

## Reviews / Comptes Rendus

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## REVIEWS / COMPTES RENDUS

**Ben Swankey, *What's New: Memoirs of a Socialist Idealist*** (Victoria, BC: Trafford Publishing 2008)

BEN SWANKEY IS a charter member of that heroic generation that built the Communist Party of Canada, sustained it through the grueling days of the Great Depression, stuck with it on the roller-coaster of World War II, and persisted through the even more desperate Cold War era. Swankey and other devoted members then watched, with greater or lesser cognizance of what was happening and why, the daring project turn to dust and virtually disappear by the 1990s.

Swankey joined the party (via the Young Communist League) in 1932 and, despite occasional doubts about its specific policies, remained in it for the next 59 years, rising to the position of Alberta leader of the party. Not until April 1991, as the Soviet Union hurtled to its demise, did Swankey leave the party. Before joining and after leaving the CP, however, Swankey did not turn his back on politics. *What's New* is Swankey's memoir about three quarters of a century of activism, based on a constant democratic socialist perspective.

This is a memoir far stronger in its depiction of actions than in its reflection on the significance of them. Swankey is at his best when he recounts the details of the great organizing efforts of his youth. Among the first of these was the 12,000-strong Hunger March in Edmonton on December 20, 1932, which the Royal Canadian Mounted Police suppressed with sadistic abandon. But his description of that event illustrates

the need for more exploration of consequences. Swankey is a great advocate of left-wing unity, and speaks with pride of his success, as Alberta Young Communist League leader in the mid-1930s, in forging a united front with the social democratic Cooperative Commonwealth Federation Youth Movement. But while Swankey mentions that the CCYM was "the junior section of the United Farmers of Alberta," (85) and that the RCMP's violent suppression of the 1932 Hunger March came "on the authority of the UFA government," (59) he doesn't tease this out to speak to the larger question of the Communist Party's "Third Period" political strategy. Too often it is the communists who are condemned for sectarian prejudice against socialist democrats in the years 1928 to 1935. Swankey himself implicitly supports this argument. But he might well have asked why communists *should* have been favourably disposed to social democrats, when, in situations like the Hunger March, it was social democratic party orders that unleashed repressive police violence on starving workers and farmers.

Another significant section in *What's New* deals with the critical years 1939 to 1941, when the Communist Party faced the immense challenge of how to respond to World War II. From Swankey's perspective, the party failed left and right. The party's stand that the war was imperialist and must be opposed – a policy adopted, Swankey argues, out of unquestioning acceptance of the outlook of Joseph Stalin, the USSR, and the Communist International – "was a serious mistake, perhaps the most serious in

its history. ... The war had an anti-fascist character right from the start." (87)

This could have been an opportunity to take on a thorough review of the CP line in that critical historical moment. One element of it would be to recognize that in the midst of such a crisis flexible tactics were essential. The international bourgeoisie recognized this and acted on it. What else explains the complete reversal in policy that occurred when Winston Churchill replaced Neville Chamberlain as British prime minister in May 1940? And why, in June 1941, as Nazi Germany attacked the USSR, the fiercely anti-communist Churchill embraced the Soviet Union as an ally? An international communist movement that did not similarly adjust its tactics to keep abreast of new developments would be doomed to oblivion.

In any case, before World War II communists in Canada and abroad did in fact foresee the need for tactical shifts based on political principle. On February 1, 1941 the Ottawa *Clarion* – just a mimeographed newsletter struggling to survive in a period when the party was illegal – laid out a strategic war vision under the headline, "Communists and the War." After 17 months of war, the paper wrote, its character in Canada was clear. Civil liberties had been suppressed, national registration and conscription legislation passed. "War profiteers are having a field day. ... The rich grow richer, the poor grow poorer." The Communist Party, it added, had anticipated this, and at its Eighth Dominion Convention in 1937 it had urged Canadians to fight for peace. However, the CPC had declared in 1937, "should imperialist war none the less break out despite the struggle for peace," communists would follow the plan of the Communist International, which called on progressive people "to work for [the war's] speedy termination" and use the opportunity to "hasten the downfall of capitalist class domination." Hence the

correct line in the years 1939 to 1941. Moreover, with considerable foresight, the Communist International had also anticipated the German invasion of the USSR, advising communists worldwide that if there were "a counter-revolutionary attack on the Soviet Union," it was the duty of all progressives "to do everything possible for the defeat of the imperialist and fascist forces."

In effect, what is commonly referred to as World War II was not one war at all, but a series of wars with different characteristics at different moments. For countries like Canada, during the 8-month period of the Phony War, for instance, it was not an anti-fascist war at all, but a war by the bourgeoisie against domestic leftists, civil liberties, and workers' rights. But in 1941, the bourgeoisie's own stand on the war changed. The communists' tactics had to be based on actual conditions at any one moment in that complex, shifting situation.

Perhaps the most significant aspect of Swankey's criticism of his own party's stand on the war is the extent to which it reveals that even middle-level leaders of the party were not acquainted with or did not understand the line of the party and the international communist movement. Several factors might account for this. One that comes immediately to mind is that when the party was outlawed and key militants were arrested the result was disruption in communications from leaders to the scattered sections of the country. Obviously there are other plausible explanations that ought to be explored in memoirs such as this.

Finally, this volume would have been stronger had Swankey supplemented his memory and notes by using objective historical records. Most important would be the addition of Royal Canadian Mounted Police records that he could have obtained through the Access to Information and Privacy Act.

I have to admit that my experience with Access Act requests for that generation of communists is mixed. Invariably, the Canadian Security Intelligence Service – with its determined effort to erase the historical record – rips out almost all useful evidence from the RCMP records it vets. But occasionally some details survive, and they can be fascinating and historically highly useful.

This brings me to my pitch for civic activism by historians. Every historian in Canada should be in an adopt-an-activist program. Seek out a politically engaged person of a certain age who would have a record with government departments. Sit down with the person and identify every possible department that might hold records on the person and make a request for his or her files. Don't be discouraged by the egregiously censored results. Appeal to the Information Commissioner. Eventually we will gain the opportunity to construct a court case and challenge the ignoramuses who gut our historical record using that spurious rationale known as national security.

LARRY HANNANT

University of Victoria  
and Camosun College

**Michael Petrou, *Renegades: Canadians in the Spanish Civil War*** (Vancouver and Toronto: University of British Columbia Press 2008)

THE EMINENT CANADIAN historian Jack Granatstein has been recruited to pen a cover blurb for this book and has written: "Based on massive research, this is the best and most complete account of Canadians in the Spanish Civil War we are ever likely to get."

Research alone, of course, cannot guarantee that a book will be the definitive work on a subject. And the notion that *any* history is the most complete account

"ever" short-changes future historians. Indeed, there are certain inexplicable gaps in *Renegades* that historians might wish to explore to write a more complete history. For example, to paraphrase Frank Scott's famous question to E.J. Pratt about his poem on the construction of the Canadian Pacific Railroad, "Where are the women?"

Raising these caveats is not to say that Petrou's *Renegades* isn't good. It IS good – ironically – because it's the very type of history that Professor Granatstein disparages – social history. With the able assistance of archivist and historian Myron Momryk – whose immense labor Petrou gratefully acknowledges – Petrou has put together a comprehensive factual database chronicling the personal details of the almost 1700 Canadians who went to Spain in the late 1930s to fight fascism.

In addition to recognizing Momryk, Petrou might have inscribed a thankful word for the long-dead faceless functionaries of the Communist International (Comintern). It was they, after all, who assembled and preserved the exceedingly important record of international leftist history that is found in the political assessments of the tens of thousands of anti-fascists who joined the fight for democracy in Spain in 1936–9. With the collapse of the Soviet Union, these Comintern records have now become public.

Petrou has brought together this data, sorted out a host of problems fundamental to its very nature (just one of which was the many pseudonyms people used) and drawn an informative portrait of the volunteers from Canada who made up the Mackenzie-Papineau Battalion, the Canadian contingent of the International Brigades.

Petrou sums up the features of this group in a single word: renegades. They were renegades several times over. In the midst of a Depression that made many of them obsolete as workers and seemingly

irrelevant as humans, they forged their way to the front lines of the Spanish conflict to declare themselves to be historical actors. They refused to be mute victims and to accept that Spain would be one. In this regard they were mavericks too. Western governments were prepared – indeed happy, some have cogently argued – to hand over Spain to fascism.

Petrou's database on the volunteers also shows that the Canadian volunteers were, in the words of one of their political commissars, "very, very working class." (25) This distinguished them from US recruits, whom one Canadian dismissed as New York City "ice cream boys" who "would starve to death in a grocery store." (17) Having survived in tough, dangerous jobs as loggers and miners, the Canadians were also indomitable fighters.

Another significant fact about them was that three quarters were members of the Communist Party of Canada. (24) This should not be surprising. What is startling is the fact that despite their solid working-class background and clear party affiliation they were regarded as political renegades by international communist leaders. The Canadian Mac-Paps were thought to harbour anarchistic tendencies and exhibit ideological weakness. Apparently, years of living on the bum and resisting military authority in the 20-cent-a-day labour camps gave the Canadians in Spain a disrespect for any authority, even that of the Communist Party. (42) And a disproportionately large number of volunteers came from British Columbia, where the anarcho-syndicalist Industrial Workers of the World exerted an influence into the 1930s. In addition they had a "rank-and-file consciousness" that made them desire to be "one of the boys." (110) Taking and giving orders was not a task they accepted easily.

Another feature of the volunteers was that they were mostly not native-born

Canadians. Almost 80 per cent of them were immigrants, often refugees from authoritarian regimes in Europe. Petrou argues that for some of the immigrants, Spain was round two in an on-going battle against fascism. (48)

In addition to the detailed social portrait of the mass of the volunteers, another element that stands out in *Renegades* is Petrou's journalistic approach. Petrou left journalism to pursue a PhD at the University of Oxford, and *Renegades* is his revised dissertation. After completing his PhD, Petrou returned to journalism. This background gives Petrou an eye for memorable detail. He describes, for instance, the response of one Canadian to a political commissar's question of whether or not he liked his coffee: "It depends ... If I'm politically developed, comrade *commandante*, the coffee is very good. But if I am not politically developed, it tastes like horse piss." (136)

But Petrou's journalistic approach has its weaknesses, too, one of them being occasional failure to provide adequate background. The context of the Spanish Civil War explains some arrangements that Petrou regards as iniquitous. He asks, for instance, why "trusted members of the Communist Party were more likely to be given command positions than those who were not." (65) This prevailed in all of the International Brigades. Given the origin of the war – a rebellion by reactionary military officers against the elected republican government – and the characteristics of the volunteer armies that saved the Republic – untried, untrained, Spanish and foreign volunteers – how else were commanders to be chosen? In that crisis atmosphere, is it any wonder that the communists, the backbone of the new armed forces, turned to their own members to be leaders? The concept of the political commissar as a quasi-officer had its roots in the Soviet Red Army. But it

also made practical sense in a newly constructed army composed of raw recruits and in which officers were either totally absent or politically suspect.

Another case where greater contextual foundation is required is the chapter dealing with William Krehm, one of three individuals whom Petrou examines in detail. In 1936, Krehm was a supporter of a tiny Toronto Trotsky-influenced splinter group. In September, after attending a conference of leftists in Brussels, he made his way to Barcelona to assist the Spanish fight against fascism. He remained in Barcelona for most of the next eight months before being arrested by the Servicio de Investigación Militar (SIM), the Republic's communist-dominated security police, and held in a Republican prison for three months. Through the intercession of the British and Canadian governments, Krehm was released from jail and expelled from Spain. His ordeal confirmed Krehm's fear of "the threat that communism posed in Spain." (149) Petrou's sympathetic treatment of Krehm might be seen as providing ammunition to those who claim that Stalinist perfidy destroyed the Spanish Republic.

It's true that the republican government was convinced that the area of Spain it controlled was riddled with "fifth columnists." The phrase itself originates in the fascist General Mola's claim that he would take Madrid through the use of agents inside the city. Although the boast was exaggerated, there were in fact fascist supporters and agents in the Republic. No less important, it was not just the Republic that was preoccupied by uncertainty about whom to trust. Reports from fascist-controlled parts of Spain indicate that paranoia about security was a fixation there too. And the same obsession prevailed in a good part of the Western world in the 1930s. Authorities in many countries were overwrought by fears of

fifth columnists, spies, and saboteurs. Popular culture – see, for instance, the Alfred Hitchcock films from 1935 to 1941 – reflected a similar agitation.

Republican Spain had good reason to scrutinize foreigners like Krehm. Consider the fact that some 40,000 people from over 70 countries joined the International Brigades. Most were screened by their home communist parties, but police agents certainly did enlist. The RCMP, for instance, had an agent ready to board a ship for Spain. (55–6) Also flooding into the Republic was an uncounted host of curious, sometimes sympathetic, sometimes just plain adventurist journalists, commentators, and political voyeurs. For people of various political and sexual temperaments in 1936, Spain was *the* place to be.

One of them was William Krehm. For eight months, as the Spanish Republic tottered on the edge of collapse under a murderous assault by both Franco's army and the militaries of Germany and Italy, Krehm waged his own campaign of international solidarity with the embattled republic. In the cafés of Barcelona he held his ground, arguing with Spanish comrades and trying to "show them the proper line." (150) British journalist Virginia Cowles described a similar scene in Valencia in March 1937, observing that "the squares of Valencia were filled with young men of military age who seemed to have nothing better to do than stand in the sunshine picking their teeth." (*Looking for Trouble*, 1941, 7) In May 1937, when actual fighting broke out in Barcelona – between communists and the anti-communists whom Krehm supported – Krehm was arrested. Perhaps the truly remarkable thing about Krehm's arrest by the SIM, his imprisonment (in a prison with plywood walls) and his expulsion from Spain was that it did not occur many months earlier.

Petrou forges new ground by devoting a chapter to the crimes committed by the Canadian volunteers and the punishments meted out to them. Comintern records show that about 150 of them ended up in some kind of trouble with authorities, for both military offenses such as incitement to mutiny and desertion and for offences off the battlefield such as drunken escapades and rape. (136–7) Given the desperate conditions in Spain (one Canadian volunteer had no shoes for most of the war) and the composition of the International Brigades, this number of recorded misdemeanours was remarkably low. Regular armies devote strict attention to both training and instilling discipline. The typical training for Mac-Paps was firing three bullets into a hillside before being sent into action. Engendering discipline was, inevitably, just as haphazard. Little wonder, then, that there were some problems, which Petrou properly attributes mostly to battlefield exhaustion. (121) Ironically, the low rate of severe problems presents Canadians not as renegades but as disciplined loyalists.

