

Reviews / Comptes Rendus

Volume 15, 1985

URI: <https://id.erudit.org/iderudit/llt15rv01>

[See table of contents](#)

Publisher(s)

Canadian Committee on Labour History

ISSN

0700-3862 (print)

1911-4842 (digital)

[Explore this journal](#)

Cite this review

(1985). Review of [Reviews / Comptes Rendus]. *Labour/Le Travailleur*, 15, 191–272.

REVIEWS / COMPTES RENDUS

- Le Collectif Clio, *L'Histoire des femmes au Québec depuis quatre siècles*
by D. Suzanne Cross / 191
- Normand Lafleur, *Les "Chinois" de l'Est ou la vie quotidienne des Québécois émigrés aux États-Unis de 1840 à nos jours*
par Jean Lamarre / 193
- Brian Young, *George-Etienne Cartier: Montreal Bourgeois*
by Fernand Ouellet / 193
- Anthony B. Chan, *Gold Mountain: The Chinese in the New World*
by Jack Scott / 195
- Melvin Baker, Robert Cuff, and Bill Gillespie, *Workingman's St. John's: Aspects of Social History in the Early 1900s*
by Eugene Forsey / 200
- Irving Abella and Harold Troper, *None Is Too Many: Canada and the Jews of Europe, 1933-1948*
by Graeme Decarie / 201
- James Struthers, *No Fault of Their Own: Unemployment and the Canadian Welfare State 1914-1941*
by Norah L. Lewis / 202
- Laurel Sefton MacDowell, *'Remember Kirkland Lake': The History and Effects of the Kirkland Lake Gold Miners' Strike, 1941-42*
by Douglas O. Baldwin / 204
- Sandra Djwa and R. St. J. Macdonald, eds., *On F.R. Scott: Essays on His Contributions to Law, Literature, and Politics*
by Norman Penner / 205
- Howard White, *A Hard Man to Beat — The Story of Bill White, Labour Leader, Historian, Shipyard Worker, Raconteur: An Oral History*
by John Stanton / 207
- François Cyr and Rénti Roy, *Éléments d'histoire de la FTQ. La FTQ et la question nationale*
par Guy Bélanger / 209
- Jacques Cousineau, *L'Église d'ici et le social: 1940-1960. 1. La Commission sacerdotale d'Études sociales*
par Claude Couture / 211
- Joe Wallace, *Poems*
by David Frank / 212
- Tom Wayman, *Inside Job: Essays on the New Work Writing*
by Paul Kelley / 214
- Graeme Gibson, *Perpetual Motion*
by David Gagan / 216
- Ronald E. Seavoy, *The Origins of the American Business Corporation, 1784-1855: Broadening the Concept of Public Service During Industrialization*
by Charles E. Freedeman / 217
- Walter Licht, *Working for the Railroad: The Organization of Work in the Nineteenth Century*
by Hugh Tuck / 219
- Edward G. Raddy, *Mills, Mansions, and Mergers: The Life of William M. Wood*
by Albert Desbiens / 221
- Michael H. Frisch and Daniel J. Walkowitz, eds., *Working Class America: Essays on Labor, Community, and American Society*
by James R. Barrett / 222
- James Green, ed., *Workers' Struggles, Past and Present: A "Radical America" Reader*
by Peter Seixas / 225

- Philip S. Foner, *Fellow Workers and Friends: IWW Free-Speech Fights as Told by Participants*
by W.M. Dick / 226
- Arnold Shankman, ed., *Ambivalent Friends: Afro-Americans View the Immigrant*
by David A. Gerber / 228
- David Milton, *The Politics of U.S. Labor from the Great Depression to the New Deal*
Lawrence T. McDonnell / 230
- Nelson Lichtenstein, *Labor's War at Home: The CIO in World War II*
by Martin Glaberman / 232
- Arnold R. Hirsch, *Making the Second Ghetto: Race and Housing in Chicago, 1940-1960*
by Peter G. Goheen / 234
- Herbert A. Applebaum, *Royal Blue: The Culture of Construction Workers*
by Beverley Gartrell / 235
- James E. Cronin and Carmen Sirianni, eds., *Work, Community and Power: The Experience of Labor in Europe and America, 1900-1925*
by William M. Reddy / 237
- Alan B. Campbell, *The Lanarkshire Miners: A Social History of their Trade Unions, 1775-1874*
by Ian McKay / 238
- Bill Williamson, *Class, Culture and Community: A Biographical Study of Social Change in Mining*
by Allen Seager / 240
- Joel H. Wiener, *Radicalism and Freethought in Nineteenth-Century Britain: The Life of Richard Carlile*
by Roger Cooter / 241
- Barbara Taylor, *Eve & the New Jerusalem: Socialism and Feminism in the Nineteenth Century*
by Mary Anne Poutainen / 243
- Deborah Gorham, *The Victorian Girl and the Feminine Ideal*
by Dorothy E. Smith / 246
- Eva Garmanikova, David Morgan, June Purvis, and Daphne Taylorson, eds., *Gender, Class and Work*
by Roberta Hamilton / 249
- Lee Holcombe, *Wives and Property: Reform of the Married Women's Property Law in Nineteenth-Century England*
by Bonnie G. Smith / 250
- Malcolm Waters, *Strikes in Australia*
by George Potmoe / 251
- Jean-Pierre Ravier, *Les syndicats britanniques sous les gouvernements travaillistes, 1945-1970*
par Trevor Burridge / 252
- Robert H. Davies, *Capital, State and White Labour in South Africa, 1900-1960: An Historical Materialist Analysis of Class Formation and Class Relations*
by Frederick Johnstone / 254
- Charles van Onselen, *Studies in the Social and Economic History of the Witwatersrand 1886-1914. 1. New Babylon 2. New Nineveh*
by P. Stigger / 256
- Dan O'Meara, *Volkscapitalisme: Class, Capital and Ideology in the Development of Afrikaner Nationalism, 1934-1948*
by Martin J. Murray / 258
- James Cockcroft, *Mexico: Class Formation, Capital Accumulation, and the State*
by Richard Boyer / 260
- Peter DeShazo, *Urban Workers and Labor Unions in Chile 1902-1927*
by Peter Blanchard / 262
- Gregor McLennan, *Marxism and the Methodologies of History*
by Stuart Pierson / 264
- Anthony Giddens and Gavin MacKenzie, eds., *Social Class and the Division of Labour: Essays in Honour of Ilya Neustadt*
by Peter Meiksin / 266
- Edoarda Masi, *China Winter: Workers, Mandarins, and the Purge of the Gang of Four*
by Richard M. Coe / 268

REVIEWS / COMPTES RENDUS*

Le Collectif Clio, *L'Histoire des femmes au Québec depuis quatre siècles* (Montréal: Quinze 1982).

IN *L'HISTOIRE DES FEMMES au Québec*, Micheline Dumont, Michèle Jean, Marie Lavigne, and Jennifer Stoddart have made an excellent synthesis of the research that they and a number of feminist historians have done during the 1960s and 1970s. A cursory glance at the bibliography makes it clear that this book could not have been written ten years ago, so recent is most of the research in what is one of the most rapidly developing fields of Canadian history. It is an ambitious undertaking to trace the history of women over 400 years, and in places the book is lacking in depth, but one must congratulate the authors for their decision to go ahead rather than wait for the research of the next decade to produce their book. Anglophones may find its 500 pages a rather formidable undertaking, but it is a most readable book, and well worth the effort. One hopes, however, that at some future date, it will be translated in order to attract the wider North American readership that it deserves. Future research may modify some of the authors' views, but for the moment we have a most welcome addition to the several good collections of essays on different aspects of women in history which have appeared in recent years.

The authors have broken with the traditional organization of Canadian histories — even the Conquest ceases to be a pivotal date. They note in the introduction that "nous ne trouvons aucune mémoire des femmes dans 'ces dates importantes'." The book is divided into six sections, the first of which ends in 1700, by which time the survival of the colony and its inhabitants was assured. The second section covers a long period of social stability terminating in the 1830s. This decade marked the beginning of social and economic changes that had far-reaching effects on women for the rest of the century. The influence of the Catholic church expanded throughout the nineteenth century, and its social teaching afforded a choice between only two vocations: that of wife and mother or that of religious life. The fourth section covers the years from 1900 to 1940. During this period, in which the nineteenth-century ideology about women prevailed, feminism in Quebec evolved at a much slower pace than in English-speaking North America. There were few feminists in Quebec, and they received little support from society or even from other women. Only after 1940 did significant numbers of women begin to demand and initiate changes in their status in society. In the fifth section the authors emphasize the importance of the sharp drop in the birth rate in Quebec during the 1950s, well before the decline in the influence of the Catholic church and the introduction of oral contraception. Quebec women were already asserting themselves, albeit

* The Table of Contents for "Reviews" is on page 4.

secretly, in the domain of birth control, before they were further influenced by the *women's movement in the United States* and the rest of Canada. The final section concentrates on the impact of contemporary feminism on the movement in Quebec, and here we are dealing with an ongoing story which leaves the reader asking "Where do we go from here?"

The authors examine many factors that affected the lives of women. Treatment of Indian and English-speaking women is uneven, but this is understandable since much basic research remains to be done in these areas. In the authors' discussion of the role of women in the work force, we see several developments. In pre-industrial society, the family was the basic unit in production in which the wife had an integral role. This changed with the onset of the Industrial Revolution. Men began to support their families by working outside the home, while their wives devoted themselves to their roles as mothers and housekeepers. Women who could not rely on the support of husbands had a limited choice among unskilled and badly-paid jobs. In spite of freer access to education in recent years, the authors note that young women still flock into the traditional women's careers, with only small numbers challenging the sex-defined barriers in many parts of the work force.

The trade union movement in Quebec is shown to have the same flawed record in protecting women's rights as it has had in the rest of North America. The concept of equal pay for work of equal value has been viewed with distrust. The men who dominate the executive levels of the large syndicates have seen women in the work force as a potential threat. For example, contracts negotiated on behalf of women would seek exemption from night work, so that they could be at home with their children, rather than demanding equal pay. In the long run, however, granting special rights to women has made it possible to avoid according equal pay, because it is often shown that the working condi-

tions for women are significantly different than they are for men. Several predominantly female unions have demonstrated their militancy in bitter strikes. Women, however, remain underrepresented in the trade union movement as a whole, and especially in the higher echelons of the unions.

Any discussion of women in Quebec must evaluate the impact of the religious orders, whose growth the authors trace from the first orders in the seventeenth century through the great expansion in the nineteenth century to their present sharp decline. From the mid-nineteenth century, the fields of education, health, and welfare gradually opened to women in the rest of North America, but in Quebec they remained largely the preserves of the religious orders. French Catholic lay women were excluded to a great extent until well into the twentieth century. There is a certain irony in the situation since the government took over education, health, and welfare. Male bureaucrats now administer the services that were formerly the responsibility of the superiors of the women's orders. Lay women have replaced the sisters in the ranks.

The concerns of rural women are discussed, and the authors describe in some detail the organizations that rural women created to meet the needs of their often lonely and unsatisfying lives. The growth and self-confidence of the farm women's organizations on occasion led to friction with the Church and divisions among themselves.

This book is strongly recommended to the general reader as well as to those involved in women's studies. If there is a single underlying theme, it is that if the women of Quebec, as elsewhere, want to improve their status in society and the work force, it must be through their own individual and collective efforts.

D. Suzanne Cross
Vanier College

Normand Lafleur, *Les "Chinois" de l'Est ou la vie quotidienne des Québécois émigrés aux États-Unis de 1840 à nos jours* (Montréal: Leméac 1981).

LE QUÉBEC d'aujourd'hui ne s'est pas encore tout à fait remis de la saignée démographique qui s'est opérée dans ses rangs à partir du milieu du XIX^{ème} siècle. Certaines études révèlent que l'émigration des Canadiens français vers les États-Unis aurait entraîné des pertes de l'ordre d'un million d'individus de 1840 à 1930 et ce, sans compter leurs descendants.

Cet exode, qui a souvent été considéré comme l'un des faits dominants de l'histoire du Québec du XIX^{ème} siècle, a donné lieu à de nombreuses études. Celle que nous propose Normand Lafleur se défend bien d'être exhaustive et n'a nullement la prétention d'être une étude scientifique et objective. Elle se veut une contribution à l'étude de l'émigration, à travers des témoignages recueillis par l'auteur auprès des membres de sa famille qui ont émigré aux États-Unis.

Le pari de Normand Lafleur était ambitieux. Résumer en si peu de pages la vie quotidienne des Canadiens français émigrés aux États-Unis s'avérait une lourde tâche. Malheureusement, le résultat déçoit quelque peu.

Certes, l'auteur, par les citations tirées des entretiens réalisés, nous apporte, sur des sujets précis, une vision différente de celle propagée par l'historiographie traditionnelle. L'utilisation des techniques relatives à l'histoire orale lui permet de nous faire découvrir des facettes moins connues de la vie quotidienne des Canadiens français aux États-Unis, en particulier en ce qui concerne les modalités d'embauche, le travail, et le logement. Ce sont d'ailleurs les sous-chapitres qui nous semblent les plus intéressants.

Cependant, l'originalité du livre de Lafleur ne va pas plus loin. Les grands thèmes touchés — causes de l'émigration, conditions de vie et de travail, organisa-

tion sociale de la communauté — sont traités de façon beaucoup trop générale et s'appuient sur une bibliographie trop restreinte pour améliorer de quelque manière que ce soit notre compréhension de ces phénomènes. Ainsi, n'est-il pas étonnant de constater que les conclusions auxquelles il parvient reprennent dans l'ensemble celles qui nous étaient déjà connues.

L'auteur aurait eu avantage à mieux connaître la situation de la recherche sur les Franco-Américains. Ainsi, aurait-il pu mieux orienter la sienne et contribuer, d'une façon significative et plus originale, à une meilleure compréhension du phénomène migratoire et de l'établissement des Canadiens français aux États-Unis.

Jean Lamarre
Université de Montréal

Brian Young, *George-Etienne Cartier: Montreal Bourgeois* (Kingston and Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press 1981).

Parmi les BIOGRAPHIES du compagnon d'armes de J. Macdonald, le petit livre de B. Young est certainement celui qui, compte tenu de la pénurie relative de sources sur cet homme politique éminent, a le mieux réussi à restituer les différentes facettes du personnage et de la carrière de Cartier. Pour arriver à ce résultat, l'auteur a polarisé son analyse autour d'un qualificatif commode qui ne dit pas tout mais qui lui permet de prendre en charge beaucoup de choses essentielles comme les antécédents et le milieu familial, le niveau social, les inclinations intellectuelles, la pratique politique et les rapports avec les réseaux institutionnels. Ainsi campé, G.-E. Cartier est présenté sous les traits accusés d'un *bourgeois de Montréal*.

Dans un premier temps, B. Young met en valeur les ascendants familiaux de son personnage: depuis le premier Cartier arrivé au Canada en 1735 et établi comme marchand dans la ville de Québec, les Cartier avaient de plus en plus opéré comme marchands de grains dans la vallée

du Richelieu où ils avaient prospéré aussi longtemps que la production du blé avait continué à accroître sa domination sur la production agricole. La tradition familiale était donc celle d'une bourgeoisie rurale qui menait un trafic orienté d'abord vers le marché extérieur. À sa mort en 1814, le grand-père, Jacques, avait laissé un héritage évalué, dit l'auteur, à £166,370. Cette somme présentée en livres courantes anglaises paraît tellement colossale pour un marchand de ce niveau qu'il s'agit évidemment, de la part de l'auteur, d'une confusion (2, 5, et 138) entre la livre courante française (₣) et la livre anglaise (£) dont la valeur était environ vingt fois plus grande que celle de la livre française. Cette fortune était, même divisée par vingt, encore substantielle. Bien sûr, B. Young note ces faits avec soin pour mettre en évidence les arrière-plans bourgeois de Cartier; mais il n'insiste pas suffisamment, à notre avis, sur le poids des enracinements ruraux et fonciers chez ces Cartier de la vallée du Richelieu. À cet égard, en plus de consulter les greffes des notaires, il aurait été utile de faire le tour du recensement nominatif de 1831 qui contient des informations sur ce point. Bien plus que ne le laisse soupçonner l'auteur, il y eut derrière son héros la pesanteur considérable de cette tradition d'une bourgeoisie commerçante rurale, liée de plusieurs façons à la terre, incapable de s'élever plus haut socialement bien que prospère, mais qui, après 1814, avait été sérieusement ébranlée dans les assises commerciales. Cartier lui devait certainement son dédain plutoit marqué des choses intellectuelles, ses propensions agriculturistes, ses ferveurs aristocratiques, et son goût pour les investissements fonciers, pour ne pas dire, sécuritaires. On ne doit pas non plus oublier que, pendant la plus grande partie de sa carrière politique, Cartier a misé sur ses appuis ruraux et familiaux pour se faire élire. Ce n'est certainement pas un accident.

Ceci dit, le thème du *bourgeois urbain*, à condition d'être proprement qualifié, rassemble quand même beau-

coup d'éléments de cette existence faite de luttes pour des objectifs politiques, inspirée par l'ambition et tissée de compromis. Il faut se rappeler que la profession d'avocat, surtout aux XVIIIe et XIXe siècles, fut une carrière urbaine, qu'elle débouchait très souvent sur les engagements politiques et qu'elle conduisait non seulement à des relations étroites avec les hommes d'affaires mais amenait à s'impliquer directement dans les affaires comme ce fut d'ailleurs le cas pour Cartier. Celui-ci n'avait pas attendu d'être riche pour devenir actif en politique et tenter d'être élu. De 1835 à 1853, époque où ses choix définitifs n'étaient pas complétés, ses revenus bruts ne dépassèrent pas, dit B. Young, (16) £5000 au total, ce qui fait un revenu annuel à peine supérieur à \$1,000.00 contre \$12,000.00 environ en 1873. Ce ne fut qu'après son insertion dans la politique que ses revenus commencèrent à devenir vraiment substantiels. À notre avis, ce fut la politique qui lui permit de se donner une solide clientèle et de pénétrer dans les milieux d'affaires. Le terme *bourgeois de Montréal* mérite par conséquent d'être nuancé à son sujet puisque sa fortune ne fut à l'origine attribuable ni aux investissements commerciaux, ni à ceux dans l'industrie ni même aux investissements financiers. Le facteur politique est celui qui permet le mieux de situer Cartier parmi les différentes catégories de bourgeois de Montréal.

C'est peut-être ce caractère ambigu de son insertion dans la bourgeoisie francophone et anglophone de Montréal, autant que ses racines rurales, qui permit à Cartier de jouer le rôle que B. Young lui assigne: celui de médiateur entre la société canadienne-française et le monde extérieur, entre elle et la société industrielle montante. Tout cela est bien intéressant et stimulant mais mérite d'être creusé davantage: en particulier par une relecture des rapports entre ces éléments de base et les composantes de son idéologie.

Fernand Ouellet
Université d'Ottawa

Anthony B. Chan, *Gold Mountain: The Chinese in the New World* (Vancouver: New Star Books 1983).

THE EXPECTATIONS OF the reader of this volume are aroused when, early in Chan's preface, the author offers a statement outlining what he claims will be the main thrust of his thesis: "I have chosen to tell the story of the Chinese experience in Canada because it is at the heart of who I am, what I have become. The history of Chinatown is reflected in the history of my family: in its flourishing after Chan Dun's arrival, in its cultural and social life, in its support for Sun Yat-sen, in the fight against the 1923 Chinese Immigration Act, in my uncles' participation in Canada's World War, and in today's continuing struggle against racial discrimination." (7) Proceeding from this statement of intent the reader has every right to expect an account of how one family — not alone and in isolation, of course — survived the traumatic experience of encirclement by racist mobs, while at the same time suffering abandonment to violent assault by a government that was supposed to afford them protection. But, alas, this must be accounted as one more case of hope deferred.

Treatment of the Chan family history, which is allegedly central to the narrative, is almost wholly confined to a single chapter, "Merchant Society." Here the discussion is centred on an arranged marriage "in the Chinese tradition," celebrated in Victoria and Vancouver in August 1932. This was a time when unemployed Chinese workers, simply because they were Chinese, were receiving less relief than Caucasians in similar circumstances, and were protesting on the steps of the legislative buildings and at Vancouver's city hall. Yet no word of this, or any other instance of overt racism, gets a mention in the chapter. By the time the reader has progressed this far into the book it becomes apparent that the author has abandoned his stated objective and

opted for a brief overview of Chinese life in Canada, with fatal results. Examining the complexities and contradictions of 125 years of Canadian-Chinese history is beset with a host of difficulties. Attempting to compress it into less than 200 pages, fully one-quarter of them devoted to the description of a wedding feast and its ceremonial background, presents problems of such magnitude that none but the brave would dare grapple with them. Yet that is precisely what Chan undertakes to accomplish, and specific areas get short shrift.

Chan is most disappointing when he discusses the role and character of workers. He is outrageously wrong where he portrays Chinese workers as servile strikebreakers and docile labourers afraid to challenge their employers. Chan is, of course, numbered among those who "sympathize" with the oppressed Chinese workers. But sympathy will not mitigate the crime perpetrated against a whole people. If Chinese workers did indeed fit the role portrayed by Chan, we would be compelled to live with that as an historical fact, putting it in proper perspective within the context of the relations and circumstances of the time. But there exists a wealth of documentary evidence that proves the contrary true. First, Chinese workers were *not* the only, or even the main source, of scabs in the mining towns of Vancouver Island. Second, Chinese labourers were first hired as cheap labour, *not* as strikebreakers as Chan suggests, and as it is popularly believed. Third, certain historical events are presented and interpreted in a manner that depicts Chinese workers as strikebreakers when such was *not* the case. Fourth, there were occasions when white workers were known to have scabbed on the Chinese, a reversal of the popularly ascribed role. When Dunsmuir imported strikebreakers during the 1877 Wellington strike he needed experienced miners, not labourers, but the latter were all that he could find in the local Chinese communi-

ties. He had to go farther afield, to San Francisco, where he sought recruits among the many unemployed southern European immigrants in the vicinity. Most of them refused to go to work when they arrived at Wellington and found a strike in progress. It is quite possible that these Spanish, Italian, and Portuguese workers were the first to bring anarchist ideas to Vancouver Island. It was soon after their arrival that the black flag began showing up on picket lines and in demonstrations. An intensive research programme might turn up evidence to show that Dunsmuir recruited, or tried to recruit, scabs from among half the ethnic groups on the planet. It should come as no surprise, therefore, that some Chinese were among those caught in his net. If the body was fit enough to produce a better than average profit, Dunsmuir cared nothing for its colour or breeding.

Chan speaks of Dunsmuir's hiring of Chinese strikebreakers in the 1880s. By that time many of the Chinese had become experienced miners. But Chan leaves the reader with the false impression that this was the first occasion on which the Chinese began working in the coal industry. They were in fact hired much earlier, in 1867, when they were employed as surface labourers to work at the Nanaimo properties of the London-based Vancouver Coal Mining and Land Company. John Wild, a company director, stated in 1878 that he was "one of the first to introduce Chinese labour on Vancouver Island." He regarded this work force as "sharp in other things besides the celebrated game of cards," reporting that the "heathen Chinese" had extracted a wage of over \$1.00 a day. Before becoming a director Wild had been engaged as an expert to make a tour of inspection of the mines and probably to make preparations for some changes in managerial personnel. He was undoubtedly in Nanaimo in 1867 when the first of many Chinese were hired as surface labourers.

It is evident that the miners of the time

cared nothing about who worked on the surface. In the mines the miner is king, and in the Vancouver Island coal mines he often over-acted the part — eventually to his own cost in terms of labour solidarity in crises. The miner was lulled by a sense of false security in the knowledge that he alone could halt the flow of production by a refusal to break coal at the face, leaving the surface labourers with nothing to do. At this early stage it is conceivable that the miners could have kept the Chinese out of the mines. But they were undisturbed by the presence of "cheap labour" on the surface. They would act only if it became a threat to them in their subterranean domain.

For most of the life of coal mining on Vancouver Island the surface workers stood outside whatever organization managed a tenuous existence from time to time. This posed a serious problem for striking miners when owners were successful in hiring scabs for underground work. At such times the surface workers, non-Chinese as well as Chinese, felt no compulsion to make a personal sacrifice in defence of the interests of those who, at other times, studiously ignored them. Given these circumstances, reports of scabbing by Chinese surface labourers need to be subjected to close scrutiny before being accepted as gospel.

John Wild was right on course when he commented on the "sharpness" of the Chinese. A dollar a day doubtless loomed large when compared to rates in China which, as Chan points out, were around two and a half to five cents a day in the Yangtze Valley. But the Chinese labourers quickly realized that a dollar a day was not much in North American terms. Just eleven weeks from their first hiring in the mines, the Chinese struck for a 50 per cent increase. On 23 July 1867 an astonished *Daily Colonist* journalist wrote: "Just imagine a John Chinaman, when at home, works for five cents per diem and finds his own 'lice' striking for an increase in wages! At Nanaimo, on

Monday, the Celestial gentlemen who load the cars with coal at the mouth of the pit, actually struck for a dollar and a half a day instead of one dollar, their former rate of wages. John has caught the 'striking fever' from the white colliers, and as he cannot well be replaced even at the advanced rate, it is predictable that his demands will be complied with." Even as John Wild was complaining to his fellow directors in 1878 about the sharpness of the Chinese, manager John Bryden was informing the board by letter that he was unable to effect a wage reduction as directed.

The year 1878 was thus a time of great turmoil in British Columbia's Chinese communities. In September there occurred a total withdrawal of Chinese labour in the city of Victoria that lasted for five days. The dispute was provoked by the enactment of a Provincial Act imposing a special tax on all Chinese over the age of twelve. Set at a rate of ten dollars a head, the tax was to be collected quarterly, for a total annual rate of forty dollars. This Chinese withdrawal of labour stopped domestic households and a number of manufacturing sectors in their tracks. Some white workers did apply for the vacated posts. But the tone of the *Daily Colonist* editorials over the following days indicates that not nearly enough were willing to serve in the menial jobs available, nor were employers willing to pay the higher rates deemed necessary to attract the required number of white labourers. At the conclusion of a five-day show of force and solidarity the Chinese resumed working, and the legislation was eventually ruled unconstitutional on 28 October 1879.

As 1878 was drawing to a close, Chinese labourers at Nanaimo were drawn into the fray. A potential strike was discussed in the press. Reasons for the strike are unclear, but there was a certain amount of unrest connected with Bryden's continuing efforts to reduce wages. The strike could also have represented delayed

support for the strike in Victoria, especially since the legislation had not yet been disallowed and the Nanaimo Chinese were confronted with an unjust head tax and the prospect of a reduction in wages. In any event, far from being natural-born strikebreakers, it can be seen that the Chinese treated it as a very serious offence, and indeed physically assaulted one of their countrymen who threatened to break ranks. A strike did materialize soon after, in which the issues were clear. In 1879 Bryden confided that he had informed the directors that the Chinese labourers had demanded an increase in rates, and when the demand was rejected they had "all left." When these withdrawals of Chinese labour occurred the places would usually be filled by whites at higher rates, thus assuring the uninterrupted operation of the enterprise.

Eventually, then, as the events of 1878-9 indicate, the Chinese would either win or be forced to capitulate. In either case they would once again return to their jobs to replace the whites at lower rates. But in the intervening period between stoppage and return the white workers would have been scabbing on the Chinese, temporarily receiving higher rates for strikebreaking duties. A more direct reference to white scabbing is found in the diary of Mark Bate (PABC) who succeeded Bryden as manager at Nanaimo. On 5 April 1881, a diary entry notes that, "Two Chinamen at Douglas Pit have not come out to work today and white men are taking their places. The pit was kept going some twenty minutes after two o'clock yesterday. The Chinamen grumbled because they could not get away at the usual hour (two p.m.) and it is supposed that owing to the little extra work they have remained at home."

During all of this, the income of the underground workers depended upon the amount of coal they broke and delivered to the pit head. The more coal the miner broke, the more money he earned. Wages could be an increase in tonnage rates, or

the miner could work harder and produce more coal. However, as pressure increased during 1879-80 for an improvement in rates, management at the Nanaimo mines thought of an ingenious third way that would cost the company nothing, yet result in an improvement in the miner's income while simultaneously lightening his labour. Management argued that since the hiring of "cheap labour" had been so profitable for the company, the miners should follow capital's example to their own advantage. As contractors, the miners could employ Chinese labourers using them for the heavy part of the work, moving the coal from the face to the pit head. Thus the miner would be freed for the relatively lighter task of breaking coal, but would collect payment for the entire operation and pay his Chinese labourers out of the proceeds.

Acceptance and institution of this system resulted in a worker-employer relationship between the miner-contractor and the Chinese labourers. There is at least one instance on record — and probably more that went unrecorded — where the inevitable happened: the Chinese workers demanded better wages and the contractors called on the company for aid in resisting them. Mark Bate noted in his diary on 19 January 1881: "McNeil and Fraser say Chinamen will not stay with them unless they are paid an extra 12 1/2 cents a day — that is, 12 1/2 cents more than the Company pays. We must try to help the contractors with Chinese labour." This nefarious system was still being discussed and lamented over as late as 1903.

One result arising from this system, apparently unforeseen by the white miners, was that the Chinese became knowledgeable in mining skills, which made it possible for them to qualify as miners. Thus the white miners, while they were in pursuit of an extra dollar, unintentionally created the skilled workers who could, and did, replace them during

crises. When the white miners eventually went out on strike they were replaced by Chinese miners. It is mainly because of this that the Chinese acquired the reputation as strikebreakers. But could this be called scabbing in the real sense of the word? White miners on strike look like normal employees of the company. But to the Chinese they were employers who exploited them. Looked at from that angle the strike appeared to be a case of the employer walking out while the employee stayed on the job. The Chinese had nothing to gain from the strike. In fact, if the contractors won, the Chinese labourers would have been more intensely exploited, because they would then have been producing greater profits for their employers. Given the circumstances, which had evolved from the miners' decision to become employers of labour, the contractors were in the position of demanding more from the mine owner for work performed by the labourers. This could hardly be termed a classic case of strikebreaking.

From its origins on Vancouver Island, militancy among Chinese workers spread to the mainland. The Chinese Labour Association (CLA), which was affiliated with the Guomindang, was in operation by 1916, and by 1918 was reputed to have a membership of 500 to 600. Banned by government edict in November 1918, it rose again from its ashes in summer 1919. Associated under the banner of the CLA were groups of workers employed in mainland sawmills and shingle mills, as well as produce sellers in the Vancouver area. During 1919-20 the mill workers conducted successful strikes to bring their ten-hour day into line with the eight hours worked by white mill hands. And when the exclusion act was being debated prior to its passage in 1923, delegates from the CLA made representations to the government demanding equal treatment with other ethnic groups.

