop USES branches throughout the country. An economy-minded Republican Congress, however, abolished the agency.

Disheartened reformers who now sought refuge in the states and municipalities found succor in the leadership of Governor Alfred E. Smith, who established the New York State Industrial Commission and expanded the functions of the State Employment Bureau. Smith's achievements, however, served chiefly as a delaying action in an era of retrenchment. Yonkers also witnessed a further decline in local control as a result of wartime mobilization. A trend toward centralization of Yonkers' charities, Seixas notes, led eventually to the forging of new links with city, state, and federal agencies. Conscription, new booming war industries, periodic shortages of fuel and the heightened fluidity of labour, all led to a breakdown of previously-unified local organization and leadership. Labour militants found themselves thwarted when opponents tarred them with the brush of Bolshevism during the postwar Red Scare.

Secretary of Commerce, Herbert Hoover, appeared to give unemployment a high priority when he initiated the President's Conference on Unemployment in 1921. Yet the Conference placed obligation for the unemployed squarely on the shoulders of local authorities. It stressed community action, worker discipline, and a return to self-reliant American individualism. Hoover's Conference, in effect, turned the clock back to the late 19th century. By 1920, however, most industries operated as parts of national corporate structures and no longer participated in community activities. Reformers had to wait until Hoover's world of *laissez faire* and American individualism collapsed in 1929 before they could make further advances.

Seixas' study is well researched and expands our knowledge of one aspect of the Progressive Era. His use of Yonkers as a microcosm does not succeed entirely. Several chapters examine national trends without a mention of the New York community; when a section on Yonkers does surface, it sometimes appears tacked on as an afterthought. Seixas concentrates almost wholly on impersonal forces. This lack of inclusion of the human personality gives the book a dull heavy quality in need of leavening. Nevertheless his work makes a contribution to our understanding of one of the important social issues in the Progressive Era.

Graham Adams, Jr.
Mount Allison University

Prometheus Research Library, ed., *James P. Cannon and the Early Years of American Communism: Selected Writings and Speeches, 1920-1928* (New York: Spartacist Publishing Company 1992).

ONE OF THE POLITICAL IRONIES of the conservative 1980s in the United States was a resurgence of interest among historians in the history of the Communist Party. This renaissance was generated by related political and methodological developments that turned younger scholars toward the rich legacy of American radicalism and toward the Communist Party in particular as the most important 20th-century example of this radical tradition. When the New Left generation of the sixties and early seventies reached their intellectual maturity and began a search for radical roots, they found the Communists.

An earlier generation of historians writing at the height of the Cold War, as well as some more recent conservative scholars, located the pulse and brain of the party in Moscow; it was an alien movement espousing an alien ideology. But the new historians of American communism, embracing the methods of the new social history with its emphases on

focused community and workplace studies, aimed to rewrite the movement's history from the bottom up. The vision of American communism which emerged was both more sympathetic and fundamentally different in its vantage point. Many of the new studies described a grass roots movement shaped less by Moscow masters than by the agency and ideas of indigenous radicals. Neo-conservative and neo-liberal historians contested this more optimistic reading, and a new historiographical battle was joined. The central question involves the relative importance of indigenous factors and Comintern intervention in explaining the rise and fall of communist politics in the United States.

The Prometheus Research Library's collection of James Cannon's speeches and writings from the 1920s can tell us a good deal about this failure. It focuses on a period that has been largely ignored in the more recent studies, and its internal party documents provide a rare look inside the organization. In addition to simply describing the collection, I would like to suggest how it relates to the current historiographical and political debates about the history of American communism.

Besides being an important radical activist throughout his life and the founder of American Trotskyism, Jim Cannon was also a fascinating character. Born near Kansas City in 1890, his own ideas and experiences linked the Communist movement to an earlier generation of American radicals. Passing through his father's Irish republicanism and socialism at a very young age, he joined the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) in 1911 and remained a key figure in Midwestern syndicalism throughout the World War I era. He rejoined the Socialist Party in 1919 to build its pro-Bolshevik wing and entered the communist movement at its inception in the summer of that year. Cannon was the Workers' (Communist) Party's (WP) first chairman and a member of its Central Committee from its founding until his expulsion for Trotskyism in

the fall of 1928. In 1925 he founded the International Labor Defense (ILD), an important united front providing legal protection for labour and progressive groups and individuals in the midst of the Red Scare. He went on in 1929, in collaboration with the Canadian communist Maurice Spector, to establish the Communist League of America, North America's first Trotskyist organization, and he remained the leading figure in its successor, the Social Workers' Party, until his death in 1974.

The book consists of sixty of Cannon's speeches, articles, and internal memos and reports, many of them previously unpublished and culled from his papers, now at the State Historical Society of Wisconsin; a host biographical note; an introduction which analyzes the evolution of the WP's program in the 1920s in relation to its turbulent internal politics; a series of previously unpublished reports from Cannon's closest collaborators; an internal WP report that provides an approximation of Trotskyist support within the party at the time of Cannon's expulsion; an extensive glossary of individuals, organizations, and terms mentioned in the documents; a bibliography of Cannon's writings from 1912 through 1928; and 28 photographs from a dozen different sources. The editors, who have done a fine job, provide a brief, helpful introduction for each document in the collection.

The documents themselves are important for a number of reasons. First, in tracing the trajectory of Cannon's own thought through these years, they do indeed suggest the roots of American Trotskyism in the factional politics of the 1920s. One can begin to see why the split emerged, what people like Cannon saw at stake in the Comintern conflicts. The previously unpublished internal documents are especially useful for understanding the way in which the WP functioned, or, more often, failed to do so. What emerges most clearly is the terribly destructive effects of the party's incessant factional

conflicts. These are conveyed in a series of documents running throughout the entire period. One gets the distinct impression that much more time was spent writing internal memos and realigning factions than in any real organizing and that indeed such conflicts represented serious obstacles to communists who were primarily interested in practical work. Scholars who wish to understand the weakness of labour radicalism in the 1920s should consider the problem of factionalism, for these documents suggest the dominant influence of such conflicts.

As a research organization and archive with strong ties to the Spartacist League, a small Trotskyist group, the Prometheus Research Library had a political purpose in editing this large and rather complex book — to trace their own political lineage. The central argument that emerges from the introduction and editorial comments is the notion that American Trotskyism was the product of factional struggles within the WP, that Cannon's experience in these conflicts predisposed him and other WP activists to Trotsky's critique, and that the failure of communist politics in the United States can be explained in large part by the degenerate nature of the Soviet party and Comintern leadership as early as 1925.

Yet the failure of American communism was a great deal more complicated than this suggests. Trotsky's own manoeuvring in the Comintern was part of the more general problem of international factionalism that sapped so much of the WP's strength and creativity and so warped its perspective of class politics in the United States. Had the American communists listened to Cannon and Trotsky in 1928, they would still have faced massive repression at the hands of the government and conservative union leaders.

And this brings us back to the historians' debates about American communism. Documents directly addressed to Comintern commissions and congresses or closely reflecting Comintern politics

dominate this collection, whereas we find very little here about the lives of American workers. Why?

There are at least two ways to understand this focus, each relating to a different way of explaining communist history. Many of the newer and more radical interpreters of American communism might argue that in concentrating on Cannon, the editors have settled for a rather myopic view of the movement. In documenting a discourse among radical elites, they have simply missed the submerged and more important experience of American communists. To put it bluntly, who cares what Cannon thought unless it can be linked closely to the reality of class conflict in 1920s America? More conservative interpreters might find good grist for their mills. The WP was obsessed with Comintern politics. American party policy was often dictated from Moscow. In this sense, the movement was an alien influence, and this explains its failure. My own sympathies lie with the newer, more sympathetic interpretation of the party's history, but after reading these documents, it is difficult to avoid the overwhelming importance of the international movement. The process of democratic centralism meant that the work of rank-and-file communists was fundamentally shaped by the preoccupation of James Cannon and other WP leaders with the science of Marxism-Leninism as interpreted by the Comintern leadership. The key in building a communist movement lay in integrating this theory of revolution with workers' experiences in streets and workshops throughout the United States. The key in understanding the movement's history, it seems, lies in analysing the failure to achieve this integration, a failure that James Cannon shared with a whole generation of American communists.

James R. Barrett
University of Illinois at
Urbana-Champaign

Archie Green, *Wobblies, Pile Butts, and Other Heroes: Laborlore Explorations* (Champaign: University of Illinois Press 1993).

MORE THAN THIRTY YEARS ago Archie Green coined the term "laborlore" to refer to the wealth of traditions — songs, stories, slang, phrases, occupational terminology, jokes — generated by workers and their organizations. Green admitted that laborlore might not fit conventional academic definitions of folklore and folksong. However, he argued that considerable similarities existed between the traditional folklore and laborlore processes and that scholars would do well to investigate the lore and song of the working class. Green was not the first to plead on behalf of labour's song and lore. As a journalist and ally of labour, George Korson had pioneered the collection and publication of coalminers' songs and stories from the 1920s onward. In addition, John Greenway had made a case for labour protest songs within the academic folklore circle in the early 1950s. Nevertheless, Green's work finally won the crowd over to laborlore's side. Doing so required considerable persuasion and it is a compliment to Green that he did so with little methodological or ideological venom. He simply spent three decades collecting and disseminating laborlore among his colleagues, while simultaneously waging a tireless non-partisan campaign to get other scholars to follow his lead.