*Renegades* is certainly the most complete work we have on the Canadians who fought for Spanish democracy. And although it is a fine contribution indeed, it is not the final word on the subject.

LARRY HANNANT

University of Victoria and  
Camosun College

**Elise Chenier, *Strangers in our Midst: Sexual Deviancy in Postwar Ontario***  
(Toronto: University of Toronto Press 2008)

*STRANGERS IN OUR MIDST* is an important book for it historicizes and evaluates the development of legal, psycho-medical, and public reactions to sexual deviancy. Arriving as it does on the heels of

the sensationalistic 2007 trial of convicted sex offender Peter Whitmore, this is a timely academic study because historian Elise Chenier asks some trenchant, carefully framed questions about current sex offender legislation including the utility of the current laws; the difficulties and costs of obtaining treatment while incarcerated; and the efficacy of those treatment models. Furthermore, she historicizes the competing interests of the state, the psychiatric profession, prison administrators, and prisoners. Chenier has written a work that seeks to engage public debate about these matters, and in this way it expands the monograph's relevance beyond the traditional confines of the historical profession and the natural constituency of historians of sexuality, medicine, and criminology who will gravitate towards this work.

Unlike other historians of mid-20th century sexualities who have opted to utilize cultural approaches to the topic, and have tended to focus primarily on the constructions of homosexuality, Chenier has opted to shift and expand her focus. This work utilizes a primarily medico-legal methodology to assess the popular, medical, and criminal definitions of sexual deviancy. Part One provides background information about the post-war rise of psychiatric and sexology experts, their theories concerning sexual deviancy (a range of non-normative behaviour outside of the bounds of conventional adult heterosexuality, including male homosexuality, exhibitionism, and a range of criminal sexual offences), the public reaction to a series of public sex panics and sensationalistic crimes, and the governmental response published in the 1958 *Report of the Royal Commission on the Criminal Law Relating to Criminal Sexual Psychopaths*.

In the theories section, Chenier makes it abundantly evident that the notion of sexual deviancy was a socially con-

structured phenomenon and she references the oft-cited factors of the post-war political and cultural climate (the Cold War, middle-class family values, and the desire for 'normalcy') as important contributing factors. Yet, she claims that medical and scientific developments (and accompanying legal changes) have not received sufficient credit or historical attention, and her research goal is to address that absence within the literature. For example, modern concepts of sexology studies (such as the best-selling Kinsey Reports) offered scientific rationales for varied sexual behaviour and firmly sought to remove such discussions from the moral and legal realm, viewing them as scientific and psychiatric matters. The relative liberalism of many of the international and Canadian experts faced a battle from two constituencies: mothers and the state. Here Chenier illustrates how Canadian mothers mobilized in groups such as the Parent's Action League (PAL), to defend children's rights and safety from the so-called "predators." Equally, the Canadian state, influenced more by the mothers' groups and by the courts than by the scientific developments, opted for a narrower, conservative interpretation of sexual danger and sexual offenders. For example, unlike Britain, where the Wolfenden Report urged the decriminalization of homosexuality, Canada's 1958 Royal Commission Report refused to heed the expert's advice that homosexual acts amongst consenting adults should be removed from the criminal code. Chenier's gendered analysis of the Royal Commission findings, and of the government's response to their recommendations, vividly illustrates how the government document and successive laws reinforced the construction of sexual offenders as dangerous strangers, men whose failure to adopt so-called mature, heterosexual relations resulted in their labeling as psychiatric and, at their most extreme, crim-

inally psychopathic. This development had two tragic sets of victims: those who were mislabeled as deviant and, equally importantly, those women and children who continued to be at risk from sexual offenders and assaults that occurred (most frequently) from within families or by individuals known to the victims not from the more isolated, yet sensationalistic situations that PAL literature sought to demonize for these crimes.

While Part One is compelling, it is in Part Two, "Practices," where Chenier really hits her stride, evaluating the treatment options provided by psychiatric programs in southern Ontario, the classifications of sexual deviants into medical and criminalized categories, the pathology of prisons and prison sexual culture, and, again, the role played by the public, the press, and the state in constructing a particularly narrow notion of criminal sexual offenders. Carefully researched, and exceedingly well written, these final chapters will stimulate debate about the system and what, if any, reforms are feasible medically, financially, and socially. In all of this, Chenier is consistent in her class and gendered analysis, correctly pointing to the ways that compulsory heterosexuality, and indeed misogynistic views of male sexual privilege, structured the language, the programs offered, and the hierarchical system of sexual practice in prisons. She adroitly points to a consistent flaw in modern sexology in its "inability to connect gender, sexuality, and violence." (168) For example, government and prison officials were exceedingly concerned about the same-sex activity within prisons, and of the inability of offenders to make progress in adhering to normative modes of sexual behaviour while imprisoned. What ensued were seemingly serious but misguided deliberations at all levels of the prison and justice bureaucracy about the merits of providing access to women –



wives, prostitutes, or willing members of the community – who might assist in re-socializing the men. Archly representative of gendered and sexual social norms of the mid-century, this example from 1965 offers insight into the heterosexual, middle-class, male notions that prevailed as Chenier recounts that “the federal commissioner of penitentiaries, A.J. MacLeod, reported that he was allowing seventy-two hour passes for men to return home to visit their wives and families, and to mow the lawn.” (186)

As the proceeding summary and analysis indicates, Chenier’s contribution to mid-century sexualities’ history is substantial. This book successfully combines the medical, legal, and social history approaches that regretfully so often run on parallel historiographical tracks. Similarly, with its exhaustive primary source base, theoretical sophistication, and careful parsing of the politics and history of sexual deviancy, this is a work that will command attention. It is a timely evaluation of how the Canadian legal system got itself into the corner of dangerous sexual offender laws, and an indictment of the failures of the collective will to adequately fund treatment options for the incarcerated and of a prison administration system that often operates contrary to legislated goals for offenders. Finally, it raises some long-standing feminist concerns about the social and historical construction of sexual offenders as deviant, dangerous strangers as opposed to the realities of inter-familial sexual violence. One hopes that other historians will follow Chenier’s lead, and enlarge the frame of analysis offered here, to assess treatment options, laws, and public opinion in other provinces.

While one applauds the attention to gender and class matters, this work is largely silent about race and there is little discussion of race-based notions of appropriate sexual norms and deviancy.

An expansion of provincial and federal focus might very well enlarge such a discussion, one that is of increasing interest to social, sexual, and cultural historians.

Ultimately, one hopes that both policy makers and historians pick up this book and engage with Chenier’s concluding chapter where she calls for renewed public debate and policy discussions about offenders, their treatment (or lack thereof), and the legal and social constructions of such offences. This book vividly illustrates how policy and social perspectives concerning sexual offenders continue to employ mid-century models of deviance that have not served us well. Finally, the failure to find scientific, medical, or penal solutions to such matters, despite all the political bluster about getting tough on crime, continues, ironically, to put Canadian women and children at risk.

VALERIE J. KORINEK

University of Saskatchewan

**Gerald Hunt & David Rayside, eds.,**  
***Equity, Diversity, and Canadian Labour***  
(Toronto: University of Toronto Press  
2007)

THIS PAST LABOUR Day the annual festivities in Saskatoon sought to highlight the ongoing differential in pay between female and male workers. The traditional speeches were given and press releases were issued but this year organizers utilized a bit of activist theatre and gave all attendees a cookie. Men received an entire cookie but women merely received seventy percent of a cookie, graphically representing women’s lower wages and their diminished purchasing power. At a time when food and energy costs are rising dramatically, this message of basic injustice resonated with participants. Quoted in the local paper, organizers said their goals were twofold, to publicize this

ongoing wage discrepancy and, naturally, to provide some stimulus to change. Well, one hates to offer a grim dose of reality, but if those organizers avail themselves of the new book on this topic, *Equity, Diversity and Canadian Labour*, they won't be so optimistic about achieving their goals anytime soon, nor about any hard and fast link between educational campaigns to raise awareness about inequities in the workplace and tangible policies to ameliorate them.

In this volume, editors Gerald Hunt and David Rayside have compiled an impressive collection of scholars (Julie White, Anne Forrest, Judy Haiven, Karen Bentham, Hunt and Jonathon Eaton, Rayside and Fraser Valentine, Tania Das Gupta, and Linda Briskin) whose concise articles focus specifically upon employment equity pertaining to wages, gender, disability, sexual orientation, and race within the unionized workforce. All essays offer useful, albeit short historical commentaries about each equity group's participation in unions and an evaluation of the trajectory involved in union leaders beginning to champion these causes and workers. While these overviews will strike historians as too slim, the true strength of this volume lies in the contemporary commentary and analytical material.

Hunt and Rayside are very transparent about their goals for this volume, intending the book to offer an updated primer for those interested in these issues, to critically assess the blanket notions that unions have made considerable progress in these areas, and to offer suggestions for where unions, their executives, and their bargaining committees might go in the future. Clearly envisaged as a useful text for students, as well as union administrators and, perhaps, some unionized workers, it enumerates the challenges unions face in addressing diversity issues. While all of the articles do offer the tacit

conclusion that we've come a considerable distance from the darker days of the immediate post-war years, and certainly from the beginning of the 20th century, many readers will despair that none of unions, workers, employers nor various levels of the Canadian government have made significant progress at addressing these systemic concerns. If there is a flaw with the work it is the tendency to rely on top-down appraisals of union policies and documents, collective agreements, and bargaining processes. From these essays, we might more properly conclude that unions and their leadership aspire to transform themselves into more equitable and diverse organizations and seemingly believe strongly in those goals for the Canadian labour force. However, they face tremendous challenges in translating these ideals into practice.

Two of the most compelling articles, by Judy Haiven and Karen Bentham, stand out by virtue of their micro-analytical, bottom-up assessments of the tremendous difficulties of implementing changes, and how, in many cases, tensions amongst workers undercut the larger message of diversity and support in the workplace. Haiven's article, appropriately entitled "Union Response to Pay Equity: A Cautionary Tale," offers a blunt assessment of how one change agent, CUPE leader and activist "Tim Reiner" (a pseudonym), found himself marginalized and ultimately blacklisted for championing pay-equity within his union – the Saskatoon Catholic School Board. There the primarily male elementary school custodians balked at the notion that their rates of pay should be equitable with the school administrative support staff, who were almost all female. At stake were the male employees' job status, their familial roles as breadwinners, and their notions of workplace culture that prioritized the hardships of labouring work (often outside) against the seemingly easier

work and responsibilities of those who merely sat inside, at desks, utilizing keyboards, typewriters, and telephones as the major tools of their trade. The male workers successfully mobilized to defend their positions, going so far as to divorce themselves from the administrative staff, forming their own union local, and thus removing themselves from the threat of the implementation of pay equity.

Assessing this outcome years later, Haiven reported that the administrative staff were more unified and happy with this arrangement, though they were still paid less than their CUPE brethren. This finding was supported by the next essay, Karen Bentham's critical re-evaluation of the tangible progress (as opposed to the policy statements) on the so-called women's and family issues. Ultimately, Bentham writes, such assessments "call into question Canadian unions' genuine commitment to bargaining collective agreement provisions that promote gender equity." Furthermore, she adds, "overall the collective bargaining gains of the last two decades are unimpressive." (127)

Those familiar with the literature on unions and diversity know that the majority of published works focus upon race and gender issues. Thus, in branching out to summarize recent changes for disabled, transgendered, and gay, lesbian, and bisexual workers, this volume offers readers some innovative and less well known evaluations of 'diversity' politics within unions. According to Gerald Hunt and Jon Eaton, gays and lesbians have been at the forefront of recent workplace gains, but, as they are at pains to illustrate, this accrual of workplace victories is part of a larger framework of support provided by Charter of Rights and Freedoms decisions, and provincial human rights extensions. What might not be well known outside a small community of gay activists and/or sexuality historians is the significant role that Canadian

unions have played, since the 1970s, both in advocating for gay and lesbian workers, but also, more generally, in lending their institutional support, and leadership, to gay and lesbian activism. This is an aspect of the recent history of modern gay and lesbian activism that deserves to be better known and thus Hunt and Eaton are to be commended for bringing this to a wider audience. Having said that, this article, entitled "We are family," rather perfunctorily observes that gay and lesbian union activists were assisted by strong feminist and women's caucuses within the union movement, contradicting the other articles on women's issues that point to their failure to achieve tangible goals. Equally, it does not comprehensively explain why gay and lesbian issues achieved greater traction precisely when feminist and women's issues seemed to falter. Or what motivations, other than equity, employers might have had for supporting those goals.

This very thought-provoking volume concludes with two chapters that seek to offer a broader framework for analysis, and ultimately, for dialogue. In the first, David Rayside argues that Canadian unions are more advanced in their support for workplace diversity and equity than is the case in many other countries. This counters the tendency to view recent gains as meager, rather than to see that the Canadian labour movement is in the forefront on many matters of diversity and equity (in particular, with gay and lesbian issues). By contrast, Linda Briskin's forward-looking essay about where the movement needs to go next is less exuberant than Rayside's piece, offering a trenchant critique of the glacial pace of changes on many fronts (most notably, on gender issues). Still, Briskin is not without optimism for future advocacy, and in a relatively short article she lays out a persuasive plan of attack for the ways in which union leaders, activists, and mem-

bers can begin to make change happen in their own unions.

In conclusion, this beneficial publication bridges historical and contemporary assessments of diversity and equity policies, broadly construed, to offer students, union activists, and workers a quick overview of this field. While readers of this anthology will quickly realize that female workers will not be munching on an entire cookie anytime soon, still the volume manages to end on a strikingly hopeful note. By concluding with Briskin's essay, with its blueprint for change, it offers readers – students and activists alike – a blueprint for discussion, and one ultimately hopes, for action.

VALERIE J. KORINEK  
University of Saskatchewan

**Jean McKenzie Leiper, *Bar Codes: Women in the Legal Profession***  
(Vancouver: UBC Press 2006)

NUMEROUS BOOKS have explored the legal profession, including women's battles to gain admission to law, the business and corporatization of the profession, and the diversification of specializations and sectors within the legal profession. Women's contemporary representation and impact on the profession of law have garnered particular attention in recent detailed case studies in Australia, the US, Canada, and Britain. What sets *Bar Codes* apart from other books on lawyers and women in the legal profession more specifically?