Strangely enough, Chan seems to have discovered only the produce sellers group

among the CLA affiliates. He cites an unsuccessful three-month strike which began in November 1919, protesting a discriminatory licence fee at twice the rate charged white peddlers. The strike came to an end early in 1920, with Chinese acceptance of the discriminatory levy. It is clear that the Canadian-Chinese workers do not fit Chan's image of them as docile strikebreakers who were short on principle. Suffering double and triple jeopardy, the Chinese nevertheless engaged in sustained and often successful economic war with their oppressors and traducers. And since the wage differential constituted a manifestation of racism in practice (it seems that Chan sees it as the *only* such manifestation), then every battle fought to eliminate or reduce the differential represents an "initiative against industrial bosses as the instigators of racism." As we have seen such initiatives were by no means rare.

Much of the historical material presented in this review lies buried in obscure documents and newspaper files. It would be largely unknown to Chan, who seems uninterested in the history of labour. But some of the relatively recent material was published in *Canada to China*, a work which was presumably consulted by the author since he has included it in his bibliography. Why, then, did Chan ignore vital information about the history of Chinese workers in Canada, information which would have unquestionably challenged, in a very fundamental way, the gloomy image that he has created. And the workers are not alone in being thus treated. The Chinese merchant class is also eliminated as an effective force in the Chinese communities.

Because they were entrepreneurs who exploited Chinese workers, yet were dependent upon the workers for support in an alien and oppressive society, the Chinese-Canadian merchants are seen to possess a sort of Jekyll and Hyde personality. Of course there were always the thoroughly decent ones, like Chan Dun

who kept Chinese tradition alive, as portrayed in the chapter on the arranged marriage. He assisted in the fight to free China from imperialist oppression, took an interest in the fate of his compatriots in Canada, and gave three sons to the Canadian army in wartime. But the "decent" Chinese merchant has become a relic of the past. He has been replaced by nouveau riche millionaires, three-quarters of whom, as Chan is careful to point out, are aliens from abroad. Although not accepted in the "polite" circles of the Anglo-Saxon ruling class, these newly-arrived entrepreneurs join with the dominant force in Canadian society to share in the profits of exploitation in the Chinese communities. Only the Mr. Hyde side of the personality remains. And in order to make his thesis appear plausible, the author concentrates attention on Toronto, where conditions seem more favourable. He fails to cite contrary experiences from such places as Vancouver, which would give balance to his unbalanced narrative.

With the elimination of both the working class and the merchant class as leading forces, or potential leading forces, in the Chinese communities, the last piece in Chan's puzzle finally falls into place. At the end of his narrative of dark despair, bitter disappointment, and frustration, Chan sums up: "The merchant gentry became the developer/investor, and the poor labourer or peasant became the working class. But while China's impoverished classes were poorly represented, this new working class was developing its own articulate, well-educated leadership." (156) Then an elaboration on this theme follows which takes up the final two chapters of the book, and brings us face to face with the author's objective: an announcement of the rediscovery of the "student vanguard" that will lead the working class to the promised land.

This is not to suggest that the 1001 noisy groups which constantly protest violations of human rights wherever they may occur should pack their bags and

depart from the scene. They all play a necessary role in that they refuse to allow complacent elements to ignore the wrongs and shortcomings still present in society. Without the presence of such protest groups life would be less rich and rewarding, the oppression of minority groups would be infinitely greater and more unbearable. Their contributions, however, should be assessed not in isolation but in relation to the society as a whole.

A fundamental weakness in Chan's work thus lies in his failure to place the Canadian-Chinese community within the broad canvas of a society divided along racial and class lines. It is as though the Chinese in Canada exist as a nation within a nation. For Chan, the larger labour and political movements do not exist. White workers invariably appear in the book — and they rarely make an appearance — as blatant racists. But there was and is more to the history than this blanket dismissal, just as there is more to the history of Chinese workers than strikebreaking. Observed from the narrow and short perspective one can easily grow weary and impatient with the working class, with its too subservient attitude toward an entrenched bureaucracy, and with its tendency to be led into blind alleys of endeavour. But those who have lived with the working-class movement, and those who study its rich history, know that there has been constant development. Battles have been won and battles have been lost, with every defeat a lesson learned. But one thing is certain: without the active participation of the working class the democratic process in this country will not be expanded and deepened, as it must be. Mr. Chan should absorb that fundamental lesson before putting pen to paper again, regardless of whether he writes about the Chinese in Canada, or Canada and the Chinese. "Gold Mountain," if not the book of the same title, is about class and race.

Jack Scott
Vancouver

Melvin Baker, Robert Cuff, and Bill Gillespie, *Workingman's St. John's: Aspects of Social History in the Early 1900s* (St. John's: Harry Cuff Publications Limited 1982).

THIS BOOKLET CONSISTS of three essays: "Trade Unionism in Pre-Confederation St. John's" (Gillespie); "Municipal Politics and Public Housing in St. John's, 1911-1921" (Baker); and "The Quill and the Hammer: The NIWA in St. John's, 1911-1925" (Cuff). There are nineteen illustrations and a select bibliography.

"Trade Unionism in Pre-Confederation St. John's" is an excellent short account of its subject. I hope Mr. Gillespie's thesis, on the Newfoundland Federation of Labour, will be published.

"Municipal Politics and Public Housing in St. John's" is also excellent, and I hope the thesis of which it is evidently a part will also be published.

"The Quill and the Hammer" is, in substance, very good, and very valuable. But it suffers from poor proofreading. Mr. Gillespie's essay is also marred by this (he misspells Donald MacDonald's name five times — so does Professor Kealey in the preface, and the Trades and Labor Congress gets the English spelling "Labour" which it always eschewed), but only to a minor extent. Mr. Cuff has "worker's" for "workers", "'cooper's'" for "coopers", "'typographers'" for "typographical", "'discernable'" for "discernible", "'warning'" for "waning", "'centers'" for "centres", "'peoples'" for "people's", "'advisor'" for "adviser", "quasi-federation" loses its hyphen, and two sentences on the same page lose the period which ought to separate them; "more so" appears as "moreso." There is also some curious phrasing. What is a "sub-lobbying interest group?" The longshoreman's strike of 1921 "evolved" (broke out?). How does a "meeting" rival an "apex?" How did Linegar "bottom" the poll in 1920? What exactly is the meaning of "the Workingman's Party

was not regarded as much of a threat to win the election?" Regarded by whom? Threat to whom?

It would have been helpful to know which "church" called the Christian Workers' Convention in 1918, and to have the various parties in the 1919 election rather more clearly identified, and sorted out.

These are small failings. But, like the pea under the princess's mattress, they are irritating; and they are disappointing in work by a university graduate with a post-graduate degree. However, they may all be the work of a computer or word-processor!

Eugene Forsey
Ottawa

Irving Abella and Harold Troper, *None Is Too Many: Canada and the Jews of Europe, 1933-1948* (Toronto: Lester and Orpen Dennys 1983).

THROUGHOUT THE 1930s and the 1940s, knowing of the persecutions of Jews in Europe, knowing of the death camps, knowing of the hardships of survivors, knowing that many Jews wanted to bring skills and capital to Canada, knowing that Jews in Canada were willing to assist those without capital, Canadian officials persistently denied these people even temporary entry into this country. In consequence, many who might have been saved perished — as Canadian officials knew they would.

Other countries behaved in much the same way, though few with quite the talent for pettiness displayed by Canada's immigration authorities, who were led by an impeccably religious and respectable Ontarian, F.C. Blair. Vincent Massey, our last colonial, supported exclusion — clearly, it seems, because of his anti-Semitism. Mackenzie King did so for his usual reason: it was the line of least resistance. Had the shame stopped at that level,

it would have been bad enough. We might even take some comfort in laying the blame at the clay feet of Ottawa's clay idols. But Mackenzie King was a sensitive barometer of public feeling.

It is unfortunate that Abella and Troper devote little attention to that public feeling, although they do recognize its existence, particularly in the case of Quebec. The truth is that King pursued an anti-Semitic policy because Canada was an anti-Semitic country. Open anti-Semitism was, of course, declining in fashion by the 1930s, but there was a compelling eloquence in the silences of prominent Canadian individuals and institutions. It is not too much to say that these silences which encouraged politicians and civil servants to act as they did also encouraged Nazi Germany to carry out its extermination programme. Hitler had no reason to feel that Canadian (or American or other) perceptions of the "Jewish problem" were significantly different from his own. Nor were they. Or that much would be done to prevent his solution to the problem. Nor was it. In this, as in many other ways, Nazi Germany can be seen not as an aberration but very much in the main stream of western history.

Canadian historians have rarely treated racism as part of the normal and even respectable pattern of Canadian life. Generally, one finds some recognition of racism where recognition is unavoidable (as in the treatment of the Japanese during World War II), where the racist is sufficiently *passé* to be a safe target for critics (as is Abbé Groulx), or, more rarely, where the scholar is a member of a group that has felt racism. One reads less of this unpleasantly Canadian characteristic in a J.S. Woodsworth (who, in all fairness, later rose above it) or in the practices of Canadian groups and institutions.

None Is Too Many is about morality. The research is careful and the tone is usually almost clinical; but the assumptions are moral, for without moral assumptions

there would have been little point to writing it. And its morality has a broader scope than the fate of the Jews and the history of two decades. If this book is understood only as a condemnation of anti-Semitism or as an isolated footnote to a troubled period, then a great deal of fine scholarship will have gone to waste. One hopes it will not. This is not a book simply to add to a shelf or a reading list. It is one that cries out for reappraisal of the shelf and the reading list.

Graeme Decarie
Concordia University

James Struthers, *No Fault of Their Own: Unemployment and the Canadian Welfare State 1914-1941* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1983).

DURING THE 1930s, thousands of unemployed Canadians, male and female, young and old, single and married, suffered physical deprivation, emotional stress, mental anguish, and loss of self-esteem while Canadian politicians delayed, dallied, and were seemingly more concerned for their own political careers than for either the present or the future of the unemployed. Struthers focuses his study on the large and highly visible group of single unemployed transient males, a group too large to be maintained by the providers of traditional welfare, and one group feared by municipal, provincial, and federal governments as a source of civil unrest.

Struthers poses two questions for the reader. First, who was responsible for the large numbers of unemployed workers moving about the country, for an unemployment rate which, in 1933 at the height of the Great Depression, reached 26.6 per cent? Over one and one-half million Canadians received direct relief payments, and thousands of other Canadians did not qualify or apply for relief. The second question follows from the first. How could workers unemployed through no

fault of their own be provided with a decent minimum living standard and still not undermine workers' desire to work? Politicians, farm leaders, and some social workers believed that if the amount of relief paid to the jobless exceeded either the wages paid to those still working or the wages offered for available work, however menial, thousands of unemployed would choose to become permanent relief cases rather than accept low-paid, unpleasant employment.

Struthers sets the background for his study of the long, slow development of a federal unemployment policy and unemployment insurance programme by noting that unemployment constituted a regular and significant aspect of pre-industrial late-nineteenth and early twentieth-century Canada, where labourers in fishing, trapping, agriculture, forestry, and construction trades all followed a seasonal work cycle. "Regular employment for the labourer was unusual." (4) Then came an aggressive immigration policy that brought additional thousands of labourers, mostly unskilled and willing to work for low wages. In these same years, Canada's staples-based economy made both regional and national economies vulnerable to fluctuations of the international market. The country suffered major economic slumps during the periods 1913-15 and 1920-5. In spite of these warnings, Canadian politicians failed to initiate any measures to either alleviate or at least to counteract the problems of mass unemployment. Struthers thus asserts that "Deliberate policy decisions, not simply inexperience, lay behind Canada's woeful lack of preparation, for the 'dirty thirties'." (210)

Struthers' case is well argued, but in reality could Canadian politicians have prepared for the Depression of the 1930s? Neither the government of Canada nor those of most other industrialized countries anticipated either the intensity or the duration of the Great Depression. Canada was not alone in its failure to pre-

pare for major fluctuations in its economy; the economies of other nations, including both Great Britain and the United States, were drastically affected by the Depression. On the other hand, failure to anticipate the economic downturns was compounded by the failure of the Canadian government to adopt or adapt measures taken by other governments, such as the United States, to provide the unemployed with work and/or a decent minimum income.

In responding to his second question, Struthers does not dwell on the privations of the unemployed, but examines instead the interplay among forces and factors that resulted in a prolonged nineteen-year gestation period for a national unemployment insurance scheme. He analyzes, for instance, attitudes of politicians, farm leaders, and some social workers towards the unemployed, the demands by farmers for cheap farm labour and the pressure of the "back to the land movement," the conflicting manpower needs of farm, labour, and business, and the reluctance of both Prime Ministers Bennett and King to have the federal government assume responsibility for the thousands of jobless Canadians.

Although differing in their political allegiances, both Bennett and King focused on immediate solutions to the problems created by the Depression. They appeared to believe it to be of a temporary nature, and justified their inaction by claiming "next year" would bring an improved economy and a reduction in the numbers of unemployed. Their reluctance to act was then strengthened by the persistent attitude among some farm leaders and other members of the community that work existed for those willing to work and that the provision of relief only encouraged idleness. Both men utilized these arguments to reduce relief grants to provinces, thereby forcing the unemployed into and out of relief camps, shifting them on to and out of work projects, and compelling them to take poorly-paid farm

work. Both Bennett and King ignored the advice of two federal government commissions appointed to study the problems of unemployment and the advice of economists employed to offer suggestions for ways either to reduce the staggering cost of relief, or to create work for at least some of the nation's unemployed through centralized control over fiscal and monetary policy.

Resistance by the federal government to assuming responsibility for the jobless was based on the claim that relief for the unemployed was a municipal and provincial responsibility, and that initiation of a national unemployment policy required an amendment to the BNA. But, Struthers argues, neither the BNA nor provincial rights prevented the federal government from initiating positive measures to provide employment. Instead, hard-pressed urban administrations and provincial governments, especially from the bankrupt western provinces, as well as businessmen, labour leaders, two federal commissions, and thousands of unemployed implored the federal government to assist the jobless. It was, Struthers asserts, "Ottawa and not the hard pressed municipalities and provinces that constantly invoked the constitution and sanctity of provincial rights as its justification for limited responsibility for the jobless." (200) In the final analysis, Struthers notes, it was war and not the plight of the unemployed that finally forced the creation in 1940 of an unemployment service and national unemployment system. Although unemployment was at its lowest rate in a decade, King recognized that at war's end demobilized military personnel and war workers would not endure the humiliating and dehumanizing conditions of the 1930s. The unemployment insurance schemes introduced as a means to help these short-term unemployed workers subsequently evolved into a welfare scheme that today provides minimal, if not adequate, income for Canada's jobless.

No Fault of Their Own is a well written, carefully documented study of the interaction of pressure groups, personalities, and political manoeuvrings during the period 1914-41, as Canada struggled to develop a national policy to deal with unemployment and the unemployed. Struthers presents alternative interpretations to the traditional historical arguments that Canada lacked experience with a recession economy and unemployment, or that constitutional change was required before the federal government could assume responsibility. He skillfully demonstrates that when the time was politically expedient, the King government quickly overcame all constitutional obstacles to implement an unemployment insurance scheme.

In addition, *No Fault of Their Own* possesses an alarming *déjà vu* quality as present day federal and provincial politicians, labour leaders, and Canadian church leaders reiterate the same attitudes, concerns, and contentions of half a century ago. For those whose unemployment benefits have run out, or those young people who have never entered the work force, relief payments are low and, in some provinces, deliberately reduced to force those on relief out to work at jobs that do not exist. Food banks, inner city missions, and trade unions attempt to meet the minimal needs of those in desperate need and organizers of such services are alarmed and concerned at the number of young men and women in acute need of assistance. Struthers alerts his readers to the need for constant vigilance in order to maintain welfare services that currently exist and he demonstrates, indeed, that our poor-law heritage may not be as distant as we would like to believe.

Norah L. Lewis
Vancouver

Laurel Sefton MacDowell, *'Remember Kirkland Lake': The History and Effects*

of the Kirkland Lake Gold Miners' Strike, 1941-42 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1983).

IN NOVEMBER 1941, Kirkland Lake International Union of Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers (IUMMSW) Local 240 struck for union recognition and collective bargaining. Three months later, as the importance of gold to the war effort continued to decline, the strike collapsed, owing largely to the federal government's refusal to intercede on the workers' behalf. Although the strike failed to achieve its immediate goals, Laurel Sefton MacDowell argues that the Kirkland Lake dispute highlighted the inadequacies of the government's labour policies and ultimately led to the establishment of collective bargaining in Canada.

The first three chapters sketch the history of labour organization in North America since World War I and outline the growth of the IUMMSW. The author stresses the importance of the Wagner Act in the United States, and Canada's failure to recognize collective bargaining. Although this background information is essential to an understanding of the strike, it continuously jumps back and forth in time, and the failure to introduce quotations properly forces the reader to refer to the endnotes more than should be necessary.

The major thrust of *Remember Kirkland Lake* is the actual strike, and here the author has consulted an impressive array of source materials, including nine interviews conducted between 1972 and 1976, and several hitherto unused primary sources. Unfortunately, Dr. MacDowell was apparently unable to find any management records or company executives to interview. As in previous Canadian strikes, the owners accused the union leaders of being American or communist agitators who falsified the facts and misled the workers. Faced with strikebreakers, an unsympathetic police force, intimidation, and government-company

collusion, the miners banded together and were able to arouse significant public support in their struggle with the obdurate owners. The events of the strike, and the claims and countercharges of both sides, are analyzed in depth. Other than the unique wartime conditions, however, the grievances, tactics, and results remarkably resembled the 1919 Cobalt silver strike, and subsequent union-management conflicts. *Perhaps it is time for a general monograph on labour-capital relations in Northern Ontario.*

The author notes in the preface that her "intention was to consider not only the union's organizational activity and the inadequacy of existing legislation, but also the activities, views, and feelings of the individuals involved." Unfortunately, *Remember Kirkland Lake* more closely resembles the labour histories of the 1960s than it does recent examinations of working-class culture. Other than wage and cost-of-living statistics, there are few attempts to describe working conditions, or the miners' day-to-day existence. The reader is left with little sense of the years of oppression and terrible conditions that culminated in the 1941 strike, and might thus justifiably question whether the owners were correct when they charged that strike was initiated by such paid organizers as Tom McGuire from the IUMMSW in Denver, and Bob Carlin of the CIO. When the strike was broken, these and other union leaders merely shifted their organizational emphasis to Sudbury.

Remember Kirkland Lake is primarily an analysis of the strike from the miners' perspective. The union's position and demands are always well-documented, whereas management's case is sloughed off as "all the arguments." In discussing the briefs before the Industrial Disputes Inquiry Commission, for instance, the author devotes less than two pages to the company's position and six to the union's stance. Indeed, management is almost totally excluded from this study. The extent

of foreign ownership of the gold mines, and its possible impact on the cause of the strike, is largely ignored. How much freedom did the local managers have in decision-making? Who, in fact, were the mine owners?

The concluding thirty pages trace the long-term impact of the strike. Although the workers lost, the author argues that their struggle provided a focus for labour discontent that unified the movement and transformed the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation into an effective political party. The Kirkland Lake strike provided a training ground for many future trade unionists and propelled them into careers as political activists.

Larry Sefton, the "young recording secretary" for Local 240, was the author's father. One of his tasks during the gold miners' strike was speaking to union meetings across the country and soliciting contributions. With *Remember Kirkland Lake*, Laurel Sefton MacDowell has continued in her father's footsteps.

Douglas O. Baldwin
University of Prince Edward Island

Sandra Djwa and R. St. J. Macdonald, eds., *On F.R. Scott: Essays on His Contributions to Law, Literature, and Politics* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press 1983).

THE TROUBLE WITH A book like this, which touches on every field in which the main character performed with distinction, is that most of the essays are too brief to be satisfying. The other weakness, associated with the first, is that since these were papers presented at a conference called to praise Frank Scott, there is very little critical evaluation. This is not to deny the scope and quality of Scott's work, nor his contribution to Canadian society. But it would not have detracted from his achievements to

include in this book some other more critical opinions about his ideas and actions.

His contributions to the Canadian left began with his major role in the founding of the League for Social Reconstruction in 1932, and his joint efforts with six other social-democratic professors in bringing out the first major left-wing analysis of the Canadian economy with the publication in 1935 of *Social Planning for Canada*. He devoted much of his life as a civil libertarian defending the rights of persecuted minorities such as communists, Jehovah's Witnesses, and Japanese-Canadians before the public as a speaker and writer, and in the courts as a lawyer. He was one of the first prominent Canadians to advocate a Canadian bill of rights that would be entrenched in the constitution.

But his main weakness, in my view, was his relentless advocacy of strong powers for the central government, regardless of the issue or the time and even at the expense of the rights of the francophone majority in Quebec. Scott could never bring himself to regard Quebec society as a nation, or even as a province different from the others. He limited his concept of the French-English duality to a cultural question, and lumped together every form of Quebec nationalism, failing to distinguish between the reactionary nationalism of Duplessis and the nationalism of the Quiet Revolution. Because of this and in spite of his record as a civil libertarian, he strongly endorsed the promulgation of the War Measures Act in 1970, and as late as 1983 vehemently reiterated this endorsement.

It is too bad that there was no paper presented at the conference or in the book by a French or English Canadian to debate at least this question. Instead we have a small paragraph in Walter Tarnapolsky's article quoting Scott's reason for his position on the War Measures Act. Tarnapolsky, however, seeks to mitigate this position by saying that Scott participated with thirteen other citizens in the investi-

gation of the conditions under which people were detained. This comes under the heading of charity rather than justice. Scott's own explanation was that "all the evidence pointed out not to a popular insurrection, but to a further erosion of civil government. . . . A shock treatment was needed to restore the balance. It was given, and it worked." (139) The main thing wrong with that statement is that the War Measures Act is applicable in peacetime if there is "apprehended insurrection." There is nothing in the Act about "civil erosion."

No proof has ever been presented which showed that there was even a remote possibility of insurrection, as Scott himself says, and since not one of the over 400 people detained was ever charged with anything, the so-called "shock treatment" must be seen as an attempt to stop the PQ, a legal political party, in its tracks. It did not succeed in that purpose. The PQ, after a period of spectacular growth following the events of 1970, is now in a state of self-inflicted disintegration, without any "shock treatment." But the fact that Frank Scott can use a phrase like that as a justification for the War Measures Act must indicate that at least one of his contributions to Canadian democracy, as a defender of civil liberties, had its limitations when applied to French Quebecers. Michael Oliver defends Scott's apparent inconsistency by saying that for Scott "the fact that the PQ seeks to break up Confederation overshadows every other fact about the party." But surely since the PQ is functioning as a legal democratic party, which sought and still seeks to win separation by a free vote, a defender of democratic rights such as Scott can hardly justify the removal of all civil rights in Quebec, even for a short period of time?

There are only three articles which deal with the politics of Frank Scott, all of which describe his historic contribution to the institutionalizing of social democracy in Canada, the drafting of the Regina

Manifesto, and later the drafting of the Winnipeg Declaration of 1956, which replaced the Regina Manifesto. These are likewise snippets and leave one frustrated with their brevity. Kenneth McNaught injects a controversial note into his essay, directed at people who were and are opponents of "democratic socialism" from the right and the left. But here he is not writing as an historian, but rather as a partisan advocate who, with one sweep of the brush, can declare that all these misguided critics dismissed the CCF and NDP as "irrelevant," which McNaught as an historian would really have to deny about many of the people he attacks.

David Lewis testifies once again to the fact that Frank Scott was the greatest influence in his political life, although pointing out that the one major disagreement they had was over the War Measures Act. David Lewis stood steadfast in the House of Commons with most of the NDP to denounce the Trudeau government's action as a body blow at Canadian democratic rights. An interesting sidelight appears in Lewis's essay where he lists the people who in his opinion were most responsible for the existence of the CCF: J.S. Woodsworth for his "prophetic inspiration;" M.J. Coldwell for his winning "acceptability which the CCF gained during the war years;" and Frank Scott and Angus MacInnis for their "philosophic depth and organizational firmness." McNaught on the other hand criticizes someone outside the NDP for ignoring T.C. Douglas's role in establishing the record of achievements of the first, and for twenty years the only, CCF government in existence. It might have been more to the point if McNaught had taken issue with David Lewis doing just that, because the context in which this appears is a deliberate snub by Lewis of Douglas, the first time such an explicit but unexplained criticism appears.

But limited as it is, this first study of F.R. Scott is worth reading not just for understanding his impact on the left in

Canada, but because of his important contribution to so many aspects of Canadian life. We look for further studies, two of which were mentioned in this book as forthcoming, a biography of Scott by Sandra Djwa and a collection of Scott's best political essays, letters, and addresses, being edited by Michiel Horn, historian of the League for Social Reconstruction.

Norman Penner
Glendon College
York University

Howard White, *A Hard Man to Beat — The Story of Bill White, Labour Leader, Historian, Shipyard Worker, Raconteur: An Oral History* (Vancouver, Pulp Press 1983).

THIS BOOK CAPTURES the realism and immediacy of its times. It is an oral union history told by Bill White, a loquacious, intelligent, and practical man, to Howard White (no relation) whose skills with the written word are numerous. Both authors are natural raconteurs. Bill provides the actual stories of people and events that are interesting and colourful in their own right. Howard puts the stories into vivid prose so redolent of Bill's way of talking (I remember it well) as to be utterly uncontrived. Even the vast numbers of rare and common oaths and curses, interspersed with folksy sayings, come across as authentic.

Nor is it simply a fun book of reminiscence. The chunk of Canadian labour history it presents is of no small importance. It was a time of transition from the *laissez-faire* system of labour law inherited from Britain to the American system of legally recognized (and legally destructible) collective bargaining rights. (Canada, of course, would never dream of developing its own system). Would that more works in the field were written in such an accessible style, yet so packed with substance, as to assure readership far

beyond academe! I would not trade the occasional error and confusion of the sequences of some events, for a polished, erudite, but dull work.

Beneath the easy words is an intricate fabric woven by the men involved in building, from scratch, most of Canada's merchant (and other) navy. It was done under wartime pressure and the corruption of "cost-plus-10 per cent" contracts. They guaranteed that profits would come by direct pipeline from the public purse to the pockets of favoured (usually Liberal) employers. Vancouver was the birthplace of the fleet which grew to become the world's fourth largest. All the union's skill in backing a country-wide campaign failed to save the fleet after the war.

The Boilermakers & Iron Shipbuilders Union of Canada, Local No. 1 grew mightily and was once the country's largest local. It dwindled rapidly. The Whites introduce us to the people involved in ship-building and union-building: tycoons, con men, unionists, politicians, lawyers, socialists, and communists. Who better to portray them all than the ex-Arctic Mountie turned union leader, Bill White? He later became an ex-communist turned labour historian. As much as any one person, he led the Boilermakers for fourteen years of their most active life. For about five of those years, I was counsel for the union. Until I read the book, I didn't know White had fired me, nor the reason!

Bill's main job as he saw it was to protect his members from hordes of "phonies" he discovered among employers, government agencies, unions, the CCF (now NDP,) and the communists. He lambastes all with gusto, recalling his frequent invitations to settle things in an alley (where his large fists spoke with finality) and his involvement in "rhubarbs." But he gives far more than stories by an egotistical crusader given to violence, though Bill was certainly that. He breathes the lively spirit of the times as sensed by a shrewd participant.

The spirit of the times? It was an amalgamation of many ingredients described in the book. In common with hundreds of other union-builders in the British Columbia of that day, Bill helped to mix these ingredients. Listing the main ones is perhaps the best way to identify them:

- contempt for money-grubbing employers, and capitalists generally;
- understanding how the media "control people's minds without them ever realizing it;"
- acknowledgement that workers sometimes betray their own interests;
- cold fury for doctors who cheat injured workers out of their right to compensation;
- realistic assessment of politicians: (one Liberal attorney-general is described as "not a bad shit . . . every bit as crooked as they say, but one guy you could talk sense to");
- opposition to right-wing union leaders like Charles Millard and Aaron Mosher;
- scorn for a political system that dispenses no justice, but protects the established order;
- correction of errors made by historian Irving Abella, when he failed to understand why communists came to lead the Boilermakers;
- elation from winning quickie strikes that restored jobs;
- recognizing the harm done to Canadian workers by the American connection and its "business unionism," while also recognizing a limited potential for progress within craft unions;
- acknowledgement of the Communist Party's great contribution to union-building in the 1930s and early 1940s, coupled with understanding that the same party yielded to corruption because they felt they owned the unions they had built, or because of severe Cold War blows;
- delight with beating some outrageous court or board decision;
- castigation of those from the CCF (NDP) who preferred not to build unions, but to

take over, from the top, the handiwork of better men;

- opposition to ideological battles within unions for control of officers, because of the corrosive results.

Each one of these ingredients, and others not listed here, is presented in the context of an actual situation. Everything was real, not imagined. Much sardonic humour and cheerful comment are common.

Like the times they so faithfully record and explain, the Whites are volatile. Anger boils over quickly and honestly. It does not cloud judgement nor the ability to solve problems. Big egos are certainly here, but they are the handmaidens of able people dedicated to the fight for social justice that has strong roots in British Columbia.

The flavour of the times, and of the book, linger. . . .

John Stanton
University of British Columbia

François Cyr et Rémi Roy, *Éléments d'histoire de la FTQ. La FTQ et la question nationale* (Montréal: Éditions coopératives Albert Saint-Martin, coll. «Recherches et documents» 1981).

CET OUVRAGE EST la version abrégée d'un mémoire de maîtrise en science politique déposé à l'UQAM en 1979. François Cyr et Rémi Roy consacrent leur recherche à l'influence déterminante de la question nationale sur l'évolution de la FTQ de 1955 à 1980.

Bien que les auteurs se situent dans une perspective marxiste, ils refusent de percevoir la question nationale comme un phénomène secondaire par rapport à la lutte des classes. Selon eux, un modèle préétabli ne suffit pas à saisir toute la complexité de la question nationale. Certes, ils énoncent des «éléments de problématique» qui constituent une certaine grille de lecture. Mais, leur étude repose sur une recherche essentiellement empirique.