In this book Green once again takes up the cause in a collection of essays on a variety of laborlore topics. In his introduction Green outlines the historiography of laborlore while encouraging more workers and scholars to do fieldwork. Green has never laboured over theoretical or methodological details, however, and this work is no exception. Green states his case, moves on to do the business at hand, and leaves the larger analytic questions to other interested parties. Most of this work finds Green taking readers through a

series of laborlore case studies. In the first chapter Green charts the history of visual representations of the folk hero John Henry. In a similar vein Green traces Joe Hill's elevation to heroic status among the left in chapter two. In two other chapters Green dissects the sources and evolution of the terms "wobbly" and "fink." Elsewhere he fleshes out the epic meaning of a labour song about Marcus Daly, the Butte, Montana mining magnate. Two chapters review the history of songs: one from the 1892 Homestead strike and another from a textile strike in North Carolina in 1900. Another chapter briefly surveys a variety of work rituals — Labour Day parades, Charivari, retirement ceremonies, and sabotage. A final chapter considers the origin and history of the term "pile butt" for pile driver.

Green packs a wealth of information into each of these chapters. Anyone interested in workers and their history will find something of value here. From this reviewer's vantage certain chapters nevertheless stand out for quality and appeal. In his chapter on the term "wobbly," for example, Green does an admirable job of straightforward detective work as he attempts to chart the term's origin and evolution. If we never actually discover the term's original source we learn a lot of labour history along the way. Elsewhere, in the chapter on Joe Hill, Green demonstrates how the independent-minded, Wobbly songwriter Joe Hill emerged as a martyred hero among the Stalinist-dominated Communist Party. Much of the story follows the popular song "Joe Hill" and its movement through leftist ranks. Along the way, however, we learn as much about the US Party's history as we do about a song.

By far the most engaging chapter in this book, however, is the one on "pile butt." Green's enthusiasm and interest in his subject will appear obvious to readers. He turns a chapter on a single term into an excursion through the labyrinth history of an entire occupation and its lore. This strikes me as one of the best essays Green

has ever written. While utilizing the original-source-and-all-its-variants form that folklorists frequently rely upon, Green avoids slipping into the antiquarianism that can plague scholarship guided by this methodological formula. Just as historians sometimes string together one mass after the next of dry descriptive evidence of data, those trained in folklore can string together variant texts and reams of dull, ancillary descriptive information. (I won't make friends among genealogists or demographers by saying this, but such writing reminds me of my relatives sitting me down to read an annotated family tree. Information contained in the tree has no inherent value, in spite of what my relatives might think and regardless of how many variant texts my forebears bore!) Nearly all of us suffer this malady at some point in our writing and the weakest sections of this book demonstrate that Green hasn't entirely escaped it either. The chapter on "Home Front Harassment," for example, falls into this category even though it includes informative material. In "pile butt," however, Green carefully delineates a larger perspective as he brings in worker anecdotes, political commentary, labour history, economics, and cultural analysis. Moreover, because he puts more of himself into this essay by adding personal recollections of his years on the waterfront, this essay breathes a kind of intensity and verve as well. For these reasons it becomes all that more convincing to readers. (We should hope that Green neatly segues from this essay into a work on his own life and labour. That would be a treat for us all.)

Anyone interested in laborlore or worker culture would do well to make their way through this important book. You will sometimes find yourself bewildered as Green takes you through a case-study maze where beginning and end are not always clear. Be patient when that happens. There is much to learn from this book and everyone will find useful information in its pages. Overall it must be judged a first-rate piece of scholarship.

After 30 years on the campaign trail, Archie Green proves that he still has a lot to say to the converted and unconverted.

Clark "Bucky" Halker
Princeton, Maine

Renqiu Yu, *To Save China, To Save Ourselves: The Chinese Hand Laundry Alliance of New York* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press 1992).

IN THE UNITED STATES the Chinese have often been perceived as an ethnic group robustly resistant to the American melting pot. As newcomers, they have been portrayed as "sojourners," immigrants who did not take root in American society, failing to adopt its dominant values or assimilate its culture. Renqiu Yu disputes this view. In this study of the Chinese Hand Laundry Alliance of New York, the author argues that the Alliance's activities demonstrate the extent to which some Chinese had in fact adopted American democratic values and vigorously sought to advance them.

Founded in 1933 to protect New York's laundrymen against municipal regulations which would have driven them out of business, the Chinese Hand Laundry Alliance quickly assumed other roles in the Chinese community. It became, from one perspective, a democratic counterweight to the conservative, hierarchical, merchant-controlled Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association, which dominated the life of the Chinese community in New York. The battle between these two bodies was bitter and often unscrupulous. For example, leaders of the Benevolent Association exploited widespread suspicion of the Chinese to undermine the Alliance, hinting of "bad elements" among its members and leaking to authorities the names of people thought to be illegal immigrants. Despite the best efforts of Chinatown's elite to harass and discredit them, the Chinese Hand Laundry Worker's Alliance quickly be-

came a leading organization in New York's Chinatown.

From its new power base the Alliance championed Chinese patriotism. The Alliance's efforts included a major campaign to raise money from laundrymen and their customers to aid China in its war against Japan. Four ambulances were purchased in 1938 with the funds raised; the vehicles were used visibly in the streets of New York to display Chinese-American patriotic spirit. Once in China, however, the vehicles frequently stood idle — a result of lack of fuel and inappropriate terrain. While their practical utility in guerrilla warfare may have been exceedingly limited, the ambulances were a potent tool in an American-based propaganda campaign meant to raise the status of the Chinese in America. If they could be shown to be as patriotic a native Americans, members believed, respect for them would increase. Demonstrations of patriotism were prominent in most Alliance activities. The leadership encouraged its economically hard-pressed members to buy US war bonds. As Li Chengzhu, one of the Alliance's leading members, urged in 1944: "Let every hand laundry in every corner become a buyer of war bonds, so as to increase the amity between us and our customers and, to set an example for those 'cheap' customers, inspiring them to follow us to buy the war bonds."

These promotional and fund-raising activities became an important part of the life of many Chinese laundrymen and a method of breaking down their isolation from the country in which they worked. These men had little choice to be other than "sojourners." Most spoke and read little English, worked long hours, had only superficial contact with non-Chinese, and, crucially, were legally restricted (by the Chinese Exclusion Act and related regulations) from forming family units or becoming American citizens. By the early 1940s, however, the Alliance's efforts seemed to be making headway. In 1943 the Chinese exclusion acts were repealed, finally giving the

Chinese the same right to apply for citizenship as all other immigrants — and a quota of 105 new immigrants a year. The reason for the repeal, however, had little to do with the views of Chinese Americans; rather, the fundamental argument was that the measure would help to end the war and enhance US postwar relations with China. Meanwhile, the war itself helped Chinese laundries, since work was diverted to them from large factory laundries devoted to war work, and because of increased custom from women newly in the wartime workforce.

These benefits were short-lived. After the war home washing machines and renewed commercial laundries seriously harmed the livelihoods of Alliance members. Politically, the support of leftists and the hostility of conservative Chinese combined to ensure FBI harassment and prosecution during the McCarthy years. The Alliance's members, along with their journals and businesses, were pursued relentlessly. Chinese community leadership reverted to the conservatives. The Alliance lost much of its membership and FBI surveillance continued into the 1970s.

The Alliance's efforts were largely ignored by the broader society. It did much to provide assistance and economic aid to its members but it could never break down the twin barriers of American anti-Chinese sentiment and the Chinese community's political conservatism. The Chinese, between 1882 and 1943, were explicitly excluded from American society, yet the Chinese Hand Laundry Alliance chose to identify with the democratic values of a society which kept its members politically, socially, and economically on the periphery.

To tell the Alliance's story, the author has drawn extensively on Chinese language sources and oral history. As a consequence, this study adds nuance and complexity to our understanding of the Chinese experience in America. Unfortunately, the potential to use creatively the interviews conducted with two dozen elderly Chinese laundrymen is largely lost

in favour of long quotes from newspapers and documents. We learn too little about the laundrymen's work, thoughts, and feelings about their lives. Editorials, often reproduced at great length, cannot achieve the immediacy of good oral history. In addition, this monograph prematurely takes on the tenor of a "dusty tome" through its suffocating use of acronyms. *To Save China, To Save Ourselves* adds considerably to our knowledge, but, at the same time, it misses an opportunity to make the past come alive.

Patricia Malcolmson
Ontario Ministry of Health

Reginald Gibbons and Terrence Des Pres, eds., *Thomas McGrath: Life and the Poem* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press 1992).

Even in this brief outline, there is enough to indicate that Sidney Greenspan was not the stuff of which heroes are made, at least in the conception of heroes which is most popular in America today.