Three elements make this book both original and worthy of scholarly attention. First, the subject is an important one. McKenzie Leiper examines women's experiences as lawyers, raising challenging debates over their integration, their impact on the culture of professional norms, and the consequences for augmenting time demands on both lawyers'

lives and the profession's reputation. Second, McKenzie Leiper has undertaken a highly innovative study, interviewing 110 women lawyers working across a range of practice settings throughout Ontario. These women were interviewed over an eight year period (1994–2002); the majority of them were interviewed twice over the span of the project. This sort of qualitative research with a longitudinal dimension, and incorporating mixed methods of questionnaires and time-scheduling measurement is exceptional. Third, McKenzie Leiper possesses a refreshing and engaging writing style that seamlessly integrates lawyers' narratives within theoretical debate.

McKenzie Leiper begins with a clever play on words – discussing civil and criminal codes as the cornerstones of legal doctrine, codes of conduct for professional standards, dress codes, and coded meanings embedded in the stultically masculine culture and traditions of law practice. It is the unwritten codes, or informal norms, that McKenzie Leiper argues are problematic for women. These include expectations about hours at the office, access to prized files, presence at informal meetings, and unspoken views about pregnancy and parental responsibilities. As McKenzie Leiper observes, "Women who either fail to crack the codes or choose to ignore them can remain committed members of the bar but they are distanced from the powerful centres of legal practice." (6)

An unusual focus in the book is McKenzie Leiper's extensive analysis of dress codes in courtroom appearances. The detailed interpretation of Portia in Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice* is admittedly taxing at times. Yet, McKenzie Leiper raises interesting issues surrounding the cultivation of professional reputations, legitimacy through dress, and legal robes as "mantles of professionalism that help to authenticate women"

in their courtroom performances. (19) Her analysis of women's responses to the robes explores elitism, professional identity formation, and empowerment versus disenfranchisement from symbolic authority.

Women's experiences in law school are first examined historically through the entry of early Canadian women lawyers to legal training. McKenzie Leiper offers a Bourdieusian approach to cultural and social capitals in law practice and legal curriculum. She does not shy away from unresolved debates on women's styles of practice, their purported commitment to an "ethic of care," and contemporary feminist critiques of law school culture and pedagogy. She forays into barriers of social class, race, sexual orientation, and physical disabilities among law students and lawyers and boldly asserts her distaste for inequities persistent in continuous escalation of tuition fees and the intertwined impact of career paths privileged by 'elite' law schools.

Time is another pervasive theme of *Bar Codes*. McKenzie Leiper undertakes quantitative analyses of indices of time crunch, comparing data from her lawyer surveys with Statistics Canada data on employed Canadian women. Dovetailing the potential monotony of numeric data are lawyers' own accounts of stress associated with highly regimented time commitments, further emphasizing themes of time famine, role overload, and harried lives deprived of personal time and sleep.

Her analysis of temporal conflicts in the lives of women lawyers leads McKenzie Leiper to conclude that women lawyers' time is "splintered and cross-hatched with the competing temporal obligations that mark their daily routines." (111) Her analysis underscores the "punishing time norms" (128) established by large law firms and infused throughout the profession, and pervading expectations that compel women to precariously balance

the double burden of career and family responsibilities. She documents tempo-numbing daily routines and diverse career paths of women lawyers through rich qualitative data and the display of actual time calendars and career charts among a sub-sample of lawyers. McKenzie Leiper's repeated interviews and subsequent follow-ups allow the reader to see the unfolding of careers rarely documented in studies of the profession. That said, nearly ten percent of McKenzie Leiper's sample had left the profession by the end of the study and their motives for leaving and destinations remain largely elusive.

The book is not without limitations. McKenzie Leiper herself acknowledges the cursory attention to issues of race and ethnicity. There are occasional theoretical loose ends, including passing references to Foucault's disciplinary practices and Goffman's theories of dress in chapter 2. The sampling method initially employed a non-probability sampling scheme that evolved to a second data tier using a random stratified sample. The data are perhaps less representative than presumed; yet the insight afforded through in-depth and longitudinal interviewing is substantial. Despite a convincing rationale for a sample comprised exclusively of women, one wonders to what extent men also "learn to be docile and to submit to the rigours of transformation in law school [and] in legal practice." (28) Furthermore, without gender comparisons, is it safe to assume the traditional 'masculine' linear career model has not diversified and that most male lawyers remain single-earners with a spouse at home to manage the 'personal' realm? To the extent that these patterns endure, McKenzie Leiper's research findings are all the more unsettling.

Central to *Bar Codes* is the question: "Have the expectations for performance been modified over the past thirty years as women have advanced in the system

or charted new approaches to the management of time, professional work, and family life?" (177–8) McKenzie Leiper's response is a tentative *yes*. Through their presence and agitation for change, women have "raised alarm bells" regarding gender inequities and prejudice in law practice and provoked reports, policies and responses by law societies and bar associations. (178) McKenzie Leiper offers tenacious optimism, uncovering stories of women who have carved their own rewarding, if not always conventional, career paths, who have achieved fulfilling lives, and choreographed intricate timetables despite the sometimes chaotic rhythm of children's needs and greedy institutions. I was perhaps less convinced by her claim that women lawyers have participated in a profound tidal process of social change. Yet, McKenzie Leiper concludes with acknowledgement of accomplished pioneering women lawyers and their impact on all levels of the justice system, offering inspiration for future generations of women lawyers.

*Bar Codes* will provoke debate and discussion among scholars of law and society, as well as among leaders in law societies, bar associations, and the country's law schools, and possibly even kindle discussion of progressive reform in the boardrooms of law firms. Women contemplating careers in law and those strategizing about how best to manage professional lives and personal goals will find this book a touchstone of insight, cautionary tales, and inspiration.

FIONA KAY

Queen's University

**Richard Allen, *The View from Murney Tower: Salem Bland, the Late Victorian Controversies, and the Search for a New Christianity, Book One. Salem Bland: A Canadian Odyssey*** (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 2008)

RICHARD ALLEN's latest addition to the fields of religious and intellectual history, *The View from Murney Tower*, provides a detailed account of the early life of Salem Bland, a giant in 19th century Canadian Methodism. At first glance, the book is a biography. Yet, at heart, the work chronicles the intellectual shifts of a crucial era for the Christian church, and for the nation itself. Bland both influenced and was affected by the religious and scientific thought of the day, and the structure of the book certainly reflects this dichotomy.

Overall, Allen follows a typical chronological narrative style. The book's early chapters are mainly devoted to Bland's father, Henry Flesher Bland, who was also a well-known Methodist preacher. By the fourth chapter, the focus turns to Bland himself. The remainder of the book chronicles his early career and the abundance of intellectual influences under which his work and personal faith developed. Thus, the book's main focus falls on the years between 1886 and the end of the Boer War. At just under four hundred pages, it almost goes without saying that Allen's writing is impressive in its depth and detail.

One of the book's greatest assets is its careful account of the shifting scientific and theological thought of the time. Bland was establishing his career and personal philosophies at the height of one of the most turbulent times in Western thought. He was well-read, theologically open, and maintained good notes; thus, Allen is able to make frequent forays into the intellectual currents of the day. With meticulous attention to philosophical

details, Allen guides us through those currents, always with an eye to Bland himself and how these trends affected him. *The View from Murney Tower*, as Allen intended, is truly an intellectual biography. In other words, while those who seek the details of Bland's everyday life may be disappointed (or, at least, frustrated by the effort required to find such details amid the philosophy and theology), anyone eager for a lengthy discussion of late 19th century thought will be satisfied.

Those with even a passing knowledge of Bland may associate him with the social gospel and labour movements of the day. Through Bland, Allen shows that the social gospel movement did not emerge out of fear or a desire for relevance but out of sincere application and adaptation of evangelical faith. In this way, Allen sets his work apart from that of Brian McKillop or Ramsay Cook, arguing that Bland's personal faith transition was not a negative reaction to the intellectual challenges of the time but a positive, creative, energetic response to the needs of the day. This volume ends just as the social gospel movement is beginning, meaning that the best discussions of Bland's involvement with labour fall at the end of the book (for example, in chapter thirteen). Hopefully, those looking for more complete discussions of this aspect of Bland's life will not be disappointed by the second volume of this biography.

Despite its many qualities, *The View from Murney Tower* is not without certain puzzling characteristics. For instance, even in the introductory pages, there is little discussion of source material (aside from very limited mention in the final two pages of the otherwise unrelated prologue). Allen admits to using historical imagination to flesh out areas in which the sources are sparse; indeed, his narrative is much improved by this tool. That said, any discussion of a dearth of sources

must be sought in the endnotes, not the text itself. The long gestation of this work no doubt contributed to the author's ease with the material; it has undoubtedly improved the quality of his story-telling. However, from the point of view of the reader, a more elaborate in-text discussion of sources might be useful.

As an intellectual biography, the book is highly successful. However, the result of such heavy emphasis on historical thought over the course of a lengthy narrative is a book that verges, at times, on inaccessibility. Chapter fourteen, for example, provides a detailed observation of the shifting theological winds affecting not only Bland, but contemporary Christianity itself. The chapter would be best understood by those with some theological training or personal knowledge. Indeed, unless one is particularly interested in the inner workings of theological discussions at that time, the chapter may seem superfluous. Allen's explorations of philosophical, religious, and scientific trends are certainly well written. Yet, given that his focus is Bland, these frequent (and lengthy) forays into 19th century thought may appear tangential.

Finally, we must consider the book's opening: a prologue which says very little about Bland and very much about the historiographical context in which Allen writes. On one hand, this sort of introduction is necessary: Allen is re-contextualizing his current work within several decades of religious and intellectual history. In this field, much has been written since Allen's last significant publications during the 1970s; some discussion is, therefore, understandable and welcome. On the other hand, one gets the impression that Allen is attempting to do too much in a relatively short space. After a brief but useful introduction to Bland himself, he turns to a historiographical discussion of evangelical and liberal theology in the late 19th and early 20th cen-

turies. The prologue is problematic on a number of fronts, not the least of which is an unusual and critical focus on Michael Gauvreau's work, *The Evangelical Century*. Allen's insistence that Gauvreau does not pay attention to popular religion, in spite of the fact that Allen does not do much of this himself, is confusing. Bland ministered to a variety of congregations, but most of his faith formation is shown as a response to the intellectual stimuli of the day. Allen also spends significant space defending criticism of his earlier work, *The Social Passion*, a book published nearly four decades ago. In the midst of such a diverse discussion, the reader is left to wonder what all of this has to do with Salem Bland. By focusing so specifically on historiography and certain nuances of religious and intellectual history, Allen is also limiting his audience to those for whom Bland's credentials are common knowledge. For those historians who seek to bring religious history more completely into the mainstream of the Canadian field, this prologue (and, in many ways, the book that follows) may seem like a missed opportunity.

Despite these shortcomings, *The View from Murney Tower* is a highly useful account of late 19th century thought: a marvelous intellectual history of a man and an era. Allen must be commended for writing a detailed, yet readable biography of a Methodist preacher whose influence was felt well into the 20th century, and well beyond the bounds of religious institutions. The book's conclusion leaves us with the expectation that much of Salem Bland's story remains untold: thus, we eagerly await the second volume.

HEATHER LAING

McMaster University

**Robert O'Brien, ed., *Solidarity First: Canadian Workers and Social Cohesion***  
(Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press 2008)

THIS 226-PAGE edited collection analyzes the concept and application of social cohesion for (mostly) Canadian workers. Notions of social cohesion centre on the degree of incorporation of individuals into society and their participation in its processes. The book's premise is that social cohesion both offers workers an opportunity to advance their interests and frequently works against those interests – that is to say, social cohesion is contested terrain and its utility to workers depends upon its basis, nature, and form. Worker responses to economic dislocation and rising inequity form the focus of the book's ten chapters. Among the key points made is that worker solidarity appears to be a prerequisite for both resisting negative forms of social cohesion and extracting social cohesion policies that advantage workers.

Belinda Leach and Charlotte Yates examine the gendered nature of work in the Ontario auto industry and its implication for social cohesion. In short, they argue the form and shape of social cohesion is partially determined by the position and experiences of women in work and the labour market. The gendering of paid and unpaid work and the post-war construction of men's and women's roles as complementary became sources of social cohesion. Though this gendered approach to maintaining social cohesion was challenged in the 1970s, the pressures exerted by neo-liberal and neo-conservative ideas thereafter have compelled women into increasingly intensified employment while stripping away social and state supports necessary for women to carry out their disproportionate social reproduction obligations.



Holly Gibbs examines how auto-part workers in Ontario and Mexico conceptualize “otherness,” finding that workers have internalized notions of international competitiveness and defined threats to their society in terms of foreign workers, rather than the operation of global economic systems. Further, cohesion based on the threat of other workers reduces the willingness of workers to resist capital’s interest in reducing wages and intensifying work. Indeed, the perceived need of workers to be maximally efficient to even maintain their jobs pits workers against each other and encourages self-discipline in the workforce.

Wayne Lewchuk and Don Wells examine the development of workplace cohesion at a Magna plant in Ontario while Mark Thomas considers how the social organization of working time at a Toyota factory retards the development of non-corporate social cohesion. Lewchuk and Wells note that Magna has developed a high worker commitment to managerial productivity goals via the organization of work as well as by emphasizing the threat posed to jobs by external market forces. This formulates social cohesion at a plant to the exclusion of social class and fosters collaboration between labour and capital. The ability of Magna to maintain its part of the bargain in the face of intensifying international competition is unclear. Thomas examines how the organization of work time at a Toyota plant in Ontario (including non-voluntary overtime and short-term contracts) is used to control workers and create a form of social cohesion, whereby workers refusing overtime are pressured to work harder. Thomas also notes that the organization of time is a site of (sporadic) resistance.

Larry Haiven considers the duality of social capital as it applies to social cohesion in Cape Breton. While Haiven provides no definitive conclusions, his discussion of culture as both a source

of economic development and a locus of conflict is quite engaging. While working-class issues and class conflict form a significant component of Cape Breton culture, the degree to which this culture can be used to develop social cohesion capable of challenging capital appears limited. Indeed, it may serve more as an outlet for tensions than as a part of a framing process that can lead to social mobilization.