La recherche de Cyr et Roy pose le problème du rapport entre la conscience nationale et la conscience de classe, dont le chevauchement permanent produit la question nationale. Selon les auteurs, le nationalisme de la bourgeoisie québécoise est un discours mystificateur de solidarité interclassiste. Cependant, ils précisent que la question nationale, loin d'être l'apanage de la classe dominante, peut résulter de l'intervention de la classe ouvrière. Pourtant, cette «mise en oeuvre» de concepts n'est guère concluante. La conscience nationale ne revêt-elle pas un caractère particulier selon la classe où elle se manifeste? Le nationalisme peut-il être réduit à un discours bourgeois et mystificateur? Peut-on opposer un nationalisme «bourgeois» à une conscience nationale «ouvrière»? Ces questions importantes demeurent sans réponses satisfaisantes.

Aux fins de leur recherche, Cyr et Roy divisent leur période d'étude en tranches de cinq années, qui correspondent à des étapes importantes de l'évolution de la position de la FTQ sur différents aspects de la question nationale. De 1955 à 1960, la FTQ est confrontée à la question nationale notamment sur le plan interne. L'héritage autonomiste de la FUIQ se heurte au conservatisme de la FPTQ, ce qui crée un double clivage au sein de la FTQ. Sur le plan politique, un courant favorise la création d'un «parti de classe» spécifiquement québécois. Parallèlement, sur le plan syndical, un nouveau leadership autochtone entreprend de centraliser les activités internes de la centrale.

La question des rapports intersyndicaux soulève également des aspects nationaux durant cette période. Le CTC et certains syndicats internationaux s'opposent avec succès au processus d'intégration de la CTCC, afin d'éviter le renforcement des tendances autonomistes des syndiqués québécois dans un axe CTCC-FUIQ. Du reste, la volte-face des principaux leaders

de l'ex-FPTQ sur la question de l'action politique démontre que le CTC perçoit essentiellement la FTQ comme une simple succursale québécoise. Néanmoins, la FTQ affronte ouvertement l'équipe Jodoin lors de la grève des réalisateurs de Radio-Canada (1958-59).

Durant la période 1955-1960, la question nationale à la FTQ se manifeste particulièrement dans deux conflits majeurs. D'une part, la grève de Murdochville (1957) révèle au grand jour les contradictions entre les revendications des mineurs et la collaboration étroite entre le régime Duplessis et les intérêts économiques. D'autre part, la grève de Radio-Canada marque les débuts de l'action syndicale de nouvelles couches de travailleurs intellectuels au Québec. Soulignons enfin que l'émergence du NPD suscite beaucoup d'espoirs au sein du leadership syndical québécois qui espère en finir avec le régime Duplessis.

De 1961 à 1965, la révolution tranquille provoque une véritable crise d'identité à la FTQ. Au cours de cette période charnière, la montée de la CSN et le développement des rapports conflictuels avec le CTC forcent la FTQ à lutter pour acquérir une plus grande autonomie et un caractère spécifique. De 1966 à 1970, la remontée nationale des masses populaires entraîne, selon les auteurs, un chevauchement généralisé des forces qui agissent sur la FTQ. Cette dynamique complexe permet à la centrale de s'affirmer davantage comme centrale syndicale québécoise. Comme le leadership du mouvement ouvrier s'avère incapable de prendre en charge la question nationale, la base et les cadres intermédiaires commencent à lorgner du côté du PQ. De 1971 à 1976, la FTQ s'identifie de plus en plus au PQ. Parallèlement, la centrale développe rapidement son discours et ses pratiques, ce qui lui permet de consacrer son autonomie par rapport au CTC.

La partie la moins convaincante de cet ouvrage est sans doute le chapitre consacré à la période référendaire de

1976-1980. Les auteurs constatent qu'au cours de cette période l'hégémonie péquiste sur le mouvement national québécois atteint son apogée. En somme, le PQ «civilise» la question nationale, grâce à une stratégie axée sur l'électoratisme, l'étapisme, et le légalisme. On sait que la FTQ appuie le Oui au référendum, sans pour autant se joindre au comité parapluie fixé par la loi sur les consultations populaires (loi 92). Pour la FTQ, le Oui n'implique pas un appui au gouvernement péquiste; il s'agit plutôt de s'allier aux forces «progressistes» du Oui contre le conservatisme des partisans du Non. Mais, les auteurs eux-mêmes démontrent qu'à partir de 1971 la FTQ s'associe de plus en plus au PQ. Dans ce contexte, il est surprenant que les auteurs affirment que «l'examen des forces en présence fait clairement ressortir le caractère de classe de la polarisation référendaire.» (190) Ce jugement est d'autant plus contestable que la FTQ poursuit sa politique de fidélité au PQ après le référendum, notamment au sein de Solidarité-Québec.

En fait, la période référendaire place les organisations syndicales et populaires devant un choix draconien en ce qui concerne la question nationale: Faut-il accepter le leadership péquiste ou le rejeter au nom de l'autonomie? Les auteurs escamotent trop rapidement ce débat, qu'ils qualifient de «faux problème.» Ils semblent prêter foi à l'argument classique du Oui «critique,» tout en dénonçant la carcan légaliste qui favorise la polarisation du débat. Les auteurs semblent oublier que le Oui consiste essentiellement à accorder au gouvernement péquiste le mandat de négocier une formule particulièrement vague de souveraineté-association.

Cette vision partielle de la période référendaire peut s'expliquer par les limites de la recherche. Les auteurs admettent eux-mêmes que leur grille de lecture se confine à la conscience ouvrière d'une institution syndicale, la FTQ, et plus particulièrement aux positions défendues par le leadership de cette centrale. Cette

approche institutionnelle a d'autant plus émoûsé le sens critique des auteurs, qu'ils éprouvent visiblement une certaine sympathie pour la FTQ.

Malgré tout, l'ouvrage de Cyr et Roy apporte une contribution valable sur deux aspects importants de l'histoire de la FTQ. D'une part, la FTQ n'a jamais cessé de lutter pour accroître son autonomie par rapport au CTC. D'autre part, la centrale s'est affirmée comme organisation syndicale québécoise, tout en s'identifiant de plus en plus à cette société dont elle est une composante essentielle.

Cet ouvrage soulève d'importantes perspectives de recherche. L'histoire des rivalités intersyndicales au Québec demeure un domaine relativement peu exploré. Il importe également d'étudier l'action politique ouvrière en rapport avec la question de l'autonomie syndicale. Une telle recherche permettrait d'expliquer la faiblesse des traditions politiques autonomes des organisations syndicales québécoises. Enfin, toute approche institutionnelle suscite un problème méthodologique qu'il est nécessaire d'approfondir: Les positions défendues par les leaders des organisations syndicales sont-elles toujours absolument conformes aux préoccupations des travailleurs?

Guy Bélanger
Montreal

Jacques Cousineau, *L'Église d'ici et le social: 1940-1960. I. La Commission sacerdotale d'Études sociales* (Montréal: Bellarmin 1982).

D'EMBLÉE, LE PÈRE Cousineau adopte un ton polémique. En avant-propos et en introduction, il s'en prend aux intellectuels des années 60 et 70 qui ont critiqué le rôle de l'Église au sein du mouvement ouvrier au cours des années 30, 40, et 50. L'influence de «l'Église d'ici» n'était pas, selon ce père jésuite, «réactionnaire.» Au contraire. C'est pourquoi il s'est donné pour but de reconstituer les «faits» et d'exposer «la vérité.»

Pour ce faire, celui qui fut jadis conseiller moral à la CTCC et membre-fondateur, en 1948, de la Commission sacerdotale d'études sociales, a, justement, dépouillé de cette CSES qui constitue le sujet de ce premier tome d'une étude consacrée à l'Église catholique canadienne-française. (Le deuxième tome portant sur la question de l'amiantose et sa dénonciation par l'Église serait publié sous peu. Le troisième, sur l'influence de l'Église dans la société canadienne-française, ne le sera pas puisque le père Cousineau est décédé à l'âge de 77 ans peu de temps après la parution de ce premier tome.)

L'histoire de la Commission se divise en trois principales périodes: 1948-51; 1952-59; 1960-65. La première est sans aucun doute la plus intéressante. Jamais, par la suite, la CSES n'a eu autant de rayonnement. Au départ, les principaux «pères» fondateurs (Paul-Émile Bolté [p.s.s.], Émile Bouvier [s.j.], Jacques Cousineau [s.j.], l'abbé Gérard Dion, le chanoine Henri Pichette et Mgr Jean-Charles Leclair) cherchaient à donner un caractère plus formel et officiel aux «journées sacerdotales» qui réunissaient depuis 1945 des membres de l'Église engagés dans l'action sociale. Officiellement reconnue en 1948, la CSES releva directement de l'Assemblée des Evêques du Québec.

Dès 1949, la CSES se distingue, d'une part, en prenant position contre le «Bill 5» de Duplessis et, d'autre part, pour les grévistes de l'amiantite. L'année suivante, la CSES est cette fois à l'origine de la publication de la *Lettre épiscopale collective sur le problème ouvrier* rendue publique le 14 février 1950. Ce document, très critique envers les capitalistes et le gouvernement Duplessis, portait principalement sur la réforme de l'entreprise (dans le sens d'une cogestion) et l'hygiène industrielle.

À partir de 1951, plusieurs membres de la Commission, dont le père Cousineau, sont ni plus ni moins limogés par Mgr Paul-Émile Léger, alors considéré

comme un conservateur. L'auteur rappelle avec discrétion cette mise au rancart assez pénible pour lui. En raison de ces changements d'animateurs, l'expansion de la Commission fut plutôt modeste au cours des années 50 pour finalement disparaître en 1956.

En ce qui concerne la grève de l'amiante, l'ancien assistant-directeur de l'École sociale populaire est intraitable sur deux points. Premièrement, il ne voit aucun lien entre les positions prises par Mgr Charbonneau lors de cette grève et son départ forcé à la suite de présumées magouilles de Duplessis auprès de la hiérarchie catholique. Charbonneau aurait été écarté pour des raisons strictement administratives. La preuve: la décision pontificale fut communiquée à l'archevêque de Montréal par Mgr Antonietti *avant* la rencontre du pape Pie XII avec les ministres Barette et Paquette.

Par ailleurs, le père Cousineau trouve «farfelue» la thèse d'Hélène David selon laquelle la grève de l'amiante a provoqué une lutte entre l'Église et l'État et consacré l'émancipation idéologique de ce dernier par rapport à la tutelle religieuse (cf. l'annexe J., 279). Pour lui, même si l'épiscopat a pris position pour les grévistes et s'est opposé d'une certaine façon à l'État ligué au patronat, il ne s'agissait pas d'une lutte fondamentale pour le pouvoir, encore moins de la perte de l'hégémonie idéologique de l'Église.

Bien qu'il ne soit pas question de défendre ici la thèse d'Hélène David, il faut cependant souligner l'apparente contradiction de l'auteur qui écrit un peu plus tôt dans le texte qu'avec la grève de l'amiante «la société canadienne-française fut ébranlée, fêlée sinon cassée, à cause de l'espèce d'affrontement Église-État. Certes la fêlure prit du temps avant de devenir cassure, un peu plus de dix ans. Il reste que l'événement déterminant, le coup, la brisure date de 1949.» (198) Quand on sait que pour le père Jacques Cousineau un des éléments fondamentaux du «tissu social canadien-français» est l'harmonie Église-État, on

peut se demander ce qu'il entend par «cassure», «brisure», «fêlure?»

Enfin, notons que ce qui est présenté en introduction comme un essai sur le rôle «progressiste» de l'Église avant la Révolution tranquille, est en fait un témoignage. Ce qui est très différent. Ainsi, les rares éléments formels de démonstration sont carrément perdus, soit dans de longues reproductions intégrales de documents de la CSES, soit dans des justifications que l'on retrouve tout autant dans la partie descriptive que dans la partie «analytique.» D'ailleurs, le choix de l'auteur de diviser son livre en une partie «objective» et une partie «subjective» n'a pas été très heureux. Plusieurs passages sont carrément redondants et nul doute qu'une fusion du «subjectif» et de l'«objectif» aurait grandement amélioré la composition.

Il n'en reste pas moins que ce témoignage du père Cousineau est intéressant à ce titre et que certains documents présentés sont riches de détails savoureux.

Claude Couture
Université de Montréal

Joe Wallace, *Poems* (Toronto: Progress Books 1981).

WHAT AN EXTRAORDINARY autobiography Joe Wallace might have written! Born in Toronto in 1890, he survived an unhappy, battered childhood in Nova Scotia, was educated in Saint Francis Xavier University, and then pursued a successful advertising career at the "Winged World" advertising agency in Halifax. An enthusiastic Laurier Liberal in his youth, he converted to labour radicalism in the momentous year of 1919, and in 1922 became one the leading lights of the Workers' Party in the Maritimes. In the 1920s he wrote not only for *The Worker* but also for the Catholic weekly, *The Casket*, and to the end of his life he remained a practising Catholic as well as a communist. Quitting his job in the early 1930s, Wallace became an itin-

erant organizer for the Canadian Labour Defence League in Montreal and Ottawa, and later conducted a regular column for *The Clarion*. He was considered dangerous enough to be arrested under the Defence of Canada Regulations in 1941, and served eighteen months in Hull and Petawawa. On his release he trained as a lathe operator and worked in war industry, helping to organize a local of the United Electrical Workers; after the war he was employed as a hospital worker in Toronto until bad health forced him into retirement. Through all of this, from the time he published his first verse in the *Halifax Herald* at the age of fifteen, Joe Wallace was also a poet. With contemporaries such as Kenneth Leslie and Andrew Merkel, he participated in the Song Fishermen's romantic revival in the 1920s in Nova Scotia. His work is sprinkled through the labour and radical press of the 1920s and 1930s. His first book, however, *Night is Ended*, did not appear until after his release from jail in 1942. This was followed by *All My Brothers* in 1953 and *Hi, Sister! Hi, Brother!* in 1956. He found his biggest audiences in the Soviet Union, where his two subsequent books were published, *The Golden Legend* (1958), and *A Radiant Sphere* (1964). In Canada he was anthologized in Margaret Fairley's *The Spirit of Canadian Democracy* (1945) and in the revised edition of F.R. Scott and A.J.M. Smith's *The Blasted Pine* (1967), although not in the original edition (1957). When he died in Vancouver in 1975 at the age of eighty-five, he was mourned by the Communist Party as "Canada's foremost poet,"¹ but for most Canadians he remained, in John Robert Colombo's phrase, "Canada's banned poet,"² little known and largely ignored.

Among experts, the poetry of John

Wallace has been doubly condemned, not only as politically motivated but also as bad verse. Wallace is noted simply in the *Literary History of Canada* as "that poet laureate of communism."³ There have been a few dissenters. In *Night is Ended*, E.J. Pratt pronounced Wallace's poems to be "genuine lyrics," "emotionally dynamic without undue spread of sentiment:" "Wallace is writing out of his life and no one may deny the sense of conviction." A review of that volume noted that this political poet had learned how to set aside "unpoetic abstractions" in favour of the "flesh and blood of English poetry."⁴ Indeed, it seems likely that some of Wallace's work will eventually find acceptance in the mainstream of Canadian poetry: the taut, emotional compression of his prison poetry ("How High, How Wide," "Your Arm is Strong Enough") is probably unique in Canadian literature; many of his short, political epigrams ("Troubles of a Quebec Valentine Writer," "A Sovereign Nation") are genuinely witty topical statements; there are playful, musical tones to be heard in "Making Hay" and "Hi, Sister! Hi, Brother!," and a sincere patriotism in "O Lovely Land." Other selections will be of special interest to students of the left: the poetic expositions of an early Marxist-Christian dialogue ("The Bridge," "Catholics and Communists"), and the direct and unpretentious advice to political organizers in "The Road to Understanding:" "Don't stand and shout directions from afar./ Go where he is and journey by his side./ At once the good companion and the guide./ From scenes familiar let new scenes unfold./ We learn by

³ Carl F. Klinck, ed., *Literary History of Canada*, 2nd ed., (Toronto 1976), I, 488.

⁴ *Saturday Night*, 3 July 1943. See also the comments by E.K. Brown in "Letters in Canada: 1942," *University of Toronto Quarterly*, 12 (April 1943), 309. More recently, Milton Acorn has also argued on behalf of the poetic quality of Wallace's best work: *Canadian Literature*, 93 (Summer 1982), 126-8.

¹ *Pacific Tribune* (Vancouver), 19 December 1975.

² John Robert Colombo, "Canada's Banned Poet," *The Canadian Forum*, 40 (July 1960), 80-2.

living not by being told." Certainly there is little in Wallace's poetry that might be considered adventurous in technique; he followed a few basic rules of composition. Some themes are surprisingly absent in his writing — there is nothing which could be defined as work poetry, despite his political attachment to the working class. He did not leave a large volume of great poetry, and he might be considered lucky to weigh in as a very minor poet in the grand procession of Canadian literature.

Like most poets, Wallace occasionally succeeded; usually he fell short. But if we regard Canadian culture less as a collection of literary artifacts and become more interested in the whole social process of cultural creation, then Joe Wallace may be seen as a rather more important figure. If we borrow, for instance, from the cultural terminology of Raymond Williams, Wallace looms in Canadian literary history as one of the few writers who laboured conspicuously for the creation of an emergent, oppositional working-class culture. It is difficult simply to judge his work by his books, for his reputation in Canada was made in union halls and political meetings, in labour periodicals, and the communist press. Moreover, he had his influence on a generation that produced Milton Acorn and Dorothy Livesay. There is a remarkable story to be told here of politics and faith and culture, and there is no better place to begin than by reading Joe Wallace's work.

For all these reasons it is good to see a new edition of Wallace's poetry. The selection is drawn from the earlier published volumes, and also from private collections, archives, and newspapers. By my count there are some 300 items here, and these are presented in nine thematic sections. Unfortunately, many of the poems are not dated, not even by the volume or source in which they were located. Also, it seems clear that a large volume of Wallace's work still remains to be unearthed in the periodicals to which he

contributed. The introduction is informative but fails to refer readers to the few autobiographical fragments, memoirs, or interviews which shed light on Wallace's life and work.⁵ Joe Wallace's *Poems*, then, cannot be considered either a *Collected Works* or *The Best of Joe Wallace*, each of which might have greater importance or appeal. Meanwhile, it is the first volume of his poetry to be published in Canada in twenty-five years, and it will have to do. As Joe Wallace says, in one of his own wry afterthoughts, "One other thing I have found: the good is the enemy of the best."

David Frank
University of New Brunswick

Tom Wayman, *Inside Job: Essays on the New Work Writing* (Madeira Park, B.C.: Harbour Publishing 1983).

THE FOUR ESSAYS gathered under the title *Inside Job: Essays on the New Work Writing* were first written and published by Tom Wayman between 1976 and 1983. These were years many of us will remember as having been marked by double digit inflation, unheard-of unemployment levels, wage restrictions, and the insidious doubletalk of restraint and recovery. It is ironic, but not surprising, then, that the major preoccupation of these essays is work. Certain things seem to increase in significance as they disappear and work is one of them.

Curiously, Wayman's essays ignore these issues. They seem to be unconcerned with the historical problems surrounding work at the present moment. The essays in *Inside Job* discuss the value of representing work ("Groundwork"),

⁵ A brief autobiography is included as a preface to *The Golden Legend*, 17-20. See also the interview by Allan Safarik and Dorothy Livesay, "How I Began," *CVIII*, 1 (Spring 1975), 35-42, and Milton Acorn, "In Wry Memoriam Joe Wallace," *Canadian Dimension*, 12, (September 1977), 38-43, 51.

the value of the aesthetics of realism in this representation ("The Limits of Realism"), the relationship of work to culture ("Regional Culture, National Culture, Industrial Culture"), and the criticisms which have been directed at those who think as Wayman does about work ("The Enemies of Intelligence").

Work, for Wayman, is an abstraction, a subject matter, albeit a very important one. For this reason, he is more interested in writing about what happens on the job than whether or not the job exists. He seems not to have thought about what the disappearance of work means to his project. This seems very odd, indeed, because work, or rather writing about work, is the essential ingredient that Wayman envisions as a literary movement which will transform not only our literature as we know it, but also our culture and quite possibly our society.

A brief outline of this transformational process is as follows. For Wayman, most of literature is simply "escapist." It does not represent our lives as they truly are because it does not represent what he considers to be our dominant experience: work. Literature diverts us from "current realities," rather than allowing us to see them and possibly contrive methods for ameliorating them. Literature misrepresents us because it does not allow for a place where we can voice our experience of working. Following from this silence, Wayman maintains, the general effect of culture is "narcotic." It numbs us to our daily realities by providing more and more fantastic illusions for us to consume. Culture, like literature, keeps us from an accurate and authentic self-consciousness by manufacturing identities for us which have nothing to do with the real dimensions of our lives. Because culture is constructed around a *silence* — the absence of the depiction of the experience of men and women working — it is unable to offer the critical views of society which it should perform in order to bring about "meaningful social change."

The alternative to all this false consciousness is provided by the new work writing. The transformation begins by breaking through the silence around work. The new work writing (aka "the new work literatures," aka "the new industrial literature") will restore work to its proper place in literature. Organized around the experience of work, literature will no longer be "escapist." Rather, it will bring both reader and writer face to face with the real conditions of contemporary life. Because realism is the dominant aesthetic of the new work writing, literature will concern itself with accurate, that is, "authentic" and "honest," depiction of our working conditions and living conditions. In this way, literature will enter and transform culture in the broader sense — our representations of ourselves to ourselves. The operations of culture, once they have been *corrected and brought into line with daily reality*, signal the end of all present ideological misrepresentations of whatever kind. (Significantly, it is here that Wayman seeks to distinguish the new work writing from the "old work writing." The old work writing, he maintains, was not really concerned with the accurate depiction of work. Its true interest was an "external ideology" of the future of the worker, that is, a *mythos* of a "happy collectivity" which obscured the real conditions of work.) The death of ideological misrepresentation is the birth of true consciousness. Because we will have an accurate depiction of our lives, both on the job and in society, for the first time, we will begin to understand that certain institutions and conditions should be changed. Culture will then be the critical tool to shape this social transformation.

Setting out what he considers the *raison d'être* of the new work writing, Wayman notes:

Some of the loudest objections to the ideas implied by the emergence of the new work literature have come from other authors. It is as though these people sense that the appearance of the new work writing indicates a major

change in attitude to literature as we have known it. Traditionally, the three main subjects of imaginative writing in English have been love, death, and nature. To these, the contemporary industrial literature introduces a fourth major subject: work. More than this, the new writing demonstrates how a person's attitudes to love, death, and nature are in large part shaped by the kind of daily work he or she does. Our employment obviously determines our personal standard of living — how well and where we live off the job. Our employment is responsible, too, for how much mental and physical energy we have when we return home, and indeed how much time off we receive. So the amount of money, energy and time available to us to pursue romance or appreciate nature is a direct result of the conditions of our work. And how we regard and respond to a wide range of matters, including death and nature and the opposite sex, is strongly influenced by whether we interact with these daily at the job and what this interaction or lack of interaction leads us to conclude about them. Any literature, then, which omits this governing experience of life is a literature with an enormous hole in the middle of it. Just as a taboo once surrounded the presentation of sex in literature, so a detailed examination of daily work and its effects on people has up to the present been omitted from most of our imaginative writing. (12-13)

Like much of what Wayman writes in *Inside Job*, this argument seems to promise much. He seems to have discovered a truth as inevitable as the falling of a dis-tended raindrop from a telephone wire. It seems so simple. Perhaps it is just a little too simple. For the people this paragraph constructs are people who live without history, without culture, without ideology. It is as if, having found these false, Wayman has chosen to ignore them completely. He has chosen to (over)simplify life by constructing a new teleology with work as its prime mover. This scheme has alarming implications of which Wayman seems unaware: to be without work or the experience of work is to be without consciousness, without true understanding. To be without work is to be without experience; it is to be false; to be less than false; to be nothing.

Yet we are. Wayman's argument does not offer what it seems to offer; it does not resonate beyond the narrow confines of its pages. It is a literary — not a social or political — argument, and a rather feeble one at that. All it really proposes is the substitution of one content for another by asserting that work is not only a universal theme, that it is the *primary universal theme*, the universal that determines all other universals. There is nothing intrinsically political about the subject of work, and Wayman proves it — against his own intentions. By insisting on work as a universal, he admits it to the company of the same bourgeois ideology which he claims is the source of literature's escapist tendencies. Work, as a subject matter, will not rupture this ideology because this ideology can absorb any subject. The risk Wayman is running is this: rather than politicizing literature, he may, in fact, be making politics literary; rather than politicizing aesthetics, he may be aestheticizing politics. To write about work the way Wayman does at a time when jobs are disappearing by the thousands is to lay the groundwork for a new social fantasy, a new escapism.

Paul Kelley
Vancouver

Graeme Gibson, *Perpetual Motion* (Toronto: McLelland and Stewart 1982).

ROBERT FRASER. THE protagonist of Graeme Gibson's historical novel *Perpetual Motion*, can be found in any, and all, of the travel accounts and reminiscences about rural life in nineteenth-century Upper Canada. Fraser is a composite, an archetype of the Upper Canadian backwoodsman, just as the setting of *Perpetual Motion* and the events of Fraser's life are composited, with great fidelity, from the historical record. But Fraser is, as any fictional protagonist must be, larger than life. In him, Gibson has enshrined many of the obsessions delu-

sions, and contradictions of Victorian society and culture in its Upper Canadian manifestation. The result is a novel that reads at times like a gothic pot-boiler, at times like recent surrealist fiction.

Robert Fraser is a farmer who aspires to be not merely independent, but at the very least a small capitalist. He eventually succeeds, after one particularly hilarious failure, by becoming the provisioner to the armies of passenger pigeon harvesters who invade his domain annually. Fraser's farm, and his life, are awash in pigeon shit. His hatred for the birds is pathological, and symbolic of his contempt for his backwoods vocation which distracts him from his true calling. Fraser's passion, indeed his religion, is science, more particularly physics. His obsession with the construction of a model of the universe *in moto perpetuo* becomes a divine madness which alienates him from his wife, children, neighbours, and associates.

Fraser's only reference point for this obsession is the London Crystal Palace Exhibition of scientific wonders he must conjure in imagination on the basis of second-hand accounts from two charlatans from Toronto who relieve him of a mastodon's skeleton he has unearthed on his farm. Fraser's determination to unlock the secrets of perpetual motion and thereby make his own mark as a scientist also ends in glorious failure when his water-driven Rube Goldberg model (which eventually occupies a three-story workshop) self-destructs to the amazement (and horror) of a throng of admirers assembled for its unveiling.

Gibson invests Fraser and his demonic obsessions with a dose of black humour which provides essential relief for a rather slow-moving story that is sometimes too mired in historical realism to be interesting. On the other hand, Gibson is at his best creating historically plausible vignettes, for example his description of Fraser's sojourn at a workingman's saloon in Toronto where there is dark talk of conspiracies and secret societies. Gibson also

has an ear for the oral traditions of rural Ontario. He recounts the story of a terminally flatulent bull relieved by a well placed bugle which then becomes the cause of the animal's demise. It is a story I first heard in connection with the Grey North by-election in 1945.

Perpetual Motion is not a great novel. Perhaps no novel about life in Upper Canada can be when the reader's familiarity with the historical record robs the novelist of his ability to surprise by juxtaposing the familiar and the exotic in a way which enlarges the reader's understanding. But *Perpetual Motion*, as an evocation of a particular time and place, is nevertheless a novel worth reading.

David Gagan
McMaster University

Ronald E. Seavoy, *The Origins of the American Business Corporation, 1784-1855; Broadening the Concept of Public Service During Industrialization* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press 1982).

IN 1974, THOMAS C. Cochran argued that the emergence of the business corporation within a single generation during the early years of the republic made an enormous contribution to "the revolution" in American business. Ronald Seavoy's study of the development of the business corporation in New York State — in spite of the broader implications of his title — lends support to Cochran's analysis. Seavoy's study is especially welcome in that New York, one of the leaders in making the corporate form of organization available to business, has lacked until now a serious study to be placed along side of those for Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and other states.

The author shows how the business corporation emerged from the concept of public service attached to the first incorporations of municipalities, charitable organizations, and educational institu-

tions, from which it was extended to turnpikes, banks, insurance companies, and finally manufacturing enterprises. Since the granting of a corporate charter by the state legislature was regarded as conferring a privilege, particularly that of limited liability for businesses, corporations had to be regarded as furthering some public purpose that would otherwise go unsatisfied. At first, this almost automatically precluded the grant of a charter to an enterprise which would compete with proprietorships and partnerships. In time, the freedom of entrepreneurs to form a corporation came to be regarded as the appropriate democratic course.

The achievement of free incorporation by means of general incorporation statutes mirrored the political concerns of the age: first with the 1811 statute, which established general incorporation for certain types of manufacturing enterprises; second, with the free incorporation statute for banks in 1838; and finally with the rapid extension of free incorporation to almost every type of business enterprise within a few years following the promulgation of the constitution of 1846. The general incorporation statute of 1811, as Seavoy shows, anticipating the outbreak of hostilities with Great Britain, which would curtail the import of manufactures, encouraged the chartering of spinning mills, metal working, and glassmaking factories.

One motive for general incorporation statutes was to clear the agenda of the state legislature for other business, but the elimination of political favouritism in the granting of corporate charters was equally important. Nowhere was this favouritism more apparent than in the chartering of banks during the 1820s and 1830s. A disciplined Democratic Party machine known as the Albany Regency granted bank charters only to political allies who were willing to make numerous shares available to important politicians. This period closed with the revolt of the locofocos, men of hard money and anti-

monopoly persuasion, who united with New York City businessmen whose interests were ill-served by the Regency, to help pass a general incorporation statute for banks in 1838. This statute not only provided for a sound currency, backed 100 per cent by government bonds, but freed the founding of new banks from political influence. For Seavoy, "the free banking statute marked a permanent shift in the state's business policy; it cast the development of *laissez faire* business doctrine into corporate form." (180) The new 1846 constitution not only mandated free banking, but also forbade legislative chartering of banks. Complying with the intent of the constitutional convention, free incorporation was extended to other business enterprises by a series of general incorporation statutes enacted between 1847 and 1855. These statutes also provided for the much coveted limited liability for shareholders, except in the case of banks. Seavoy shows that free incorporation with limited liability had a genuinely democratic pedigree: "The passage of general incorporation laws for business corporations was the major economic aspect of the political and social forces that democratized the United States during the Age of Jackson, 1825-1855." (256)

The political and legal aspects of the rise of the corporation are particularly well done. It is not intended as a criticism of this work to observe that the economic impact of the corporation in New York is insufficiently treated. While it may be true, as Seavoy asserts, that corporations played a major role in economic development, and that without a *laissez faire* chartering policy the economic development of New York would have "languished indefinitely," the evidence to support this assertion is lacking.