Howard Fast, "An Epitaph for Sidney"

THE UNLIKELY HERO of Fast's short story is one of those freedom-loving youngsters who, in the summer of 1937, ignored their country's wishes and followed their hearts and their Party to the hills and valleys of Spain. Fast names his hero "Sidney Greenspan," a metonymy for all the working-class radicals who put aside what little personal comfort they enjoyed at home to volunteer for liberty abroad. But "An Epitaph for Sidney" is not solely about the civil war in Spain or the brave men who fought and died there. It is, as the final clause of my epigraph suggests, the story of an age when the selfless heroism of a Sidney Greenspan had grown not only unfashionable but nearly extinct, when the belly-crawl of the besieged anti-fascist had been replaced by the long, low one of the con-

gressional informer. Looking back at Sidney's sacrifice from the early days of the postwar persecution of Communism, Fast's narrator must write his epitaph against the grain of a national press that "devotes countless millions of words" to explain "why people like Sidney Greenspan are corrupt, evil, selfish, and enemies of mankind." To counter the anti-Communist mystifications of the late 1940s, the narrator musters this simple clarity: "To the memory of Sidney Greenspan, anti-fascist, who fell in the people's struggle — from his comrades." Soon, however, the House Committee on Un-American Activities and the Smith Act trials would distort even this comradely idiom not only into heresy but also into evidence of conspiracy, and writers on the left would be forced to adopt an Aesopian indirection and obscurity incommensurate with the spirit and tact of their revolutionary politics and poetics.

One of the radical writers who fought most valiantly to retain a language that might not deny a lifetime of direct action was the poet Thomas McGrath. Summoned to testify before HUAC in 1954, McGrath neither equivocated nor temporized, citing legal, professional, moral, and even aesthetic precedents for refusing to cooperate:

I believe that one of the things required of us is to try to give life an esthetic ground, to give it some of the pattern and beauty of art. I have tried as best I can to do this with my own life, and while I do not claim any very great success, it would be anti-climactic, destructive of the pattern of my life, if I were to cooperate with the committee.

Sadly but not surprisingly, such forthrightness cost McGrath his teaching job at Los Angeles State, but it is this unbroken trajectory of political commitment and social responsibility that is memorialized by this collection of poems, interviews, memoirs, and criticism first published in 1987 as a special issue of the journal *TriQuarterly* and now happily reissued in a somewhat expanded version two years after the poet's death. Edited

ably and engagingly by Reginald Gibbons and the late Terrence Des Pres, this volume serves as both tribute and general introduction to the work of a writer whose achievement as poet, teacher, and citizen is, I believe, unsurpassed in modern American letters.

That McGrath hasn't received the critical acclaim he deserves might in part be explained by his backlisting in the 1950s and by his association throughout his career with what he called "the unaffiliated far left." Things are changing, however. In 1988 Des Pres gave a chapter of his highly-regarded *Praises & Dispraises* to McGrath's accomplishment as a political poet, placing him alongside Brecht, Breytenbach, and Rich — fast company indeed. The following year *The Nation* awarded its Lenore Marshall Poetry Prize — whose previous winners include Allen Tate, Hayden Carruth, and Denis Levertov — to McGrath's *Selected Poems: 1938-1988*. In 1991 a reviewer for the *New York Times Book Review* called *Letter to an Imaginary Friend*, McGrath's two-volume epic of labour, resistance, memory, and hope, "this century's most persuasive poem about struggles for broad-based social change" and McGrath himself "the essential modern American poet of witness and community." The timely reappearance of *Thomas McGrath: Life and the Poem* should only enhance the poet's already burgeoning reputation.

What distinguishes Gibbons and Des Pres' volume from previous attempts to honour and understand McGrath's work — there are special issues of the *North Dakota Quarterly* and *Poetry East* devoted to McGrath as well as Federick C. Stern's 1988 collection, *The Revolutionary Poet in the United States* — is the editors' wise decision to underplay critical assessment and emphasize instead McGrath's own language. After an appropriately modest introduction by Gibbons, the collection begins in earnest with a healthy sampling from all four books of *Letter to an Imaginary Friend*, followed

by the longest interview with McGrath ever published, a conversation filled with the same irreverence, generosity, hard-won wisdom, and beguiling Irish wit that mark all of his poetry. Here is McGrath near the start of his 329-page *Letter*, explaining what he's up to:

— I'm here to bring you
 Into the light of speech, the insurrectionary
 powwow
 of the dynamite men and the doomsday
 spielers, to sing you
 Home from the night.

And later on, in lines written in the horrible shadow of the Congressional witch-hunt, more of McGrath's characteristic blessing and cursing as he recalls "the generous wish" of populism during the late 1930s:

Music under the dogged-down
 Dead lights of the beached caboose.
 Wild talk, and easy enough now to laugh.
That's not the point and never was the point.
 What was real was the generosity, expectant
 hope,
 The open and true desire to create the good.

Now, in another autumn, in our new dispensation
 Of an ancient, man-chilling dark, the frost
 drops over
 My garden's starry wreckage.

This emphasis on the spoken word, if not finally made flesh at least potentially so, is manifest throughout the volume, McGrath's laughter and complaints everywhere resounding, from the extraordinary memoir by the late British labour historian E.P. Thompson of his fifty-year friendship with the poet, to a seventy-year-old McGrath's final free-form theorizing on poetics: "We need a language that ranges from slang all the way out. Or, to paraphrase what MacDiarmid said of the kind of poetry he wanted: language that is high, low, Jack and the whole god-damned game." More often than not, that's exactly what Tom McGrath spoke to us.

Arthur D. Casciato
 Miami University

L.D. Schwarz, *London in the age of industrialisation: Entrepreneurs, labour force and living conditions, 1700-1850* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1992).

"INEVITABLY, THIS BOOK draws heavily on Dorothy George's *London Life in the Eighteenth Century*. First published in 1926, and frequently reprinted, it will remain a classic of its kind. The labour that went into its production was prodigious; time and again one begins to write about something only to find that Dorothy George has already dealt with the subject and done so with more authority." (6) In fact, I had a strong sense of *déjà vu*: time and again, I began to read about something only to find that Schwarz did not deal with the subject with authority because this book is a collection of essays, that are themselves pastiches of argument and assertion. Time and again, I had the strong sense that what worked in a good article or learned comment was indigestible or else under-conceptualized in the framework of what should be a more considered study. Overall, then, this book has some good parts but I found that the centrifugal forces of its parts detracted from the centripetal attraction of its main argument. And, indeed, the main argument is not merely a re-hash of Dorothy George but also relies very heavily on an abridged and edited version of Henry Mayhew's studies of London labour in the mid-19th century. I had hoped for more.

The novelty of Schwarz's emphasis on population dynamics gave me this hope but, unfortunately, he has treated this issue separately rather than giving it the centrality he urges for it (and it calls for). In this regard, I would contrast this book unfavourably with Jack Goldstone's *Revolution and Rebellion in the Early Modern World* (1991). This comparison underscores Schwarz's diffuse arguments about the supply of labour deriving from the changing structures of vital forces. Throughout this book the importance of a relative over-supply of labour is repeated-

ly emphasized, but when the author analyzes the causes of this fluctuating demography he provides a very old-fashioned discussion of the Bills of Mortality alongside a series of unsubstantiated assertions regarding family size without any consideration whatsoever of illegitimacy, nuptiality, or fertility.

What is lacking — and the author himself acknowledges it — is precise analysis of births, marriages, and deaths. This is a shame because this book shows that Schwarz has done interesting research into the relationship between incomes, occupations, social structure, social class, social geography, and the standard of living. His discussion of the formation of the wage and entitlements and their relationship to non-monetary perquisites is thoughtful. His analysis of the changing fortunes of tailors, shoemakers, furniture-makers, and silkweavers is also perceptive. His consideration of the roles of guilds, apprenticeships, and magistrates is fair and even-handed. His inquiry into sweated labour and the problem of skill is also sensitive. But somehow the parts do not add up to a significant whole. What we get instead is an argument that has the potential to develop into a significant departure from the established historiography, but the potential of this research is unrealized, its impact is dissipated, and the reader is left in the lurch.

Finally, Schwarz's orientation is decidedly economic. Debunking the mythology that treats London as "the Athens of the artisan," Schwarz shows that nine of ten male workers — who made up two-thirds of all males in the capital — sold their labour in a marketplace that was always flooded. Workers, we are told on a number of occasions, could expect to do little in face of large-scale structural relationships so that they were fighting a hopeless battle — "a ceaseless quest for stability." (209) Of course, we now know that the struggle against de-skilling, subdivision, and speed-up would be lost while competition from provincials, women, and children would not be re-

sisted forever, but Schwarz's account gives us little sense of why these struggles were fought nor why and how resistance was organized. Moreover, his repeated assertion that the traditional economy disintegrated in the 1860s is not completely convincing since beneath the veneer of structural stability the previous 150 years witnessed some very radical changes in the reproduction of both capital and labour. London's workers are seen as bearers and suppliers of labour power but their more complex social relationships with each other — and with their employers — are hardly considered. More intimate forms of social reproduction are likewise neglected so that we are told almost nothing about family, kinship, and neighbourhood; likewise, we learn nothing about social mobility between classes nor within classes, while geographical mobility from the countryside into London is completely overlooked. In much the same way, Schwarz treats England's imperial wars superficially so that the state's role in regulating labour is only considered within a neo-classical analysis of supply and demand. Thus, the press gang is never mentioned, while the role of the state's demand for manufactured goods from the dockyards and armament manufactures is hardly considered: the only real impact of war on the economy seems to be the removal of hundreds of thousands of workers into the armed forces and the consequent demand for coats and blankets. Thus the economic role of the state and its wars is seen as neutral — more or less like the demand for shoes or stockings. This is curious since the thrust of recent historiography — see John Brewer's *The Sinews of Power: War, Money and the English State, 1688-1783* (1989) — has been to emphasize the importance of state formation initiatives and imperial policies. These years were, after all, the time when Britannia's wooden ships ruled the waves; for the pullulating throngs of seamen and coastal merchant mariners — the deep-sea proletariat — who gravitated

to the East End of London, the Ratcliffe Highway was the centre of the world. Of this we learn next-to-nothing. Similarly, London's demand for coal was of crucial importance in promoting the Tyne- and Teeside mines, but of these linkages we also learn nothing. Nor do we learn anything about the immensely complex division of labour in the port of London. Furthermore, the entrepreneurial classes are similarly given scant attention so that the immense complexities of the City and the Inns of Court are given such short shrift that we would never imagine that Dickens located the Circumlocution Office in the heart of this great city.