Robert O’Brien examines the way in which civic associations perceive the development of a global, neo-liberal economy, and whether (and how) they engage with international forces. Fifteen interviews with a variety of associations find interesting cleavages between groups with national versus international focuses and between groups that see solutions based on increased competition versus increased solidarity. This highlights tensions about the boundaries of social cohesion evident in other case studies (e.g., Gibbs, and Lewchuk and Wells) and reinforces the message that worker solidarity appears to be a prerequisite for both resisting negative forms of social cohesion and extracting social cohesion policies that advantage workers.

Roy Adams’ chapter addresses collective bargaining from the perspective of human rights. This chapter is an odd inclusion: while an interesting perspective, it is not well connected to the theme of social cohesion, reprises Adams’ 2006 book *Labour Left Out*, and ignores the impact of the Supreme Court’s decision in *Health Services and Support – Facilities Subsector Bargaining Assn.*, relying instead on *Dunmore* (although this may reflect a delay in publication rather than an omission). Its value lies in demonstrating limited state commitment to worker collective representation, a significant source of worker cohesion and power.

Leah Vosko examines the difficult question of who requires statutory labour

protections by examining developments at the ILO and their application to precarious employment in Canada. This chapter nicely extends the analysis presented in Vosko's 2006 edited collection, *Precarious Employment: Understanding Labour Market Insecurity in Canada*. Using the standard employment relationship as the basis upon which to grant labour rights and allocate social benefits was a successful strategy for maintaining social cohesion following the Second World War, but has been significantly undermined by the development of non-standard employment relationships, many of which entail an element of precariousness. This approach perpetuates divisions within the working class that are significantly gendered and racialized.

The volume concludes with a brief essay by O'Brien. He notes that the studies in the book highlight that existing approaches to social cohesion typically pass costs from one group of workers and their families to another. This transfer of costs typically occurs along the lines of gender, employment (in)security, and nationality. The development of worker solidarity crossing these divisions appears to be a prerequisite for social cohesion policies that do not simply reapportion disadvantage among workers.

Overall, I found this volume a useful examination of social cohesion, its potential to improve workers' lives, and its utility in the hands of capital to disadvantage workers. While reading the chapters, two main classroom applications came to mind. The book (or portions of it) would be useful in introducing key features of the labour market and the management of employment relationships to undergraduates. The background information on, for example, the gendered nature of employment, is provided in a succinct and accessible manner while Lewchuk and Wells' chapter is a useful case study in HRM techniques. While the book takes a criti-

cal perspective on these issues, its avoidance of an overtly Marxist analysis may draw students into a critical appraisal of work relationships that they might otherwise discount because of ideological prejudice against Marxism. The book could also be used in advanced undergraduate courses focusing on understanding and analyzing social cohesion trends in the workplace, community, and society. In this respect, this collection provides a useful and broad-based examination of this phenomenon and its role in social reproduction.

BOB BARNETSON  
Athabasca University

**Douglas C. Harris, *Landing Native Fisheries: Indian Reserves and Fishing Rights in British Columbia, 1849–1925***  
(Vancouver: UBC Press 2008)

HARRIS'S CHIEF objective in writing this book is to lend support to the First Nations in British Columbia who have been negotiating with the BC government to settle land claims and associated rights ever since 1871 when the province joined Confederation. In particular, Harris takes great pains to delineate "reserve geography" through the use of detailed maps that appear throughout the book as well as in an appendix. These maps demarcate the land set aside from 1849 to 1925 as reserves. Well over half of that land was established to create access and rights to important adjacent fisheries. In other words, the principal argument in this very meticulously conducted study is that in the case of the First Nations of British Columbia, the setting aside of often small plots of land for the various bands was expressly done to secure access to important traditional fishing sites. That is, the land base cannot be dissociated from the adjacent water and the resources it contained. Since, apart from

a very few treaties, most of the land and resources comprising the province of British Columbia were not “alienated” from the indigenous inhabitants who, for the most part, were not “settled” on a particular piece of land but travelled over territories to use adjacent resources like fish and game, the argument elaborated in this book is very important in emphasizing the “prior claims” of the reserve lands to adjacent fisheries.

Well before BC entered Confederation in 1871, the colonial government had started the process of allocating land, including access to fisheries, to the various bands resident in what would become the new province. In 1849, the Hudson’s Bay Company assumed governance of the British colony on Vancouver Island. In the same year another colony was created on the mainland, and in 1866 they were joined together into one colony of the British Empire. The purpose of moving the territory from its status as a series of fur-trading posts to colonial status was to promote settlement as a way of marking the territory as British. There had earlier been American encroachment and the British wanted to reinforce the demarcation of the 49th parallel in the Oregon Treaty of 1846 as the border between American and British territory.

The HBC’s chief trader, James Douglas, was charged with negotiating land treaties with the indigenous peoples as a prelude to increased immigration and settlement. That is, there was nominal recognition that indigenous peoples had some claim to the land and resources that needed to be “extinguished.” “Aboriginal title and rights do not rise from Crown grant; nor do they depend on the application of the Royal Proclamation of 1763 to British Columbia. Instead, they arise from the long use and occupation of land and resources by Aboriginal peoples that predate British assertions of sovereignty.” (90) However, once the British did assume

control of the colony of what became the province of British Columbia, there was inconsistent recognition of the prior claims of the First Nations to the land and resources that were being opened up to immigration, settlement, and industrialization. Harris relies on the legal system as the means to settling Aboriginal claims. However, his book testifies to the extent that these claims were sometimes recognized, often abused or ignored, and even rescinded after being recognized.

What became known as the “Douglas Treaties” included 14 land purchases covering a small portion of Vancouver Island. In addition to two other treaties involving small holdings on the mainland, after 1854 the question of “Native title” remained unresolved. After Douglas, there were a number of attempts to demarcate reserves. Harris argues that over half of the more than 1,500 reserves allotted between 1849 and 1925 were intended to provide indigenous access to fisheries. This is the reason why so much of the “reserve geography” constituted a miniscule land base. Like the resources they captured, Aboriginal people migrated over the course of the seasons to capture the resource (the abundant fisheries constituted a major part of their dietary and trading needs), to trade with one another, and to winter in larger settlements. Fishery sites were an essential component of these migrations. As long as incoming settlers were interested primarily in the gold rush or in permanent settlements based on an agrarian economy, disputes over fishery rights were kept to a minimum. However, once the capitalist economy in the form of salmon canning took hold in the last quarter of the 19th century, there was direct competition for the capture of salmon, especially sockeye salmon.

Harris takes pains to take the reader through the rather convoluted legal apparatus of the British Empire as it affected

the common right of public access to capture fish, which varied according to whether the fish were found in tidal or non-tidal waters. What appeared to be relatively unproblematic in England, however, was vastly complicated by the geography of the Pacific Northwest coast. With establishment of the two colonies, Douglas began the arduous task of delineating land, including access to fisheries, for the First Nations. However, his work remained largely unfinished. Upon entry into Confederation in 1871, matters were complicated further when the federal state assumed responsibility for indigenous peoples under the Indian Act and for the fisheries (included in a separate department that produced its own legislation), while land became a provincial responsibility. Throughout the book, Harris takes pains to demonstrate the continuing recalcitrance on the part of both the province and the federal Department of Marine and Fisheries to recognize, much less to negotiate, the pre-existing rights of the First Nations to pursue their traditional fishing practices.

More than this, with the establishment of the salmon canning industry in the last quarter of the 19th century, not only were the pre-existing claims of the First Nations ignored, but their fisheries and important fishing sites were taken over to service the salmon canneries that became established on the major salmon-producing rivers and streams. While Indian agents often proved sympathetic to the rights of the First Nations, salmon canners who organized in a powerful lobby group, the federal fisheries department, and the provincial government not only refused to settle outstanding claims to land and fishery resources but began a process to cut back and rescind allocations made in the previous decades.

One of the most contentious continuing issues is over the "food fisheries," which were recognized by both the fish-

eries department and Indian Affairs as a right that the First Nations held. But the federal fisheries officers then tried to abolish this right, especially when the fishery sites and fish species were prized by non-Aboriginal fishers and fishing companies. Harris argues that had the First Nations been allowed control over their traditional fishing resources and fishing sites, there was hope that they could integrate into the emerging industrial economy. However, the reality was that they were dispossessed with the argument that they could then provide their labour to the canneries and fishing companies. But even in terms of their labour power, the First Nations suffered racial discrimination on the grounds that they were wards of the federal state under the Indian Act and thus unsuitable as wage workers.

In summary, then, both the strength and the weakness of this work is in its reliance on the legal system with its accompanying and convoluted political apparatuses to settle the largely outstanding and unresolved Aboriginal land claims that include fisheries rights. As Harris shows throughout the book, the provincial state over the course of the time period covered here refused to negotiate or to even recognize Aboriginal rights and title to the land and the federal fisheries department, for the most part, adopted a similar position. Various commissions, federal and provincial, took place with acknowledgement by at least some of the commissioners that the First Nations had rights that needed to be acknowledged and settled. But when these views contravened the various interests of fisheries bureaucrats, the salmon canners, the non-Aboriginal fishers, and provincial politicians, they were simply ignored. So one wonders how the legal and political systems can be used to uphold these centuries-long claims when they have so often in the past been used to thwart them. It seems that the fisheries

themselves will long have become extinct through capitalist exploitation before the rights of the First Nations to their fisheries ever become recognized, upheld, and enforced in Canadian federal and provincial law.

ALICJA MUSZYNSKI  
University of Waterloo

**John Sutton Lutz, *Makúk: A New History of Aboriginal-White Relations***  
(Vancouver: UBC Press 2008)

JOHN SUTTON LUTZ'S *Makúk: A New History of Aboriginal-White Relations* offers a much needed analysis of the intimate relationship between colonialism and capitalism in Canada. More specifically, *Makúk* provides a fresh perspective on the history of indigenous labour and its role in the making of the modern province of British Columbia. Lutz is both powerful and poetic in his reframing of this important history, and his book is a strong contribution that significantly moves the British Columbia historiography forward in new and exciting ways.

The concept of "makúk," an indigenous expression with several meanings, including "to exchange" and "let's trade," is employed skillfully as the text's guiding structure. Lutz explains that as the history of "makúk" in British Columbia is steeped in cultural misunderstanding, *Makúk* is "another attempt at cross-cultural communication." (13) In short, Lutz's goal is to broaden the conversation about colonialism, cultural exchange, and work so as to end the traditional marginalization of indigenous peoples' working experiences in history. In doing so, Lutz not only shows how indigenous peoples were important to the spread of capitalism in British Columbia, but also how they were able to work with and against non-indigenous immigrants to create spaces for themselves, their cultures,

and their own economies within the new colonial order of things.

The first two chapters of *Makúk* introduce readers to the early history of indigenous-newcomer relations on the Pacific Coast and to Lutz's loosely post-modern analytical framework. In the third chapter, *Makúk* clearly establishes itself as a strong critique of the role of the historiography of British Columbia in perpetuating the myth of the "Lazy Indian" through a misunderstanding of the extent and importance of indigenous labour. Lutz points out that scholars have traditionally argued that with the advent of newcomers, indigenous peoples were either pushed aside to make room for settler capitalist expansion or that they benefited temporarily before declining in wealth and importance. Lutz refutes these arguments and critiques the historiography for a "largely uncritical reliance on sources" that continue to ignore the widespread involvement of indigenous peoples in wage labour and the making of British Columbia. (21) He goes so far as to argue that the stereotype of the "Lazy Indian" is as much a construction of lazy historians as it was of racist colonialists.

To decentre the traditional historiography, Lutz uses a variety of new sources to locate previously unheard indigenous voices in relation to the history of work, including oral histories, autobiographies, biographies, and ethnographies. His overall finding is that as capitalist social relations spread throughout the territories of the Pacific Northwest Coast, "these extraordinary [indigenous] people did a very ordinary thing; they went to work for white employers and many prospered." (276) However, there is more to Lutz's project than simply highlighting indigenous peoples' engagement in wage labour. Lutz argues that capitalism did not simply replace traditional indigenous economies, but rather that a "moditional" economy was forged: a hybrid economy,

neither fully European nor indigenous, both traditional and modern. For Lutz, the term “moditional” captures the fluidity of a new economy that combined wage labour, prestige, subsistence, and welfare economies that many indigenous peoples struggled to make work for them. Lutz organizes the rest of his work around an explanation of how such “moditional” economies came about in British Columbia.

Chapters 4 and 5 function as micro-histories of two indigenous groups for point of comparison: the Lekwungen of southern Vancouver Island (who welcomed newcomers) and the Tsilhqot'in of the southern interior of the mainland (who drove newcomers away). The strength of these chapters lies in the juxtaposition of the very different responses of these two indigenous groups to newcomers and capitalist social relations. And yet, Lutz's overall argument is that no matter what strategy indigenous peoples adopted to deal with the newcomers – accommodation, resistance, or a combination of both – two hundred years after the arrival of Europeans, the Lekwungen, Tsilhqot'in, and the vast majority of indigenous peoples in British Columbia were “impoverished and dependent.” (281)

In chapters 6–8, Lutz situates the micro-histories of the Lekwungen and Tsilhqot'in within the macro-context of the socio-economic dynamics of colonial state-building. Chapter 6 traces the history of indigenous labour in two time periods. The first period, 1849–1885, shows indigenous involvement in the trading of food and furs, while the second period, 1885–1970, illustrates how indigenous involvement expanded as did capitalist relations throughout the new province. For example, Lutz explains how in the post-1885 period, it was indigenous peoples who cleared the first farm fields, acted as the original labour force in coal mines, were the first to mine gold, and

worked in sawmills, canneries, and on docks and steamships. Modern British Columbia was built on the backs of indigenous labourers. Indeed, Lutz argues that by the early 20th century, “British Columbia had become one of the most industrialized provinces in the country, and it did so on a workforce dominated by Aboriginal people.” (192) According to Lutz, it is clear that the response of many indigenous peoples living in British Columbia to newcomers was closer to that of the Lekwungen than that of the Tsilhqot'in.