Charles E. Freedeman
State University of New York
at Binghamton

Walter Licht, *Working for the Railroad: The Organization of Work in the Nineteenth Century* (Princeton: Princeton University Press 1983).

WALTER LICHT'S 1977 Princeton thesis, "Nineteenth-Century American Railwaymen: A Study in the Nature and Organization of Work," was a pioneering study. Instead of adopting a traditional institutional approach to labour history concentrating upon unions and strikes, Licht took on the task of examining the everyday work experience of the first two generations of American railway workers from 1830 to 1877. These workers were of special interest, he pointed out, because they were the first in America to be employed by large-scale, bureaucratically-organized corporations. Appearing as it did at a time when increasing attention was being paid to both workers' history and the "managerial revolution" in American business, Licht's thesis was highly relevant and important. It is gratifying to see it finally appear in book form.

Licht's approach was inspired by P.W. Kingsford's study of English railway workers, *Victorian Railwaymen* (1970). Following Kingsford's example, but adopting his own categories of analysis, Licht organized his work topically, devoting separate chapters to the recruitment of labour, discipline, wages and other employee benefits, the risks of railway work, including irregular work and accidents, and finally a "social profile" of American railway workers, including ethnic background, educational levels, and early attempts at unionization. This proved to be an exceptionally suitable framework for the organization and arrangement of Licht's data, and one which other researchers (including this reviewer) have since found useful. Numerous tables are well-placed in the text, and there are over thirty pages of appendices listing wage levels, regularity of work, labour turnover, the relationship

between ethnicity and promotion, and patterns of residency and property holding.

Licht's primary sources include a wide range of early railway company records, government documents, the published memoirs of old-time railroaders, and a limited amount of early union material. He has also assiduously combed through a broad assortment of secondary material, much of which unfortunately dates from 1977 and earlier. One of the weaknesses of the book, in contrast with the thesis from which it derives, is its failure to incorporate adequately the results of more recent scholarship in what has become a fast-moving field. The company records must have posed particular difficulties for Licht, since by their very nature such sources tend to deal only with those aspects of the work experience which generate problems for management. Hence the book is of greatest interest and probes most deeply where Licht has been able to draw upon direct testimony from the workers themselves on topics of major importance to them, such as accidents. Unfortunately, the sheer volume of anecdotal material which sometimes results gives the text a rather undigested look in places.

Factually, therefore, this book has much to recommend it, but analytically there are some problems. Most importantly, perhaps, Licht fails to deal satisfactorily with the over-all processes of change during the years 1830-77. This is probably a consequence of the topical, anecdotal approach. While the book does discuss specific changes resulting from major events such as the Civil War — for example, the war's impact upon black railway workers in the south — it frequently treats the whole period as a unit, with examples drawn from everywhere in the period or even beyond into the eighties to illustrate a general point. This is particularly evident in the discussion of the risks of work. But what will be equally annoying to those who are interested in the human consequences of indus-

trialization is the inadequate treatment of the problems of adjusting pre-industrial American farm boys and independent artisans to the discipline required by the railway timetable and the huge new railway shops. Licht presents the data in descriptive form: railway workers during this period were a remarkably unruly, cantankerous, independent lot. This was especially true of the workers most subject to rules and regulations, the train crews, who "could be openly and deliberately defiant . . . when it came to the manner in which they thought the work should be performed." (98) It was not unusual for conductors and engine drivers in the 1850s to ignore company timetables completely and operate their trains according to their own convenience. Licht, however, merely contents himself with describing management's attempts to solve these "problems," and draws no parallels with similar difficulties as they developed in other American industries in the nineteenth century, or with the earlier experience of British workers as discussed by E.P. Thompson and others.

But as Licht's concluding chapter, "The Legacy of the Early Years," makes clear, this is not his real purpose. Instead of looking backwards into the immediate pre-industrial past, with the period 1830-77 as a time of acclimatization to the newly-emergent corporation, he is more concerned with the fully industrial future and the serious labour problems which erupted after 1877 on American railways. As the conclusion makes clear, this book is an attempt to explain the causes of this unrest: between 1830 and 1877, Licht suggests, forms of labour management relations were established which led to most of the subsequent labour upheavals. In particular, the corporate decentralization which gave local officials arbitrary control over hiring, discipline, job assignments, and so on, together with bureaucratically imposed rules and regulations, forced workers to fight back in 1877 and after to gain control over the work experi-

ence, if not the productive process. It is "the major argument of this book," Licht declares, that "as freeborn citizens of the republic they refused to countenance unjust and unfair treatment and resorted to violent means to protest their circumstances." (269, 272)

This conclusion clearly is not very satisfactory. To begin with, there is no hint of it in the book's introduction, where the entire emphasis is upon the period 1830-77, although this is perhaps a minor fault. There are more serious difficulties. As Licht himself points out in his preface, the time period 1830-77 precedes the great westward expansion of the rail network, limiting "by necessity the geographical range [of this study] to the eastern third of the country." (xvii) Yet western railway workers were among the most militant of all after 1877, a fact which Licht's analysis of eastern regions clearly cannot explain. For a convincing analysis of the post-1877 militancy which goes beyond Licht's invocation of the power of corporate structure and rules to stir minds, we must turn to the recent work of Shelton Stromquist, Nick Salvatore, and others. They have shown that we must also consider ideological and technical change, differing community attitudes, the expansion of the rail network, and employers' attempts to increase the supply of skilled labour, all of which were part of the post-1877 scene, since it was a growing faith among railway workers in sympathetic action which found its most important expression in the American Railway Union of the 1890s.

Yet, while simplistic and already outdated in some respects, this is an important book. A Canadian historian might complain about the complete lack of any Canadian data, given the ease with which workers and railway lines crossed the international border into a governmental and legal system different from the American. But Licht's work is certain to remain useful to students of railway labour relations, if only because he has

shown how essential it is to consider the views of ordinary workers. As such, he has done much to rescue the very first American industrial workers from (in E.P. Thompson's phrase) "the enormous condescension of posterity."

Hugh Tuck
Memorial University of Newfoundland

Edward G. Roddy, *Mills, Mansions, and Mergers: The Life of William M. Wood* (North Andover; Merrimack Valley Textile Museum 1982).

AU POINT DE départ l'A. s'était tracé un programme ambitieux, soit d'éclairer la vie et la carrière de William M. Wood, cet industriel de Nouvelle-Angleterre, architecte de la création du géant American Woolen Co. qui dominera le monde du textile pendant plusieurs décennies au début du XXe siècle. D'entrée de jeu l'A. nous affirme en quelque sorte que le sujet de son investigation correspond tout à la fois complètement et en aucune façon aux idées reçues qu'on pouvait entretenir à son endroit. Le plus désolant c'est que précisément il ne parvient pas à situer son personnage par rapport à ces idées reçues et que l'ouvrage est beaucoup plus consacré à la gloire de William M. Wood qu'à une analyse serrée de sa carrière, de ses activités et de ses réalisations.

Le sujet était important et attrayant. Comment ce fils de famille nombreuse immigrante portugaise a-t-il pu s'imposer dans le monde du textile et en venir à mettre sur pied une gigantesque compagnie de lainages qui dicte ses lois à ses concurrents et à des milliers d'employés. On doit avouer qu'on n'obtient guère de réponse. Tout au plus Edward Roddy a-t-il tracé un portrait traditionnel d'un industriel, bon père de famille, aimant sa compagnie, prêt à faire la charité et animé par un désir de construire qui relèverait parfois de l'obsession. L'idée centrale de Wood semble avoir été de régler tous les problèmes par la taille des conglomerats qu'il

mettait sur pied. À ce niveau il est vrai que son entreprise fut réussie. En 1916 la compagnie regroupait 50 établissements disposant de 10 000 métiers et employait plus de 30 000 personnes. La compagnie avait surmonté l'épreuve de la célèbre grève de Lawrence (1912) et s'apprêtait à profiter des commandes pharamineuses du gouvernement américain pour habiller les militaires. Le traitement que l'A. réserve à l'épisode de 1912 est un autre exemple d'explication courte. De prétendre que Wood avait tout simplement perdu contact avec ses ouvriers n'éclaire rien en réalité.

Il est vrai que l'auteur ne disposait pas de beaucoup de documents sur Wood et sur ses opérations. Très souvent il a été obligé de s'en remettre au témoignage du fils Wood et à l'analyse d'une presse régionale qui à l'époque était largement favorable à ce puissant capitaliste. Rien ne nous est vraiment dit de l'évolution de ce fils d'immigrant, qui tentera d'effacer son ascendance portugaise, qui commencera à travailler à l'âge de douze ans et qui végétera, comme il le dira lui-même, pendant des années à \$4.00 par semaine. L'auteur n'explique pas vraiment non plus le rôle des protecteurs de William M. Wood qui ont eu une influence déterminante sur sa carrière. Ses liens avec les Pierce et les Ayer sont à la base de son ascension et trop peu explorés. Se dégage finalement de l'ouvrage de Roddy le portrait d'un homme à la stature beaucoup moins impressionnante que celle à laquelle on aurait pu s'attendre. Il s'agit sans nul doute d'un homme de talent, d'un gérant efficace, mais qui finalement n'entre pas dans les grandes lignes du monde capitaliste comme l'auteur voudrait trop souvent nous le faire croire.

À notre sens, les passages les plus intéressants de l'ouvrage ne traitent d'ailleurs pas de William Wood lui-même mais plutôt d'une de ses créations, Shawsheen Village. En 1919, après des années d'acquisitions, Wood se lançait dans la construction d'un «village» modèle où

seraient logés les cadres de sa compagnie. Ce «village» demeure encore aujourd'hui un des plus intéressants exemples de l'influence du mouvement de la cité-jardin et des efforts de planification urbaine du début du XXe siècle. Comme pages d'histoire urbaine celles concernant Shawsheen Village représentent une contribution intéressante. De la même façon les quelques pages consacrées à l'époque «capitalisme-bienveillant» de la compagnie sont intéressantes mais limitées. L'A. disposait d'un informateur privilégié en la personne du fils Wood et le développement de ce sujet aurait pu être accentué sans nuire à l'unité de l'ouvrage.

Nous sommes donc en présence d'une oeuvre qui nous laisse énormément sur notre faim. Le sujet est passionnant, mais trop est laissé inexplicité même en considérant les limites de la documentation.

Albert Desbiens
Université du Québec à Montréal

Michael H. Frisch and Daniel J. Walkowitz, eds., *Working Class America: Essays on Labor, Community, and American Society* (Champaign, IL.: University of Illinois Press 1983).

THIS COLLECTION WAS consciously designed to display the best of a new generation of American labour history scholarship, so it provides an opportunity to take stock of the state of the art and to delineate some of the major themes in the field. The editors have produced a book which is relatively balanced with regard to subject and chronology. Most of the works are characterized by three broad concerns: working-class culture, the social relations of production, and political ideas and organization.

The preoccupation of American labour historians during the past decade or so with working-class culture is most clearly reflected in the essays contributed by Jon Prude, Frank Couvares, and Elizabeth and Kenneth Fones-Wolf. Several of the

authors, including Prude, have advanced the field by focusing on hitherto neglected groups. He studies early textile operatives and their families, not in the large Waltham and Lowell mills, where conflict was fairly common by the 1830s and 1840s, but rather in a cluster of small, rural mill towns where paternalistic management practices were generally successful and labour trouble minimal. Prude describes early industrial relations in these towns as a problem of learning (or perhaps establishing) the "rules of the game," each side acknowledging its dependence on the other but also setting limits on the other's demands.

Couvares concentrates on the interaction of plebeian leisure-time pursuits, elite cultural reform institutions, and the rise of commercial mass culture in Pittsburgh between the 1880s and the first decade of this century. While describing the very real conflict between plebeian tastes and values and the cultural onslaught of middle-class reformers, Couvares minimizes the impact of the Carnegie libraries, public parks, and other institutions on immigrant workers' lifestyles.

The Fones-Wolf essay takes up in the early twentieth century a problem which has been carefully analyzed for the nineteenth — the place of evangelical Christianity in the working-class movement. Employing the rhetoric and conversion methods of evangelists, *Labor Forward* promoters launched 150 local, revival-style organizing drives and found an enthusiastic response among some American Federation of Labor (AFL) officials and craft unionists. The authors explain the latter's response in terms of the cultural resonance between reform-oriented, nineteenth-century evangelical Christian values and those of conservative craft unionism. The AFL officials' enthusiasm had more to do with the prospects for mobilizing a popular base of support to counter the rising tide of socialism within the federation.

The emphasis in several of the essays on the workplace and what might be called the "politics of production" suggests a problem which has long concerned labour radicals but has been taken up by historians only in recent years. While many of these essays employ this theme as a backdrop, Sue Benson's on early-twentieth-century department store clerks, Nelson Lichtenstein's on auto workers during World War II, and Steve Fraser's on the Amalgamated Clothing Workers develop the shop-floor perspective most fully.

Benson's case study represents an important advance because of the group she observes. It seems to be more satisfying for labour historians to study miners, steelworkers, or women factory operatives, but it is essential that we learn more about clerical, retail, and service workers if we are ever to get a comprehensive picture of twentieth-century working-class life. Unfortunately, Benson's approach has some problems. Because it lacks a systematic analysis of changes in the industry and labour force during the rather long period under consideration (1890-1940), the essay has a timeless quality about it. Did the department store work force experience the sort of social transformation that we find in so many other North American industries? If so, what impact did this have on the work culture which Benson carefully describes?

It is precisely in the relationship between the recomposition of the Detroit working class and the changing character of shopfloor organization and behaviour that Lichtenstein makes his greatest contribution. As a result of conscription and a dramatic expansion of the auto work force during the conversion to war production, the union-conscious veterans who had created the United Automobile Workers (UAW) in the late 1930s were swamped by a massive influx of inexperienced workers, including many married women and black and white migrants from the south and midwest. At the same time, continu-

ing labour shortages and the ever-increasing demand for more production placed management in a weak bargaining position. Lichtenstein adds to this volatile mixture a complicated ideological dimension — strong patriotism on the part of most production workers and factional conflicts among the political activists. The result, he argues, was a shop floor movement which was at once very militant and politically inchoate. Radicals proved unable to build an effective opposition to Reuther's machine which assumed control of the UAW in the post-war era.

Leon Fink's essay on the politics of the Knights of Labor and Josh Freeman's on New York's Irish transport workers develop the themes of political ideology and organization most fully. Fink rejects the concept of a clear-cut divergence between "practical" trade unionism and what too many labour historians have seen as the utopian reformism of labour politics. The Knights, Fink argues, recognized no such distinction and based their critique of industrial capitalism in large part on traditional republican views.

Republicanism also played a large role in the upsurge among Irish Catholic transport workers which provided the impetus for the foundation of the Transport Workers' Union of America (TWU) during the 1930s. Here an alliance between the Communist Party and the left-wing Irish Republican Army (IRA) veterans and sympathizers provided not only a core of organizers but also a crucial entrée into the tightly-knit Irish-American neighbourhoods and cultural institutions in Brooklyn and the Bronx. The traditional hostility of many clergy to radical republicanism reduced the conservative influence of the Catholic church, while the involvement of the IRA in union activity made an otherwise apolitical audience more receptive. Freeman's argument that there was an important connection between republicanism and union activism is quite persuasive, but his

analysis is political rather than explicitly ideological. He is careful to delineate factions, alliances, and strategies, but the precise connection in transport workers' minds between republican ideas and values on the one hand and those of radical unionism on the other is never entirely clear.

The best essays relate all three of the collection's themes to an analysis of the changing character of industrial capitalism. Against the backdrop of small-scale manufacturing in early nineteenth-century New York, Sean Wilentz analyzes republican artisan festivals to demonstrate the re-articulation by both workers and employers of older political ideas in the form of class perceptions. In the best traditions of British and French labour historiography, Wilentz employs rhetorical analysis to argue that it was the growing disparity between their republican ideals and industrial reality — not simple economic self-interest — which motivated journeymen militants.

In a companion essay on the "Origins of the Sweatshop" in mid-nineteenth-century New York, Christine Stansell demonstrates a tight fit between the status of women in the family and as outworkers in the flooded metropolitan labour market. "Under the pressures of early industrialism," she writes, "family labor became both the means by which women met their own household needs and the instrument of their exploitation within the work force; to put it another way, it was the source of both respectability and alienation." (91) The lack of organization among women was as much a product of the patriarchal family as of the labour market. Their identification with children and the home rather than with other workers in their trades made organization more difficult than it was among male artisans. Thus, while the image of female outworkers being peripheral to the social relations of production was certainly wrong, it persisted, enhanced by the daily

experience of both household and waged work.

In his elegantly conceived and executed piece on the Amalgamated Clothing Workers (ACW), Steve Fraser describes the "new unionism" of the World War I years and early 1920s as a partial solution to the general crisis of legitimacy in the early twentieth century. "How was it possible," Fraser asks, "to restore managerial authority, regulate the marketplace, and redistribute wealth, while preserving the formal institutional framework of a democratic polity." (213-4) The new unionism provided corporatist reformers with a "laboratory of social experimentation" for the sorts of innovations which were eventually codified under New Deal legislation in the 1930s. What Fraser contributes to this scenario is a view of it from the shop floor. The central problem for business people and union officials pushing the concept of co-management, for example, was the need to formalize and institutionalize informal workshop organization and activity and, in the process, to shift authority from rank-and-file leaders to national union officials. But this quest for a "rule of law" ran head on into what Fraser calls "chronic guerilla warfare on the shop floor." (224) The Amalgamated's patchwork ethno-culture of union politics complicated the effort still further. The virtue of Fraser's approach is that it brings the broadest questions concerning the structure and strategies of businesses and unions, the role of the state, and the clash of political ideas into the context of the distinctive work culture of the garment workers.

The editors themselves acknowledge a few gaps in the collection, reflecting perhaps weak spots in labour history as a field. None of the essays deal with black workers, and immigrants fare little better. Freeman and Fraser at least consider ethnicity as a complex variable, facilitating class identification and organization for Irish transport and Jewish needle

trades workers. But the relationships between ethnic and class consciousness, when it is considered at all, remains one-dimensional in the other essays.

Still, the general impression one gets about U.S. labour history from this collection is just how rich a field of scholarship it is and just how far we have come within the last generation.

James R. Barrett
North Carolina State University

James Green, ed., *Workers' Struggles, Past and Present: A "Radical America" Reader* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press 1983).

ACCORDING TO James Green, the journal *Radical America* was founded in 1967 to "explore past radical movements and draw lessons the New Left could use in its own organizing efforts." *Workers' Struggles, Past and Present* is a selection of those explorations, twenty-one articles which attempt to utilize the past for the present. But Green's formulation oversimplifies the task. Herbert Gutman has recently challenged the idea that the value of studying history might lie in "practical lessons" for today: "Class and social relations are constantly changing. That is why there is no direct 'lesson' learned out of — say — Homestead." [Interview in *Radical History Review* 27 (1983), 216] What kind of historical knowledge, then, can be of use to labour activists? Of what use can it be? And have the contributors to *Radical America* had a clear sense of those uses?

Workers' Struggles is divided into three thematically organized sections, each beginning with a comparatively general article published in the early years of the journal. All three introductory articles are dated and all have flaws which may have been less noticeable when they were first published. But Green has managed to follow each of these flawed, dated, general statements, with a series of more

recent, more specific, more empirically grounded articles, which vindicate the earlier attempts at least by showing the importance of their basic themes.

Part I deals with the issues of scientific management, skill, race, and sex as important factors in "the struggle for control" of the workplace. It begins with Harold Baron's four-century survey of the political economy of black labour in America. Baron shows how the peculiarities of American racism have interacted with the demands of world capitalism to shape the conditions of black labour. This 1971 essay ends hopefully, noting the resurgence of revolutionary black nationalism in the Dodge Revolutionary Union Movement and the League of Revolutionary Black Workers.

The outlook from 1983 could not be more different. Not only has the political landscape shifted drastically, but historical scholarship has had a rich twelve years which irrevocably date Baron's article. Immanuel Wallerstein, Edmund Morgan, Eugene Genovese, Herbert Gutman, Jonathon Wiener, and Leon Litwack, to name only a few, have contributed massive studies and sparked new debates on the issues which Baron skims summarily. That he touches so many themes which would be the focus of scholarship in the 1970s and early 1980s is an indication, however, of Baron's perspicacity.

Mary Frederickson picks up some of these themes in "Four Decades of Change: Black Workers in Southern Textiles, 1941-1981." She follows the transformation of rural blacks into industrial workers, the contribution of their culture in making the transition, and their responses as southern, black, industrial workers. This juxtaposition of older and newer articles, repeated in each section, is what makes the collection work well. It is irrelevant that neither Baron nor Frederickson offers a usable strategic "lesson" for today's workers.

George Rawick's 1969 article, "Working-Class Self-Activity" intro-

duces Part II, "Organizing the Unorganized." Rawick uses a discussion of labour during the 1930s to demonstrate workers' accomplishments in spite of industry, government, and the unions. "The genuine advances of the working class were made by the struggle from below, by the natural organization of the working class. . . ." (147) Rawick's treatment of spontaneous worker activity and "natural" working-class organization introduces a theme which is prevalent throughout the rest of the book. His critique of union relationships to the state is insightful, notwithstanding the stilted parting exhortation for a government of workers' councils.

Rawick's focus on the activity of workers, as distinct from the institutions which claimed to represent them, anticipated much that was to follow in the "new working-class history," of which Roslyn Feldberg's "Union Fever: Organizing Among Clerical Workers, 1900-1930," is a fine example. Feldberg challenges widely held assumption about the culture of women workers by exploring their confrontation with a male-dominated and sexist trade union movement. The major problem for the Women's Trade Union League in helping to organize clerical workers was not overcoming resistance of women workers to unionism, but overcoming the trade union movement's resistance to women.

In succeeding articles, Manning Marable unravels the contradictions in A. Philip Randolph's rightward-moving politics, while Staughton Lynd bemoans the lost opportunity for an independent labour party. Both concentrate on organizations and their leaders — neither has fully taken up Rawick's challenge to focus on the activity of workers themselves. A final article, a brief how-to document on organizing against sexual harassment, is an interesting addendum to Mary Buzarick's fine piece on the history of sexual harassment in Part I.

Part II opens with Stan Weir's general

but extremely provocative piece on the dynamics of bureaucratization in unions. Nelson Lichtenstein follows with the story of the CIO during World War II, again giving empirical substance to the more general introductory article. The next seven articles deal with the more recent past — the 1960s and 1970s — but pursue similar themes, contrasting the needs, desires, resistances, and adaptations of workers with crusty, conservative, and self-serving union bureaucracies.

David Montgomery's final article, "The Past and Future of Workers' Control," ties the recent past to the more distant history, offering perhaps the best demonstration of the uses of labour history where there is no tactical "lesson" to be learned. Sketching the history of the struggle for control since the late nineteenth century, Montgomery shows how, over time, workers struggled with varying degrees of success under a staggering variety of conditions, all of which were quite different from those of today. If, as Herbert Gutman asserts, the central value of historical understanding is not in providing "lessons" but in helping us realize that the apparently given conditions of our lives are in fact historical contingencies, then Montgomery is right on target.

Ironically, the essays in *Workers' Struggles* which are aimed most at teaching "lessons" are often the least historically revealing in Gutman's sense. The collection as a whole frequently moves beyond the "lessons from the past" orientation, but it might have moved still further — for instance in to the early nineteenth century — had the editors of *Radical America* maintained a consistently broad sense of the uses of the past.

Peter Seixas

University of California at Los Angeles

Philip S. Foner, *Fellow Workers and Friends: IWW Free-Speech Fights as Told by Participants* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press 1981).

OF ALL THE so-called syndicalist movements that seemed to erupt in the industrial countries around 1905, perhaps the most impressive was in the United States. Rather than being just a phase in the development of the main national labour organization, the American version assumed a particular institutional form — The Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) — and managed to survive as a separate and increasingly viable force until decimated by local and federal authorities during and after World War I. But for all its syndicalist and international revolutionary rhetoric, what was the IWW really all about? Was it not the product of conditions unique to the United States and particularly to its western half? Moreover, was it not, before its decline, well on its way to becoming an ordinary trade union, that is, an instrument for raising wages and improving working conditions? Philip Foner, who devoted the third volume of his *History of the Labor Movement in the United States* to the IWW, provides material for probing these questions in this collection of original reports of the famous "Free-Speech Fights."

Free speech fights erupted when wobblies engaged in illegal street speaking in western towns. When arrests were made, others came from far and near to carry on the meetings, seek arrest in turn, and flood the jails. Often they would get no further in their speeches than "fellow workers and friends," hence the title of this book. Canadians will be interested in the fact that the first reported free speech fight occurred in Toronto in 1906, although Foner can find no trace of it in local papers. The struggles recorded in this book were in Montana, Oregon, Washington, California, Colorado, and as far east as the Dakotas and even Missouri, all between 1909 and 1916. Some of the pieces are articles from contemporary IWW publications similar to those republished in Joyce Kornbluh's *Rebel Voices*, but others are reports sent by participants to IWW leaders. They were in turn for-

warded to the Industrial Relations Commission (the Walsh Commission), and are now in the National Archives in Washington.

What strikes me in reading these accounts is the geographical setting: the migrant nature of the work in lumber and harvesting, the vast distances travelled. One group of wobblies, for instance, travelled from Washington state down through Oregon to the free speech fight at Fresno, California. Clearly they enjoyed a rich community life of their own, but it was detached from the rest of society. It is important to remember in this respect that the more settled miners in the west, whose organization, the Western Federation of Miners, was the principal generator of the IWW in 1905, had withdrawn by 1908. Outside Australia, where the IWW also gained a foothold, there is nothing to compare with the American setting.

Again, one is struck by the power exercised by local business people organized into vigilante groups, and by the relative absence of independent authority. The class struggle seems blatantly raw. Elsewhere the state might work on behalf of capitalists; in western America it seemed powerless before the vigilantes. One survivor of the struggle in Kansas City claimed he would remain a British subject after his experience with American "freedom." One searches almost in vain for a sense of working-class opinion outside the IWW. True, there is the odd account of ordinary people trying to get food to prisoners, or of an occasional railway guard who aided the travellers; but it is the paucity of such incidents that is most evident. Solidarity comes from common work experience; presumably wobblies were regarded by most locals as outsiders not worth getting into trouble over.

On the surface, the free speech fights seemed far from the world of collective bargaining and trade union organization. Participants seem more interested in overthrowing the "system" or in fighting over

principles. Workers on the boat from Seattle to Everett, where the bloodiest conflict occurred in 1916, sang the "English transport workers' strike song" — a neat identification with the international working class. Yet behind it all there is a concern with more mundane matters. Street speaking started in the first place because it seemed the best way to contact migrant workers — there were no labour halls. The campaign at Spokane started as a protest against the crooked agencies that were charging migrants fees for directing them to non-existent jobs. The most telling report in the book was written by a banker, no less, in Minot, North Dakota, who tried to convince townspeople that the wobblies were only seeking a stable trade union organization that would benefit the whole community (he lost his job). Perhaps the fact that Haywood and others sent such reports on to the Industrial Relations Commission, which was attempting to find a solution to labour violence, shows a certain ambivalence towards the "system."

Nevertheless, these reports show that the energy spent on the free speech fights far outweighed any benefits in terms of organization. Reading them, one can understand why leaders like William D. Haywood became increasingly frustrated by their futility (as well as the sporadic nature of strike activity in the east). Accordingly, after 1916 Haywood sought to centralize the IWW and to control its local activities. For his trouble he was accused by former colleagues of trying to "respectabilize" the wobblies. He, of course, denied the charge, just as he told the Industrial Relations Commission that accommodation between labour and capital was impossible. Yet, before the war-time onslaught, migrant workers were already beginning to improve their position as a result of organization on the job. Conceivably, CIO-style mass unionism could have emerged.

The argument about the futility of the free speech fights is not, of course, made

by the authors of these reports, nor is it pressed by the editor. On the contrary, Foner argues in his introduction that these struggles "did build within the movement a spirit of unity in action," and that they were "significant in cementing solidarity among IWW, Socialist Party and AFL members." However, in the light of research by scholars like Cletus E. Daniel and Glen J. Broyles (*Labour History*, 1978), who severely question the tactics of the IWW, this book provides useful material for a reconsideration.

W.M. Dick
Scarborough College
University of Toronto

Arnold Shankman, ed., *Ambivalent Friends: Afro-Americans View The Immigrant* (Wesport, CT: Greenwood Press 1982).

UNTIL HIS DEATH following a long illness in 1983, at just 37 years of age, Arnold Shankman was professor of history at Winthrop College in North Carolina. For most of his sadly short career, it seems that Shankman was both intermittently ill and enormously prolific. He published two books, a co-authored archival guide, and some 40 articles in Afro-American, native American, Jewish, immigration, and Civil War history. He was a man whose plans were apparently as large as his energy. The work under review here was intended to be the first of two volumes analyzing a significant, yet largely unexplored subject: Afro-American attitudes towards immigrants in the years between 1880, the inception of the second wave of mass immigration to the United States, and 1935, in the depths of the Great Depression. The volume he completed covers the relations between blacks and Chinese, Japanese, Mexicans, Jews, and Italians, and is restricted to the analysis of opinions based on intergroup contacts forged in the South and Southwest. The second vol-

ume, which was in progress at the time of the author's death, was intended to analyze the same subject matter for the northern states.

Ambivalent Friends is a short, competent book, which is written in an admirably matter-of-fact, confident style, and is based on a great deal of research in the black press and a wide variety of published sources. At the start of his research, he tells us, Shankman recognized the limitations of the black sources: the black press represented the views of a narrow higher status and intellectual segment of the Afro-American population, and we cannot assume its views are generalized throughout the race. As a result, one actually gets little sense here of daily, grass-roots interactions between ordinary people across the social boundaries of race and ethnicity; and while Shankman is able to tell us how representative attitudes are among editors, he cannot tell us how prevalent they are among blacks. Moreover, it is not always clear whether particular types of opinion correlate with other characteristics, such as racial ideology, so the various sources of particular attitudes or subgroups are not as fully understood as are the attitudes themselves.