London in the age of industrialisation is, then, a dissatisfying book. It promises to revise one of the classics of English historiography, but Schwarz's only significant departure from Dorothy George's *London Life* is in his treatment of population dynamics. Yet this discussion is acknowledged to be both old-fashioned and under-researched.

David Levine
Ontario Institute for Studies in
Education

Margot Finn, *After Chartism: Class and nation in English radical politics, 1848-1874* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1993).

BRITAIN'S MID-VICTORIAN labour and radical movements have always been difficult to place. What happened to the expansive vision and solidarity of Chartism? It is this period that Royden Harrison entitled "before the socialists" and this retreat that the labour aristocracy thesis purported to explain. More recently, Eugenio Biagini and Alastair Reid, in their edited volume, *Currents of Radicalism* (1992), have argued for the substantial continuity of radicalism in the period 1850-1914, an interpretation that views "socialism" as a mere recasting of liberal radicalism. Margot Finn's work has the

virtue of seeing a fair measure of continuity between late Chartism, the mid-Victorian labour movement, and the emergent socialism of the 1880s, without losing the distinct flavour of each of these historical moments.

The originality of *After Chartism* turns on how the author negotiates the complex politics of class, nation, and internationalism in the decades after Chartism. While recognizing the blurring of perceived class distinctions, Finn persuasively maintains that the politics of the 1850s and 1860s were more sharply divided along class lines than is usually supposed. Moreover, she insists that allegiances to class and nation were not simply opposed; nationalism was itself contested rather than shared cultural terrain. Her superb opening chapter, "Nation and class in the English radical tradition," emphasizes the centrality of the 17th century to English notions of patriotism and an imagined national identity. Finn's view should be set alongside Linda Colley's more exclusive concern with the origins of "Britishness" as the result of 18th-century warfare with France.

Labour historians have generally neglected that late Chartist movement, and Finn's contribution here is significant. Her discussion of the political culture of late Chartism is sound as is her consideration of Chartist debates on social policy. She stresses a continuing radical concern with democratic social change, relates this concern to internationalism, most particularly to support for French labour-republicanism, and identifies this orientation as a crucial fault-line separating the politics of working-class radicalism from that of middle-class liberalism. Thus, in 1848, Chartists were most enthusiastic about France — with its adoption of universal manhood suffrage and Louis Blanc's economic schemes — whereas middle-class reformers were more typically drawn to the national and liberal revolutions of Germany, Italy, and Hungary. Finn proceeds to show how working-class and middle-class radicals fa-

shioned distinctive and competing versions of national and international allegiance, charting the shifting configurations of support for such figures as Mazzini, Garibaldi, Blanc, Kossuth, and the British Russophobe David Urquhart.

Within post-1848 radical culture, support for various continental causes, reinforced by the presence of several thousand exiled revolutionaries, became inextricably linked to debates on political economy and on the relationship between political and social reform. In contrast to the politics of patriotism, however, radical leaders' concepts of international brotherhood were based on far less secure ideological foundations. But, as Finn argues, internationalist and nationalist sentiments, rather than constituting a straight-forward opposition, were historically contingent. Radicals were thus able to refashion the rhetoric of nationalism to promote internationalist causes.

As for debates within the mid-Victorian labour movement on social and economic programs, Finn concedes that radicalism's leaders proved unable to generate a shared critique of industrial capitalism. Yet while falling short of Marx's programmatic aims, Finn stresses the dynamism rather than the reformism of English radical culture after 1848. Indeed, during the 1850s, this dynamism presented a challenge to the sophisticated moulders of middle-class reform opinion and often served to distance labour-radicals from progressive middle-class spokespersons like George Dawson, Birmingham's radical Congregationalist minister. Finn concludes that the decade after 1848 "saw the proponents of nationalist sentiment mediate a gradual elision of Chartist and liberal thought without destroying perceptions of labour's distinctive political vision." If working-class radicals moved toward the center, this was at least in part because middle-class liberals moved to the left, "first questioning and then discarding the received dogmas of political economy that had crystal-

lized in English responses to the continental revolutions of 1848." (187)

Indeed, one of the most arresting parts of Finn's study is her sustained treatment of the reformulation of mid-Victorian liberalism. She claims that like 1848, the decade following 1858 marked a watershed in English radical politics, characterized by a gradual expansion of the middle-class radical vision and the reintegration of the political and social spheres earlier separated within bourgeois liberal thought. Sympathy for Polish and Italian nationalist struggles drew working-class and middle-class leaders into increased cooperation, setting the stage for the tangled reform movement of the mid-1860s and the rise of popular liberalism following the Second Reform Act. "If class has failed, let us try the nation," thundered Bright. But as Finn comments, the architect of popular liberalism appealed to the nation to legitimate his new recognition of the claims of labour and acceptance of the fundamental relationship between social and political reform. Moreover, Finn traces the ideological origins of liberal social democracy (and thus the "new liberalism" of the early 20th century) from the evolving pattern of liberal and radical thought during the 1860s. Similarly, she views the Labour Party as rightly tracing its lineage to democratic social and political traditions "that owed as much to the nation-state as they do to class." (319)

Finn leaves some questions unasked. One wonders, for example, how the pronounced anti-statism often prevalent in 19th-century popular radicalism fits an interpretation that places so much emphasis on the continuing importance of democratic social reform and state intervention. Overall, however, Finn has rethought the history of these decades in most wide-ranging, nuanced, and controversial fashion. For this, we are in her debt.

James Epstein
Vanderbilt University

Robert Duncan and Arthur McIvor, eds., *Militant Workers: Labour and Class Conflict on the Clyde, 1900-1950* (Edinburgh: John Donald 1992).

THE EXTENT OF INFLUENCE of the *Red Clyde* has been long and wide, historically and geographically. In Canada, for example, *Clydesiders* became a generic term for radical Scottish immigrants who became actively involved in workers' struggles here in the early 20th century. The focus of this study — Harry McShane, one of the last of the Red Clydesiders — can be instructively compared with Ecclefechan-born Jim McLachlan, the most prominent "Clydesider" in the coal fields of Nova Scotia. Both were honest, forceful, determined, imaginative fighters and educators who never gave up. Their radicalism brought them constant blacklisting. Both left their respective community parties when the latter lurched to the right, McLachlan in 1936 and McShane in 1953. Their examples continue to inspire and to teach those on the left, frequently far from the Old Country.

Terry Brotherstone's historiographical piece "Does Red Clydeside Really Matter Any More?" targets the revisionists in the 1980s who made a determined effort to relegate this period to the back shelves. The attempt, as this book attests, was unsuccessful. Brotherstone succinctly argues that this fascinating and historically useful period of militancy and radicalism between 1914 and 1922 still "has a central part to play in political discussion at the end of the twentieth century." (53) He perceptively dissects the 'liberal revisionists,' adds the broadening assessments of contemporaries and, with the "openly capitalist offensive" (74) of the 1980s, concludes that "Red Clydeside certainly matters ... more so than ever." (75) The relevance of this is underlined in a later chapter by Arthur McIvor and Hugh Paterson, "Combating the Left: Victimisation and Anti-Labour Activities on Clydeside, 1900-1939." Recent expo-

sure of the seventy-year old Economic League, "the most vigorous contemporary anti-socialist political blacklisting agency in Britain" (129) is a case in point. "Victimisation of those on the left of the political spectrum has a very long history indeed" (130) and according to this article Clydeside employers were at least as autocratic, nasty, and miserable as any of their contemporaries in other parts of the land. Comprehensive blacklisting, evictions, informers, propaganda, sharing of police information, and a biased judiciary were a few of the methods utilized. Systemic blacklisting was endemic, effective, and singled out political activists on an impressive scale. In 1911 the Singer Sewing Machine Company sacked between 400 and 1,000, including all of the almost 200-strong Strike Committee. A letter to the Glasgow *Evening Times* or running against a coalowner in a parish council election was reason enough to be dismissed. "Sackings forced many to migrate from the area to seek work, whilst those who remained often experienced dire problems obtaining alternative employment." (140) During the Hunger Marches in the 1930s the imaginative "Tory-controlled Fife County council 'had the married men who marched to London arrested as wife deserters.'" (147)

Rob Duncan's "Independent Working-class Education and the Formation of the Labour College Movement in Glasgow and the West of Scotland, 1915-1922" uses the notion of 'independence' as a "fundamental class and political position" (110) as he traces the rise and fall of formalized education, attributing the demise to finance, "opposition and ambivalence," and the ascendancy of labour reformism. Ambivalence is also evident in James Young's treatment of "James Connolly, James Larkin and John Maclean: The Easter Rising and Clydeside Socialism." Young dissipates much of their historical fog surrounding these relationships and makes the important point that "Connolly appreciated the importance of utilising cultural factors in the

struggle for socialism." (158) While socialists on the Clyde were slow to support the struggle for Irish independence they eventually came around — even John Maclean. That struggle continues as well. Useful articles on "Labour Unrest in West Scotland, 1910-1914" by the Glasgow Labour History Workshop and a study of the "National Unemployed Workers' Movement" in the same area by George Rawlinson complete the essay section of the collection.