In chapter 7 Lutz focuses on how the state, perhaps unknowingly, played a primary role in the creation of a moditional economy by shaping indigenous access to the capitalist, subsistence, prestige, and welfare economies. Although a strong chapter, unfortunately Lutz silences political protests by indigenous and non-indigenous peoples to the colonial project and misses the opportunity to highlight more clearly the close relationship between capitalism and colonial state-building. He does, however, do a fine job of explaining the complexities of the state's increasing involvement in welfare politics in Chapter 8. Lutz concludes his discussion by commenting on the modern version of the “Indian Problem” (not his words): the continuation of the legacy of poverty, illness, and general destitution of many living in indigenous communities throughout the province. But Lutz makes it clear, as he does throughout *Makúk*, that “the high rates of unemployment and welfare dependency among contemporary communities are recent historical phenomena, with observable roots and causes.” (4) As the state increasingly restricted indigenous access to subsistence resources and limited educational opportunities necessary for access to the wage labour market, many indigenous peoples turned to the government for help. According to Lutz,

the dire situation facing many indigenous communities is the consequence of the ruthless preserve-and-destroy dialectics of capitalism and the haunting legacies of colonial practices.

While the concept of a modal economy provides a new lens through which to view the history of indigenous labour in British Columbia, Lutz's concept of "peaceable subordination" demands critical attention. For Lutz, the latter concept refers to the "strategies used by certain European colonists and colonial states to dominate occupied lands, while publicly deploring the violence of conquest." (8) While colonialism arguably played out in different ways in the Pacific Northwest than it did on the American frontier, there are examples – like the Chilcotin War, which is discussed at length in Chapter 5 – that suggest that colonial conflict and the dispossession of indigenous peoples' lands were not always cloaked in a language of benevolence. Similarly, readers should challenge Lutz's linking of the concept of peaceable subordination to Ranjajit Guha's idea of dominance without hegemony. Here, I believe Lutz is working with a misunderstanding of hegemony, viewing it as deliberate and conscious consent rather than a fluid and active process of struggle for peoples' hearts, minds, and bodies. Writing the history of capitalism and colonialism in British Columbia as the struggle for hegemony allows for stories of accommodation and resistance as well as of the important ways in which these survival strategies intersect in the contact zone. In addition, Lutz's framework would have benefited from a more thorough analysis of class and the realities of capitalist exploitation that both indigenous and non-indigenous peoples experienced – and continue to experience – in the making of British Columbia. These limitations, however, only provide new

spaces and opportunities for scholars to further our historical understanding of the relationship between colonialism and capitalism in British Columbia. Overall, *Makúk* renews a pertinent discussion in the British Columbia historiography that I hope will reverberate throughout the fields of Canadian labour and colonial history.

SEAN CARLETON

Simon Fraser University

**Michiko Midge Ayukawa, *Hiroshima Immigrants in Canada, 1891–1941***  
(Vancouver: UBC Press 2008)

IN *HIROSHIMA Immigrants in Canada, 1891–1941*, Michiko Midge Ayukawa presents both a scholarly and an insider's view of the history of Japanese immigrants (Issei). As a second-generation Japanese Canadian (Nisei), Ayukawa examines this history as part of her efforts to learn more about her parents and the complex story of Issei experiences and attitudes. Her goal is to reconcile the previous histories written about Japanese Canadians as oppressed people who faced persecution with her memory of "a vibrant Japanese-Canadian community full of confident men and women." (xvii)

Ayukawa's nicely written study adds to a growing trend in scholarship on Japanese immigrant history in North America in its conceptualization of the Issei as a heterogeneous immigrant group, rather than a monolithic one. Even as she acknowledges shared aspects of the history of the Issei, including the impact of racism, she highlights differences based on place, gender, class, and generation.

She draws on her own family history, oral interviews, and historical scholarship produced in Japan and North America to tell the tale of Japanese Canadians, especially in and around Vancouver.

After earning a master's degree in history at the University of Victoria, Ayukawa continued to investigate this topic. She conducted 80 interviews in Japanese and English with three generations of people of Japanese descent across Canada and in Japan. Her research in Japanese-language scholarship adds to the richness of her study. Although English-language studies of Japanese immigrants in North America are frequently translated into Japanese, influencing scholarship in Japan, the reverse has rarely been the case. So, too, although scholars have conducted interviews with the Issei and Nisei in North America, few have done so in the Japanese language. Therefore, Ayukawa presents truly transnational research, providing insights drawn from scholarship and first-hand accounts from across Canada and Japan.

She develops her argument about the significance of difference in Japanese-Canadian history by tracing the story of Japanese immigrants from Hiroshima prefecture (or province). In the 1890s, the first immigrants from Hiroshima left for Canada to seek their fortunes. Her grandfather, Ishii Chokichi, left his village in 1907 and her father, Ishii Kenji, in 1912. Her mother, Takata Misayo, married Kenji and moved to Canada after a difficult first marriage in Japan.

Ayukawa also includes some of her experiences as a child of Hiroshima immigrants in her chapter on the Nisei. Here she explores the differences between the generations and the influences of the Issei on the Nisei. For example, the Issei raised the Nisei in some of the practices of the upper-class Japanese, even though that had not been part of their own upbringing. In her family, Ayukawa was forced to learn the *koto* (Japanese harp), even though her father came from a poor family in a remote mountain village. The Issei were strict and often burdened their

offspring with the message that they must do their best and not bring shame upon their families or the Japanese "race."

She makes a convincing case that prefectural origins mattered in Japanese-Canadian history. For instance, some prefectures encouraged Japanese residents to emigrate, while others did not. As she points out, looking for work elsewhere was a well-established pattern in Hiroshima, which "was the third-largest source of Japanese immigrants to Canada." (xx) Prefectural origins became points of identity and community formation in Canada. Immigrants united by prefecture to provide aid to each other, both formally through organization, and informally through friendships. Such prefectural links helped produce a key support network for immigrants who lacked a family-based support system in the new country. Ayukawa, for instance, felt connected to a group of "surrogate relatives" (xvii) of other Hiroshima immigrants in Canada. She argues that the support network was built on a shared sense of place in Japan, from which the Japanese developed the same dialect and culture, including tastes for certain foods.

Although she convincingly shows that regional identity mattered, she is less successful at demonstrating that immigrants from Hiroshima had a different experience in Canada than other Japanese immigrants. As evidence, she often provides detailed, biographical sketches of Hiroshima immigrants. However, too often they remain disjointed in the narrative and fail to illustrate how and why the individuals were unique as immigrants from Hiroshima, rather than typical of the Japanese immigrant experience.

One of the most interesting chapters in the book focuses on the history of Japanese immigrant women, most of whom arrived between 1908 and 1924. Here Ayukawa is at her best. She passionately



demonstrates that Issei women were not mere appendages to men, but central characters in the history of Japanese immigrants. In line with scholarship in women's history, she treats women as historical figures in their own right, rather than as just the wives of immigrants. Ayukawa demonstrates that many of the women were well educated in Japan and eager for adventure. She also documents their paid work lives and not only their family caregiving labour. For example, she identifies Japanese immigrant women who worked as domestic workers in white homes, ran boarding houses, and practiced midwifery, a major health care occupation among the Japanese. She includes discussion of the agricultural labour of women, many of whom worked with babies strapped to their backs. Such activities disturbed the gender expectations of some white neighbours who criticized Issei men for allowing women to chop wood, clear land, and perform the backbreaking labour of farming strawberries.

Ayukawa's research also contributes to labour history by illustrating how complicated it was for Issei workers to organize for better conditions. There were tensions between white workers and immigrant workers because immigrants resented the fact that they were paid less than white workers and the whites resented immigrants taking jobs. There were also grievances and animosities within Japanese immigrant communities as a result of vast economic differences between workers and employers, especially the wealthy Issei owners of lumber companies. Furthermore, immigrant workers had a complex relationship with immigrant labour contractors. Japanese workers in Canada were so grateful for employment that they often thought of Japanese labour contractors as benefactors. Yet, these contractors focused on their own self-interests and exploited the Issei workers just as whites

did. Immigrant workers' attitudes toward fellow countrymen "bosses," many of whom came from the same prefecture, affected their struggles over working conditions in times of class conflict.

In sum, this book provides a good overview of the history of Japanese immigrants from Hiroshima to British Columbia. Yet, it is much more than just a story of immigration from one Japanese prefecture to one Canadian city – it presents a key chapter in the development of Canada.

SUSAN L. SMITH

University of Alberta

**Gerald Tulchinsky, *Canada's Jews.***

***A People's Journey*** (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 2008)

*CANADA'S JEWS* is the product of Gerald Tulchinsky's life-long immersion in Canadian Jewish life and Jewish history. The book is both an update of and a replacement for his two-volume Jewish history, *Taking Root* and *Branching Out*, issued in the 1990s.

This successor work is a thorough (500 pages of text) and masterful survey of 240 years of organized Jewish community life that covers everything from class conflict in the clothing industry to the mentality of immigrant Holocaust survivors.

The book is grounded in traditional Canadian historiography, but because it incorporates newer social history, the book can be viewed as a comprehensive synthesis of newer and older history writing. Older accounts of the histories of immigrant groups tended to focus on institutions and to laud prominent ethnic community leaders. While Tulchinsky builds on this earlier foundation, he combines it with a rich body of recent scholarly work focused on social history.

There's another, more important way in which Tulchinsky's book reflects Canadian historiography and national history.

The themes of the book are the major staples of traditional Canadian history writing – French-English dualism and French-Canadian nationalism, regionalism, the British tie, Canadian-American relations – applied to Jewish life.

Within these staple themes, he shows, for example, the ambiguous position of Jews as a third solitude in Quebec, the anti-Jewish doctrines prevalent in French-Canadian nationalism, the regionally divided nature of Canadian Jewish settlement, the support of Canadian Jews for the British imperial tie because of what a Jewish newspaper called its “preservation of every individual culture within its realm,” (301) and the distinctiveness of Canadian from American Jewish life, for example, Jewish Canadians’ greater support for Zionism because dual loyalties were more permissible.

“The Canadian Jewish identity,” he writes, “was formulated within the parameters of the emerging Canadian national personality...” – a personality based on Canada “separating itself from the mother country and distinguishing itself from the United States.” Jewish traditions originating in Europe “take root and branch out in rough symbiosis with a new society that was distinctively North American: overwhelmingly British and French, conservative, traditional, precarious, and defensive.” (7)

Tulchinsky writes that Canadian Jewish history before and after the watershed year of 1920 was “shaped by a set of coordinates which were unique to the northern half of this continent, and which resulted in the evolution of a distinctive community: Canada’s political structure and dual ‘founding peoples,’ its economic dependency and long-lasting constitutional colonial status, its own immigration patterns and urbanization processes, had together shaped a historical experience different from that of United States Jewry.” (194)

At the same time, *Canada’s Jews* has plenty to engage the student of social and labour history. In this “northern land of ‘limited identities,’ where region, culture and class differ so significantly,” (192) Tulchinsky devotes plenty of space to class relations and particularly to Jewish working people, their unions in the clothing industry, and radical politics.

Tulchinsky emphasizes the class divisions within the Jewish community. Even before the mass migration of poor Jews from Eastern Europe in the late nineteenth century, “fairly sharp economic, ethnic, and religious differences existed within the Montreal Jewish community.” (71) Labour conflict in Quebec’s clothing industry during the 1920s and 1930s revealed “vicious class warfare within the community.” (254) His detailed coverage of the lengthy squabbles over the position of Jews in Quebec’s Protestant school system demonstrates the persistent clashes between the prosperous integrationist leadership in the west end of Montreal and the labour-backed “downtown Jews who adopted a nationalist position...” (288)

Tulchinsky starts his book with a description of the colonial era, mostly in Lower Canada, where the Hart family was an important actor in economic development and Jewish political rights were affirmed by the Assembly in 1832. He then surveys the mid-19th-century small-business enterprises of predominantly English and German immigrants through the use of credit reports from R.G. Dun and Company. He also considers the checkered fate of Jewish agricultural settlement in Western Canada.

The rising tide of Jewish immigration in the late 19th and early 20th centuries coincided with the development in Canada of what us historian Moses Rischin in *The Promised City* called “the great Jewish métier,” the clothing industry. (8) *Canada’s Jews* follows the interactions

of Jews with the industry as workers and owners from the 1880s to the post-World War II years. "Competition was rife, and expanding markets placed a premium on flexibility, price-cutting, mobility, and exploitation of workers, particularly women, children, and immigrants." (145)

Industry leader Lyon Cohen was representative of the owners in sharply criticizing unions and warning that the key question was "who should control the shop floor, the fore-man or the shop delegate." (156) In one of the most interesting sections of his book, Tulchinsky discusses the "provocative" (254) actions of some Jewish dress manufacturers in using anti-Semitism as a means of fighting the ILGWU, which was organizing a work force that was 80 percent French Canadian. During a bitter 1934 strike, "some Jewish workers tried to disguise themselves by speaking French and wearing crosses around their necks." (254)

Tulchinsky surveys the familiar story of virulent clerico-facism and anti-Semitism in French Canada during the inter-war period, which provides a context for understanding young Pierre Trudeau's attitudes in the early 1940s. *Le Devoir* ran articles characterizing Jews as "aliens, circumcised, criminals, mentally ill, trash of nations, Tartars infected with Semitism, malodorous – they smell of garlic, live in lice-ridden ghettos, have greasy hair and pot bellies, big crooked noses, and they are dirty." (313–14) The parallels with Nazi propaganda are depressingly familiar.

The book outlines the rough reception Jews received in English Canada, too, ranging from Goldwin Smith's Victorian diatribes to Social Credit's conspiratorial fantasies in the 1930s. Tulchinsky documents systematic discrimination in university admission policies in which anti-Jewish expression was rife, if more genteel than that of swastika-bearing

brawlers at Toronto's Christie Pits. Frank Underhill, the liberal University of Toronto historian, while supporting the right of a promising Jewish academic, Lionel Gelber, to be "the token Jew in the history department," noted that a student applying for a Rhodes scholarship was "a Jew with a good deal of the Jew's persecution complex and this makes him unduly aggressive and sarcastic in discussion and writing." (320) Some years before, Lewis Namier's application to teach at the University of Toronto had been turned down because, as Professor James Mavor commented, Namier "has the misfortune to have the Jewish characteristic of indistinct articulation strongly developed." (133) Needless to say, even those Jews with perfect articulation were systematically denied a variety of professional positions.

The post-war chapters document the withering of anti-Semitism and the strong impact of Holocaust survivors, who by 1990 comprised some 30 to 40 percent of Jews in Canada. Emphasis on Jewish labour and leftism declined in the face of the community's prosperity and prominence. The non-European cast of recent Jewish immigration gave the community a more varied face. Tulchinsky presents abundant statistics on the changing nature of the Jewish community and its demographic challenges, including the possibility that "Jewry's very survival was at risk" (480) in the face of assimilation and intermarriage.