Still this book is quite worthwhile. The author has done a fine job of placing black attitudes, which were frequently negative, and black-immigrant relations in the large historical context of the decline in the black political and social position that followed the collapse of Reconstruction. Voteless, segregated, impoverished, and victimized by mob violence in their native land, blacks faced a massive influx of foreigners, whose very presence in service work and southern and southwestern agriculture threatened their already insecure livelihoods, and whose degraded civil and socio-economic status was frequently still better and more rapidly improving than their own. Italians, Mexicans, Chinese, and Japanese, too, had governments to protect them during their years as aliens, while the state

was almost always an enemy of Afro-American rights. Under such circumstances, black attitudes reveal less about immigrants than about blacks themselves — their aspirations, ample fears, and frequent resentments that aliens, many of whom were non-white and non-Christian, were accorded rights denied Afro-Americans. Hence blacks were placed in an enormously difficult psychological position, in which an emotional and moral desire to empathize with similarly exploited or oppressed Chinese, Japanese, or Mexicans, for example, ran up against a certain situational bitterness and a not unreasonable competitive anxiety. Moreover, while blacks often held typical Euro-American cultural prejudices towards Third World immigrant peoples, for their part these same people not infrequently displayed their own degree of assimilation and Americanism by showing contempt for blacks, which certainly did not make empathy any easier to maintain. The greatest strength then of Shankman's analysis is the excellent job he has done of laying out the cunning of the social processes of a highly competitive and racist society in which the ostracized and relatively powerless were not only preyed upon from above, but set desperately against one another for the relatively few opportunities and resources to which they were given access.

Shankman also understands that by defensively adopting the nativistic attitudes of American whites and by distancing themselves from other pariah groups, blacks not only could rationalize their attitudes in the name of self-preservation, but could convince themselves, perhaps only semi-consciously, that they were strengthening their claims to equality by forging a basis for bonds with the powerful, racist majority. Such self-interested strategizing, however, could at times in certain hands become quite explicit. Fearing that southern Italians particularly might replace blacks as cotton plantation labour, Booker T.

Washington emerged in the 1890s as a powerful spokesman against immigrant labour. One of his strongest claims before audiences of white capitalists was the promise that, in contrast to foreigners, blacks were loyal to their country and employers, not prone to strike, and opposed to labour unions. Yet, although the author's sources cannot help us much to understand the situation, what we know about interethnic and interracial contacts at the grass-roots level is that opinions such as Washington's did not necessarily take hold among black workers. After all, they joined unions with native white and foreign coal miners and iron workers in southern foundries and coalfields when given the opportunity to do so.

The strongest individual section of this book is that which deals with blacks and southern Jews, whose concentration in commerce made them an insignificant economic threat to blacks, while guaranteeing at the same time unequal and potentially conflicting socio-economic contacts with them. This relationship was made all the more complex, on the one hand, by black religious and social anti-Semitism and Jewish racism, and on the other hand, by black admiration for Jewish achievement in adversity and Jewish identification with black suffering. On this subject, which was close to Shankman's heart as a Jew who wished to check the steady decline of current relations between the two groups, he wrote with balance and restraint. Yet a sense of moral purpose comes quietly through nonetheless. For this strong but unpretentious commitment as well as for his abilities as a scholar, we should be sad to have lost Arnold Shankman.

David A. Gerber
State University of New York
at Buffalo

David Milton, *The Politics of U.S. Labor from the Great Depression to the New Deal* (New York: Monthly Review Press 1982).

DAVID MILTON'S BRIEF study of the CIO's emergence in the 1930s combines analysis with advocacy of social change, in the best tradition of radical scholarship. *The Politics of U.S. Labor* offers a synthetic view of industrial unionism as well as a striking message for contemporary labour and the left. Unfortunately, this timely treatment too often glosses over unpleasant historical and political questions, straying into potentially irresponsible romanticism.

The Great Depression, Milton claims, witnessed the forging of a social bargain between capital, labour, and state which has endured to recent days. Roosevelt channeled and ultimately defused left-led social revolt through New Deal programmes. In violent and persistent struggle whose outcome was "neither automatic nor inevitable," American workers yielded "the historic and classic working-class objective of political and economic control over factories and the system of production" (9-10) in favour of independent organization and economic gain. Economism itself was a hard-won goal, but one which effectively drew the teeth of the American working class. "Having tamed labour, the corporate and political elites of the 1980s apparently believe they can now repudiate the social bargain." Milton asserts, "without recreating the class conflict that bargain was designed to resolve." (13) A revitalized workers' movement is the answer. The modern politics of United States labour must be militant, "a new movement of historically aware Americans," drawing on the lessons of the past, "geared to an advanced struggle which eluded the great working class movement of the thirties." (167)

The key to labour's counterattack, in Milton's view, is radical industrial unionism like that which birthed the CIO. Things seemed bleak too in 1933. Roosevelt had no labour policy to speak of when he took office, and the comfortable bureaucracy of the AFL showed little

concern for the mass of American workers throttled by depression. Labour's upsurge in 1933-4 was a social revolt of the rank and file, led by socialists of all stripes, recognizing that workers could hope for no more than they could seize by their own power on the picket line. Milton examines this radical backlash from spontaneous strikes in textiles, trucking, mining, and shipping, to culmination in the CIO's triumphs in the rubber, auto, electrical, and steel industries. By 1935, industrial unionism had established itself as a "national institution" (88) which government and business could no longer ignore. Economic downturn, internal conflict, state power, and world war ultimately checked these gains, preventing labour's political organization; by the 1950s capital was able to demand productivity increases to offset wage hikes. In post-war America, the CIO was "fully incorporated into a reconstructed political economy on terms dictated by the state." (162) Today, de-industrialization and union-busting have shattered even this miserable Keynesian bargain. Yet the "record of the losers" (8) remains interesting to Milton both for how much was achieved, and for the message it provides to contemporary workers to take the future into their own hands.

Milton's analysis of American labour in the depression decade will seem familiar to most readers. It offers little original material or insight, relying heavily on a handful of secondary accounts. In itself, this is hardly a problem; brilliant works by Bert Cochran, Irving Bernstein, Melvyn Dubofsky, and Warren Van Tine offer a firm foundation. But Milton makes only a feeble effort at mining primary materials, and seems wholly unaware of important recent scholarly studies. James Prickett's work on the North American aviation strike is neglected in favour of Wyndham Mortimer's aging memoir. Roger Keeran's views on communist influence in auto remain unbalanced by Nelson Lichtenstein's caveats. When the entry

"Melvyn Dubofsky" appears in the index more frequently than "Wagner Act," something is wrong. This synthesis is brief and generally sound — well suited to undergraduates or a lay audience — but specialists will find here little challenge and less innovation.

The sloppy text of *Politics* must prove especially frustrating to all readers. Milton's confusion of Brophy and Brody, his reference to the "International Workers of the World," his claim that 11,000 striking workers in 1933 represented the greatest strike wave since 1921, and his appeals to "John J. Lewis" carelessly weaken the book's usefulness for a general audience. The profusion of common typographical errors is characteristic of Monthly Review Press's fine work.

If Milton's analysis is a little shopworn, and his presentation a little lazy, his prescriptions are more than a little disturbing. There is no reason to believe that his formula of spontaneity and syndicalism could have worked better in the 1930s, or that it might succeed in the 1980s. The CIO did not mistakenly shrink back from politics to economism, as this book claims, nor did the working class strike any sort of "social bargain" with capital. Such concepts reveal a voluntarist liberalism bearing no kinship to the radical perspective *Politics* touts. The CIO never aimed at fundamentally altering social relations of production, and as the author admits, John L. Lewis never developed a concrete strategy or programme for the independent political movement Milton suggests was just around the corner. Radicals likewise achieved economic victories, as in the Minneapolis truckers' strike, by muting their left-wing politics. Where political and economic insurgency went hand-in-hand, as the Gastonia textile strike, or the Kentucky coal wars (which this book surprisingly ignores) demonstrate, capital's power smashed progress on both fronts. The American working class did not reject or bargain away radical politics in the 1930s; capital remained

firmly in the saddle throughout, and prevented such a choice from ever being offered.

As Milton ably shows, the lords of production have only tightened their grasp on power over the past half-century. Relations of power, not will or choice, not some idealist "social bargain," have characterized class relations during this period. In the end, this book is flawed by a cancerous contradiction: Milton knows that "dispositions of power" (10) necessarily determine the politics of United States labour, yet he weeps over social "bargains" and missed opportunities, urging contemporary workers to correct past mistakes. This is an errant formulation and an impossible demand. As Jeremy Brecher has recently shown, drastically changed conditions of labour have made the industrial unionism Milton champions obsolete. More suitable, as he suggests, may be a community-based strategy such as that used by the Knights of Labor. All advocates of social change, nevertheless, need to test their appeals by Marx's bitter reminder to the socialist movement of a century ago, that under capitalism, "L'argent n'a pas de maître." The consequence of that dictum for working people must be grinding and bleak. But those who fail to examine the past or present rigorously, trading careful analysis for wishful thinking, can only betray the interests they seek to promote.

Lawrence T. McDonnell
Johns Hopkins University

Nelson Lichtenstein, *Labor's War at Home: The CIO in World War II* (New York: Cambridge University Press 1983).

WHEN THE UNITED States entered World War II in December 1941, the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) had taken great strides towards the unionization of mass production industry. Nevertheless, significant gaps remained in such older industries as steel, and new ones that were

expanding because of war production, such as aircraft. The leaders of the CIO unions were confronted with some difficult problems. On the one hand, they wanted to support the war effort completely (they gave an unconditional no-strike pledge without consulting their membership) and they needed the sympathy and support of federal government agencies to preserve and extend their unions. On the other hand, they needed to discipline and control their rank and file, a hugely expanding work force that became more and more militant as the war went on. By the end of the war, wildcat strikes had reached record levels.

The war that Lichtenstein writes about was in essence a two-front war. It was a war against right-wing attacks on the unions by government and industry. And it was a war against their own rank and file. In documenting this period Lichtenstein is filling an important need in American labour history. He shows the tremendous speed-up in the process of bureaucratization of the CIO unions. Union leaders became intimately entwined with government, serving on and lending credence to government boards which effectively froze pay scales, limited worker mobility, and disciplined militants through firings, drafting into the military, and other forms of harassment.

The National War Labor Board (like the National Defense Mediation Board that preceded it) was totally unconcerned with the democratic rights of union members. It pressed for discipline and control over the work force and greater productivity. The author cites the response of William Davis of the NWLB to the question from Roger Baldwin of the American Civil Liberties Union in 1943 whether the board recognized the right of union members to organize against the policy of their union leadership. "Davis replied that the board did not." (181) Union spokespeople sitting on these boards either went along with these restrictions or provided *pro forma* opposition for the record. In

return they received maintenance of membership clauses in their contracts and were able to extend union organization in defence industries. The role of unions became very much like unions today in the Soviet bloc: representatives of government policy to the workers rather than representatives of workers to government and employers.

Lichtenstein spends some time describing the growing numbers of wildcat strikes in the auto, steel, and rubber industries. It would be helpful to compare this experience with events in such industries as electrical and farm equipment where communist-dominated unions held sway. Were unions with communist supporters in their leadership, who were the most uncritical supporters of the no-strike pledge and the Roosevelt government, more or less successful than the others in limiting wildcat strikes?

The author also discusses something he calls the social ecology of shopfloor conflict. The information he presents is important and useful, but his analysis is rather weak. The book records the huge influx of women, blacks, and southern whites into the big industrial unions. But Lichtenstein does not think much of them. "Apathy toward the unions and disaffection with union leaders were thus dual components of working class consciousness during the war." (74) The increasingly militant job actions, he complains, "lacked the overall union-building context that had given such prewar strikes a more consistently progressive character." (127) At the same time he notes that "the issue in these strikes was chiefly the control of production and maintenance of discipline." (121) And also that the strikes "struck a blow at the myth of a common national interest and undivided purpose so important to the ideology of the existing union leadership and the effective prosecution of total war." (202) One gets the distinct impression that Lichtenstein judges working-class consciousness essentially by the degree that workers sup-

port unions as institutions. He dismisses the struggle for control of production on the shopfloor and the massive confrontations with the state and the official ideology as apparently minor, or, at least not as "progressive" as union building. The strikes were almost all short "quickies." But the reason for that was the backwardness and hostility of the leaders and the government, not the backwardness of the workers, who could only use the tactics that were available to them.

Lichtenstein has some valuable things to say about the corporatist philosophy of many of the Catholic CIO leaders, influenced by the social doctrines of the Catholic church. This is a line of thought that would be worth following: how much of the seemingly progressive and social unionism of the CIO was in reality a democratic statist version of the corporate state of Mussolini and the Church? There were times during the war when the anti-statist tradition of the AFL and of John L. Lewis put them leagues ahead of the CIO in fighting to preserve workers' gains against business and government attack.

The book makes clear that the anti-democratic tendencies of the war years were continuations of earlier developments. The massive intervention of the government in labour relations during the war, however, vastly intensified that process. By the war's end the CIO unions were much closer to the rigid, authoritarian, one-party states that they are today. The massive legal strike wave of the immediate post-war period (1945-6) was used by the union leadership to let workers blow off the accumulated steam of militancy and to restore the unions, once again, to the effective leadership of the membership. I believe Lichtenstein underestimates the extent of the gains made in these strikes, but his judgement that ultimately they served to continue the process of bureaucratization seems valid.

This book is an important contribution to American labour history. It deals with a period that has been often distorted by the

myth of American worker dedication to war production and by the tendency of authors sympathetic to the Communist Party to boycott the period altogether. Hopefully, it will encourage others to dig even deeper into the war years.

Martin Glaberman
Wayne State University

Arnold R. Hirsch, *Making the Second Ghetto: Race and Housing in Chicago, 1940-1960* (New York: Cambridge University Press 1983).

CHICAGO HAS LONG occupied a special place in the ranks of American cities: it was there that social scientists invented the study of the modern city in the early twentieth century; it was their laboratory. Their city, as they interpreted it, served as a model for measuring social trends elsewhere in urban America. Now, in *Making the Second Ghetto*, Arnold R. Hirsch argues that Chicago's handling of the black housing issue from 1940 to 1960 provided the model that other cities adopted in addressing the problem. Hirsch chronicles the development of public programmes and management tools that were aimed at controlling the territorial expansion of Chicago's growing black population. These methods, he suggests, provided the legal framework for federal legislation on housing and urban renewal used throughout the nation.

The years from 1940 to 1960 marked the establishment of the "second ghetto," differing from the first black ghetto established between 1890 and 1930 in its size, in the chronology of events contributing to it and in its isolation from the rest of the urban area. The years encompassed by Hirsch were set apart from previous ghetto growth by the 1930s, a period of decreased immigration from the south and of little territorial expansion of black residential areas within the city. World War II brought a new generation of hands to the factories and the virtual end of residential

construction, creating a severe housing shortage felt by black Chicago more harshly than white Chicago. Hirsch asserts. The experience of war time heightened tensions that soon after the war's end erupted in "violence that gripped Chicago in . . . an ordeal by fire as the spatial accommodation of the races underwent adjustment." (67) But the city had changed since the 1920s, and the process of adjustment was to reflect in significant ways the differences in pre-Depression and post-war cities.

The second ghetto was a more populous place than the first, and even more significant was the relative increase in the proportion of the total population of the city of Chicago which it housed. The post-war rush to the suburbs by the middle class, aided by the administration of federal home mortgage programmes, contributed to the trend. The second ghetto, then, occupied a much larger territory than the old ghetto, and was more spatially isolated than previously, when it had been hemmed into a narrow zone abutting white districts on all sides. The process of claiming the new turf also set apart the post-war period from the pre-war years. Hirsch presents a convincing analysis that the expansion of black residential areas was not attendant on demolishing the legality of restrictive covenants, an act finally accomplished by the Supreme Court in 1948. Instead, he opts for an explanation more cognizant of, but not confined to, the relations of supply and demand: he notes the influence of an acute housing shortage in perpetuating old racial boundaries and of more affluent blacks whose "augmented financial resources . . . were crucial to the destabilization of old racial borders." (29) A dual housing market increased the risks but did not prevent the expansion. The significance of the 1948 court ruling was "to dispel the legal clouds that shrouded property already in black possession." (31)

Hirsch's focus is on the process of adjustment, on the way that white

Chicago reacted to ghetto expansion; it is not his purpose to assess the black community's search for housing or to examine in detail satisfaction of their needs. Rather, he explores the viewpoint of leading economic and social institutions in the city as they perceived their interests to be endangered by this process and as they sought the means to enforce their will. Likewise, he examines the reaction of white Chicagoans to the threat as they perceived it. Hirsch looks at the strategy of suppressing information on racial violence as a way to diminish the dangers it posed to order in the city. He declares it successful, and delves into the reasons for its success. Here he outlines the first principal difference between pre-Depression and post-war periods: the post-war violence was localized and focused on property — it was "commodity" rioting rather than "communal" rioting such as generated the racial murders of 1919. From the common person's reaction, Hirsch turns our attention to the institutions: to the strategies to preserve their interests adopted by leading economic institutions in the Loop, and to the University of Chicago which, facing an imminent challenge to its immediate environment, undertook an independent invention of policies and programmes to protect its investment in its site and neighbourhood. The chapters on the strategies advanced by businesses in the Loop and administrators at the university are superbly conceived and argued essays on the interplay of public and private policies and their implementation.

In his chapters on the major institutions and their spatial influence, the truth of Hirsch's remark that he is writing in urban history or race relations, rather than in black history, is clearest. The rationale seems justifiable: in this urban setting the world the blacks made for themselves was territorially defined and administratively manipulated through legal contrivances that were not of their making. Hirsch set for himself the task of discovering how

race and housing issues were handled in a period of great challenge and change in Chicago by those who with power and influence could command the authority of institutions and governments. How partial is Hirsch's view of race and housing we cannot know until the perspective of the black community is more deeply examined. It is clear that Hirsch offers an interpretation which acknowledges the cultural singularity of the race issue. This first word offers us a fine analytical hammer that only awaits further use to test its seemingly great promise.

Peter G. Goheen
Queen's University

Herbert A. Applebaum, *Royal Blue: The Culture of Construction Workers* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston 1981).

THOSE OF US who teach courses in the anthropology of contemporary societies feel a need for more good ethnographies of work and workplaces suitable for undergraduates. Applebaum's contribution should have helped to fill this gap. It has many appealing features, but these are offset by such fundamental flaws that I, for one, will not adopt it. Its flaws, however, raise some interesting questions about the nature of "insider" versus "outsider" participant-observation in the burgeoning field of the "anthropology of work."

Dr. Applebaum has combined studies in anthropology with a full-time career of more than twenty years in the construction industry. This ethnography is based specifically on observations of four major projects in western New York between 1974 and 1978, involving about a thousand labourers, journeypeople, foremen, and superintendents. He says this sample can be taken as representative of large, non-residential, unionized, construction workers in the United States. In brief, he argues that the technology and social organization of the American construction

industry generate certain conditions — craft-based labour-intensive work, high uncertainty, flexibility, low job security — that in turn lead to a specific occupational sub-culture among blue-collar construction workers. This sub-culture is characterized by, among other traits, absence of alienation, pride in craft and insistence on controlling the work process, a high degree of independence and autonomy, loose supervision and participatory decision-making about execution of tasks, camaraderie on and off job sites, all leading to a high degree of job satisfaction.

Let us point first to the appealing features of his account. The book is permeated by Applebaum's enthusiastic admiration of and respect for the people he has worked with. He has useful things to say about the intelligence, creativity, and skill manifested by these craftsworkers. His account is larded with vivid anecdotes and lengthy excerpts of salty conversation that give something of the flavour of a construction site. It is interspersed with poems and narrative that effectively supplement the more orthodox ethnography. It is informative on such matters as hiring procedures and work organization on the job site, which can facilitate ethnic (and gender) discrimination. It is clearly written, a virtue offset by repetitiveness.

Now for the flaws. Applebaum's enthusiasm for the workers, the industry, and the economic system of which it is a part, give the book a Panglossian sense of unreality that will immediately ring false to a perceptive undergraduate in the 1980s. His examination of the consequences of the social organization of the industry is superficial and uneven. He devotes a chapter to describing workers' attitudes to frequent accidents and deaths, but neglects the organizational factors contributing to the industry's dismal safety record. Quality problems are related only to worker errors, not management cost-cutting in a system based on

competitive bidding. His central thesis is that the American private enterprise, market-based organization of construction maximizes worker autonomy, an argument buttressed by an overly brief gratuitous comparison with communist China. In the course of his argument that construction workers do not experience alienation as factory workers do, because they own and use their own hand tools, he mistakenly states that Marx's theory of alienation is premised on the divorce of workers from their tools. Alienation through divorce of waged labourers from their *product*, he does not mention. Even though he notes that modern large-scale construction requires capital investment in power tools by the employing firms, he alleges that workers' independence is based in part on the ease with which they can quit and go into business for themselves! This alleged independence also stems, in his view, from hiring practices that make it possible for a skilled journeyman to quit and get another job easily. Thus at least some of the characteristics of this "sub-culture" appear to apply only in periods of economic prosperity. What he has to say about pride in craft and self-respect as "good providers" makes poignant reading in these days of massive unemployment among construction workers.

Applebaum has, like many anthropologists before him, fallen into the trap of describing as a "sub-culture" in a timeless "ethnographic present," behaviour and attitudes generated by historically specific contingent conditions. This stance may account for his almost total neglect of pressures towards technological change. With his background, he could have told us much of value as to why the construction industry appears to provide at least a partial exception to Braverman's thesis of "de-skilling" of craft work through the separation of planning and execution. Other accounts (for example, Reckman in Zimbalist, ed., *Case Studies in the Labor Process*, 1979) show that

construction has not been totally exempt from such changes. But such topics could not fit easily into the static structural-functional perspective Applebaum uses. In his view, "A successful project in construction benefits all those associated with it. The employer realizes his anticipated profit. . . . Men associated with the project are often rewarded with other work. . . ." (41) Trade unions, mentioned briefly, are described as fulfilling certain positive functions for construction firms. Why then are construction unions under heavy attack? If students are to give any credence to an anthropology of contemporary society, their texts must deal more effectively than this one does with the issues facing them in the real world.

This Panglossian outlook and its underlying structural-functional theoretical position are intimately related to the methodological problems noted above. Applebaum defines himself as a member of the group under study. (17) True, he has worked in the construction industry for many years as superintendent, project manager, project engineer, and in management, including the presidency of his own construction company. He does not tell us his precise relation to the people working on the four projects that provide the specific data base for this study, but clearly he was part of "management," a status conspicuously symbolized by colour and condition of hard hat. (24) Is this "insider" anthropology or not? His theoretical stance allows him to view himself as belonging to one harmonious group with the workers he so admires. Those of other theoretical persuasions cannot help but wonder about aspects of the workplace culture from which he, because of his structural position, would be barred. Does his view of little worker-boss differentiation reflect the actual consciousness of construction workers, or only subtle denial of access to those aspects of the workplace sub-culture that provide a defence against manage-

ment? The reader cannot tell.

Given the limitations of his position, Applebaum must be a very gifted ethnographer to have been able to give us this vivid, even if flawed and partial, account of these unionized construction workers. Let us hope that in future he uses his observational and literary gifts to give us an insider account of construction management, in a less constricting theoretical framework. If the anthropology of work is to fulfill its promise, we need to learn at least as much about what goes on in boardrooms as on construction sites and factory floors, and Applebaum is well placed to tell us.

Beverley Gartrell
Simon Fraser University

James E. Cronin and Carmen Sirianni, eds., *Work, Community and Power: The Experience of Labor in Europe and America, 1900-1925* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press 1983).

"THE AUTHORS GATHERED together in this volume seek to further the process of rethinking the interconnected (but not identical) record of labor and the left in this crucial period," says James E. Cronin in his introduction to this anthology. (11) "They are all influenced, in addition, by the new trends in historical and sociological writing" that are bringing into question the old idea that the working class in the West was successfully "integrated" into a new capitalist status quo in the early decades of the twentieth century. Among other things, the new methods of nineteenth-century social history, pioneered by E.P. Thompson, Eric Hobsbawm, and Charles Tilly, have raised questions about the real trajectory of working-class history in the twentieth. The contours of a new synthesis can be "glimpsed," Cronin believes, within this collection. By and large, these papers really do live up to Cronin's ambitious claim (especially when taken together, for

only a few of them are effectively comparative in scope, as such a synthesis would have to be). There are papers here by Cronin, Larry Peterson, David Montgomery, Mary Nolan, Gary Cross, Steve Fraser, Melvyn Dubofsky, William Rosenberg, and Carmen Sirianni (the other editor of the collection), covering Canada, the United States, western and central Europe, and Russia.

Two of the studies (Nolan's and Rosenberg's) are remarkable for applying the methods of intensive community and trade analysis developed by the nineteenth-century historians to the turbulent period following World War I. Nolan shows how the industrial structure, organization of work, and community geography of two Rhineland industrial towns shaped their divergent responses to the political crisis of 1918-19. Rosenberg examines the "democratization" of the Russian railroad industry in 1917, arguing that tension and discord among different strata of the diverse and status-conscious railroad labourers played into the hands of the Bolshevik Party. Both pieces strongly suggest that workplace democracy failed to emerge in the fluid period following the war because no one had the slightest idea of how, in concrete, practical terms, such a thing could be structured and also reconciled with both national and local needs.

Two papers on the United States labour movement during the war, by Montgomery and Dubofsky, complement each other nicely. Montgomery concentrating on the new strategies of labour unions, Dubofsky on the incoherent process of policy formation in the Wilson administration. From both pieces one senses the significance for the future of institutional experimentation during the war emergency. Fraser's piece on the Amalgamated Clothing Workers' collaboration with the Soviet Union to set up advanced clothing factories in Russia in the early 1920s speaks more of opportunities lost than of the charting of new courses for the future. For a few short

months, Lenin and the ACW's president Sydney Hillman were able to see eye-to-eye on the need to apply a democratized Taylorism in the workplace. Fraser nicely teases out the diverse circumstances of the age that made such a surprising meeting of minds briefly possible.

Organized labour's ability to respond creatively to Taylorism is also the theme of Cross's paper on the French *Confédération générale du travail*. And the rapid evolution of organizational forms in labour movements, seen in international perspective, is dealt with in both Peterson's and Sirianni's papers.

Sirianni's is, in fact, a fitting closing piece, attempting as it does — and with admirable competence — to apply a "resource mobilization approach" (255) to the shop-steward's and worker's council movements that spread across Europe between 1916 and 1921. Like Tilly or Theda Skocpal, Sirianni sees organizational achievement and the stability or instability of the state as the key variables determining the success or failure of these movements.

Taken as a whole these papers show how inadequate it is to explain the crisis of 1917-21 merely as a response to the exigencies of war. Instead it is necessary to see the underlying continuity with the developments of the pre-war decades. The new working class of the second Industrial Revolution came into its own as the war ended; new political and institutional adjustments, put off or suppressed earlier, were now finally conceded. Likewise, the ideological splits between Bolsheviks and Mensheviks, Spartacists and social democrats, wobblers and Wilsonians are shown to have extremely complex filiations with the life experiences, structures, and self-images of real working communities.

William M. Reddy
Duke University

Alan B. Campbell, *The Lanarkshire Miners: A Social History of their Trade*

Unions, 1775-1874 (Edinburgh: John Donald 1979).

ALAN CAMPBELL BEGINS his history of the coal miners of Lanarkshire, Scotland with their state of serfdom in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries; he concludes with the crisis within the miner's union in the 1870s. In the middle of the trade-union narrative he devotes several chapters to the comparative social history of two coal mining communities, Coatbridge and Larkhall. He does much more than tell the story of the colliers' unions; he explores the economy and society of the coalfields and proposes hypotheses whose significance goes far beyond Scotland.

Seventeenth-century Scottish colliers were bound to the coal at which they worked, both by law and by custom. This bondage was only slowly removed, partly (as Campbell shows) by the pressure of employers anxious to curb the colliers' collective activity by opening the labour market. Nineteenth-century colliers came to resemble urban craftsmen, developing a tradition of the "independent collier" in the context of workplaces still relying upon their skills and judgement. Lodges of "free colliers" encouraged a craft-like sense of camaraderie and exclusiveness. Relying more on the control of output and the size of the labour force than on industrial militancy, the trade union in the 1870s was forced to reconsider this legacy of the independent collier. The transition from serfdom to socialism, from sporadic protest to modern industrial unionism, was long and arduous; by the 1870s the traditions of the independent collier were only slowly receding before ideas of a more inclusive trade unionism. To Campbell, the "culture of the independent collier" was both a stimulus to early trade unionism and a brake on its later development.

Campbell concludes that "the greater the degree of occupational differentiation, of geographical mobility, of religious and

ethnic friction, and of industrial concentration, the weaker trade unionism among the colliers should be." (234-5) It is a provocative and stimulating conclusion, presented with an abundance of empirical evidence and a scrupulous regard for historical context. The growing international fraternity of coal-mining historians will long work with Campbell's finding, adapting it to various historical contexts and discovering in it nuances and implications that Campbell anticipates. (There is, for example, an argument to be made for the view that effective trade unionism cannot flourish without at least some level of industrial concentration, as the history of many rural coalfields in North America seems to suggest.) Historians of coal mining will find this monograph inspirational, one of the few indispensable books in the literature. Already they have learned from Campbell to go beyond the old stereotype of the coal miner as the simple proletarian whose traditions stemmed exclusively from brutalizing work in isolated communities; now they must absorb from him new insights into how coalfields are structured and how they differ from each other.

But the book's importance lies not just in its contribution to the history of coal miners. Social historians in general have much to learn from Campbell. They will find here stimulating studies of the Irish, of collective violence, of geographical mobility, and of the formation of collective mentalities. The author's modesty, which serves him so well in his straightforward and persuasive treatment of his material, has possibly prevented him from giving his excellent book a title which matches its contents. This is not really a study of trade unions; it is more, an all-encompassing view of a fascinating group of workers over more than a century. No Canadian library seriously interested in labour history should neglect this book, no matter how high its price.

Ian McKay
Halifax

Bill Williamson, *Class, Culture and Community: A Biographical Study of Social Change in Mining* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul 1982).

IN RECENT YEARS there has been a great deal of activity in England — rather less in Canada — directed towards the writing of what Raphael Samuel and others have called “people’s history”: “the major effort is to present historical issues as they appeared to actors at the time; to personalize the working of large historical forces; to draw on contemporary vocabularies; to identify the faces in the crowd,” in Samuel’s words. If the project’s stated aims are clear, the actual product often falls short of the mark. Notwithstanding the laudable eclecticism of the people’s history movement, there remains serious confusion as to what is required of the successful practitioner of the genre. Is he or she a good theoretical Marxist or a good feminist, a person with extensive workplace experience but no academic training, or someone with a scholarly taste for fresh readings of Dickens? Is people’s history *interdisciplinary*, or *anti-disciplinary*? No single model can, of course, encompass the wide range of possibilities but in Bill Williamson’s *Class, Culture, and Community* we have a strikingly good example of people’s history, albeit nowhere advertised as such, and written by a professional sociologist.