This book also includes a series of reminiscences about and pamphlets by Harry McShane, who died at the age of 96 in April 1988. The former contains three brief but useful personal recollections by Hugh Savage, Ray Challinor, and Eric Heffer which underline the strength of McShane's character. While a member of the CPGB for over thirty years he demonstrated his commitment, determination, openness, and honesty. "Harry was always suspicious of unanimous decisions and was not afraid of disagreements and discussion, provided they led to action." (14) When the Party veered too much to the right, in his opinion, he left it. "He was completely and utterly incorruptible." (15) After he left the CPGB he would remain politically active for another 35 years of "selfless devotion." (19) When McShane was asked a few days before he died how he was for money he said "I'm fine. I've got over £40." (15) As Heffer concludes: "It was a privilege to have worked with him." (24) Some of McShane's personal strengths can be discerned in two pamphlets written by him in the 1940s. Disregarding those "with a fixed mentality" (29) he was primarily concerned with people and how they lived. One effort, "Gorbals in not Paradise" begins: "It is a hundred years since Gorbals was annexed to Glasgow, but it looks as if 1946 will pass without a celebration of the event. That is as it should be, the progress made does not call for the lighting of a single bonfire." (39) He then proceeded to offer practical solutions to

the horrendous housing conditions in the Gorbals in a clear and thoughtful fashion.

This work is a timely refresher course for reminding us that many of the same problems, practices and attitudes that confronted people seventy years ago are still around hammering away at the poor, the unemployed, the underemployed, the old, the young, the absurd, those who disagree. The last decade has left people reeling and the government/business assault on working people in Scotland, England, Ireland, or in Canada for that matter has not yet let up. Sometimes it pays to relearn and remember and another look at the "Red Clydeside" is quite felicitous. The editors offer this collection as "a very modest companion volume" (1) to McShane's autobiography, *No Mean Fighter*. It easily achieves that objective. It is less an uneven work than an asymmetrical one; reminiscences, reprints, research in progress, and detailed scholarship reworking the fertile and still relevant area of the Red Clydeside combine in a very useful and well-written collection.

Don MacGillivray
University College of Cape Breton

David Marsh, *The New Politics of British Trade Unionism: Union Power and the Thatcher Legacy* (Ithaca: ILR Press 1992).

ASSAULTS ON LABOUR UNIONS have been a prominent feature of the recent politics of advanced capitalist societies in the context of worldwide restructuring. But the author of this analysis of British trade unions since the 1960s claims that the impact of Thatcherism on unions' status has been exaggerated. Membership has declined by 25 per cent since 1979 and bargaining strength has dwindled. However, unions have been weakened, Marsh concludes, mainly by the deindustrialization of heavy manufacturing industry and the relocation of production

abroad by British transnational corporations. Other contributing developments include: the expanding service sector, increased part-time and female employment, a drop in plant-size, and the movement of manufacturing industry away from large conurbations.

The book is largely a review of existing literature, including the author's own investigations. After brief chapters on the historical background and on union power before 1979, Marsh examines the contents of conservative legislation and the extent of its use. There is discussion of the unions' political role, surprisingly confined to influence over policy. Union's relations with the Labour Party are seen to have culminated in that party reasserting its political autonomy. The changing economic context is examined and Thatcher's economic policy is shown to have built upon and accentuated existing restructuring and deindustrializing trends. Shop-floor industrial relations in both private and public sectors receive scrutiny. Most chapters conclude with comments on the future which Marsh sees to depend heavily on whether Labour could get elected. Since it did not, one can expect further adversarial treatment for unions under Major's regime.

Marsh reports that before the exceptional period from 1966 to 1979, when they were involved in helping to develop policies under the Social Contract, unions had a limited impact on government policy. They have had virtually no such role since that unusual period. However, the practices of shop-floor industrial relations remain the same and unions have adjusted to the new realities. There has been no major move to derecognize unions or to restrict collective bargaining, and few employers have used industrial legislation. But the content and scope of collective bargaining have changed and the number and duration of strikes have dropped.

Marsh argues that the significance of Thatcherism lay in its exploitation of public opinion against the unions in its elec-

toral successes, starting with the commitment in 1979 to end "cosy consultation" and curb union power. (243) Thereafter the Tory government was able to assert its authority over a movement that was already weakened by economic changes and rising unemployment.

Nevertheless, Thatcher's labour legislation severely curtailed closed shops and picketing, outlawed union-labour-only contracts, forced unions with political funds to hold ballots on them every ten years, allowed selective dismissal of unofficial strikers, made black-listing of employers by unions illegal, and made industrial action against non-unionized companies unlawful. Given this list one might wonder just how valid is Marsh's argument about the shifting economy having done more than Thatcherist policies to emasculate the unions. Part of the answer is that in the private sector the actual use of government legislation by employers has been uneven: it has most often been invoked in the printing and shipping industries, where macho-management is very evident and derecognition of unions most widespread. In the public sector, although financial constraints have been imposed on management and a more confrontational atmosphere has replaced the consultative practices of earlier years, there have been "relatively few alterations in the institutions of industrial relations ... no real move towards derecognition and no significant decline in collective bargaining." (236)

The study is nicely organized and Marsh makes his points firmly and clearly. However, one would have liked some analysis of the complex system of class domination which formed the background to Tory policies, including, for example, the continuing trenchant attacks on organized labour in the British press. At certain points Marsh refers to capital and labour's relationship but there is no real sense of class-based power that underlies the introduction of Thatcher's legislation. The new regulations were intimidating,

hegemonic tactics aimed at drastically altering the balance of class power. They were means whereby the Tories' succeeded, as Gamble points out, in dominating the political agenda. Britain's "Bona parte in petticoats" succeeded in smashing much of the machinery for collectivist and democratic politics with her brand of authoritarian populism. Marsh is apparently not concerned about these issues: his interest in the politics of unions is restricted to their influence on policy.

As Tory Lane put it in his discussion of the Tories and the unions in S. Hall and M. Jacques, ed., *The Politics of Thatcherism*, "If management were to design an ideal world then trade unions would not fit in it. People are a nuisance and insist on having minds of their own. It would be so much more convenient if they were like visual display units and showed the right signals when a key was punched."

Rennie Warburton
University of Victoria

David Collinson, *Managing the Shopfloor: Subjectivity, Masculinity and Workplace Culture* (Berlin & New York: Walter de Gruyter 1992).

DAVID COLLINSON explores male manual workers' subjective experiences of work and their practices of resistance, compliance and consent. His analysis is based primarily on an in-depth ethnographic study (conducted between 1979-1983) of a production facility in the North of England which he calls "Slavs," a company that had once been family-owned, but which was purchased by an American transnational corporation in the 1970s.

The book provides valuable correctives to the literature on organizations and workers' culture and to theories of management and the labour process. Since Harry Braverman's pathbreaking *Labor and Monopoly Capital* (1974) there has been much debate and research on the extent of workers' consent and/or resist-

ance to managerial control. Collinson makes clear his indebtedness to previous research on shopfloor culture, particularly the work of Paul Willis and Michael Burawoy, but he (rightfully) criticizes them either for romanticizing workers' culture and exaggerating the degree of workers' resistance or for overemphasizing consent and conformity. Building on recent critical theories of organizations and management Collinson places issues of power and control at the forefront of his analysis. He rejects previous approaches to workplace culture for using a theory of power that depends on a series of dualisms: material/symbolic reality; behaviour/consciousness; compliance/subordination.

Collinson's major contribution is to highlight the significance of workers' subjective experiences of the control and commodification of their labour for understanding the social relations of work. Subjectivity, by which he means individuals' efforts to achieve personal security and to produce a stable and positive identity, is an important ingredient in reproducing power asymmetries in organizations. Without a theory of subjectivity, Collinson maintains, we cannot explain either the conditions or consequences of workplace cultural practices of consent and resistance. He replaces previous explanations of workers' practices as false consciousness or as structurally determined with a sophisticated account of workers actively engaged in a dynamic process of constructing their world and themselves under conditions of domination. Chapters of the book are devoted to analysis of the various discursive practices male workers used to deal with their commodification.

The agenda Collinson sets out for himself is extraordinarily important and ambitious: to identify and to understand the strategies and practices workers used to construct a dignified self in the context of their commodification. The self that Collinson writes about is not unitary and rational as assumed in liberal humanism

(and found in most social sciences and humanities). Rather Collinson adopts a poststructuralist version of the self as fragmented, heterogeneous, and non-rational. Individuals construct identities for themselves by investing in a multitude of available and typically contradictory discursive practices. But, Collinson concludes, none of the strategies male workers employed (indifference, domination, subordination) confronted the underlying problem of their objectification.

This book provides many examples of the ways resistance and compliance co-existed on the shop floor, sometimes in the very same practices. In the chapter, "Managing a Joke," for example, Collinson explores how workplace humour operated to maintain the status quo and to challenge it. Jokes which ridiculed management as effeminate helped to develop workers' cohesion; but the male sparring that was part of the joking culture also cut into worker unity by individualizing and heightening competition among workers.