Tulchinsky takes a balanced approach in that he covers not just the main conservative tendency in Canadian Judaism but also the left, working-class groups such as the Arbeiter Ring, Peretz Shule, and the United Jewish People's Order. But I think Tulchinsky suggests a sense of identification with Israel that may not presently exist as strongly as it did 15 or 20 years ago.

With its balanced synthesis of political, economic, and social history, Tulchinsky's book can be regarded as the standard account of Canadian Jewish history.

GENE HOMEL

British Columbia Institute  
of Technology

**John W. Warnock, *Creating a Failed State: The US and Canada in Afghanistan*** (Toronto: Fernwood 2008)

WHILE CANADIAN social scientists and humanists on the Left have developed parallel critical universes to their American counterparts in most areas, a peculiar exception is the area of foreign policy. For the most part, the literature on Canadian foreign policy is produced by Dr. Strangeloves for whom any suggestion that Canada is an imperialist or sub-imperialist power is taboo; instead we are peacemakers, defenders of democracy, supporters of good works, slayers of terrorists. We are truest to ourselves when we back the Americans in their various wars, defences of the free world, and craven and inward-looking when we do not. Though a few books on Canada's role in the Vietnam War challenge this social construction, there is little or no critical literature on our role in the world wars, the Boer War, the Korean War, the Middle East, Latin America, Haiti, the first Iraq war, or much else.

Jack Warnock's latest book is therefore welcome as at least a partial effort to view Canadian foreign policy from a Marxist perspective. This study of imperialism in Afghanistan is not primarily a book on Canadian foreign policy. There is only one chapter devoted to Canada's role in Afghanistan plus the odd mention here and there in other chapters of Canada's role. But, in Afghanistan, as in many other areas of the world, having a

critical perspective on Canadian foreign policy begins with understanding American interests and American actions. Warnock's intention is to provide such a perspective on the Afghanistan file. But he is also concerned with looking to the future, to the positive roles that Canada, or at least progressive Canadians, might play in helping Afghans to free themselves of foreign control and establish a future that he argues most of them want: one without rule by some combination of religious nutcases, warlords, and foreign powers motivated by economic interest.

Warnock observes that the US invasion of Afghanistan in 2001, often presented by supporters and opponents alike of the invasion as an emotional response to 9/11, had been planned before that event. The US had been the foreign backer of the post-Communist, pre-Taliban mujahideen regime led by the Northern Alliance from 1992 to 1996. Having happily armed and encouraged the mujahideen as they fought the Soviet-backed Communists, whose efforts to liberate women were met by mujahideen murders of women who took part in public life, the Americans showed little concern about Northern Alliance misogyny, brutality, or venality. While they were unhappy with the country's takeover by the rival Islamic crazy group, the Taliban, their concerns centred on the new government's unwillingness to be as cooperative regarding energy pipeline projects as the previous regime. In the months before 9/11, the US and its allies, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, prepared for an invasion of a recalcitrant Afghanistan. (11)

With 9/11, the Americans had the opportunity to find another reason for invading Afghanistan, however questionable it may have seemed to invade a country, wipe out its existing government and impose a new one to avenge a tragedy in one's home country that mostly involved

individuals of Saudi origin living in the us. The Taliban's insistence that it could hand Osama bin Laden to the Americans only after the latter provided its evidence that the al Qaeda leader was responsible for the 9/11 attacks became sufficient provocation for the Americans to impose their own agenda on Afghanistan. The Americans claimed that they were acting in self-defence and therefore within the principles of Article 51 of the United Nations charter. As Warnock makes clear several times, this use of Article 51 was fatuous – among other things, the Article does not allow for pure retaliation; retaliation is allowed only when the nation that has conducted an assault has not ended its aggression (in this case, it may never have even begun one). But the false claim that the UN had endorsed the American-led invasion of Afghanistan and the overthrow of the Taliban became part of the rhetoric of NATO's justification for other countries' involvement in Afghanistan on the American side. Canadian governments, in particular, mythologized their complicity with American imperialism as a contribution to a non-existent UN mission. The UN did sanction the International Security Assistance Force to provide security around Kabul and to train a new national army and national police force for Afghanistan. But this occurred only *after* the Americans had overthrown the Taliban, and the ISAF quickly came under American and NATO control, receiving not a penny of UN funds or a shred of UN supervision.

Warnock suggests that the UN's role was only one of several myths regarding Canadian participation. Canada's official position is that it is supporting the creation of a civil-rights culture in Afghanistan. But, in practice, Canada, like the United States, practices torture, rendition, and highly intrusive surveillance in Afghanistan. All of this is chalked up as necessary evils to give Afghans a future

that is more secular and peaceful than the one offered by the Taliban. But Canada has ignored Afghani public opinion which calls for military commanders and war criminals to be banned from public office, and has supported the American-favoured constitution which makes Shariah law, with its anti-women bias, the basic law. It has also treated as legitimate the government of President Hamid Karzai, "a CIA asset in Pakistan...[who] channeled \$2 billion in US humanitarian aid to various organizations that backed the mujahideen." (84) Warnock notes that the Americans foisted Karzai on the Constitutional Loya Jirga, and then carried out a sham election, marked by unending irregularities, to make him president and give him a parliament friendly to American economic and political interests.

Warnock ably documents the devastation that Western interference, in which Canada has played such a large role, has had on Afghanistan. Our vaunted reconstruction programs barely exist. And he makes clear that the failure of other NATO powers to participate in Afghanistan is a response to widespread public opposition throughout Europe to American imperialism in Afghanistan.

Unfortunately, Warnock has chosen to shear this book from the usual academic apparatus of footnotes, limiting himself to a "select bibliography." Though he has made use of primary materials, there is no evidence within the text that this is the case. This weakens the credibility of a book which makes one claim after another that is the opposite of what we read daily in the bourgeois media. When sources for very particular claims, such as the American plan to invade Afghanistan in the months preceding 9/11, are simply not provided in a clear way, a book of this kind is only of interest to the already converted. The book's apparent embrace of some of the "Truther" theories that the Bush government was involved in the 9/11

attacks makes it all the more important for Warnock to cite sources. His materials about 9/11 lack either detail or documentation, and give the impression of an easy acceptance of conspiracy theories.

A problem with the book's Canadian materials is that they provide no examination of Canada's aims in supporting the us in Afghanistan, and not, for example, in Iraq. Does Canada have imperialist interests of its own? Or is it just sucking up to Big Brother? What role do pro-military interests play in Canada? How effective are their opponents?

ALVIN FINKEL

Athabasca University

**Richard Ziegler, *Reclaiming the Canadian Left*** (Ottawa: Baico Publishing Consultants 2007)

IN *RECLAIMING the Canadian Left*, Richard Ziegler excoriates the Canadian Left (defined broadly) for failing to put the goal of economic equality at the centre of its political agenda. The book is heavy on denunciation and lacks the analytical subtlety that would be needed to capture the imagination and sympathies of even a thin slice of Left-wing activists and intellectuals. Nevertheless there is a moral imperative at the heart of Ziegler's argument that deserves more than a second thought.

The book's premise is that "the Canadian left has renounced even any semblance of economic equality as an objective." (6) In Ziegler's view it is not good enough to advocate for programs that would reduce economic inequality; rather a Left that is true to its political heritage must privilege a more-or-less pure vision of economic equality. The bulk of *Reclaiming the Canadian Left* addresses this question: "How is it that the Canadian left, formerly concerned with substantially reducing economic

differences, has arrived at a point where it is largely indifferent to or even supportive of immense inequalities?" (8-9)

Richard Ziegler begins his answer to this question by pointing to four generic features of the political and ideological landscape of contemporary Canada. (9-11) He quickly shifts to a visceral denunciation of the Left's identification and involvement with movements that supposedly work against the promotion of economic equality.

The first villain of Richard Ziegler's narrative is the new social movements – "primarily the women's, gay and lesbian and environmental." Ziegler is disdainful of these movements since "the majority of their members have no desire whatsoever for any substantial reduction of the wealth of the rich." He posits a zero-sum notion of political demands such that "the more attention a left-wing political party devotes to issues other than economic equality, the less that latter concern receives attention." The new social movements are depicted as "special interest groups" whose political agendas have successfully displaced the ideal of economic equality (19). These movements are further critiqued when they promote an understanding and appreciation of diversity since "the emphasis on diversity hinders redistribution as it is more difficult for people to share with others when differences with those others are stressed." (22) Finally, Ziegler blames the members of new social movements for creating a "climate of self-censorship and political correctness in today's left;" such is this purported climate that "the Canadian left is afraid to assert ... that the reduction of class differences should be the left's priority." (23)

The only new social movement for which Richard Ziegler has kind words is the environmental movement – he is supportive of the tendency in this movement that argues for negative economic

growth and “the establishment of limits to income and wealth to ensure nobody’s ecological footprint is excessive.” (25, 91) This assessment is revealing of Ziegler’s fundamental moral judgement: middle- and high-income wage earners are as much a part of the problem as the wealthy in Canadian society since they are earning more than what they need (41). Appreciating Richard Ziegler’s moral stance allows us to understand why he condemns health care professionals for profiting “enormously from the illnesses of others,” (27) and introduces the labour movement as the second villain in his story.

*Reclaiming the Canadian Left* argues that the contemporary Canadian labour movement pursues the material interests of workers who already have “superfluous income and wealth that should be subject to redistribution.” (41–42) Therefore the labour movement “is essentially a supporter of great social stratification” (35) since it is unwilling “to examine whether the existing disparities of income in society are justified and are having a destructive effect on societal cohesion and to consider whether pay increases will further aggravate these inequalities.” (36)

Richard Ziegler is particularly critical of public sector unionism. “The rise of the public sector unions,” he writes, “has contributed to the gratuitous wealth of workers, as governments, unlike companies, cannot relocate to find a cheaper labour force and are often obliged to submit to wage demands.” (43) This sentence echoes the common Right-wing critique of the ‘monopoly’ power of public sector unions. It is noteworthy that Ziegler fails to demonstrate how lower public sector wages in the current capitalist political economy (as opposed to an egalitarian utopia) would further the goal of economic equality. The author is also highly critical of the labour movement’s campaign for pay equity which he calls “a reactionary policy” even though “it is

undeniable that pay equity has resulted in a deserved pay increase of some work traditionally done by women.” (37) Ziegler proves himself to be a purist in this section – a policy like pay equity that merely reduces income inequalities is “reactionary” since it does not provide a basis for a fully egalitarian incomes policy.

In the end Richard Ziegler invokes his zero-sum notion of political demands to explain the labour movement’s negative influence on the Canadian Left: “the more attention the left accords Canadian workers, ... the less time it devotes to the question of redistribution.” (45) Unfortunately there is no appreciation in Ziegler’s analysis of how the solidarity of the labour movement can be an important basis for the spread of an egalitarian ethos; how the power of the organized working class can be a potent force for social change; and how, in the course of collective struggle, working-class consciousness can rapidly morph from a narrow, material focus to a broad, political focus.

The third villain in *Reclaiming the Canadian Left* is the anti-poverty movement. Richard Ziegler argues that “the anti-poverty movement is anti-egalitarian” because it does not target wealth as the cause of poverty and does not call for most Canadians to become poorer. Given his purist logic (see above), any movement that fails to privilege the egalitarian ideal is by definition “reactionary.” (56, 59) The anti-poverty movement has had a deleterious effect on the Canadian Left by “redirect[ing] thought away from the problem of wealth.” (59) While Ziegler certainly makes a valid point in identifying wealth as the source of poverty, he fails to acknowledge that anti-poverty programs redistribute income and wealth even when they do not explicitly invoke an egalitarian ideal. It is instructive that in the decade of the 1990s the OECD countries with the lowest poverty rates were also countries with relatively small gaps

in income share between the top 20 per cent and bottom 20 per cent of earners (as noted by Scott Sernau in *Worlds Apart: Social Inequalities in a New Century*).

In terms of existing Left-wing parties, Richard Ziegler denounces today's NDP as "merely another mainstream party dedicated to maintaining immense economic inequalities," dismisses the Scandinavian social democratic parties in a single sentence and terms radical Left groups "politically conservative" since they fail to meet his purist egalitarian standard. (64–65) To this point in his book, Ziegler has systematically rejected the Left-wing credentials of most of the movements and organizations that are traditionally found on the Left. Nevertheless he proceeds to propose the formation of a new Left-wing party that "would insist that all those in the wealthy countries possessing more than they need be required to share that surplus" (66) and campaign for a maximum 16 to 1 ratio between the income of the highest income world citizen and the lowest income world citizen. (66, 70) Given these party planks, my recommendation is to call such an organization the "Share the Wealth Party" or the "16 to 1 Party." My further suggestion is that Ziegler would do well to study the example of the Work Less Party of British Columbia (known for the slogan "Workers of the World Relax") to see how he might try to creatively promote his ideals.

Richard Ziegler's core moral belief is that "wealth is immoral" (87) and his possible agents of egalitarian social change are "those individuals who are able to transcend the multiple sources of their individual and collective identities ... and grasp what should be done ... the imperative of redistribution, even if it would monetarily diminish themselves." (90) *Reclaiming the Canadian Left* succeeds as a forthright moral argument for an egalitarian ideal. It fails because it posits

no social theory of wealth; is purist and doctrinaire in its political delineations; uncritically adopts Right-wing rhetoric and commonsense in critiquing new social movements and the labour movement; and is utterly devoid of humour.

TOM LANGFORD

University of Calgary

**Kiran Mirchandani and Wendy Chan, *Criminalizing Race, Criminalizing Poverty: Welfare Fraud Enforcement in Canada* (Winnipeg: Fernwood Publishing 2007)**

MIRCHANDANI AND Chan begin *Criminalizing Race, Criminalizing Poverty: Welfare Fraud Enforcement in Canada* with an introduction replete with ambitious goals for their book. Identifying seven inter-related but distinct areas to be covered they seem to bite off more than they can chew in a publication of less than 100 pages. To cover (i) the welfare fraud enforcement practices and strategies adopted by Ontario and British Columbia, (ii) the criminalization of poverty, (iii) the criminalization of race, (iv) the ways in which welfare fraud enforcement serves to "further neo-liberal governance structures," (v) the voices of welfare recipients of colour, and furthermore (vi) to increase awareness about the structural racism within social assistance policies and (vii) to make policy reform recommendations, is no small task. To do so effectively requires a solid framework within which to develop the respective areas and into which to weave the various discourses.