Williams structures what is essentially a local study of a small northeastern coal community around an intimate biography of a miner named James Brown (1872-1965), the author’s maternal grandfather. Born of rural stock the year of the formation of Joseph Arch’s National Agricultural Labourer’s Union, his own parents seeking escape from agricultural peonage in mining. Brown worked in two neighbouring collieries, Heddon and Throckley, from 1883 to 1935. He sired six children and actually raised several more, later to live in retirement among his extended family. Almost to the end he

occupied the row house that had been his home and garden for decades. But his most searing and significant memory was that of the General Strike and Miners’ Lockout of 1926. When the miners’ old nemesis, Winston Churchill, was buried amid great pomp and circumstance in London in 1965 the 92-year-old collier huffed, “Instead of a state funeral, they should of tipped the bugger over the bridge.” (154)

Not that James Brown was a radical. He viewed with skepticism, among others, Arthur Cook, communist secretary of the Miners’ Federation in the 1920s. The fact that Cook, staying overnight in Throckley with Brown’s friend Danny Dawson in 1926, had to scrounge for a change of shoes convinced Brown that “there was something not real” about the red Welshman. (189) Valuing above all a late nineteenth-century liberal-Methodist ethos of self-help and respectability, the independent-minded Brown would not permit his family to “beg” at soup kitchens in the 1920s, although he was always a loyal unionist, active cooperator, and occasional tippler. Pushed far enough he was capable of threatening to kill a policeman, who said he would knock the props out of the illegal bootleg mine that the Browns worked during the long strike in 1926. Brown lost a brother in the collieries, at age 23, and held no brief for the mine owners, even the relatively conciliatory management of the family-based Throckley Coal Company, whose development and policies are explored in typically well-researched digressions from the main biographical theme.

While few professional scholars are likely to have the kind of resources available to Williamson in this study, the author correctly points to biography as a “way of reconciling the work of the historians and sociologists” (1) in reconstructing working-class experience, and adding new dimensions to Labour History writ large. The institutions of the emerging labour movement in the northeast coal-

field Brown encountered, and in a small way helped to shape, provide a wealth of material that is of primary interest to labour historians. Here are viewed most clearly the strengths and weaknesses of the "people's history" approach. Brown's initiation into trade unionism, for example, Williamson shows, was not a traumatic or dramatic experience. In his community regular labour organization, forms of collective bargaining, and periodic strikes were, until the 1930s, a given fact of life. In this respect the northeast coalfield was particularly unique in the mining world of the 1870s and 1880s. Less favourably-situated miners (*vis à vis* markets, etc.) suffered more brutal exploitation. When Brown was only two years old, the miners in his district were represented by a man "of their own class" in parliament, Thomas Burt, miner-Liberal MP, raising the question begged repeatedly in Williamson's implicitly Marxist analysis: the northeast mining community's potential for what he calls "class politics" or "class consciousness."

Williamson insists that this potential was never realized, an argument as problematic as his sociological theorizing about the meaning of love and romance in the mining towns. (118, 135-6) Using James Brown as an example, he argues instead that the miners and their families lived "uncritically" and "in the present tense." The working people were indifferent towards socialism because they could not envision any other reality than the one they knew first-hand. (36, 49) Williamson does note that William Morris held a meeting at Ryton Willows, a place frequented by his grandfather, around the time of the 1887 coal strike. Williamson *should* have quoted what Morris wrote in his diary the next morning: "There is no doubt of the success... which we [the Socialists] have made in those northern mining districts." Is it the case that, in Williamson's words, "Self-help and consensus [Lib-Labism, which was no con-

sensus in late nineteenth-century England] politics are hardly the ingredients of class consciousness?" Exactly the opposite could be true, and probably was in the northeast coalfield. The plain fact is that miners of James Brown's generation lacked the education and leisure time to produce a cadre of William Morrises; that did not make them un-class conscious. In politics, for example, the superficial hegemony of the Liberal Party collapsed like a pack of cards before the Labour Party after 1900, a party ever more fervently supported by the miners after the 1914-18 war. Phillip Snowden said on the Tyneside in 1908 that, "The differences which had existed between the trade unionists and socialists were very small. In fact the trade unionists had been socialist all the time without knowing it." (72) And who in the end proved the better socialist, the renegade Phillip Snowden, or the humble collier, James Brown, whose friends met at the Union Jack Club during the depression to grimly mock the policies of Prime Minister "Ramsay Mac-Baldwin?" The miners were parochial and pragmatic, but their class instincts were true. They took "1926" as a call for retreat from the industrial battlefield, while "1931" inevitably spawned disillusionment and defeat for local labour. But as is explained here, the labour and anti-Fascist movements arose again in the 1930s; Brown lived to celebrate the tangible victories of the 1940s. Williamson's personal engagement with his subject is thus appropriately nuanced and understated. He does not fail to add, however, that from James Brown he learned to "hate the Tories." Without that lesson, it is doubtful that he would have bothered to write this book from which, on the whole, there is a great deal to be learned.

Allen Seager
Simon Fraser University

Joel H. Wiener, *Radicalism and Freethought in Nineteenth-Century Brit-*

ain: *The Life of Richard Carlile* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press 1983).

RICHARD CARLILE has long been regarded as one of the major figures in the history of working-class radicalism. Depicted by Edward Thompson as the foremost "showman of freethought" in Britain between the late 1810s and the mid-1820s — the first person to establish a really popular market for politically subversive attacks on "Priestcraft and Kingcraft" — Carlile has also been recognized by G.D.H. Cole and W.H. Wickwar among others as one of the outstanding warriors in the battle for political freedom of the press. Appreciated as the founder (in 1830) of the Rotunda (the only forum of its kind in Europe for the free expression of radical views), Carlile has been more recently applauded as an early advocate of birth control and as an exponent of the sexual emancipation of women.

Yet it is not difficult to understand why close study of Carlile has been shunned by labour historians. For the largest period of his adult life, from the mid-1820s until his death in 1843, Carlile devoted himself not to the atheism and republicanism of his early manhood, but to preaching an esoteric "allegorical Christianity," to lecturing on phrenology and investigating mesmerism, and to becoming one of the foremost authorities on freemasonry. More crucial to this avoidance is the fact that he increasingly argued against the schemes of Owenite socialists and Chartists, was always contemptuous of the labouring poor, and was strongly prejudiced against ethnic groups (gypsies, for instance, he believed were "not social beings" and should therefore be exterminated). Outspoken in his support of individualist competitive values, and essentially petty bourgeois in his response to most social and economic issues, Carlile was sometimes regarded by other radicals (for example, Cobbett) as "a tool, a poor half mad tool, of the

enemies of reform". Not surprisingly, therefore, historians of the left have preferred to allow partial panegyrics of Carlile (such as G.J. Holyoake's entry on him in the *Dictionary of National Biography*) to stand unmolested. Even with the greatest devotion to Carlile's historical context, it still demands an effort of will, if not a blindness, to try and give this man his due.

Making the effort, Professor Wiener has produced the first full account of Carlile's personal and political life — blemishes and all. In pleasantly short chronological chapters he documents Carlile's youth in Cornwall, his early ventures in London in hawking and publishing the "unstamped;" his heyday as the popularizer of Tom Paine and as the imprisoned editor of *The Republican* (1819-26); his involvement with birth control propaganda and the founding of the Rotunda; his legal, financial, physical, and marital struggles; and, perhaps most interesting of all, Carlile's less well-known intellectual and political wanderings during the last two decades of his life when he attempted, unsuccessfully, to retain a hold on the popular movement. Drawing upon the whole of Carlile's publications and most of the extant manuscript holdings, Wiener has made accessible much of the information hitherto only available at a secondary level through John Nott's 1970 Wisconsin Ph.D. thesis — a source curiously unacknowledged by Wiener.

The result is a thoroughly readable and reliable account of Carlile's life. The pity, though, is that the book is hardly more than this — hardly more, in fact, than an infilled version on Wiener's entries on Carlile in the *Biographical Dictionary of Modern British Radicals* and, with John Saville, in the latest volume of the *Dictionary of Labour Biography*. In spite of the book's title, Wiener fails to engage any serious re-thinking on the nature and content of early nineteenth-century radicalism. Nor does he seize the opportu-

nities wonderfully afforded by Carlile's biography on the one hand, to discuss in earnest the growth of freethought activity in the nineteenth century in relation to working-class consciousness and, on the other, to explore the wider cultural, social, and political significance of Carlile's drift from ultra-materialism to quasi-spiritualism. Too bounded by the conventions of traditional labour/political biography — above all by the need to justify the exercise on the grounds of Carlile's contemporary "stature," "influence," and "legacy" — this volume hardly compares with Jorwerth Prothero's study of the labour leader (and supporter of Carlile) John Gast, in which the exploration of the context figures uppermost. Better comparisons might be made with F.B. Smith's study of the artisan radical James Linton, or with F.M. Leventhal's study of the labour leader George Howell, although even these achieve a greater degree of historical generalization through their stress on the typicality of their subjects. Almost entirely gratuitous is Wiener's claim in his Epilogue for Carlile's "prototypicality" as a nineteenth-century working-class reformer. For the most part the book substantiates how increasingly removed Carlile was from the main stream of working-class politics, while the kinds of sources that might have been drawn upon to reveal Carlile as within an enduring radical-humanist tradition and a precursor to that tradition's subsequent popular spiritualist expression — sources such as Margaret Jacob's book on the anti-authoritarian occultism of eighteenth-century radical freethinkers, or Logie Barrow's work on late nineteenth-century plebeian spiritualism — are largely avoided by Wiener. Though J.F.C. Harrison's study of popular millenarianism is regarded by Wiener as "exemplary," the use he makes of it (like the use he makes of other non-explicitly political sources) is cursory. The implication is that Carlile's intellectual milieu and spiritual questing are somehow sec-

ondary and separable from his politics. The narrowness of this political bias seems hardly justified, since Carlile was not a political activist but, quintessentially, an "intellectual" radical whose political outlook was always mediated through his intellectual preoccupations.

Nonetheless, it would be wrong to suggest that there was anything appropriate about this book's appearance as unlucky volume number 13 in Greenwood Press's Contributions in Labor History. Wiener writes with skill and control, and he fully delivers the biographical goods he promises. The limitations of his promise will not prevent this volume from filling a long-standing gap in the record of working-class radicals.

Roger Cooter
University of Manchester
Institute of Science and Technology

Barbara Taylor, *Eve & the New Jerusalem: Socialism and Feminism in the Nineteenth Century* (London: Virago 1983).

BARBARA TAYLOR'S BOOK, *Eve & the New Jerusalem*, 1983 winner of the prestigious Isaac Deutscher Memorial Prize, reexamines British Owenism from a different perspective. By focusing primarily on its perception of the woman question, the author uncovers a serious attempt by the Owenites to understand nineteenth-century female oppression, and to search for ways to overcome it. While their theory and strategies were at the same time admirable, although inadequate, it seems to be the first attempt to integrate feminist ideas with socialism. Consequently, a vital contribution to our understanding of the independent aspirations of women within socialism at particular points in history is made.

Taylor seriously challenges Juliet Mitchell's argument that classical socialist theory, which subordinates women's liberation to socialism, was to

be found inadequate through the experience of *contemporary* radical feminist and socialist women. Rather, Taylor's study of the Owenite version of early socialist-feminist ideals, long ignored by historians, questions those beliefs that disconnect organized feminism from the socialist tradition. An understanding of *the role of the sexual division of labour in women's oppression* was not a twentieth-century insight but a nineteenth-century perception. Therefore, she makes an important contribution to the feminist-socialist debate. Later, as the socialist platform narrowed with the scientific politics of proletarian communism, the feminist issues of Owenism became obscured:

And those who later abandoned that ambition in the name of science and proletarian revolution did not thereby raise the socialist project onto a higher terrain, but contracted it around a narrow programme which left little space for women's needs or women's demands. (286)

Thus, *Eve & the New Jerusalem* offers a new view of the Owenite period. In the process, Taylor has destroyed myths, questioned traditional interpretations of Owenism, and provided a reunion between the past and current feminist demands.

Various proposals developed by ideologues of the Owenite movement were a consequence of their analysis of nineteenth-century female subjugation. Living in a society entrenched in a double moral standard, where wife beating was considered legal, most women had no legal right to enter into contracts or own property, to control their children, or to divorce without access to a large amount of money. (35) The Owenites demanded an end to private property, which prevented the female sex from attaining equality as long as status and power were derived from wealth, and the elimination of personal dependence. All living arrangements would be collectivized, including domestic labour; husbands' domination would thus lose its economic

base. Furthermore, industry would be socialized and family and bourgeois marriage abolished. (36-7)

Owenite feminism extended as well into the religious sphere. Liberating women from the rule of the patriarchal God, and thus from the fate and image of Eve, found expression in a type of counter-creed. Socialism or a communitarian future, where Owenite proposals were to be carried out, was represented as the "new Jerusalem." Taylor argues in an interesting and innovative chapter that the creation of a "religion of socialism" was a consequence of the struggle to supplant dominant social attitudes in the only vocabulary capable of moral and intellectual might:

Words, like ideas, are historical phenomena; they are also historical battlegrounds in which conflicting intentions and meanings struggle for space — and never more so than in this period of intense intellectual conflict. And if "the strength of the churches resides in the language they have been able to maintain," then the strength of their radical opponents derived from their ability to appropriate language and turn it to new psychological and political purposes. (159)

This concept clearly challenges traditional and accepted interpretations of millenarianism which label it as merely an irrational and prophetic religion. The Southcottian creed linked to the Owenite commitment to a revolution in gender relations defied conventional definitions of womanhood and manhood, according to Taylor. (171) For example, James Smith, member of a Southcottian faction and an Owenite ideologue, translated Southcottianism into the "doctrine of the woman."

The many female prophets of recent years, he claimed, were "not imposters, but forerunners of a great change of system" in which both these prophecies would be realized; they were *harbingers of the final great female messiah*, the Free Woman, whose Coming would not only fulfill the promises of Scripture but put an end to marriage, and introduce an entirely new era in the social and domestic system. . . . (168)

More concrete proposals centred around the subject of domestic labour. It was William Thompson, co-author of the *Appeal to One-Half the Human Race*, the first book outlining the socialist feminist position, who preached that adults of both sexes would perform housework in rotation, as well as share childcare and educational responsibilities. Robert Owen, leader of the movement, proposed in his *Book of the New Moral World*, a division of tasks based on age, not gender. Robert Cooper, a Manchester socialist, took his proposal further. Tasks and responsibilities would be assigned according to age and be performed equally by men and women. For example, his elaborate scheme identified children up to age 11 as performers of domestic labour; production would be carried out by adolescents between 12 and 21 years of age; and, education would be the onus of those between 25 and 35 years. (51-3) Finally, Catherine Barnby, co-founder of the Communist Church, tied women's oppression to housework and demanded its abolition:

... only when domestic labour was wholly collectivized would sexual equality become a practical possibility, since women would then become independent of men and able to engage in the "common labours" of society alongside them. (181)

Taylor demonstrates that the Owenite analysis of female inequality extended to the sexual division of labour. This evidence raises an important question: why did the analysis fail to develop into an effective strategy in the nineteenth century?

While Owenite aspirations may be seen as praiseworthy, both its theory and practice proved to be inadequate. Owenism itself was riddled with divisions and contradictions over issues involving women's role in the movement, which Taylor attributes to male prejudice and female uncertainty with a new public role.

Exactly why the feminist principles of the movement had so little effect on its own power structure is not entirely clear, although no

doubt the "iron hand" of male prejudice was partly responsible. Female diffidence was also a problem. "It being so novel a thing for females to speak in public assemblies, and the idea of eyes being, at once, directed towards them, is it at all marvellous that... a sufficiency of courage is wanting to speak their sentiments?" as one woman demanded. (220)

In reality, female marginalization within the organization reflected a broader development within working-class politics as a whole towards more formalized structures. Women withdrew because the new formal rules were both time-consuming and intimidating. (220) Taylor's analysis extends also to the productive roles of both sexes which were undergoing change. Tensions emerged whenever women's work ran against the traditional division of labour. The wage-earning wife often symbolized masculine degradation. (110-11) Too often the feminist argument regarding inequality between the sexes was couched in moralistic tones, thus blaming men instead of attempting to understand this relationship within a social and economic context. Taylor succeeds in painstakingly and sensitively exposing this affiliation:

These difficult contradictions, these complex alignments and disalignments between men and women in their roles as workers and family partners, have been at the centre of working-class life and radical organization since the first half of the nineteenth century. (112-13)

From the middle class emerged many of the feminist-socialists who identified female oppression along trans-class lines, ignoring class differences that divided them. To some extent Taylor does the same thing: the issue of women and class usually remains detached from her discussion. In fact, the author does not investigate this relationship:

Religious revivalism, with its sanctification of patriarchal and class authority, continued to tighten its grip over the middle class, while even among non-religious liberals, Jacobinical principles of natural rights and universal equality give way to a business-like reformism aimed at consolidating the power of middle

class men and suppressing the claims of all those outside their ranks, notably the working class and *women*. (16)

This suggests that Taylor 'lumps' all women together regardless of their class affiliation. Although women's rank is assigned to their husband's class, Taylor negates this by focusing on the commonality of female oppression:

But in general it was attachment to a man of a particular class position which established a women's social rank, not her own economic status. When a woman had to labour for a living she could all too easily find herself inhabiting a region where class differences blurred in the face of a common female oppression. (73)

Her methodology — for the most part rigorous — weakens when she emphasizes sex differences that she sees obscuring class differences among women. More attention to the distinction between class and sex may have exposed other contradictions between women than those based solely on gender. Some questions that Taylor might have addressed include the following. What prevented this early socialism from being more than a minority creed, popular among the upper strata of the working class and petit bourgeois intellectuals? What interfered with larger numbers of working-class women joining the movement in light of the feminist issues being addressed? Perhaps these women might have been attracted to Owenism if the theory had incorporated class differences and thus appropriate strategies might have followed. Even Taylor's appeal for women to take up, once again, the aims of the utopians, without consideration as to how this might be done and by whom, is as doomed as the Owenite period, a victim of inadequate theory and strategies.

However, as the author is quick to point out, the decline of Owenism was not simply a consequence of internal divisions and contradictions, or weak strategies. In fact the capitalist mode of production, thought by the Owenites to be on the verge of collapse, steadily extended and

consolidated its control over the economy. The capitalist state enacted the reforms which decreased class tension. Finally, the sentimentalization of the home and family through segregated gender spheres became the ideal of working-class respectability. (263) As the socialist strategy attempted to reorganize against this capitalist strength, with a new set of instruments, gender issues became subordinated to the vague promise that once the class war was won this problem would be dealt with.

Eve & the New Jerusalem is one of the most important recent British books for its elucidation of the socialist-feminist debate. In short, it is essential reading for the understanding of this tradition.

Mary Anne Poutainen
McGill University

Deborah Gorham, *The Victorian Girl and the Feminine Ideal* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press 1983).

GORHAM'S BOOK provides a picture of the ideals of girlhood which formed part of the culture of the Victorian middle class, and of the practical advice and counsel which guided the upbringing of middle-class girls and young women from childhood through adolescence. It can be compared with another on somewhat the same topic, Carol Dyhouse's *Girls Growing up in Late Victorian and Edwardian England*. Gorham's book suffers in the comparison. Dyhouse is concerned with movement, change and debate, and her choice of sources to represent these is guided by their significance in this process. She deals concretely with many aspects of girls' lives, with how they learned to be feminine, with their schooling, with educational policies, with the conflicts and debates, the rival theories, and the feminist responses. Gorham's study by contrast is oddly incoherent; she has failed to find a satisfactory thread for her story. It is curiously static, we range

over a period of nearly a century, but without any real sense of movement, much less of debates and conflicts. Yet I think the comparison is not altogether fair. For Gorham is indeed attempting something different and the problem in her work lies in the kind of theoretical approach she has chosen in an inquiry into the culture of a class.

Gorham is working in the area of what Marxists call superstructure or ideology. Her interest is in the "shared ideas and beliefs" uniting the new middle class. Her theory is that rapid social change created anxieties as well as a sense of achievement in the Victorian middle class. Institutions such as the "cult of domesticity" are responses to such contradictions. Her interest is in the ethos, in distilling the common beliefs and values expressed as the "feminine ideal." Ideas, ideals, representations, and images are abstracted from the texts of the period; her chapter on managing female childhood and puberty are accounts of sources of counsel, exhortation, and sometimes technical recommendations converting the ideal into the practicalities of socialization and management. The consciousness of a class is clearly taken by Gorham to be gendered and perhaps, although she does not argue this, we should see, in this period, femininity as the cultural practice of a class.

Of course, I know that historians do not generally see themselves as working with theories. But theories in the most general sense are methods of thinking through which relations among phenomena are displayed. The fact that a theory is not made fully explicit does not mean that it is not there at work ordering the representation of events. Gorham has a conceptual method which selects, orders, and constrains her interpretations of data in a way which disorganizes any naturally-occurring logic of historical process. It is not idiosyncratic. In fact it is pretty standard. It is this method that I want to discuss here.

Central to her method are typological procedures constructing "the Victorian girl" and the "feminine ideal." These produce a curiously abstract and static account. The historical details appear as expressions of the concept of the feminine ideal. The dynamic changes taking place in the experience and situation of middle-class women during the period are subordinated to the need to find in them a single coherent thread — the ethos, the common beliefs and values epitomized in the feminine ideal. Thus though Gorham's data in a sense deny her conceptual practices, clearly exhibiting the processes of debate and change which Dyhouse made her topic, her theoretical method cannot assimilate this. Rather it works on her diverse materials to find in them the single unchanging cultural thematic identified as the feminine ideal. It is a method of thinking which cannot handle time and process. Hence the changes taking place in the period, made visible at a number of points, have no real place. The realities of girls' experience in this period of change, which are described in the last three chapters, do not cohere with the rest of the book.

Let us think of the problem as a practical one where the researcher is confronted with textual materials from the past. Gorham has used contemporary biographies, autobiographies, the reports of the commissions, novels, women's and girl's magazines, children's stories, books of advice and counsel, and medical information and advice. How is she to select from among these? The notions of ethos, ideals, beliefs, and values provide conceptual methods which will select and extract from such textual materials. New and higher order objects, such as the "feminine ideal," are created from textual resources. These become the conceptual protagonists whose adventures provide the narrative plot. Materials from the texts can then be treated as indicators of these entities. For example, the chapter on "Sunbeams and Hoydens: Images of

Girlhood in the Victorian Period" is a collection of instances loosely organized by the chapter title and expressing in various ways the underlying theme of the "feminine ideal." The image of girlhood is linked to "harmonious domesticity" and has a number of refractions — that of the good daughter in relation to her father sustaining him both in physical illness and in moral failings; of the older sister as moral guide *vis-à-vis* the wayward brother; of the special relationship of mothers and daughters; of the general cultural image of the dying female child as redeemer (Eva in *Uncle Tom's Cabin* would be an instance); of "Angel in the House;" of the dutiful and obedient daughter. And so on. Extracts from the texts of the period become expressions of a cultural theme. One major effect of the method is that women do not appear as active in the historical process. The concept of ideal and image and the typified "Victorian girl" remove the subject matter from the actualities of activity, struggle, and creation. The Victorian girl is merely the bearer of the abstracted forms transferred to the individual by a purely conceptual device:

From the point of view of the individual, there is no opposition between "image" and "reality": the image formed part of the individual's experience. Individual middle-class girls, like all members of the class, would have been exposed to all the facets of Victorian middle-class ideology. The images of girlhood, which related so directly to her own situation, would have had a particularly central place in the individual girl's experience. (58)

And class appears merely as the conceptual site of consciousness, lacking analytic force.

But the story does not have to be told in this way. The historian's or sociologist's interest in the beliefs and values unifying a class can be developed differently. The actual presence of texts which have been subdued in the abstract notions of ideals, images, and beliefs can

be restored. There are methods of thinking which will both make texts themselves visible and at the same time recognize the activity of individuals in the making of consciousness as textual discourse. The last is of special significance in an historical (or sociological) account of the making of a consciousness among women. It restores to women an active part in the general historical process.

The discourse of femininity arises with the emergence of a wholly new order of social relations resulting from the discovery of moveable type and the organizational and commercial developments which brought about a mass market for books and magazines. Indeed we should understand the emergence of a public textually-mediated discourse as a new form of social relation transcending and organizing local settings and bringing about relations among them of a wholly different order. The nineteenth-century British novelist, Mrs. Gaskell, observes a transition in consciousness linked to the evolution of the textual discourse in *Sylvia's Lovers*. A self-consciousness emerges in the process of reflecting upon one's character, conduct, and motives in the light of the printed text. It seems probable that "femininity" is from the outset an accomplishment of textual discourse. According to Poovey, the ideal of femininity emerges early in the eighteenth century and culminates in the nineteenth-century paradigm of the "Angel of the House." It is a development of a discourse. In delineating "the Proper Lady" Poovey's *The Proper Lady and the Woman Writer*, like Gorham's book, relies on "conduct books, popular magazines, novels, and women's memoirs or diaries." It is, I believe, this textual discourse which Gorham's method obscures. And women were avidly part of it. It created for women the possibilities of a speaking in public which they had not experienced before. They wrote as well as read, sought higher education, entering into these new relationships in very active

ways. Equally important to the reflection on self from the standpoint of the textual other observed by Gaskell, textual discourse created for middle-class women an expanded sense of their role in the world, and of possibilities of communication and organization with other women. The forms were distinctive — for example, it seems likely that the autobiographical materials used to tell us *about* women's experience would tell us more about these new forms of consciousness among middle-class women if they were understood as a political and moral genre of the discourse among women. Novels did more than *express* feminist ideals, they explored, analyzed, and worked through contradictions in middle-class women's experience of femininity and womanhood. The books of advice and counsel not only supplied standards and practices, they also created a common code among readers vested in languages and images which could be referenced in conversation and in interpreting behaviour and events; they also standardized household and family health and socialization practices, hence progressively articulating household and family to changing retail, medical, and educational practices.

We can see now a second effect, perhaps a function, of the methods of thinking used. They constitute phenomena of consciousness in such a way that it is hard to trace the ways those phenomena are connected with the social relations of the historical process in which they are embedded. The historian's awareness is turned away from the artifacts which are her sources, and hence from the practical contexts of their production and uses. To restore the presence of texts is to see also that there are writers, readers, printers, publishers, and a distribution system and that consciousness has a material reality. I do not think we can understand femininity as ideal or as practice unless we understand it as a discourse in which women were active as writers and as readers and were joined to and con-

scious of one another in new ways, unless we understand the complexity of themes, and intertextuality, and the character of the relation between text and she who read it for whatever relevance it had to her everyday world.

Dorothy E. Smith
Ontario Institute for
Studies in Education

Eva Gamarnikow, David Morgan, June Purvis, and Daphne Taylorson, eds., *Gender, Class and Work* (London: Heinemann Educational Books 1983).

THE BRITISH SOCIOLOGICAL Association bowed to the inevitable in 1982, and announced *Gender and Society* as the theme for its Annual Conference. The papers in this volume were selected from those presented and are further unified by a common interest in "how the public/private distinction serves to shape and inform women's experience at home, in employment and in the labour market."

Theoretically the most interesting papers pursue "one of the most contested areas within contemporary feminist thought . . . the concept of patriarchy and its relationship to capitalism." The authors conduct their discussions on historically specific terrain, and the rewards are impressive. Middleton explores the importance of women's labour to the early processes of capital accumulation. By relieving women's labour in the pre-capitalist and early capitalist family of its burdensome taken-for-granted status he demonstrates that without this labour "primitive accumulation by the 'revolutionary' route [that is, in Marx's sense, from within the ranks of production itself] could never have taken place." He argues, furthermore, that this process involved "patriarchal exploitation" because the fruits of that labour enabled emerging capitalists as husbands and fathers to consolidate their domination over the women themselves. Schematic as

it is, Middleton's argument should extend the terms of the 40-year-old debate on the transition from feudalism to capitalism.

In her paper on the founding of a nineteenth-century English silk mill, Lown argues that "it is as inappropriate to think in terms of patriarchy being a redundant concept as it is to regard capitalism as a thing of the past." Through her creative reconstruction of the origins of the Courtauld empire she explains how paternalistic provisions "helped to bridge the contradictions of depending upon a labour force stocked primarily with people whom the employers essentially conceptualised as belonging to the home." Both these articles show that women's history can alter the writing of "mainstream-malestream" history itself and that its interests are not only sectoral, just, or expedient.

The complex interplay between class and gender experience are also explored in papers by Cunnison, Pollert, Attwood, and Hatton and Heritage on how women are directed into and sustained in low-paying, routine jobs. These analyses depict women who are neither robots nor revolutionaries but complex people of "fractured" consciousness struggling not only with bosses and husbands but also with their internalized guilt, fears, hopes, and expectations. While these papers challenge the dominant ways in which questions of the sociology of work have been theorized, there are two papers by Britten and Heath, and Payne, *et al.* which attempt to deal with the bedeviling presence of a two-sexed labour market within the accepted paradigms of the discipline. While they achieve a good deal within their own terms of reference, insisting that occupational mobility scales, however ingeniously constructed, accommodate questions of class exploitation and sexual oppression, this all seems rather like trying to go to the moon on a donkey.

There are moments in this volume when the arguments become convoluted, confusing, and even mechanical.

Nevertheless, this is a good book: difficult ideas are grappled with and complex practices are apprehended. The rewards of an interdisciplinary, theoretically sophisticated study of gender and class are demonstrated admirably in ways that should prove challenging to researchers and accessible to their students.

Roberta Hamilton
Queen's University

Lee Holcombe, *Wives and Property: Reform of the Married Women's Property Law in Nineteenth-Century England* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1983).

UNTIL RECENTLY THE reform of property law, a major component of nineteenth-century feminism, has barely interested historians. Branded as selfish and lacking in social consciousness, the privileged women spearheading committees and organizations for such reform have lacked the appeal and apparent derring-do of socialist women, militant suffragists, or strikers. No matter how redolent of male privilege the courts and magistracy were in that period, law and jurisprudence somehow lack the glamour or excitement on which one might build a narrative about women's struggles or oppression. Though so eminent an historian as Mary Beard found the topic of women and property law fascinating, it has taken more than a decade of "new" women's history to produce updated accounts of such major reforms as those described in Norma Basch's *In the Eyes of the Law* and Lee Holcombe's *Wives and Property*.