Workers did "resist" but their oppositional practices drew on and thereby reproduced the corporate culture that had objectified them. Workers' efforts to secure material and symbolic security had the contradictory effect of reinforcing those insecurities. According to Collinson, Slav management succeeded in controlling workers not simply because they had more power and resources, but also because workers' oppositional practices served to reproduce their own subordination.

Collinson's analysis of workplace culture at Slavs hinges on his assumption that the workers he studied adopted particular discursive practices in an effort to achieve material and symbolic security, an enterprise which is impossible and ultimately self-defeating. Workers' discursive practices derived from the existential need to search for a stable identity and a predictable set of meanings. Collinson attempts to show that such efforts produced only more insecurity. If you accept these big assumptions you will find the rest of

his argument about shopfloor culture convincing. Some may wonder how a seemingly poststructuralist analysis can depend so heavily upon an assumption of a singular totalizing "essence" of humanity.

There are other curious inconsistencies in Collinson's approach. He claims to adopt a theoretical framework that eschews the separation of material realities, behaviour and consciousness, preferring to see each of these as inseparable. Yet he employs the concept of (class) "interests" treating them as if they were "real" and pre-existing any discursive practice. Similarly, he treats workers' "experience" of work in ways which assume its "materiality" separate from its discursive construction. The "real" experiences on the shopfloor, Collinson argues, led men manual workers to view labour as a constraint on their freedom. Collinson makes significant efforts to break away from dichotomous thinking, but he unwittingly falls into its trap.

While I commend Collinson for taking gender seriously in his analysis of class and shopfloor relations, gender remains undertheorized. Despite Collinson's efforts to deconstruct masculine subjectivity he is caught in a framework which treats the subordination of work as "real" and masculinity as "ideological." He ultimately falls back on analysing gender as epiphenomenal, as a form of false consciousness. Class and gender remain distinct, even if overlapping and intersecting. Although Collinson claims that gender is central to his analysis his primary concern is with subjectivity and its relation to class. (Interestingly, discussion of masculinity does not begin until page 34.)

Working-class masculinity is treated as static rather than as part of a process in which it is itself transformed. Masculinity is alternately conceived as a "compensation" for workplace deprivations or as one of workers' "coping mechanisms" in dealing with their commodification.

Because Collinson has been so sensitive to issues of masculinity it is frustrating that he does not take his analysis further. He points to the ways men at Slavs talk about manliness and provides many examples of their use of sexual/bodily metaphors, but he often treats workers' language as self-evident. He doesn't explore how discourses of masculinity operate to give meaning to other systems of hierarchy and power relations in the workplace. While there is much rich analysis in *Managing the Shopfloor*, there also are numerous missed opportunities to explore the ways workers, managers, and shop stewards invoke the language of gender to naturalize and/or to represent conditions of vulnerability or domination.

In sum, *Managing the Shopfloor* is a welcome addition to the literature on work. I applaud Collinson's efforts to examine the question of workers' subjectivity. I also am pleased that he attempted to incorporate gender as well as class into his analysis of the social relations of the workplace. Even if the book falls short in certain respects it certainly is asking important and neglected questions.

Ava Baron
Princeton University

Gerald Porter, *The English Occupational Song* (Umeå, Sweden: U of Umeå 1992).

USING FOLK AND POPULAR SONG data of "between four and five thousand recordings and printed texts, from the seventeenth century to the present," this work, despite its title, does not seek to delineate a "genre" of song. Rather, it is analysis of the diversity and complexity of occupational representation in English song and as such it provides an important model for the examination of all song texts that include such references. (24) Moreover, in tracing occupational iconography Porter is to be commended for not becoming mired in categorical questions regarding cultural hierarchy and for perceiving cul-

tural commonalities by "collaps[ing] the walls interpolated between love songs and working songs, between orality and print, and between popular and 'high' culture." (151) Although he is primarily concerned with English material, Irish, Scottish, and North American analogues are also included. Given his use of North American materials, however, it is perplexing why major figures in the study of North American occupational and labour song such as George Korson, Archie Green, John Greenway, Norm Cohen, and Edward D. Ives are completely ignored. Likewise, while Edith Fowke's *Penguin Book of Canadian Folk Songs* is cited, her works on labour song and lumbering songs are absent.

As Porter observes in his introduction, some workers in Britain, especially agricultural workers, miners, and weavers, have generated more available songs than others, the variables being: "a cohesive and perceptive audience," "favorable conditions for songmakers," and the activities of the "*broadside and popular presses*." (10-3) While he maintains that sea shanties and soldiers' songs probably form the largest corpus of occupational songs, they do not warrant consideration, he argues, because they have already been extensively studied, notably by Roy Palmer and Stan Hugill. From a theoretical perspective, Porter's decision not to include such songs in his survey is unfortunate, particularly because Palmer's and Hugill's works do not approach songs with Porter's frame. Employing an encompassing semiotic interpretation of occupational expression that overrides class and gender divisions, Porter views the occupational signifiers of his study as being "embedded in a matrix of cultural associations," songs being but one sector of a "continuum of social reference including proverbs, jokes, caricatures and written literature." (13) Given such a holistic perspective, it is further lamentable that Porter omits any mention of the large amount of work that has gone into occupational folklife studies by scholars such

as Robert McCarl, Jack Santino, and Robert Byington, for occupational folklife is also an area of research concerned with expressive communication and multigeneric ideas about work.

Although Porter is mainly interested in "insider" songs because of their rich, "occupation-specific" detail and the ways that they reflect the "lived conditions" of work, he does not neglect "outsider" songs, showing that through time their views of occupations substantially alter. His major criteria for designating insider occupational songs are, first, that they have actually been performed within an occupational group, and second, that such songs have been created "within the group, or by people whose relationship with it was largely one of equality." Porter qualifies this insider-outsider dualism as not being a "fixed order," however, for in some cultural contexts insider-outsider distinctions can be difficult to discern and it is not uncommon for outsider songs to eventually gain insider status. (15)

Through examples drawn from the mason-bricklayer trade, Porter notes a tempting pattern of song evolution from worksongs, primarily concerned with assisting the work effort through rhythm, to occupational songs, focusing on the milieu of work, and finally to the labour songs of organized workers, the social function of which is solidarity. He wisely displaces this hypothesis, however, asserting that one cannot assume such a "natural" progression." In its place he posits a more comprehensive position, namely, that there is "a less schematic change" from "work as social ritual to a reification of the work process in terms of its tools and routines, with a current growth of group and class identity." (24)

Porter's initial chapter, "The Fairing Hand: Mediation of the Occupational Song," puts his data in perspective by noting how commercial (the broadside trade), ideological (activities of early folksong collectors), and aesthetic (cultivated literature) constraints have affected occupational representation and song

texts. Particularly with regard to British folksong collectors, a narrow view of traditional song focusing on amatory gender relations has had the effect of "leading fieldworkers and editors alike to exclude the bulk of occupational songs as not true folk songs." (43) What published lyrics have appeared have often been composite, bowdlerized, "clean" texts. Not willing to abandon these resources because of their inadequacies, Porter exemplifies how one can recover the "suppressed" details of such sanitized texts "through an examination of the rhyme words." (49)

Arguing that work is "central in constructing the paradigms of society," Porter's second chapter deals with the multifaceted (music, gesture, setting, language) expressive representation of work and workers and "the durability of such representations in song transmission." (63) Using songs representing railway workers as a major example, he argues for "a broad line of development in occupation-specific culture that is common to many trades and industries," namely one in which work processes are initially seen from the outside as "simple phenomena," through to the gradual foregrounding of the work process, until finally, "the representation of work develops a variety and complexity of its own, expressed through wide variations in language, setting and figurative resources." (65) In their latter development, Porter maintains that it is "the inwardness of representations of work, that gives the occupational songs their cohesion" and that the social boundaries drawn in the narratives of such songs "routinely transgress the norms of the ruling discourse, particularly through the literal displacement of authority, the captain by the woman in disguise, the gamekeeper by the poacher, the magistrates by the highwayman, and the recruiting sergeant by the deserter." (80)

A third chapter, "Occupation as Metaphor," examines the ways in which occupational attributes have been used in songs as "role markers" and metaphors. By the 18th century, for example, the dim-

inutive stature, demeanour, ethics, role, and comic actions of the tailor were well defined in song as well as in a continuum of proverbial sayings, jokes, and caricatures. A significant portion of this chapter also scrutinizes ballads in which the "work process itself becomes a sexual metaphor" (millers grinding, milkmaids stroking). The interface of oral and printed traditions is apparent in this eroticization, the broadside being the major "mediating agency." (91, 99).

Social identity through occupation, i.e., the integration of life and work, is the focus of Chapter four, "Group Cohesion and Disintegration." A section on the emergence of the concept of "women's work" is especially poignant, for as Porter notes, the viewpoint of women in song needs conscious foregrounding in order "to combat the continuing invisibility of women's culture in the dominant discourse." (108) Besides songs in which women usurp traditionally male occupations (see Diane Dugaw, *Warrior Women and Popular Balladry 1650-1850*), Porter specifically cites songs in which women are active, "central figures by virtue of their work." He lists eighteen occupations in this regard including "besom maker, bus conductor, chainmaker, cook, dressmaker, fishgutter, ... oyster seller, prostitute and stripper." (109) Evidence as early as the 16th century indicates that women first developed a group identity in song as wage labourers in the textile industries. With regard to women's domestic labour Porter discusses "Woman's Work is Never Done," first published as a broadside in 1629. As he observes, the immediate success of the song among women is indicated by the parodies that it prompted in the latter part of that century, and by the fact that the song has continued to be performed by women in variant forms for over three centuries. In the last part of the chapter Porter discusses the role of mining disaster ballads in fostering solidarity and social consciousness in the fact of common calamity.