Mirchandani and Chan present such a framework through their discussion of how issues of gender, class, and race intersect to construct relations of power and institutional processes which stigmatize and marginalize certain groups of people. In exploring how these constructions "mediate society's understand-



ing and application of social policies," (9) they introduce a framework with the potential to integrate the various goals and objectives of the book. However, the framework they present is not sufficiently developed to successfully weave together the composite parts. Because of this, the strength of their argument is compromised in its component parts and as a whole. While some sections stand on their own, presenting a poignant and convincing case, others flounder without a structure to hang on to.

In examining the welfare fraud enforcement practices and strategies adopted by the provincial governments of Ontario and British Columbia, Mirchandani and Chan outline the relevant policies and begin to build a convincing case illustrating how these policies criminalize people on welfare. From snitch-lines (where neighbours and friends are expected to report on suspected welfare fraud) to greater streamlining of various provinces' welfare systems (to ensure recipients are not collecting benefits in more than one jurisdiction) to increased surveillance (including the hiring of additional staff to review case files), fraud enforcement initiatives contribute to the construction of welfare recipients as dishonest people and 'cheats.' Opposing the interests of taxpayers to those of welfare recipients, welfare fraud enforcement initiatives are legitimized. In an attempt "to reassure the public that their tax dollars are being well spent" (13) welfare fraud enforcement has been developed to mirror the criminal justice system to such an extent that the Harris government in Ontario proposed a plan that would mandate all welfare recipients to be fingerprinted in an effort to reduce fraud.

In looking at the numbers, Mirchandani and Chan present a clear case that welfare fraud accusations are largely unfounded and that the fraud rates and

estimates of money saved through fraud enforcement are grossly overstated. Furthermore, a number of fraud accusations result from system errors and are not, in fact, fraud at all. What these overstatements do achieve, however, is a criminalization of poverty. With the incidence of fraud ranging from less than 0.5 per cent to 4 per cent, depending upon the jurisdiction and source, the media and parliamentary attention to the issue implies that the rates are significantly higher. It draws on existing stereotypes and legitimizes a 'crack-down' on the poor and marginalized. Mirchandani and Chan's overview of the policies, numbers, and discussion of the representation of welfare fraud in the media powerfully illustrates the ways in which the poor are criminalized in Ontario and British Columbia.

Interwoven with their arguments demonstrating the criminalization of poverty through welfare fraud enforcement discourses and initiatives, is an analysis of the criminalization of race through the same processes. A key to understanding this analysis of race is the concept of 'racialization.' Racialization highlights "the systemic and continuous ways in which racism is produced" (46) and thereby "shifts the focus from the notion of race as fixed biological trait to an analysis of practices of dominant social groups." (47) Using the concept of racialization enables a discussion of how governmental institutions are constructed from the dominant paradigm, reflecting the beliefs and values of the dominant culture and inherently privileging the dominant class, race, and sex and systemically disadvantaging others. While Mirchandani and Chan do an excellent job of explicating the concept of racialization, their analysis of the process is less thorough. While they draw attention to race issues, they do not successfully weave together the processes of racialization and poverty and, as a result,

their discussion on race often comes across as a tag-on to the discussion of the criminalization of poverty.

Another key piece for Mirchandani and Chan is the ideological motivation behind the criminalization of race and poverty. Referring to neo-liberalism throughout the book, however, what they mean by the term is not clearly defined. They comment on how through the process of stigmatizing (82) and constructing “deeply negative stereotypes of welfare recipients,” (81) a dismantling of the welfare state has been legitimized. They refer to the “centrality placed on individual labour market participation” (87) in welfare reform. But, without defining what they mean by neo-liberalism, and how these concepts relate, the references remain oblique. As with their discussion of race, the references to neo-liberalism move between being weaved into the framework of the book and coming across as being appended.

One of the book’s strengths, however, is in the ways in which the voices of welfare recipients support and complement the theoretical and analytical work. The accounts of experiences told by participants tell a story of discrimination and criminalization that needs to be heard. Combined with the strength of the discussion on the criminalization of poverty that runs through the book, the experiences of welfare recipients add an important layer to the discussion. For anyone interested in income-support programs in Canada, this book documents some important experiences and trends as well as providing a number of provocative ideas to explore. However, while drawing attention to significant and important questions, the book falls short of the goals set out in the introduction. The book would be useful to a wider audience if some of the connections between the criminalization of poverty, the criminalization of race, and the influence of

neo-liberalism were more explicit, particularly as they inform government policy and institutions.

HANNAH GOA

University of Alberta

**Dimitry Anastakis, ed. *The Sixties: Passion, Politics, and Style*** (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press 2008)

THE STUDY OF the ‘Sixties’ is in full expansion. Both within and outside of Canada, books are being published, conferences are being held, and articles, theses, and collections of essays are in the process of being prepared. *The Sixties: Passion, Politics, and Style*, collecting articles first presented at a 2003 conference held at Montreal’s McCord Museum, forms part of this larger efflorescence. With articles spanning academic disciplines and treating a wide variety of topics, the book offers an eclectic look at some of the most important transformations and legacies of the decade.

In its range of topics and approaches the book casts a wide net. Authors explore questions as diverse as Charles de Gaulle’s speech from the balcony of Montreal City Hall to the Voice of Women’s opposition to the Vietnam War. The book’s protagonists vary from artists to architects to bureaucrats. Gender is the topic that is given the most sustained treatment, as a number of articles in the collection treat the complex ways in which gender ideals were debated, challenged, and transformed throughout the 1960s. Kristy Holmes, for example, offers an innovative reading of Joyce Wieland’s artistic work, arguing that Wieland sought not to defend, but to challenge Pierre Trudeau’s model of the rational liberal citizen. Holmes’ feminist critique of Trudeau is followed by an article by Christopher Dummitt, who offers an

important cultural history of masculinity and automobiles. By demonstrating the relationship between being 'manly' and being 'modern' in the years following World War II, he argues that when "automobile-centred high modernism came under attack," so too did the form of masculinity embedded within it. (74) Both Holmes and Dummitt, in different ways, remind us that some of the most profound social changes of the Sixties were registered not in the realm of high politics, but in the gender relations that shape everyday life.

Two chapters of *The Sixties* also demonstrate that, at the same time that gender norms were undergoing important challenges, conceptions of architecture and urban space were being contested and transformed. France Vanlaethem, for example, argues that critiques of architectural modernism began much earlier than the 1970s, the time during which critiques are generally assumed to have surfaced. All throughout the 1960s, she maintains, the practice of architecture was undergoing important changes, ensuring that a sense of ambivalence and unease hung over the profession. Krys Verrall, for her part, discusses the intersections and divergences among urban development projects, avant-garde art scenes, and civil rights and anti-poverty movements in New York and Halifax. As conceptual art in New York "dissociated itself from concurrent social movements that were unfolding on its own doorstep," she concludes, so too "did conceptual art and civil rights activism in Halifax develop along two racially segregated trajectories." (162)

In one form or another, Quebec forms the subject of nearly half of the book's chapters. Olivier Courteaux outlines the historical circumstances leading to de Gaulle's relationship with Quebec, and Marcel Martel explores the role of both Ontario and Quebec bureaucrats

in forming government policy on drug use. Courteaux and Martel's well-documented articles contrast with Gretta Chambers' impressionistic recollections. Chambers, an acclaimed journalist, even argues that over a period of five years "Quebec's churches were emptied and the 'priest-ridden' society disappeared without a trace." (19) This view of the Quiet Revolution as a "dramatic break" with a "parochial past" is also repeated in the book's introduction, where the Sixties in Quebec are portrayed as "a bridge from the time of Maurice Duplessis and the *Grande noirceur* to a vibrant, progressive, and modern Quebec." (4) There is no doubt that the Quiet Revolution was an important moment in Quebec history, but such generalizations, ignoring the rich historiographical debates on the topic, contribute little to our understanding of the period.

On the whole, the book's topics are varied and its argumentation nuanced. Yet, after finishing the book, one is left struggling to understand what is really meant by 'the Sixties.' Does studying the 'Sixties' merely mean studying anything that happened during the 1960s? Or is the period defined by its social, artistic, and cultural movements? Do the Canadian Sixties need to be understood through a national lens? Or were the Sixties in Canada merely one part of a much broader phenomenon? Perhaps more importantly, why are questions of race, immigration, labour, and region continually sidelined in discussions of the Sixties in Canada? If *The Sixties* at times alludes to these questions, they are never centrally addressed.

Part of the difficulty lies in the book's introduction. When attempting to define the book's scope and content, Anastakis suggests that the period may begin with the election of John F. Kennedy in the United States, or with "the seeming end of innocence symbolized by that president's murder." Or perhaps, he continues,

the period began with “the screaming arrival of the Beatles.” And because of the lasting impact of the style of the Sixties, he hints that the period may have no ending point at all. (3–4) While arguments over the beginning and ending point of the Sixties inevitably run in circles, defining the ‘Sixties’ in Canada by referring exclusively to developments in the United States points to many of the unresolved questions regarding how to think about the period in Canada.

*The Sixties: Passion, Politics, and Style* is not designed, however, to be the final word on the subject. Rather, it is conceived as a beginning, offering new lines of inquiry. Anastakis concludes the introduction by stating that the book’s articles demonstrate that the Sixties remain years of “uncertain clarity” and “ambiguous legacy.” (13) This is certainly true. And what this collection makes clear is that the period will be a subject of research and debate for years to come.

Sean Mills

New York University

**Leo Panitch and Colin Leys, eds.**  
***Coming to Terms with Nature: Socialist Register 2007*** (London: Merlin; New York: Monthly Review Press; Halifax: Fernwood Publishing)

IN THEIR CHARACTERISTICALLY dense and succinct preface to the 2007 edition of the *Socialist Register*, the editors make two important observations. The first is that socialist theorists have, until recently, not recognized environmental problems as being urgent, potentially irreversible, and “integral” to the socialist project. The second observation is that “mainstream environmentalists” continue to look to a kind of “market ecology” for solutions, “as if markets and technocracy can solve ecological problems without reference to politics and democracy.” (xiv) These

observations speak to a failure of communication between critical political theorists and the practitioners of ecological science that continues to hobble both political leadership and active citizenship. While the reasons for this failure are complex (and not the primary concern of this collection), socialists can contribute to ecological praxis by improving their own understanding of the relationships between contemporary capitalism and ecological crises. An important aspect of this undertaking is to more clearly conceptualize “the kind of politics that could lead to an ecologically sustainable as well as a democratic socialism.” (ix)

Overall, the collection very admirably achieves its objectives. The chapters by Neil Smith, Elmar Altvater, Daniel Buck, and Philip McMichael, in particular, go a long way toward fulfilling the collection’s aim of providing a “better ecosocialist understanding of contemporary capitalism.” (ix) Smith describes the ways in which nature is increasingly being commodified, socially produced, and financialized. Drawing on Marx, and on the work of the French School of Regulation, he argues that a real subsumption of nature to capital is taking place (like the earlier real subsumption of labour to capital in the intensive regime of accumulation). Nature is now not only being *appropriated* by capitalism, but also *produced* by capitalism, in the form of new technologies – in particular, biotechnologies. The eco-Marxist theorist, James O’Connor, drew attention to the same phenomena, albeit using different terms, in work published in 1988 and 1998. O’Connor viewed capital’s drive to “remake nature” as a response to the “liquidity crisis” generated by its own consumption of resources, and as requiring, also, the remaking of science and technology in its own image. Thus, monoculture forests or GMOs could be understood as capitalist attempts to

speed up nature's rates of regeneration or to transform nature into new commodity forms. This more intensive exploitation of nature, O'Connor argued, resembles the transformations of labour processes aimed at increasing relative surplus value. Interestingly, Smith seems to take up where O'Connor left off, affirming with the benefit of greater hindsight the trends that were becoming apparent in the mid-1980s. From this vantage point, Smith emphasizes the ways in which the social creation and financialization of nature (e.g., GMOs and carbon credits, respectively) constitute new accumulation strategies.

Elmar Altvater, focusing on "fossil capitalism," argues that the historical "congruence of capitalism, fossil energy, rationalism and industrialism" was both unique and "perfect" for the requirements of capitalist accumulation, and that fossil energy "fits into capitalism's societal relation to nature." (41–2) Fossil fuels did bring about a radical acceleration and spatial expansion of industrial capitalism. However, Altvater argues, the profound crisis of capitalism today is that a continued reliance upon fossil-fuelled growth risks ecological destruction, and at the same time, no economy based on renewable energy sources will be able to "power the machine of capitalist accumulation and growth." (45) In particular, a solar revolution will require "a radical transformation of the patterns of production and consumption, life and work, gender relations, and the spatial and temporal organization of social life." (54) In Altvater's view, these new directions will necessarily be non-capitalist.

Altvater is not alone, of course, in associating "soft energy" alternatives such as solar energy with transition to decentralized (more democratic) control over energy production, less globalized (and more self-reliant) economic circuits, and less consumption-driven societies.

While it is tempting to cling to the hope offered by this prediction of capitalism's inevitable demise (beginning in about four decades, with the end of oil), there remain compelling grounds for skepticism and uncertainty about the dependence of capitalist social relations upon a specific energy regime. Indeed, many environmental thinkers have promoted ecological modernization precisely on the grounds that it is compatible with capitalism. Nuclear power, – which is not discussed in any detail by any of the authors – while not a renewable source of energy (because of limited reserves of uranium), could extend the life of capitalism for a very long time, with some risks mitigated by small-scale reactors. Nuclear, indeed, is enjoying a "renaissance" of credibility, thanks to the promotional efforts of the nuclear industry and supportive governments – also some environmentalists, such as James Lovelock and Patrick Moore – who have identified nuclear power as a solution to global warming.

Daniel Buck predicts that capitalism *will* survive the "ecological challenge" (although the future mode of regulation could be more inegalitarian and inhumane), because it is not oil, but technology, that is central to the capitalist mode of production. Buck's argument regarding the potential of capitalists to produce radical technological breakthroughs resembles that of the "Prometheans" of the 1980s, who insisted that "human ingenuity" would find solutions to any ecological limits to economic growth. Much of what is at issue here is our understanding of the necessity of incessant economic growth (in terms of energy and material throughputs) for the continuation of capitalism as a mode of production. Also at issue is how we assess the potential of ecological modernization to reduce throughputs and wastes to an ecologically sustainable level within a capitalist mode of production. Costas

Panayotakis argues that technological fixes alone cannot resolve the “third” contradiction of capitalism, which is its inability to provide “a richer and more satisfying life for all human beings.” (260) The arguments in this chapter have been advanced before – notably, by Herbert Marcuse – and the author seems pessimistic about the possibility of resistance to capitalist consumer culture. He proposes restrictions on advertising, but it is not evident where the agency for such a reform is likely to come.