Holcombe's masterful work begins by letting us in on the intricacies of the English legal system — especially common, equity, and ecclesiastical law — as it applied to women's property in particular. In this regard one comes to see the centrality of law both to social order and social theory. The complex English system con-

tained layers of historical thought about women and property, and each of those layers had an impact on women's experience. That experience in turn influenced new twists and developments in legislation and jurisprudence through litigation, case law, and reform. Holcombe demonstrates how equity law overcame the worst effects of common law by providing married women their "separate" property, albeit administered by a trustee. Such protection from rapacious or imprudent husbands, however, demanded substantial legal fees and therefore benefited only the woman of means. Seen in this light, efforts at reform appear somewhat less self-serving to wealthy activists and somewhat more advantageous to the hundreds of thousands of married women who needed control of their wages. Relegated to the realm of common law, they had no control even over property they earned with their bodily labour.

United by the slogan that there should not be one law for the rich and another for the poor, dozens of wealthy men and women worked during three decades for full property rights for married women. (The mini-biographies of these reformers presented by Holcombe remind us how desperately we need a biographical dictionary for European women.) Their labours eventually met with success, in part because of the general move toward equity jurisprudence in the 1873 Judicature Act and because reform in the case of women was often supported on the grounds of consistency with modernization of legal institutions. Choosing a broad perspective, Holcombe also suggests that the 1882 Married Women's Property Act amounted to a major reallocation of property if one considers the wages of working-class wives. To some extent, according to this interpretation, property reform confused the suffrage debate while the reluctance of male legislators to support women's proprietorship demonstrated the need for actual political representation. Holcombe believes that,

once passed, such legislation compounded old distinctions between married and unmarried women with that between the propertied and less propertied. This left suffragists confused over exactly what kind of women would be acceptable for enfranchisement by male parliamentarians. It seems unfair in this instance to blame suffragists for clouded vision, for the legal definition of women continued to reside in the inherited logic of coverture. Under this rubric married women's legal personality was absorbed by that of their husbands, while all unmarried women constituted a group potentially so absorbed. Property reform as such never rectified women's lack (or potential lack, should they marry) of legal personality. In the long run, then, women in the nineteenth century waged major campaigns for institutional change of a system for which they had no existence. Focusing our attention on law and jurisprudence as a central terrain on which most of these older battles were engaged, Lee Holcombe's new work invites further pursuit of legal scholarship by historians of women.

Bonnie G. Smith
University of Rochester

Malcolm Waters, *Strikes in Australia* (Sydney: George Allen and Unwin 1982).

MALCOLM WATERS attempts to provide a model to explain strike patterns not only for Australia, but for all capitalist industrial societies. He adopts the model utilized by Shorter and Tilley in *Strikes in France*. Strikes are presented in terms of three dimensions: frequency, size, and duration. Waters then proceeds to present three-dimensional diagrams to illustrate how the character of strikes in Australia has varied over a lengthy period.

Waters' basic thesis is that the changes in strike patterns are a result of the workers' responses to production techniques. He notes that production techniques in capitalism have undergone four

phases. These are the craft production phase, the mechanized factory production phase, the assembly line production phase, and the service and automated production phase. Waters presents other factors such as economic conditions, immigration, and union organization as intermediary variables.

Waters' weakness in his analysis arises from technological determinism. His phases of production echo the writings of Robert Blauner (*Alienation and Freedom*) and Joan Woodward (*Industrial Organization*), who analyzed technology as a neutral agent and the primary explanation of strike proneness. Waters views the mode of production in a narrow sense of technology and work organization at the plant level rather than in the broad social sense found in Marxist writings. He also ignores the role of technology as an agent of capitalist control, the strategic considerations that management makes in the introduction of new technology, and the influence of worker resistance to technological innovation.

Waters' treatment of compulsory arbitration and the work force policies of management in Australia can also be criticized. In regard to the former, Waters claims that accounts which focus on conflict accommodation structures such as Australian compulsory arbitration "can only tell us why conflict can or cannot be accommodated, and not why it is generated." (11) However, as Waters notes, (26) a feature of Australian industrial relations is the large number of strikes of short duration. Many of these strikes are protest strikes and are a consequence of the parties attempting to influence industrial tribunals to hasten proceedings. Thus the conflict accommodation structure of Australian compulsory arbitration could be argued to have a major impact on the shape of Australian strikes. In regard to employer policies aimed at curbing strike action such as superannuation and welfare, Waters has nothing to say.

Chapters four to nine of the book

involve the testing of Waters' model in regard to Australian industrial relations history. Utilizing secondary sources, Waters is limited in his analysis by the lack of research into the industrial relations history of major Australian industries such as building, railways, and road transport. Further, irritating errors arise in the book. For example, the important Australian Agricultural Company is described as the Australian Amalgamated Company (93) and an incorrect claim is made concerning the federation of maritime unions into the Waterside Workers Federation in 1902. (100)

Waters also makes some interesting comments concerning Canada, which he claims is perhaps "the only other Western Society in which there is the same degree of statutory regulation as in Australia. . . ." (26) Further he claims that the effect of compulsory arbitration in Canada has been to multiply protracted disputes, while the implication for Australia has been brief disputes. Unfortunately Waters does not apply his model to Canada on the grounds that like Australia it is a "middle power" and he wants to apply his model to countries that are dissimilar to Australia. His model therefore is applied to France, the United Kingdom, Sweden, and the United States.

Overall Waters' book is a bold attempt to provide a theoretical framework for understanding strikes in Australia and other countries. However, the book is marred by a narrow technological approach to strike proneness and shallow historical research.

Greg Potmoe
University of Sydney

Jean-Pierre Ravier, *Les syndicats britanniques sous les gouvernements travaillistes, 1945-1970* (Lyon: Presses Universitaires de Lyon 1981).

RARES SONT LES livres spécialisés en histoire britannique récente écrits origi-

nellement en français. Plus rares encore sont ceux, comme celui-ci, qui sont fondés sur la recherche approfondie dans les archives britanniques. Ce qui n'est pas la moindre qualité de ce livre c'est l'abondance des citations tirées des documents peu accessibles au lecteur francophone. Il faut donc accueillir l'ouvrage de Jean-Pierre Ravier comme une excellente addition à la bibliographie française de son sujet.

Pourtant, son sujet n'est pas précisément celui qui est indiqué par le titre. L'auteur l'admet quand il écrit qu'il « n'est pas question ici d'étudier le syndicalisme britannique dans tous ses aspects mais de sélectionner les traits qui expliquent l'évolution des relations industrielles. » Et ce sont surtout les relations industrielles qui sont considérées: en effet, les syndicats semblent être trop pris pour acquis.

Quoiqu'il en soit, le sujet reste énorme. Il pose des questions importantes de méthodologie. La façon par laquelle l'auteur a essayé de surmonter les difficultés de sélection et d'organisation de l'immense documentation consiste à identifier certains « cadres de référence parfois explicites, souvent implicites, qui peuvent constituer en quelque sorte des grilles de lecture. » Il se sert de trois de ces cadres pour créer une problématique: la conception « unitaire, » qui compare l'entreprise à une équipe poursuivant en commun un but unique; la conception « pluraliste libérale, » qui voit dans l'entreprise une coalition d'intérêts; et la conception « néo-marxiste, » qui insiste sur la dyssymétrie fondamentale des intérêts entre les employeurs et les travailleurs dans l'entreprise. Après un premier chapitre consacré aux objectifs travaillistes et les contraintes de l'économie britannique de l'après-guerre, Ravier a développé sa problématique par rapport à quatre axes en particulier: les négociations collectives, l'évolution des auteurs à l'échelon national, le défi de la base et la réforme des relations industrielles.

Ce faisant, Ravier démontre une maîtrise enviable de la documentation officielle et une bonne connaissance des diverses interprétations britanniques. Il nous offre une synthèse précise et claire, parfois brillante et de façon générale bien équilibrée. (Ce dernier trait doit quelque chose sans doute aux conseils du directeur de la thèse dont le livre provient, Mme Monica Charlot.) Si l'ouvrage ne frappe pas par son originalité, et s'il n'échappe pas aux limitations du genre, il demeure une bonne introduction académique du sujet. Il est provocateur et l'auteur n'hésite pas à illustrer ses analyses par référence à l'expérience française des relations industrielles.

Malheureusement, M. Ravier est préoccupé par la question: « Pourquoi le chef du mouvement travailliste Harold Wilson a-t-il été amené à prendre des mesures contraires à l'intérêt des travailleurs? » Voilà surtout une question d'avocat qui est en même temps révélatrice d'un certain point de vue. Wilson n'était point contre les intérêts des ouvriers ou des syndicats: il s'est opposé aux extrémistes, protagonistes des grèves sauvages. Ce sont précisément les actions de ces extrémistes qui ont facilité la prise du pouvoir de Mme Thatcher, avec les résultats que l'on sait pour la classe ouvrière. Il n'est pas nécessaire d'être d'accord avec la politique industrielle du gouvernement Wilson pour comprendre que lorsqu'il est arrivé au pouvoir il lui a manqué l'espace économique pour manœuvrer dans le sens désiré par M. Ravier. En tout cas, c'est une grosse exagération d'insinuer que le chômage était un élément majeur de la politique Wilson: le taux de 2.5 pour cent en 1970 était dérisoire. Favorisant l'interprétation néo-marxiste, Ravier ne fait mention nulle part d'ailleurs, dans son livre, du fait qu'une bonne partie des investissements dans l'industrie britannique vient des fonds de pension des ouvriers! Et, fait curieux, c'est Attlee, traité à la légère par Ravier, qui a envoyé

les soldats aux docks de Londres pour briser les grèves sauvages.

Ravier conclut que «les possibilités du réformisme s'amenuisent, et que l'espoir d'améliorer les salaires et les conditions de travail dans le cadre du système économique en place diminue comme une peau de chagrin.» Il lui semble que, «si la dureté de la logique capitaliste s'accroît, le choix risque de se poser en d'autres termes» soit dans un renforcement de la position des employeurs et un affaiblissement de celle des ouvriers soit dans la recherche d'«une autre cohérence, une autre logique, un autre type de société.» Quel sera ce choix?

Pour un lecteur anglo-saxon de son livre, une autre possibilité serait un retour au consensus «traditionnel» de préférence selon les lignes établies durant la période Attlee. Sans doute, certaines modifications seraient nécessaires. Un tel retour exigerait, par exemple, une reconsidération sérieuse de la part des syndicats de leur principe sacré de la liberté de négociations collectives, principe qui date d'une époque révolue. Peut-être aussi, les britanniques pourraient prendre en considération le système des relations industrielles qu'ils avaient établi en Allemagne de l'Ouest après la guerre: de telles comparaisons, tout au moins, seraient plus pertinentes que celles qui sont établies avec l'expérience française.

Trevor Burridge
Université de Montréal

Robert H. Davies, *Capital, State and White Labour In South Africa, 1900-1960: An Historical Materialist Analysis of Class Formation and Class Relations* (Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press 1979).

THE STUDY of South Africa has been transformed in the last decade by a new school of work which has focused on class. This has involved a re-writing of South African history, and a major focus

on labour history in particular. The old view was that South Africa's racial system was an archaic residue of irrational cultural forces (racism, nationalism, etc.), incompatible with and undermined by the rational forces of industrial capitalism. The new idea is that racial domination was essentially functional for various white class interests, notably for the capitalist super-exploitation of black labour.

Of particular significance in this class analysis of South Africa has been the question of white labour. For the old view, the conservatism of white workers ('Workers of the world unite and fight for a white South Africa!') was decisive proof of the irrelevance of Marxian analysis. The new work, on the other hand, shows that the involvement of white workers in racial discrimination (for example, the "colour bar" in employment) stemmed from their class problems within a super-exploitative capitalist system: it distinguishes between the "class colour bars" of capital and of white labour, and argues that the "job colour bar" of white labour essentially derived from the "exploitation colour bars" of capital. It is this whole issue of white labour that Davies pursues more fully in this book. He seeks to analyze and explain how and why the state intervened, in the 1900-60 period, to deal with white labour — to reserve particular occupations for white workers, and to incorporate white workers into a reformist industrial relations apparatus. His basic answer is that the state functioned primarily in the interests of capital, and that this pattern of state intervention towards white labour served the economic and political interests of capital. Economically, the racially split labour market reinforced and legitimized the super-exploitation of black labour, and politically, capital needed white labour support to achieve and retain political hegemony and control of the state. The book periodizes South African modern history in Poulantzian terms,

according to which "fraction of capital" dominated the "power bloc" controlling the government, and it applies its general thesis to each main period — mining hegemony, Pact and Fusion, early and late apartheid.

While its basic thesis is not new, the book is an important study both in the way in which it systematically consolidates and expands this argument, and in its pioneering attempt to link the evolving pattern of state intervention to the changing economic structure and as well — and more contentiously — to hegemonic shifts among "fractions of capital." The book clearly brings out a long-term pattern in the state's intervention towards white labour, and makes a good effort to ground its thesis in specific historical analysis of this wider economic and social change. If there are any lingering doubts about the relevance of class analysis to white labour in South Africa, this book should do much to dispell them.

The general thesis may be valid, but the book's Poulantzian structuralism limits the breadth and depth of this validity. There is a fundamental underestimation of politics and culture, and there are problems of periodization and class analysis. On the first point, the book underestimates the political clout of white workers, and the autonomous and mediating role of cultural forces such as Afrikaner nationalism. Davies tends to see state intervention on behalf of white labour too much as the structurally preordained fate of white labour as dictated by unfolding capitalist interests, and too little as concessions won by white workers as powerful political actors in the class struggle. Thus, when Davies answers the question of why the state intervened for white labour but not black labour, (33) he ignores what is probably the key reason: that black labour lacked the political power which enabled white labour to force such intervention. Instead we find a tendency towards a tautological economism (32, 351); such intervention was

confined to what was "good capitalism" — concessions made to white labour "remained at all times strictly limited to those compatible with the maintenance of the conditions necessary for capital accumulation." (32) But fewer concessions would have been quite compatible with capitalism, and the degree and timing of concessions reflected the political strength of white labour. Davies does give some weight to class struggle and political explanation. But he is more dismissive of the "politically free labour" argument (for example in his economic explanation of high white wages, [58]) than is justified. Another problem is that Davies makes light of the social and causal significance of ethnicity. While the class analysis of Afrikaner nationalism (O'Meara as amplified by Davies) has much validity, white labour involvement in Afrikaner nationalism is not fully explicable in purely class and instrumental terms and requires greater sensitivity to the ways in which meaning, identity, and choice are autonomously constituted by ethnicity. Like false consciousness arguments, the emphasis of white labour's "cooption" by Afrikaner nationalism denudes the subjective choice of actors of any meaningful significance in its own right.

In addition, there are problems with Davies' class analysis. First of all, the Poulantzian periodization is too simplistic in its equation of certain political changes (for example, the Pact government) with hegemonic shifts among fractions of capital. The important points Davies makes about ongoing economic transformations can and should be made independently of this much more complex and debatable issue of hegemony, and fusing the two unnecessarily weakens the analysis, given the difficulty of proving whether or not a given fraction had hegemony, especially for the 1920s Pact period. Secondly, the book as a whole does not convincingly demonstrate the relevance or necessity of the narrow "pro-

ductivist" Poulantzasian definition of the working class favoured by Davies in his introduction and his continual reference to "white wage earners" rather than "white workers." For in fact the book keeps dealing with typically working-class problems and fears among "white wage earners." And when he finds that in the modern period most "white wage earners" are not, functionally, easily definable as a supervisory "new petit bourgeoisie," he shifts to ideological definitions of class (defining them as a "new petit bourgeoisie" because of their "ideological class practices," [25]), and the allegedly rigorous structuralist analysis becomes distinctly less rigorous. The whole problem could be avoided in the first place by rejecting narrow structuralist definitions of the working class, since one can analyze the class problems of social groups without making rigid demarcations concerning what constitutes the "working class proper."

The book's rather heavy-handed categorizations (and the over-politicization of contemporary sociology) are evident in other more minor ways, such as Davies' dismissal of the South African Labour Party's "parliamentary cretinist ideology." (133) What precisely is the sociological usefulness of the term "cretinism?" I also wish to take this opportunity to reject a false criticism Davies makes (in an otherwise fair assessment of my work) of my view of the Pact government: he claims (180) I implied it was a white labour government, whereas I clearly analyzed the electoral Pact and the Pact government as an alliance between white labour and other groups.

Despite some structuralist excesses, however, this is a major study of capital and labour in South Africa. It is an important piece of work, which has significantly strengthened and extended the class analysis of South Africa.

Frederick Johnstone
Memorial University of Newfoundland

Charles van Onselen, *Studies in the Social and Economic History of the Witwatersrand 1886-1914*. 1. *New Babylon* 2. *New Nineveh* (Harlow: Longman 1982).

VAN ONSELEN'S OBJECTIVE is to achieve an counterpoint to his earlier *Chibaro: African Mine Labour in Southern Rhodesia, 1900-1933* by writing about "selected groups of ordinary people in Johannesburg within the wider context of the industrial revolution that engulfed the Witwatersrand." In order to demonstrate how the ruling classes gradually came to assert their control over others, he sets out to place "these groups within the emerging structures of the society... refracting their experiences through the process of class struggle." To this end, he offers us an introductory essay which identifies themes explored in seven subsequent studies focusing on drink, prostitution, cab-driving, domestic service, the Zulu washermen's guild, Afrikaner urbanization and unemployment and, finally, covert African traditional movements.

Each essay is absorbing when read in isolation, while the cumulative effect is in large degree that which the author intends. We are left in no doubt that by 1906 the Afrikaners of Fordsburg and Vrededorp were struggling to survive in an urban environment over which they had little apparent control, and that largely unskilled labour in the mines had become vital to their survival.

Van Onselen causes the reader to arrive at this conclusion by stages. It is first suggested that national disasters and the growing commercialization of agriculture drove *bywoners* (farm tenants) off the land, initially onto the brickfields, into long-distance transport-riding, or urban cab driving. They were then forced off the brickfields and out of transport-riding by the increasing capitalization of brick-making and the development of railways. The railways brought ladies who desired

more than simple scotch-carts in which to travel, so that some *ex-bywoner* cabbies were eliminated by being unable to invest in landaus or victorias. However, it was the bicycle and the motor vehicle, combined with the replacement of the short horse-drawn tramway by a more extensive electric system after the British occupation that destroyed the cabbies and those who serviced them. It was these progressively deteriorating conditions that finally forced the men of Vrededorp to press first the municipality of Johannesburg and then the mine-owners to provide them with a living wage as they took over tasks performed previously by Africans.

The status of the women of Vrededorp emerges out of the essays on drink, prostitution, and domestic services. Alcohol was first produced to absorb grain surpluses. Then the rural bourgeoisie supplied the mine-owners, who used alcohol to attract and manipulate African labour until drunkenness menaced mine profits. The owners then sought to prevent liquor sales to Africans, a goal achieved only with the British occupation. Prostitution provided similar solace to white miners, and was not discouraged until some social stability had been achieved along the Rand. Part of this stability involved domestic service employing the labour of African men in European homes or in their laundries. Laundry work provided an opportunity for some Africans to achieve an independent livelihood. However, when steam laundries emerged, legal obstacles began to be created which, along with Indian and Chinese labourers competing, eliminated most African entrepreneurs. Afrikaner women were not prepared to work in "English" households, and to that extent influenced the pattern of predominantly male African domestic service which evolved. Some were prepared to work in Chinese laundries, but opportunities for them were few. Thus the only avenue open to many became prostitution, into which African women also moved, in part because white

women feared their sexual competition within the home. Afrikaner women, like Afrikaner men, had been pushed into place by 1910, and the steps by which they became enmeshed in the class struggle are established with no apparent cause for doubt — as long as groups within Johannesburg alone are considered.

Once an attempt is made to set the groups against a wider politico-economic background, serious problems arise. Much of the discussion about alcohol, the cabbies, and the horse-drawn tramway turns on the assumption that the rural bourgeoisie manipulated the economy to facilitate the consumption of burgher produce in these sectors up to the British occupation of 1900. A horse was fed ten pounds of mealies and twelve pounds of forage a day: an African miner was provided with two-and-a-half pounds of meal a day and two pounds of meat a week. The tramway required no more than 200 horses, while the number of cab horses was declining by 1897. At the same time, the number of African miners rose from 14,000 in 1890 to 88,000 in 1897. These miners were eating 220,000 pounds of meal a day and probably demanding 400 cattle a week by 1897, yet the impact of the growth of this enormous market on the attitude of the rural bourgeoisie towards other sectors of the economy is not considered. It is also not explained why that class should restrict non-European labour on farms to no more than five families per farm by Law No. 21 of 1895, since the measure appears to have restricted the ability of the rural bourgeoisie to produce grain unless *bywoners* were engaged. Concurrently, however, the rural bourgeoisie was courting indigent burghers by making sites available to them at Vrededorp, just as Lord Selborne's administration did when it offered the inhabitants 80-year leases over an average lot for only £40 under the Vrededorp Stands Ordinance No. 31 in 1906.

The burghers of Vrededorp were a privileged group, wooed by the mine-

owners and the skilled miners after the defeated Boer generals returned to power at the head of Het Volk in 1907, as Van Onselen has shown. These same burghers were wooed earlier by the rural bourgeoisie and the British. We need to know why the indigent were wooed so consistently and, to this end, we need to know what was happening in the Transvaal at large. Until we do, judgement must be reserved on whether or not these men and women truly perceived themselves in class terms and demonstrated an aggressive working-class consciousness, since they may have been taking the first hesitant steps towards manipulating racial ties so as to preserve and then develop an initially qualified privilege.

P. Stigger
Simon Fraser University

Dan O'Meara, *Volkskapitalisme: Class, Capital and Ideology in the Development of Afrikaner Nationalism, 1934-1948* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1983).

DAN O'MEARA'S *Volkskapitalisme: Class, Capital and Ideology in the Development of Afrikaner Nationalism, 1934-1948* is not only a significant contribution to South African historiography but also an excellent theoretical account of the mediated relationships between social classes and ideology. This highly readable, theoretically-informed, and well-argued book is divided into an introduction and six parts.

The conceptual centrepiece of the book is contained in the introduction. In a relatively few short pages, O'Meara outlines how, in his view, "specific but differentiated collectivities of social agents, incorporated in specific but differing social conditions, came to be collectively mobilized in a particular historical conjuncture in terms of an ethnic ideology of Afrikaner nationalism rather than one or

other of the competing ideologies of the period." (11) Drawing on the work of Althusser, Laclau, Gramsci, and others, O'Meara meticulously establishes the conceptual conditions under which ideological currents cohere to classes/class alliances. He understands ideologies as systems of representation through which collectivities of social agents define for themselves the parameters and limits of social interaction within the class struggle.

O'Meara presents a compelling and penetrating critique of the conventional wisdom that defines Afrikaner nationalism. He summarily rejects the various idealist perspectives that, variously, regard Afrikaner nationalism in terms of the "classless, embattled volk" (the "nationalist" view) or in terms of a "backward, chauvinist tradition" (the "liberal" view). Ideological conceptions, he correctly warns us, are not timeless a priori categories but fungible perceptions that undergo transformation as the relations of production change.

In the six parts of the book, O'Meara first identifies a specific historical conjuncture, then proceeds to examine the particular class configuration that defines it, and finally explores the particular ideological currents that represent the conditions of existence of the period. He accomplishes this task with subtlety and clarity. Often, two or three arguments intersect and are creatively interwoven for a time, only to be disentangled later. Ranging far afield to explore specific historical studies, Afrikaans-language newspaper accounts, official documents, and so forth, O'Meara brings a plethora of "raw materials" together in his examination of the class basis of Afrikaner nationalism. His procedure is certainly not to expose the history of an "idea." On the contrary, he begins with the shifting fortunes of Afrikaans-speakers, and their break-up into different classes. From there, he proceeds to demonstrate how Afrikaner nationalism was forged as the

ideological cement that united the often conflicting class forces (Afrikaans-speaking waged labourers, various petit bourgeois strata, emergent capitalists, etc.) into a coherent "movement."

Perhaps the most creative and innovative aspect of O'Meara's analysis is both his emphasis on the conflicting class places in the social division of labour occupied by Afrikaans-speakers (agrarian capitalists, particularly in the Cape; emergent capitalists in industry; the petit bourgeois intelligentsia of lawyers, writers, scholars, and church ministers; the petit bourgeois supervisors of labour; etc.), and his exploration of competing ideological currents ("Christian nationalism," the "economic movement," "apartheid," etc.) that often overlapped and intersected. Specifically, he traces how various strata of the Afrikaans-speaking petit bourgeoisie worked both within and outside the parliament and political parties to extend their organizational networks. The success of the "economic movement," for example, depended upon the inculcation within the Afrikaans-speaking masses of the idea of the unity and common interests of all members of the *volk*. O'Meara demonstrates with considerable clarity how various ideological currents are not simply "ideas" that somehow achieve resonance in the daily consciousness of Afrikaans-speakers of all classes but are guides to practical activities (and manifested within organizations). He shows how Afrikaans-speakers who occupied different (and sometimes conflicting) class places in the social division of labour came to understand their location within the organic unity of "Afrikanerdom."

On the whole, this book is not only an impressive contribution to the growing Marxist South African historiography but also a practical application of the Althusserian (in broad terms) theory of ideology. In my judgment, the major substantive weaknesses are twofold: first, O'Meara tends to invoke the notion of

class struggle as the motor of class transformation, yet never actually demonstrates how this process works. Too often, "class struggle" surfaces as a *deus ex machina*. Nowhere does he really describe in detail or analyze the class struggles of the dominated classes. To be sure, class struggle has an ideological dimension. Yet, O'Meara concentrates his scholarly attention on conflicts within the propertied classes or aspiring propertied sectors of the petit bourgeoisie.

Second, O'Meara tends on occasion to dissociate his theoretical argument from his narrative account. Because these two elements are not clearly interwoven, some chapters read like historical accounts of political parties, economic changes, etc., without being clearly organized by the theory.

In addition, I have a few criticisms that appear at first glance to consist more of preference and style than anything else. First, the bibliography is poorly organized for a book of this quality. The "Official Publications and Papers" should be separated into more discrete categories rather than including disparate private manuscript collections, House of Assembly debates, and official (published) reports. References to published articles inexplicably do not contain page numbers. Other references are exasperatingly incomplete. Second, some chapters are not footnoted sufficiently or footnoted ambiguously. Further, the reference style of placing sources in parentheses in the text itself is not only inconsistently followed but also done clumsily in places. Third, the conclusion appears more as an introduction to the "issues" of Afrikaner nationalism of the 1950s through the 1970s than a concise, coherent, and thorough summary of the book itself. Perhaps the editors insisted upon a quick historical sketch of the recent past to render the book more "relevant." The conclusion could have accomplished two ends: first, bringing together the various themes considered in the six sections of the book;

second, demonstrating the specific character of the new configuration of class forces post-1948 and uncovering the emergent ideological currents that came into existence as a consequence of this class realignment. While these omissions might seem insignificant in relationship to the overall argument of the book, they contribute to a certain stylistic "looseness" that detracts from the scholarly impact of O'Meara's contribution.

Criticisms aside, O'Meara's book is a welcome addition to South African scholarship. It is one product of a new intellectual trend that first came together in the early 1970s, both in South Africa and abroad. *Volkskapitalisme* has set a standard in the field.

Martin J. Murray
State University of New York
at Binghamton

James Cockcroft, *Mexico: Class Formation, Capital Accumulation, and the State* (New York: Monthly Review Press 1983).

ON 1 SEPTEMBER 1982 the president of Mexico, José López Portillo, gave his final state-of-the-nation address. The first part of his speech was a three-hour recital of his administration's achievements which ranged, for example, from unprecedented investments in the state-owned petroleum industry (27 billion dollars) to large numbers of trees planted in the Federal District (119 million). The trees' chances for survival are not especially good, for they must exist in a metropolitan area that suffers from some of the highest levels of air pollution ever recorded. Oil is another matter: how can a nation go wrong that possesses proven reserves of 72 billion barrels, probable reserves of 90 to 150 billion, and potential reserves of 250 billion? So thought President López Portillo in 1976 when he began his term of office. He played "the oil card:" borrowing to expand production, assuming that oil revenues would

finance Mexican development. In fact, in the latter part of his speech the president had to admit that the oil strategy had failed. By 1982 the Mexican economy suffered from "petrolization (... oil [now] accounts for 75 percent of... [Mexico's] export earnings... half its GNP, and PEMEX [the state-owned oil complex]... a quarter or more of state expenditures' [262]), dollarization, and relative decapitalization." (308) As López Portillo spoke, Mexico had the highest foreign debt in the world; Mexicans themselves had recently transferred some 50 billion dollars to American bank accounts or to purchase real estate in the United States.

Who was to blame for this predicament? The answer of López Portillo was two-fold. Externally it had been the influence of the great powers who control capital markets and interest rates and who had somehow manipulated oil prices downward. Internally, it had been the private banks that had aided and abetted the "traitors" who had decapitalized the nation. For this they were to pay and, with trembling voice and tears in his eyes, the president announced that those banks were herewith expropriated (with compensation for their owners).

How did Mexico get into such a "national emergency?" Did the expropriation solve the crisis? What in fact is Mexico? James Cockcroft answers these questions and many others in a book that summarizes Mexican history from the conquest to 1982. The first half of the book moves quickly but adroitly through the colonial period, the wars of the nineteenth century, the dictatorship of Porfirio Díaz, the revolution of 1910, and establishes that the "modern state" had emerged by about 1940. The second half of the book slows the pace and gives the reader a meaty, densely-textured treatment of Mexico's modern era. Here Cockcroft works both thematically and chronologically with chapters on "the transformation of agriculture and indus-

try," "classes and the state," "the crisis, 1968-1977," and "the crisis prolonged, 1978-1982." Packed into the 170 pages or so of this section is the most serious, sustained, and comprehensive analysis of contemporary Mexico that now exists in one volume. To accomplish this Cockcroft is systematic and coherent, controls large amounts of data that nobody else has put together so conveniently, and is informed equally by Mexican and non-Mexican literature, by scholarly, polemical, and journalistic materials. Some of the basic research that informs the book Cockcroft himself has generated (along with his students and colleagues at the Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana in Azcapotzalco [Mexico City]) relative to migration and migrant labour.