In a final chapter before his conclusion, "Forces from the Outside," Porter ponders the songs of cotton weaving, railways, and coalmining as examples of "symbolic schemes" which emerged in Britain's industrial revolution (ca. 1770-1850). In addition, he interprets certain, more recent songs as "rituals of rebellion" because they exhibit patterns of collective action and protest based on the formation of trade unionism. The signifiers he examines as "symbols" are the factory bell (the regimentation of time), the machine (displacement of the human body), and the worker as hero (strength, productivity). Rebellion is treated under individual and organizational headings. Critical of the popular rise of the "autonomous protest singer" in the 1960s, Porter contends that singers such as Dick Gaughan and Ewan MacColl who worked "within the parameters of organized movements," have performed and recorded "songs of individual protest" that "live in a symbiotic relationship with labour anthems." Here he cites the uses put to Gaughan's *True and Bold: Songs of the Scottish Miners*, a cassette which was released during the national miners' strike (1983-84) and MacColl's union anthem "We are the Engineers."

A study of "texts," *Occupational Song* necessarily incurs the liabilities of omission that only context can provide. For instance, what is the barometer for the popularity of the thousands of texts that Porter has consulted? Parody may be one indicator, but how typical are Porter's examples and to what extent are they insider social documents? Although I am aware of Sam Richards as a fine "folk revival" singer and composer, Porter offers no arguments for his extensive examination of Richards' "The Lofthouse Colliery Disaster" other than that the song "enlarges and extends the tradition of turning the specific conditions of disaster to the cause of group solidarity" and that it "can be seen as part of the folklore of the event, an element in the complex network of cultural expression." (120, 122)

That the song is interesting, draws on previous disaster song models, and has to do with an actual tragedy which occurred in 1973 are all well taken considerations, but what source group has the song actually served? Have miners sung it? Are the people of Lofthouse, Yorkshire aware of it? Is it a song that has been sung largely at folk festivals? Such questions must be broached if the analysis of texts is to be more than a formalistic exercise. Minor quibbles include an insufficient discussion of audio recordings, which today have replaced the broadside, and the index's omission of concepts. A final stylistic criticism is that the author has made no attempt to transform what is obviously a thesis into a book and because of this, the writing is sometimes cumbersome and repetitious. In general, however, Porter's monograph is a very valuable contribution to studies of vernacular song and occupational folklife.

Peter Narváez
Memorial University of Newfoundland

Mark Traugott, editor and translator, *The French Worker: Autobiographies from the Early Industrial Era* (Berkeley: University of California Press 1993).

MARK TRAUGOTT has performed a real service for teachers and students of modern French history and of social history by translating large portions of the autobiographies of seven French workers whose experiences span the period from the end of the Old Regime to the dawn of the 20th century: the chair turner Jacques Etienne Bédé, the embroidery worker and midwife Suzanne Voilquin, the joiner Agricol Periguier, the mason Martin Nadaud, the silkweaver (among other occupations) Norbert Truquin, the machinist Jean-Baptiste Dumay, and the silkwormer, seamstress, and domestic servant Jeanne Bouvier. Even temperament is well represented in the collection, with Perdiguer's and Nadaud's optimistic faith in progress

balanced by Truquin's and Dumay's ironic and rebellious natures.

Traugott's introduction highlights the historical context in which the autobiographies were written and emphasizes their value to the historical sociologist as evidence of changes in work organization, apprenticeship, sociability, the use of *patois* and French, and collective protest in the 19th century. The texts are especially rich in discussions of the workings of the labour market: Bédé's account of how chair turners protected their position by assuring the distribution of workers to competing centers of the business in Paris and by sending younger workers out of the city with the understanding that chair turners with families would protect the corporation's interests while keeping their jobs in Paris; Perdiguer's explanation of how a *compagnonnage* "captured" a town: Nadaud's shifting positions in a variety of pay systems; and Dumay's run-ins with Le Creusot management eager to recoup apprenticeship costs and which therefore banished for life any trainee (like Dumay) who left the company before his draft lottery.

The texts are open to equally revealing readings of cultural beliefs and practices: the meanings given skill and honour, responses to odours and proximity, and the physicality and violence of the informal and formal (*compagnonnage*) worlds of male labour. Particularly interesting are the ways in which workers evaluated employers, on economic as well as moral and humane grounds. Bédé most clearly inverts the employers' argument that they act in line with the rationality of the market, while workers are governed by their passions. He wrote of one master, "This proves that a person's interests are not always well served when pride takes hold and is allowed to triumph over reason." (67) The autodidact's anger at a society that stymied access to the world of knowledge marks the memoirs of Voilquin, Truquin and Dumay. Most college students approaching these texts for the first time will likely be struck by

the harsh material conditions in which many of the authors grew up, the authors' apparently extraordinary memory of wages and costs of items from their youths, and especially the autobiographers' often devastating assessments of their parents' behaviour. "I was not loved by my mother," Bédé tells us at the beginning of his tale, the first of several such laments in the collection. (48) (Only the optimists Perdiguier and Nadaud had good relations with both parents.)

Traugott selected what parts of the autobiographies to include in his collection so as to bring out the youth and the work experiences of the authors. He largely omitted the adult political beliefs and careers of the Saint-Simonian Violquin, the republican Nadaud, the agrarian utopian Truquin, the socialist Dumay, and the syndicalist Bouvier. This was a sound decision. In his introduction to Nadaud's memoirs (published by Hachette in 1976), Maurice Agulhon contrasts the freshness of the early sections on Nadaud's youth and work life with the more guarded — and less interesting — chapters Nadaud devoted to his career as a leading republican. Such a shift in the memoirs of working-class politicians, notes Agulhon, "is almost a law of the genre."

While Traugott's principles of inclusion largely eliminate the political careers of his memoirists, there is another aspect of the politics of these texts which deserves mention. All seven of these autobiographies were published (usually republished) in France between 1976 and 1984. Interest in these works in France at this time reflected two developments. First, the transformation of France during the Fifth Republic prompted publication of a number of autobiographies of individuals from a rural France of berets and baguettes (Pierre-Jakez Hélias, *The Horse of Pride*) and, to a lesser extent, from an industrial France of mining and manufacturing (Louis Lengrand and Marie Craipeau, *Louis Lengrand, mineur du nord*), both sectors which appeared to be disappearing in the 1970s.

Second, by the mid-1970s many on the left in France had come to distrust the intellectual's traditional forms of political engagement as potentially muting or even contradicting the voices of the oppressed and the marginalized in society. Maspero's "Actes et mémoires du peuple" series, in which six of Traugott's seven autobiographies appeared, was one response to this concern. While Traugott's principles of selection and editing are those of the historical sociologist, contemporary French readers have been interested in the political implications of these texts as well.

This becomes evident if one compares Traugott's brief introduction to his selection of Truquin's memoirs with Michelle Perrot's essay on the memoirs — to which Traugott refers as a source for his comments. (Perrot's essay is in Steven Kaplan and Cynthia Koepf, eds., *Work in France: Representations, Meaning, Organization, and Practice* [1986].) For Traugott, the memoir reveals "the occupational instability and marginality of those without skills, without knowledge, without tools, without the support of a family or a circle of friends." (25) Perrot, reflecting her broadly Foucauldian politics, moves from a sociological gloss on Truquin's experiences to Truquin's interpretation of them: "a lifetime ... committed to the belief that the rootedness of the working class is a cause of its misfortunes.... There was job insecurity, it is true, but also a certain freedom." (*Work in France*, 300, 308). The autobiographies Traugott presents are open to a variety of readings and this is one of the strengths of his collection.

While *The French Worker* should attract a variety of audiences, it will be particularly valuable as a text in French history and social history courses. The stories are riveting — and often wrenching. Given the large literature in English on 19th-century French working-class experience, it would have been helpful for Traugott to provide a list of "further readings" for students interested in exploring

the context of the memoirs, but this is a minor quibble. Traugott has produced a wonderful collection: the memoirs are well selected, introduced, edited, and translated to illustrate the breadth of working-class experience in 19th-century France and the diversity of ways of describing and interpreting this experience.

Donald Reid
University of North Carolina at
Chapel Hill

Darryl Holter, *The Battle for Coal: Miners and the Politics of Nationalization in France, 1940-1950* (De Kalb, IL: Northern Illinois University Press 1992).

THE BATTLE FOR COAL was of central importance in the shaping of postwar France. This book is a study of union power in operation, the evolution of industrial policy by government, and of the insecurities of labour-management co-operation. Holter is at his best in describing the mentalities of union leaders and managers and the interplay of national and international politics with industrial relations. In a rich and multifaceted treatment, what perhaps is most interesting is Holter's examination of the role played by the French Communist Party (PCF) and its militants in the CGT Federation of Miners. In his focus on the coal miners, Holter bears out George Ross's thesis that Communists acted as labour leaders as well as revolutionaries and that the balance between the two continually shifted.

Holter organizes his book into three phases. The first deals with the process through which coal became a nationalized industry. Coal had been the subject of state interest before World War II through subsidies and the social reforms of the 1930s Popular Front government. After the liberation, the centrality of coal in any reconstruction and the breakdown of the authority of coal owners and managers because of collaboration with occupation forces, demanded direct government in-

tervention and ownership. The coal miners of the northern fields resisted the Germans and sabotaged energy supplies. They struck openly from August 1940 and periodically right through the occupation period. Opposition to the Germans was orchestrated largely by militants of the Communist Party which gathered to it large numbers of workers anxious to help. Holter describes patriotic resistance as acting against invaders and employers actively supporting the Nazi war effort. The Communist Party emerged from the war as the most important single political force locally and nationally. As a result, the miners' union enjoyed considerable prestige and had to be involved intimately in energy policy and postwar reconstruction. Their militants had to be involved in the nationalization of the mines for it to work.

The second phase of the book concerns the actual nationalization of the mines and the so-called "Battle of Production." In this period, Communists fully supported the idea that France should be reconstructed as fast as possible under the leadership of the wartime liberation coalition. It was hardly a revolutionary position. Holter shows ably the lengths to which Communists went to convince workers to make sacrifices in the national interest. According to Holter, the Communists singlehanded put an end to the spate of wildcat strikes which broke out in 1945. The trade off between organized labour and the government brought results. In exchange for labour peace and record production levels, miners achieved their goal of nationalization of the industry and representation in management; improved wages and benefits; and the encodement of traditional legislative demands.

Through all this, the Socialists, who had dominated the Miners' Federation until the war, faced a difficult choice. Most were opposed to the Communists but did not wish to appear unpatriotic. Socialists within the mineworkers adopted guerrilla tactics. They kept up a

level of criticism which dwelt on sacrifices made by the miners in the face of escalating inflation and criticized the "stakhanovism" of the Communists, saying that the battle of production was little more than hated scientific management by another name. Failure in local and union elections during 1945 and 1946 led Socialists to adopt more extreme tactics. Within the union they formed a distinct faction. Like the Communists of the CGT, Socialist miners followed closely party policies. As Socialists nationally turned against the PCF, they used their influence in government to purge Communists from the coal industry leadership.

The third phase of the book deals with the influence of the Cold war on the politics of coal. Many observers and scholars have argued that the United States pressured France, among other countries, to end experiments in social reform and crush Communist influence. Holter takes the more francophile view that the divisions between Communists and non-Communists were real and deep without American influence and that while "the cold war did not create these problems, it did provide a new frame of reference for old conflicts that boiled over in a series of strikes in November 1947." (115) This perhaps is less convincing. Socialist strength in the postwar period had been considerably diminished. American cash was crucial to the survival of the Socialist Party (SFIO) and its national newspaper. American money and equipment was also made available by the American Federation of Labor to militants considered sufficiently anti-Communist in the northern mines from 1946, as well as elsewhere and in other industries. Irving Brown of the AFL, cultivated the militants of the Force Ouvrière faction and urged them to split from the Miners Federation and the CGT. In addition, the impact of US decisions to withhold desperately needed loans from European governments which continued to include Communist ministers served to orient the French government more and more into the American

orbit from 1946. American aid and influence were powerful incentives to pursue the Communists with great vigour. Holter acknowledges the important role in coal politics of a rapidly changing international situation from the beginning of 1947.

What Holter does very well is to examine the independent hostility and determination of Socialists like Robert Lacoste and Jules Moch to crush Communist influence. The failure of the great strikes of 1947 and especially 1948 marked, for Holter, "the defeat of the French working class." (180) In the wake of the Monnet Plan, amply supplemented with Marshal Plan money and in accord with its goals, the mines were fully mechanized, management regained its confidence and authority, production was integrated in the European Coal and Steel Community with that of Germany, and "the heroes of the battle of production became the victims of modernization." (189)

In vigorously working to restore what they considered to be a popular yet bourgeois state, the Communists helped seal their own doom. In the nation they were isolated. In the mines they were thrown into disarray and left without influence in the running of an industry they did so much to shape.

This is a welcome book. It contains much to stimulate thought and it provides a valuable addition to a literature which has helped recast the struggles of postwar Europe in recent years.

Stephen Burwood
Staffordshire University

Gregg Olsen, *The Struggle for Economic Democracy in Sweden* (Aldershot: Avebury 1992).

THE COLLAPSE OF STATE socialism in eastern Europe and the rapid adoption of what looks suspiciously like capitalist reforms in much of the remaining commun-

ist countries has created a sense of crisis and depression among the left, not only in Europe and North America, but also among the democratic left in the former communist countries. This is despite the mounting evidence of the lack of success of neo-liberal "reforms" in eastern Europe (cf. Poland) and what may equally be labelled the failure of western capitalism in general to "deliver the goods."

What evidence of the latter failure do we have? When parties across the spectrum, from the Reform and Tory neo-conservatives to the social democratic NDP, advocate and introduce programs that attack the social wage and the very legitimacy of the public sector, all in the name of "living beyond our means" (sic), that is strong evidence in itself that western capitalist economies are unable to guarantee even minimum levels of income and output.

Perhaps this was most frankly revealed in some recent TV footage of a brief tea party conversation between Queen Elizabeth and Ronald Reagan in which the Queen lamented the "bankruptcy" of western governments. This was attributed by Reagan to the inability of capitalist economies to afford the current level of expenditures on social programs. Given our continuing high levels of unemployment, recession and economic stagnation, Reagan's admission is a pretty damning admission of failure. In short, western capitalism, like state socialism, has failed to deliver what it promised, a high and rising material standard of living for the majority of its citizens, in particular the working class.

Many of the left have traditionally looked at social democracy as the alternative "middle" or "third" way. In terms of the democratic transition from capitalism to social democracy (and potentially to democratic socialism), it was Sweden that was seen as the vanguard model. Unquestionably, it had the most advanced welfare state marked by high levels of gender and income equality, full employment, and strong and democratic participation

through the unions and the popular movements in political and economic decision making.

In the mid 1970s, after over four decades of almost uninterrupted Social Democratic rule and the expansion of the welfare state, pressure was mounting for a new advance toward economic and industrial democracy, towards a "third way" not dissimilar from the model Yugoslavia was approaching from the state socialist direction. As Olsen notes, "the political and cultural climate in Sweden had become quite radical ..." and, according to political power theorists, "labour was finally ready to transcend its compromise with capital." (16) The democratization of the economy would be achieved through workplace legislation and wage-earner funds to create a new form of capital ownership different from either private capital or state capital, much more akin to the Yugoslav concept of self-managed social capital.

Twenty years later, however, Sweden is governed by a right wing government, its unemployment rate has risen about 10 per cent, cutbacks in the social wage are taking place, and plans are underway to increase the retirement age. Rather than moving toward economic and political democracy, social democracy in Sweden appears to be in full retreat.

The reasons, Olsen argues, lie in the dramatic shift in class power from labour to capital in the intervening two decades. Ironically, or perhaps inevitably, it was Social Democratic Party (SAP) policy and the new and more radical policies that made possible this shift and provided the issue that precipitated it.

The issue was the proposal for wage-earner funds. Under the original plan put forward in 1975 by Rudolph Meidner, the leading economist for the dominant labour federation, *LO*, and the co-architect of Sweden's post-war economic policy, 20 per cent of all pre-tax profits, in the form of shares, would be put into a labour-controlled central fund allowing workers greater collective ownership and

participation in economic decision making. According to Olsen, within five or six decades the plan would guarantee that "most of the Swedish economy would be 'socialized.'" (35)

Opposition to the Meidner plan came not only from capital and the right (as would be expected), but also within the SAP and from the two white-collar labour federations, the TCO which split badly on the wage-earner fund issue, and SACO, the professional and managerial federation which, given its ambiguous class position, remained adamantly opposed to the social democratic position. As a result, the wage-earner fund proposal went through a series of amendments watering down the plan until, by the time it was adopted in 1984, the legislation guaranteed that the fund would not be allowed to "socialize the economy."

While labour became divided over the issue of the wage-earner funds, capital coalesced. This reversed the previous division in the Swedish capitalist class between domestic (home market) capital which had generally supported the full-employment welfare state capitalism promoted by the SAP up to the 1970s, and export-oriented capital which remained relatively independent of the domestic economy and had always opposed the solidaristic-wage centralized bargaining that had characterized the Swedish industrial relations-based incomes policy.

Domestic capital had also been relatively weakened by escalation of capital concentration and by 'globalization' that

had already undermined many home market industries. By financial deregulation, which strengthened international capital's blackmail power and the opening up of the Swedish economy to the European Community, the Social Democrats had engineered their own defeat. If indeed they had ever really supported the transformation of economic society through the real transfer of property rights within a market system, their integration into the European-global system precluded this outcome. Perhaps the ultimate irony is that, just at this time, within the EC there is emerging doubt about the wisdom or unregulated capital mobility even for the health of capitalism.

Meidner, in a recent article in *Studies in Political Economy* (Summer 1992), is optimistic that the situation in Sweden can be rescued. After reading Olsen's book, which anyone interested in the democratic transformation to socialism should read, I am much less optimistic. If the social structure of accumulation (SSA) school, or the regulation school, is correct (and I accept that they are), we are in the middle of a major social transformation to a new stage, or regime, of capitalist accumulation. If Olsen is right, and unfortunately I believe he is, social democracy "missed the boat." The chance at a third way, a humane and democratic political and economic way, has been lost, at least for this and several more generations.

Paul Phillips
University of Manitoba