Cockcroft's argument may be simplified briefly into the following outline. By about 1940 Mexico had created a modern state in that the church was subordinate to the state, the generals were in the barracks and committed to the regular succession of power through party structures, an agrarian reform was in place, and oil and mineral resources had been nationalized. Foreign capital was limited to 50 per cent of any given enterprise and Mexico had blocked out an independent foreign policy. As well, Mexico had created a sophisticated bureaucratic-authoritarian state that expertly controls dissent by grouping people functionally and corporately and then by attaching them to the state. Labour unions and peasant organizations, for example, are government-controlled. With a modern state in place, Mexican bureaucrats adopted a development strategy of "dependent state monopoly-capitalism." The results were income disparities (10 per cent of the population earns more than 50 per cent of total income), structural distortions (agribusiness expanded the production of crops for export, for example, while more than half the population suffers from malnutrition and one-fifth of

the corn consumed by Mexicans comes from the United States), and the polarization of classes. Such results, of course, are coded into the Mexican system for "how can capital investment increase or profits be maintained without a low wage scale, and how can this be guaranteed unless under- and unemployment in turn guarantee a reserve army of unemployed?" (4) The state, then, is to a large degree the agent in class formation and re-formation. To show this Cockcroft analyzes such trends as the proletarianization of the peasantry and the petty bourgeoisie, the growth of the industrial proletariat, "re-peasantization," the emergence of intermediate classes, the consolidation of formerly separate sectors of the large-scale bourgeoisie, and the "atomization of the working class as a whole" and "the immiseration of the majority of the population."

The Mexican state continues to lurch along, attempting to balance the demands of foreign capital (Mexico cannot even pay the interest on its debt until oil production is doubled to 5 million barrels a day, which, in turn, will require more infrastructure which will require additional funds, etc.) while keeping up the appearance of being an independent nation. Increasingly the Mexican political economy is structured by the IMF as a condition for additional credit; increasingly Mexico resembles a debt peon with oil pledged to the United States at less than market prices to service a debt that stretches as far as the eye can see. Only Mexico's foreign policy remains on an independent course.

By nationalizing the banks and scapegoating the bankers, López Portillo whipped up nationalist euphoria and bought a bit of time "with which to manipulate the class struggle." (309) At the same time he raised expectations that cannot be fulfilled. Moreover, euphoria based on rhetoric will dissipate quickly before the realities of an inflation rate of 100 per cent, a negative growth rate of the

economy, massive unemployment, including one million of the regularly employed laid off in fall 1982, and the cost of basic commodities such as tortillas, beans, and bread doubling and doubling again.

Mexico: Class Formation, Capital Accumulation, and the State will be of particular importance to students of Mexico and Latin America and will be widely used in undergraduate courses. It also deserves a wider readership for its analysis of political economy and transnational structures. Canadians can benefit more than they might care to admit from such an analysis.

Richard Boyer
Simon Fraser University

Peter DeShazo, *Urban Workers and Labor Unions in Chile 1902-1927* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press 1983).

LATIN AMERICAN LABOUR history continues to be a popular field of scholarly endeavour as new books and articles seem to be appearing almost monthly. With the increased quantity of material, much of it in English, detailed comparisons and contrasts can now be drawn among several Latin American nations, as well as with the North American and European labour movements, and studies can be made of common organizations such as mutual aid societies and resistance societies, ideologies such as anarchism and socialism, and activities such as strikes. The material that has appeared since 1977, when Hobart Spalding published his well-received general work on the history of organized labour in Latin America, is so extensive that his book needs to be revised or a new survey written.

Peter DeShazo's monograph on the formative years of the urban labour movement in Chile is a recent addition to the literature that revises the traditional view

of early Chilean labour history. He has had access to very rich archival resources, a luxury not always afforded Latin Americanists, and has produced a book that will have to be considered not only by labour historians of Latin America but by anyone studying twentieth-century Chilean history. Moreover, his treatment of his subject has been so thorough that his book can be used as a kind of checklist of the various influences and developments one should consider when studying any labour movement.

DeShazo begins with an examination of the socio-economic background of the years 1902 to 1927 and a general overview of the developments that he details subsequently. The focus is on the capital, Santiago, and its port, Valparaíso, since, in his view, the urban workers were the "driving force" of the Chilean labour movement. In the growing cities with their expanding manufacturing sector and industrial proletariat the conditions were ripe for agitation, as his survey of wage levels, living and working conditions, employment patterns, and employer attitudes clearly shows. One might expect the Chilean workers to have enjoyed frequent successes since, for one thing, congress rather than the president was dominant at this time, suggesting a comparatively open, even democratic, political system. In fact, the system was tightly controlled by an elite who had no intention of giving up any of their power or privileges. They responded to labour successes with firings, lockouts, blacklisting, and the formation of company unions, and they received support from a government that shared their laissez faire attitude to industrial relations. As a result, Chilean unions suffered greater repression than those in neighbouring countries, and early Chilean labour history was marked by a recurring cycle of expansion and decline.

Despite the frequent setbacks, the movement experienced definite progress and development. Organizations were formed, agitation began and intensified,

and political alliances were made. The Chilean experience was similar to other Latin American countries. The first organizations were mutual aid societies that sought improvements mainly through political contacts. Anarcho-syndicalists subsequently radicalized the movement, sponsoring the formation of resistance societies and fomenting industrial agitation. They attracted support by winning improvements in "bread and butter" areas and by altering the nature of local labour relations: at one point they secured the right of unions to act as bargaining agents. Chile's urban workers were most successful between the years 1917 and 1920 which saw a definite shift to the left. The *mutualist Federation of Chilean Workers* (FOCH) was transformed into a socialist, then a communist, organization; anarchist unions expanded: a branch of the Industrial Workers of the World enjoyed a brief period of popularity; and a wave of successful strikes occurred. This was followed, however, by the usual repressive reaction. It, in turn, led to a growth of ideologically-based organizations, wider political participation by the workers, and divisions amongst them. Weakened, they could not withstand the even harsher repression instituted in 1927 by the government of President Carlos Ibáñez.

DeShazo comes to a number of conclusions. He argues that the major influence in the development of the Chilean labour movement was Chile's nitrate industry, that urban unions expanded when the industry was prospering and declined when the industry was depressed. However, he is not rigidly deterministic for he lists a variety of other factors that also had an impact. These include political elements, such as the attitude of the person in the presidency, inter-union affairs — some unions suffered because of the dishonesty of executive members who absconded with their funds — and even natural phenomena. In 1906, when an earthquake severely dam-

aged Valparaíso, the workers' bargaining position improved because of the creation of jobs in the construction industry and the elimination of the pool of unemployed. DeShazo also challenges the traditional view of Chilean labour history by insisting that urban workers were far more important than nitrate workers with regard to the labour movement and the anarchists, not the FOCH, pioneered the movement. He feels that the latter's size and influence have been greatly exaggerated by historians and he paints the communists as a rather opportunistic and self-centred group.

The book is not without its faults. It lacks a unifying analytical framework and is short on narrative development. There is no build up to a dramatic conclusion, which may accurately reflect the reality of the situation but makes rather dry reading. So, too, do the excessive details. Is it necessary to include so much information about so many of the strikes that occurred? More space could have been spent on some of the personalities involved, for although the author claims that he is viewing industrial relations from below, the personal element is missing; the participants remain largely faceless. He draws comparisons with some Latin American countries, but not with Mexico despite the abundance of Mexican material available, particularly on Mexican anarchism. He also attempts to touch on anything and everything that might have relevance to a labour movement but in the process occasionally fails to explain their relevance to the Chilean case. For example, he discusses whether a labour aristocracy existed in Chile — he concludes that it did not — but then fails to indicate how this affected the Chilean movement in either a positive or negative sense. The same shortcoming is true of some of the quantitative material he lists in his conclusion. Finally, in his attempt to stress the importance of the anarchists he loses his objectivity with regard to the FOCH. The communists almost become the villains of the

study. In one instance they are criticized for their tardiness in protesting a massacre of nitrate workers in 1925, but the anarchists seem to have made no protest at all, which seems far more deserving of criticism.

The deficiencies of the book probably stem from the fact that it is another doctoral thesis that has been rushed into print too rapidly without the benefit of more critical editing. However, one tends to sympathize, realizing the pressure imposed on younger academics by tenure committees and increasingly selective publishing companies. And in this case, despite the shortcomings, the book has much to recommend it. It is a welcome addition to the literature with an abundance of valuable information that will be of use to specialist and non-specialist alike.

Peter Blanchard
University of Toronto

Gregor McLennan, *Marxism and the Methodologies of History* (London: Verso Editions and NLB 1981).

WHAT WE HAVE here is not an argument but a series of glosses on the arguments of others. In three parts, going from general to particular — philosophy, methodology, and historiography — McLennan comments on dozens of authors who have written about the nature of history and of historical knowledge. His purpose is to "persuade philosophers and historians of their common interest in the alliance of philosophical realism and historical materialism." (xii-xiii) It is unfortunately difficult to believe that his book will persuade anyone of anything, for its presentation does not come to a point anywhere. One persuades by being direct, not oblique; pointed, not diffuse; by saying "this is true," not "this is apt," or "appropriate," or "viable," or obedient to "criteria." One persuades by talking plainly, rather than having the text bristle

with inverted commas; by keeping words ending in -ism to a minimum, or at least defining them very carefully as the discourse proceeds, rather than throwing dust in the persuadees' eyes with passages like this:

Marxism is regarded, variously, as functionalism, economic determinism, or the pragmatic suppression of difficult and practical issues. All the accusations are based on the view that Marxism is a causal *monism*, that it claims that there is but one set of factors, [strange monism, to be composed of factors] in nature or history, that determines everything else. In his otherwise important article, Alasdair MacIntyre fuels this preconception by citing, for example, Marc Bloch's objection to monism as evidence for even *Bloch's* pluralism. This is misleading, because Bloch does not (on the whole) support pluralism, and MacIntyre does not defend monism. (233)

Lastly, if one wishes to persuade, one does not qualify statements out of all sense by adding, just in time to produce in the reader total exasperation, phrases like "on the whole."

Well, perhaps if we are not likely to be persuaded, we might at least try to find out what McLennan's statement of purpose means. Of its four elements — a common interest, an alliance, historical materialism, and philosophical realism — only the last is defined and discussed. The relations between them, actual or potential, are left unexplored. McLennan seems to assume that the phrase "historical materialism" identifies a doctrine whose meaning is clear and agreed upon. Is this so? I have always found it paradoxical that a theory according to which "human phenomena, historical, social, or psychological, should be viewed or interpreted in terms of physical or material causes rather than of spiritual or ethical causes" (*Webster's International*, 2nd edition, failing a definition from our author) should so often have to be expounded by means of words, arguments, attempts to persuade — mental things, surely. It is as if matter had to keep reasserting itself through the agency of books like the one

under review against some perversity of its own to drift away into a dream of its ability to be cognitive.

If there is something a bit odd about "historical materialism," perhaps we shall have better luck with "philosophical realism." What does it mean? You will find it defined at pages 31, 45, 75, and 207. The first of these passages is the most succinct: "Realism is the philosophical view that knowledge is knowledge of objects or processes that exist independent of thought." So far so good. I do not know how natural science could proceed taking any other view. Further, "scientific knowledge illuminates the relationship between generative mechanisms and empirical phenomena." (45 — McLennan here follows the thought and terminology of Roy Bhaskar.) The sun is bright and hot (phenomena) because hydrogen is being transformed to helium with a consequent release of energy (the mechanism). This process went on before it was described and will continue when there is no one left to think about it. There is of course no proof of this, but neither is there any very good reason to doubt it.

But when we come to human processes, historical phenomena, the things that men and women have done and suffered and enjoyed, can we any longer make the same claims? Certainly things go on independent of your thought or mine, but do human beings go on independent of all thought? I do not mean that everyone at every moment deliberates in a rational judicious manner on what they do. I only mean that all action depends at some time or another on decision and is accompanied by reflection, however rudimentary. Such is, at least, my experience, and I have no reason to believe that it is unusual. The equation real + independent of thought will not hold in this realm. McLennan, trying to enlist Marc Bloch on the side of his own brand of "realism," attributes to Bloch (correctly) the view that "the objects of history are real, and are as real as those of the scien-

ces." (106) They may be as real, but they are objects of a different kind from those studied by the natural sciences. Hydrogen atoms do not give themselves names, or explain themselves to you, or mutter to themselves, or make out last wills and testaments.

As for the "common interest" that philosophers and historians are alleged to have, or should be persuaded that they have, in an "alliance" between "realism" and "materialism," it is vain to seek. We have, I suppose, a common interest in trying to tell the truth clearly and felicitously. But philosophical doctrines are not joined by diplomacy. In the present instance, though I suppose to be a materialist you must also be a realist of some sort, the reverse is not true: there are realists who, like Bloch, are not materialists, and who would remain unpersuaded by McLennan's attempts to show — what? That the two doctrines are the same? No, only that "historians should adopt a realist frame of analysis. In doing so they would have more explicitly to recognize the strengths of historical materialism." (235) I do not see that this follows.

And anyway one wonders what difference it all makes. There is such a strong aroma of the lamp here, or maybe of candles and cushions to sit on and preliums to face. However, that is to argue *ad hominem*, or to dismiss in the same way the book does. R.G. Collingwood, comparing Herodotus and Thucydides, remarked:

The style of Herodotus is easy, spontaneous, convincing. That of Thucydides is harsh, artificial, repellent. In reading Thucydides I ask myself, what is the matter with the man, that he writes like that? I answer: he has a bad conscience. He is trying to justify himself for writing history at all by turning it into something that is not history. (*The Idea of History*, 29)

I ask myself, what is the matter with McLennan, that he writes like that? I answer: he has a bad conscience. Marxism is supposed to have something to do with working people and with making the world better: more just. But working peo-

ple are not listening. (Or, as Perry Anderson puts it, there is a "provisional maturity of the international working class as a whole, in a world-historical perspective." [*Considerations on Western Marxism*, 104]) So one talks to those who do listen, and who are troubled by the identical badness of conscience.

In the world of this book, texts live in an eternal present, fighting and striving for a purely logical supremacy. One does not get the slightest hint of historical consciousness at work. Marx, Engels, Gramsci, Althusser, Bloch, E.P. Thompson, Soboul, and hundreds of others argue among themselves in these pages about questions that remain constant, contemporary, the same for everybody. According to what they answer these questions, they get put in little boxes labelled with this or that -ism. (Good guys are realists and Marxist, bad guys are empiricists.) Further, everyone enjoys perfect freedom within this changeless scholastic world. "Realism asserts," or "posits;" (75) thinkers express their "predilections" (90) or "ideological preferences;" (175) everyone has "philosophical options;" (46, 206) argument is a matter of moves, manoeuvres, strategies; historical accounts are scenarios. It is a game played by backgroundless dialecticians. Harmless enough, I suppose, but also barren.

Stuart Pierson
Memorial University of Newfoundland

Anthony Giddens and Gavin MacKenzie, eds., *Social Class and the Division of Labour: Essays in Honour of Ilya Neustadt* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1982).

THIS VOLUME OF essays in honour of Ilya Neustadt represents an important event in academic discussions of class and the division of labour. Although most of these essays go over familiar ground, this collection does bring together some of the

most important contributors to British debates on class and the division of labour. It therefore allows us to assess the current state of an important part of British sociology.

Despite the unevenness of these essays two, at least, are worthy of note — those by David Lockwood and Geoffrey Ingham. Lockwood's essay, which seems out of place in this collection, deals with Durkheim's concept of fatalism. He argues that this concept, which Durkheim developed in his study of suicide, may be valuable to students of the maintenance of social order. Instead of explaining social order in terms of either Durkheim's "conscience collective" or of coercion, Lockwood feels we may want to consider the possibility that it is maintained by the inability of many social actors to conceive of an alternative to the existing system. Lockwood's essay is not without its faults. Thus, he fails to consider Gramsci's theory of hegemony, which proposes a fourth explanation of social order. Nor does he attempt to show how the concept of fatalism might be applied to the West (it might be interesting to see whether factory workers are not "fatalistic" in their attitude towards work, rather than "instrumental," as Lockwood once suggested). Nevertheless, Lockwood's essay is a nice piece of sociological theory.

Geoffrey Ingham is concerned with a very different issue — the nature of the dominant class in Britain, especially the division between the city and industrial capital. Ingham disagrees with Marxist analysts that the decline of Britain should be explained in terms of the City's focus on overseas investment; in many ways, the City has emphasized domestic *commercial* banking, and this has been at least as important to the trajectory of British capitalism. Ingham adds that Marxists have neglected the ability of non-industrial forms of capital to use the political process to buttress their power. The essay is weakened by some unconvincing

remarks attacking Marx's analysis of money. But Ingham has clearly raised a substantial challenge to the traditional Marxist analysis of the City.

Several of the other essays also make worthwhile contributions. Ali Rattansi resumes some of the major themes of his recent book. Although marred by a questionable young Marx/old Marx problematic, his article makes the interesting point that Marx did not foresee the complete elimination of the division of labour. Graeme Salaman's contribution criticizes, perhaps over-stridently, Braverman's tendency to see management as omniscient, motivated by the functional needs of capitalism as a system, and homogeneous. Terry Johnson continues his provocative work on the professions with an essay arguing that, far from being antithetical, professional power and state power are very much interrelated.

Most of the remaining essays are either literature reviews or agendas for research. Anthony Giddens provides a standard critique of Braverman's neglect of working-class resistance. Gavin MacKenzie reviews the literature on the question of where to locate class boundaries. Ely Chinoy's posthumous contribution is little more than an introduction to his unfinished book on the assembly line. Richard Brown makes the useful point that class theorists need to focus on careers as well as occupations; but he tells us very little about the relationship between career and class, especially about the effects of career on attitudes. Sheila Allen correctly laments the lack of research on women and class. But her agenda for research seems unnecessarily narrow, in part because she is primarily concerned with the fairly conventional sociological literature on inequality. In a similar vein, Richard Scase calls for more research on the petite bourgeoisie without really attempting to answer the important empirical question his essays raises. Finally, John Scott provides a rather descriptive essay on the control of large

corporations; his discussion is useful, but neglects some important work (for example, Kotz on bank control of corporations or the literature on corporate interlocks) and does not provide much in the way of data.

Only three of these essays could be described as weak. Tom Bottomore's essay on working-class politics is marred by his assertion that working-class interests can be accommodated to capitalism, an argument that neglects the difference between long-term and short-term interests. Paul Hirst tries to argue that working-class organizations need to be more receptive to income policies and Bullock-style corporatism. While his general point is not without interest, he seems almost Panglossian in his expectation that previous negative experiences with such policies will not be repeated. Finally, John Goldthorpe develops a watered-down version of Karl Renner's theory, arguing that professionals and managers constitute a "service class" united by their material privilege and the requirement for trust in their employment relationship. This argument skips over the fact that the professions are internally stratified and fails to provide a consistent definition of class that could be applied to other classes.

What does this collection tell us about the current state of British sociologists' analyses of class? First, it indicates that, unlike many of their American counterparts, British sociologists continue to be interested in theoretical questions. However, it also indicates a shift of interest away from the working class to the middle and upper classes. In the past, some of the most interesting British sociology has dealt with the life of industrial workers, yet only one of these essays (the American Chinoy's) has a similar focus. It may be that the shift of interest is inevitable, given the growing size of the middle strata and the many theoretical problems involved in defining their class nature. Nevertheless, one wonders whether we

really know all that we need to know about industrial workers, particularly in the view of the new computer technology in factories.

This book also indicates an apparent neglect, in much British sociology, of the theoretical question of how to define class. Only one of these essays — MacKenzie's — considers this issue in any detail, and it does not add anything new. There continues to be strong disagreement about the definition of class, between Marxists and Weberians and even within each camp. This volume seems to take its definitions of class for granted, thus leaving some of the most significant theoretical questions unanswered. It is, thus, a less important book theoretically than the recent book by Abercrombie and Urry which does tackle these issues (although not entirely successfully).

Finally, this collection reflects the apparent disciplinary isolation of British sociology. Although many of the contributors call for more historical analyses, and a few actually use historical data (especially Ingham and Johnson), it is noteworthy that no mention is made of the very important work on class by British *historians*. Thompson, Hobsbawm, Stedman Jones, and many others have made vital contributions to our understanding of class and class conflict, extending to the very definition of class itself in the case of Thompson. It is clear that incorporation of their insights into sociological research would be of great benefit to British sociology.

Peter Meiksin

State University of New York at Genesco

Edoarda Masi, *China Winter: Workers, Mandarins, and the Purge of the Gang of Four* (Adrienne Foulke, trans., New York: Dutton 1981).

ALTHOUGH EDOARDA MASI has considerable expertise in Chinese history, culture, and politics, her *China Winter* is

first and foremost an historical document: a diary of her year teaching at the Shanghai Foreign Language Institute. Because that year was 1976-77, during which Mao Zedong died and power shifted, the first-hand views of a knowledgeable observer are, of course, intrinsically important. Her on-the-spot accounts are also interesting, both as analyses and for what they reveal about the emotional reality of a foreign resident interacting with the contradictions of Chinese social reality.

Although I am not totally ignorant of Chinese history, culture, and politics, my main qualification for writing this review is that I too taught at the Shanghai Foreign Language Institute, five years after Masi. The Chinese radically changed various social policies, including educational policies, in the late 1970s. What changed — and even more so, what remained the same — between 1976 and 1981 is therefore revealing.

Let me begin my response to Masi's account with a trivial example of something that did not change between her sojourn and mine. Masi describes her difficulty finding the special food store for foreign residents:

I couldn't locate it at first; at the number written on my card I found a large doorway leading into a courtyard. I spoke to a man standing by the door, and he told me to walk on in: there, almost hidden before the courtyard entrance, was a little door. The shop is tiny, carelessly arranged but stocked with all kinds of supplies, even items one does not find elsewhere, from meat to fruit to canned goods. (65)

It seems clear, especially since this would be typical of the Chinese way of dealing with situations in which different people get to eat different food, that the obscurity was intentionally created, presumably to avoid situations where people without the right to the special foods might "lose face." (Loss of face, which is both objectively and subjectively very important in China, occurs only when a situation must be acknowledged.) This hypothesis is supported by the fact that the store had

been moved by 1981 from where Masi located it, but the new store was "almost hidden" in the same way.

A more significant example of what had changed was the extraordinary ignorance of the students at the Shanghai Foreign Language Institute about the basic categories of Marxist thought. Masi reports that her students "do not have the vaguest notion of the writings and ideas of Marx, even in simplified terms, they also know almost nothing about Mao." (241) What, we must ask, does class struggle mean to a student who wonders whether it exists in Europe under capitalism? What, for that matter, does capitalism mean? In 1981-82 (as today), there was considerable discussion of whether "getting rich" (which, in China, often means achieving an income that would leave one below the poverty line in North America) made one a capitalist. As near as I could tell, the categories of "surplus value" and "private expropriation of surplus value" did not figure significantly in these widespread discussions: the central question was "how rich (relative to the neighbours)?"

When some faculty members were giving foreign teachers a political briefing in which it was asserted that "a few bourgeois [i.e., the gang of four] have infiltrated the Party," Masi asked them to identify "the bourgeoisie in China's Socialist society:"

they spent two hours answering that, mainly trying to dodge this way, then that. . . . In the end, they concluded that the bourgeois class, apart from survivors from the past, is comprised of *workers* who are interested in their own welfare, who do not obey the Party, who think only of their self-interest, who have been corrupted. In a word, in China the bourgeoisie is a bunch of hooligans and rebellious workers. "Bourgeoisie" has no meaning; the term is used because these people must cling to doctrinal jargon. But what they mean is "the enemy." And in their confusion, they ended up confessing who their enemy is. (299)

One thing that had changed by 1981

was that formal political relations between foreign and Chinese faculty no longer existed. So I had no official discussions comparable to Masi's. When I and my foreign colleagues attempted to make political interventions we were criticized for "interfering in the internal affairs of China."

My experience with my students was comparable to Masi's. Discussing the United States constitution, I told my students — who were teachers at elite or post-secondary institutes, most of whom had undergone years of "re-education" during the "cultural revolution," and some of whom were party members — that aside from slaves, the masses in the United States in 1787 consisted mainly of small farmers who owned their own land and artisans who owned their own shops and tools. I then asked them about the social class of these people and received replies like "uh, . . . middle" or "lower middle." Even after I had defined petite bourgeoisie and given them the correct answer, many were unable to reproduce it on the midterm examination. An attempt to use the term "dialectical" (which is a considerably easier term for Chinese than for westerners because it is closer to their commonsensical thought structure) produced comparable difficulties. Later my students would joke with me about how ironic it was that I, coming from a capitalist country, knew more about Marxism than they did.

One must not, of course, generalize from students to the Chinese in general; the typical Chinese is a peasant, not a student. Still these responses are instructive. Moreover, although these incidents that Masi and I report do not by themselves prove much, they do tend to contradict certain views of China, and thus to raise significant questions. I suspect that Masi is right when she suggests that, having experienced Marxist-Leninist terminology overwhelmingly as ideological jargon (used not to shed analytical light but rather in factional power struggles), ordi-

nary Chinese have trouble taking it literally as descriptive/analytical.

I got another insight into the political use of jargon in China while trying to convince a police bureaucrat that it was reactionary to make a foreigner whose purse was stolen pay "fees" equal to a week's wages. The bureaucrat argued that the foreigner's presumed "carelessness" had encouraged theft. I accused her of confounding the secondary with the primary aspect of the contradiction. To my surprise, she didn't defend her position by challenging my application of these categories from Mao's essay on contradiction; instead, apparently intimidated by the jargon, she immediately switched to another line of argument.

Masi asserts that "behind a screen of utilitarian values, the detachment of thought from language proceeds apace. The anti-people mechanism of the powers-that-be shatters ideology from within." (300) Among Masi's most interesting themes are those dealing with the nature of language and communication (especially official communication) in the People's Republic of China. Some of this arises out of her reports of what she read on big-character posters in the period after Mao's death when the faction lead by Deng Shaoping was asserting itself. Some came out of the interaction with Chinese officialdom, at the Foreign Language Institute, on factory visits, in her residence, and elsewhere.

However well they may understand intellectually, it is hard for Westerners to live in that "ancient inherited tradition" where the content of a verbal message is so often "pure convention" and the significant communication is formal, depending on the decoding of variations from basic structures. An explicit example of this process occurred during a public meeting at the Foreign Language Institute that "in the unanimous opinion of the foreigners present, . . . was so much theater," in which one Wang Xiuzhen was criticized. Masi writes,

The charge was as known, but many analytical details were offered which, if anyone intended to challenge them, would lend themselves to endless hairsplitting; they were precisely calculated to transform the whole thing into a futile game and to frustrate anyone so foolish as to aspire to contend them. . . . [Wang Xiuzhen's] replies were always couched as to admit guilt, but in general terms. . . . In the end, [her accuser] answered his own questions and then asked "is that the way it is?" She confined herself to answering "yes. . . ." [Meanwhile the Chinese audience's reactions] were the usual ones at a big meeting: lack of interest, no concern for the issues involved, a compliant submissiveness. Some people read, some dozed. Everyone raised his arm when there was a slogan calling for a response. . . . (340-2)

How different this sounds from the criticism/self-criticism sessions I imagined while reading Mao in California fifteen years ago. And yet, how Chinese. As one staunch socialist told me, "For academic lectures, we try to arrive early to get seats up front; for political meetings we try to arrive early to get seats in the back [where it is possible to read, knit, and so forth]." To miss a political meeting altogether is to — or at least at the Shanghai Foreign Language Institute in 1982 was alleged to — be fined the equivalent of several hours salary.

Masi does contrast these types of communications with the frankness and openness that characterized discussions with workers from certain factories, where the values of the "cultural revolution" seemed to have survived. This may be the basis of her faith — largely unsupported, even contradicted, by the hierarchical realities she describes — that the revolution will eventually work out because the masses will assert themselves.

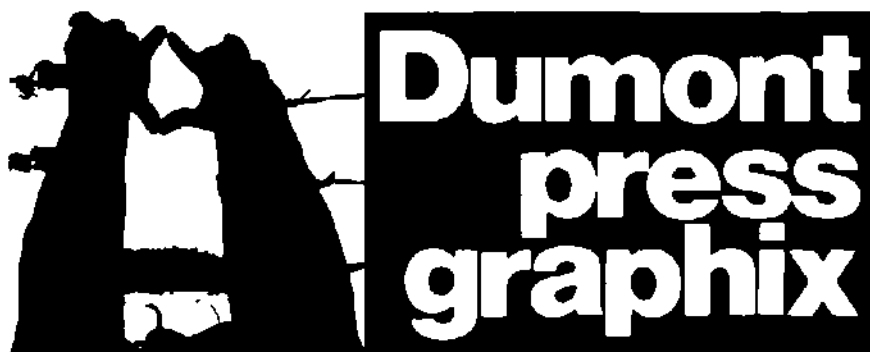
It may also be related to her provoking argument that Mao is essentially more Chinese than Marxist, specifically in his idealism. She asserts first that the "spirit of Yenan" is idealist in its axiom that dedicated self-reliance triumphs despite material obstacles. Second, she asserts

that Mao's strategy for preventing China from falling back into bureaucratism was periodically to oppose a *no* to linear progression of the revolution. Although this *no* is dialectical, I think Masi is correct in identifying it more with the *no* of Taoism and Chan Buddhism than with the Marxist dialectic.

I trust the examples I have given make clear that *China Winter* contains a wealth of concrete information about China, much of the best of it anecdotal, as well as some provoking and controversial

analyses. Composed in the immediacy of Masi's experience, *China Winter* must be read as a diary, not as a coherent and balanced study; but those who are ready to read it for what it is and to balance it with other accounts will discover a great deal about the reality of China. And those who have not lived in China, if they would "seek truth through facts," should come to terms with the facts Masi reports, however they may judge her analysis.

Richard M. Coe
Simon Fraser University



97 Victoria Street North, Kitchener, Ontario (519) 576-2640

**A worker-owned and -controlled typesetting shop
(now owned and controlled by women)**

Extensive experience in book, magazine and newspaper production, pamphlets, posters and propaganda.

- A wide selection of type styles on a Mergenthaler VIP phototypesetting system
- French accents and hyphenation programme
- Compugraphic 7200 Headliner
- VGC Phototypesetter
- Robertson horizontal process camera

**Fourteen years of typesetting
for the independent Canadian left
and the Canadian feminist movement**