The chapters that focus on particular countries or regions illustrate the difficulties of generalization with regard to “the kind of politics that could lead to an ecologically sustainable as well as a democratic socialism.” (ix) On the one hand, strategies of collective action need to be rooted in specific local contexts. On the other hand, to advance collective action in the form of international solidarity, we need to identify the *linkages* among local contexts. Case studies include renewable energy policy in the UK, political responses to Hurricane Katrina in the US, hyper-development in China, the crisis of food production in sub-Saharan Africa, obstacles to the provision of clean, safe water and sanitation to two billion people, the political economy of the Kyoto Protocol, “green capitalism” as a substitute for the reduction of consumption in the USA, and the story of the German Green Party’s de-radicalization. In addition to the five chapters described above, chapters by Joan Martinez-Alier, Michael Löwy, and Greg Albo focus on eco-socialist concepts and strategy.

Harris-White and Harris’ critique of the UK Labour government’s “aspirational” climate change policy is highly instructive for Canadians, whose governments (Liberal and Conservative) have followed the same strategy. This analysis recognizes the complexity of regulatory pressures and interests in the energy

policy field, the difficulties of identifying actors’ societal interests (given the murkiness of NGO-corporate relations), and the difficulties of documenting the influence of business in secretive policy-making processes. Yet the analysis of policy outcomes yields an uncomplicated explanation for governmental non-action with regard to investment in renewable energy: “a weakened state at the mercy of industrial interests.” (84) The authors do not have very hopeful things to say about the social actors that might transform state-society relations in the UK.

The chapter by Wen and Li provides an overview of multiple aspects of China’s environmental crisis. However, it does not identify the actors who might bring about a transition to a more egalitarian and ecologically sustainable model of development – and with whom eco-socialists elsewhere might develop solidaristic strategies. Bernstein and Woodhouse provide a complex analysis of the different effects of the intensified commoditization of agriculture on sub-Saharan Africa’s “classes of labour,” ending their chapter with a list of questions about the possible sources or forms of collective action for a more egalitarian and environmentally sustainable agricultural model. The juxtaposition of the two chapters draws attention to a striking commonality: the relationship of consumption in the Global North to ecological crises in the Global South. In the case of China, both labour and nature are hyper-exploited to produce cheap consumer and industrial goods for export. In sub-Saharan Africa, fisheries and forests are being decimated, and agricultural land reallocated to cash crops for export (including the water-intensive production of flowers for export to Europe), while for the majority of the population, “life is highly unpredictable.” (159)

Philip McMichael’s chapter maps out the global political economy of trans-

formations in agriculture and food provision since the colonial era, touching particularly on meat production, factory farming, and genetically modified crops. This chapter offers a fuller discussion of alternative models and social agency for change than some of the book's other chapters. I have used it in a third-year course and found that it made a big impression on students. Eric Swynge-douw's chapter on the commoditization of water attempts to make a similar kind of analysis, arguing that water scarcity (like famines) is largely socially constructed. While this is certainly a large part of the story, this chapter pays little attention to effects on global fresh water supply of global warming and intensive industrial uses (including agricultural). The theoretical argument would have been strengthened by more grounding in empirical research and less use of language such as "socio-hydrological cycle" or "socio-spatial flows" which are rather impenetrable to most readers. The most interesting part of the chapter is the section that discusses – like Colin Leys' remarkable *Market-Driven Politics* – how public goods like water are commodified, and what obstacles commodification encounters. It would be illuminating to extend this general discussion to a comparative analysis of attempts to commodify water in different contexts, in particular, to identify successful strategies of resistance.

Heather Roger's "Garbage Capitalism's Green Commerce" is a great read. It very effectively tackles the old problem of individual responsibility versus structural change (or state regulation) as solutions to environmental crisis. This chapter will be highly effective in North American classrooms, where, typically, students have bought into the very ideology that Rogers describes, that is, that individual consumers are responsible for environmental problems and that con-

sumer power can make capitalism green (if only we can overcome our "selfish human nature"). This chapter shines a spotlight on corporate greenwashing and the "shallowness" of the green consumerism/capitalism approach to ecological sustainability.

Jamie Peck's essay "Neoliberal Hurricane: Who Framed New Orleans?" also focuses on the powerful pro-capitalist ideological campaign to frame what is at stake in various environmental crises. He offers a careful, if perhaps overly detailed reconstruction of how neo-conservative think-tanks sought (more or less successfully) to persuade some of the America media, as well as the Bush Administration, neither to break with a neo-liberal role for the state, nor to attribute the hurricane to climate change. The result, Peck argues, is that the disaster was "transformed into a malformed reconstruction program that blames, and morally regulates, the most vulnerable victims, while setting in train "[w]holescale gentrification on a scale unseen in the United States." (122) While the focus on the influence of neo-con think-tanks is highly instructive, the essay leaves the impression that no other discourses about the meaning of Hurricane Katrina have been heard in the United States, in particular with regard to broader public opinion. A fuller answer to the question posed in the chapter's title would give some attention to a wider range of media, think-tanks, NGOs, and other actors.

The last three chapters are of particular interest from the point of view of eco-socialist strategy. Löwy outlines an eco-socialist vision with a central role for participatory, democratic planning. This is an important counterpart to the preceding eco-Marxist analyses of the capitalist roots of the environmental and social crises confronting the world. As is perhaps unavoidable, given the size of the task and the limits of space, Löwy's dis-

cussion of the relationship between short-term reforms and radical transformation is somewhat truncated and in need of clarification. On one hand, Green parties are criticized for remaining within the boundaries of social liberalism; on the other hand, he lists reforms that have been supported by Green Parties as examples of “urgent eco-social demands [that] can lead to a process of radicalization, if such demands are not adapted so as to fit in with the requirements of ‘competitiveness.’” (306) We are left wondering what forms, specifically, these demands should take so as not to be adapted (adaptable?) to the needs of capitalist accumulation.

Frieder Otto Wolf picks up on the question of the roles that have been played by Green, or eco-left parties, focusing on the prototypical German Greens. Although Wolf identifies a number of causes of the Greens’ slide toward the acceptance of neo-liberal economics, the key explanation appears to be the comparative weakness of the Green Left within the party. Wolf understands very clearly what is at stake, politically, in debates about the Green parties. If the Greens were the counter-hegemonic “movement parties” of the future – the new hope to defeat capitalism – and they are seen to be failing, what should we conclude? Not one to succumb to despair, Wolf offers some ideas about the kind of political party that might successfully resist integration. However, he argues that attempts to form such radical parties will be premature until the social movements giving rise to them have gone through a period of “education and self-education,” as modeled by ATTAC or by the World Social Forum. (331)

Finally, Greg Albo argues, in the concluding chapter, that eco-socialism must address the realities of a global capitalist economy, and should connect to territorial scales of anti-capitalist, democratic struggle that transcend the local.

There is some unevenness among the chapters in the extent of their treatment of “the kind of politics” and social agency which may advance the project of the eco-left. The essays do, however, go a long way toward providing an eco-Marxist framework for interpreting the causes of a broad range of ecological crises. Through the integration of ecological concepts, discourse analysis, and Marxist political economy, this collection helps us understand the obstacles to, and potential for, radical ecological change.

LAURIE ADKIN

University of Alberta

**Chad Montrie, *Making a Living: Work and Environment in the United States***  
(Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press 2008)

HISTORY is fundamentally the story of humans transforming the natural world through their labours. And yet, despite the deep connections between human work and the natural environment, this relationship – “the core element of human history,” in Chad Montrie’s opinion – has largely been neglected by modern historians. (129) The specialization of academic subfields has meant that labour historians have focused primarily upon labourers and the labour movement while environmental historians have focused primarily upon the environment and the environmental movement. Never the twain shall meet. Montrie’s *Making a Living: Work and Environment in the United States* seeks to bridge this historiographical gap and “tell a story that should resonate with scholars working in both environmental and labor history.” (8)

In six short essays examining textile mill girls in Lowell, slaves and sharecroppers in the Mississippi Delta, female homesteaders in Kansas and Nebraska, coal miners in Appalachia, autoworkers



in Detroit, and Hispanic farm workers in southern California, Montrie attempts to reveal how workers resisted, with varying degrees of success, the labour processes that alienated them from both work and nature. Central to this task is the author's "common theory" of alienation. Labour historians have understandably directed their attentions to the exploitation of labour by capital and the alienation of industrial workers from the labour process. Environmental historians have understandably focused on a different consequence of the Industrial Revolution: the exploitation of nature and the alienation of humans from the natural world. Montrie suggests, quite sensibly, that these two processes of alienation were connected: "the exploitation of American workers intensified while their sense of separation from the natural world became more acute." (8)

Also significant is Montrie's ambitious and revisionist claim that some workers, in the process of resisting their estrangement from both work and nature, "also helped forge a robust environmental movement." (91) It has long been a truism among environmental historians that the origins of the "environmental movement" were distinctly middle-class. Montrie argues, to the contrary, that autoworkers "pioneered a working-class environmentalism, an important but somewhat forgotten foundation for the mainstream concern that blossomed across the country." (92)

Montrie's claims that workers, rather than elites, played a crucial role in forging environmentalism as well as his emphasis on coupling labour and environmental history should serve as a wake-up call to specialists in both fields. He makes a compelling case that work and nature cannot be studied apart from each other: "Paying attention to workers' relationship with the natural world through their work can and will alter the way we think about

their experiences during industrialization, their changing identities, their varied and evolving culture and values, their efforts to create and maintain unions and other social organizations, as well as their role in politics." (6)

*Making a Living* is therefore stimulating, insightful, and relevant. However, the book seems only to add a new historiographical gloss on an old story that has been told by hundreds of social historians over the last fifty years. That story, in short, is the estrangement of artisans and farmers as holistic, rewarding, and productive labours gave way to fragmented, routinized, and oppressive industrial work regimes, followed by the valiant, but ultimately futile, resistance of these workers to such conditions. Montrie introduces the storyline in these terms: "Under capitalism, the power of living beings for creative productive activity is largely reduced to a mere means to satisfy animal needs, when they are forced to sell their labour power for a wage and give up claim to the products of their labour. This severs most of their remaining organic connections to nature and thereby compounds an actual and sensed estrangement from self, although it is not complete. Workers are not entirely bereft of ways to respond and resist, and they certainly do so, a fact that *Making a Living* attempts to reveal and explain." (7)

Sentences like this one provide a kind of historiographical déjà vu – is it the 1970s again? The storyline is valid. But does rehashing Marx's theory of alienation push forward our historical understanding? Alienation is still relevant. But that does not make it new or counterintuitive or cutting edge, as Montrie would have us believe, even if we add nature to the mix.

Another problem with the book is rural nostalgia. Montrie, like most of us ("us" meaning urban middle-class academics), takes a pessimistic view of the process

that estranged workers from nature. Even if he grudgingly acknowledges that modernization had “a few good ends” – “access to better schools, doctors, and hospitals, as well as cultural amenities such as movie theatres, amusement parks, and dance halls,” he generally depicts the lives of workers after their separation from nature – even those who fled poverty in Appalachia for high-paying wartime jobs in the North – as largely miserable and bleak. (91) Preindustrial labours, on the other hand, are cast in the most glowing terms: “Settled on a hillside or nestled in a hollow with access to bottomland, mountain residents grew, raised, gathered, and caught their subsistence as part of family production units, based on an ideal of interdependence and a life lived close to the natural world that was directly and perceptibly around them. There was a division of labor, often by gender and age, but family members had a sense of their place and function, and their work was meaningful.” (74)

I am critical because I also fall into the trap of romanticizing preindustrial labours and demonizing the “dark satanic mills.” But only by escaping such nostalgia can we begin to tell a new story. If not, we are left retelling the same old tale of “Gemeinschaft and Gesellschaft,” or, as one of my mentors used to call it, the “community goes smash” model. I like this model too. But it needs rethinking, and for the same reason that environmental historians have jettisoned the concept of “pristine” wilderness: it posits a romantic and ahistorical past.

Montrie is trying to rethink things and *Making a Living* is a step in that direction. His book should stir a lively debate in graduate school seminars among environmental and labour historians who will likely meet in separate classrooms. Unfortunately, the book will not gain much of an audience outside of academia where we really need a rethinking

of the relationship between labour and the environment. For too long, a wall has separated workers and environmentalists just as it has divided historians. It's time to bring the discussion together and stimulate debate. Chad Montrie has tried to do just that and I applaud him for it.

DAVID ARNOLD

Columbia Basin College

**Joseph Gerteis, *Class and the Color Line: Interracial Class Coalition in the Knights of Labor and the Populist Movement*** (Durham and London: Duke University Press 2007)

JOSEPH GERTEIS' BOOK is a valuable contribution to the massive, and still burgeoning, literature on race and class in American history. His subject is the Knights of Labor and the Populists, which he identifies as “at once the most important class movements of the Gilded Age and the era's most important vehicles for interracial organizing.” (202)

There is a longstanding historiographic debate about these movements' complex attitudes towards race and particularly organizing across the colour line. In reassessing the Knights' and Populists' activity in the American South, Gerteis brings fresh perspective to this old question, and produces insights and modes of analysis that are significant for broader debates about labour, social history, and race relations.

He contends that most of the scholarly discussion about the Knights and the Populists has been driven by either a preoccupation with the “fluidity and gamesmanship surrounding race,” or a given historian's own conceptions of race and class. (3–4) Gerteis insists that if we accept that race is socially constructed, then what matters most are the ideas of the historical actors, in this case the people and organizations that sought to

change the social and economic conditions of their day. "Rather than try to engage in abstract argument about the ultimate interests or intents of the movements with regard to race," he writes, "my goal is to reconstruct the way that the movements made sense of their own interests and identities." (4)

One debate about "ultimate intents" that Gerteis especially wants to escape pertains to whether the Knights and Populists were exclusive or inclusive, and especially whether their rhetoric about uniting white and black "producers" was sincere or cynical. Gerteis credits Eric Arnesen for "nailing this problem when he labeled it the 'how racist/racially egalitarian were they' question." (204)

Gerteis declares the opposition to be a false one, and argues that these movements were clearly *both* exclusive and inclusive, egalitarian in some instances and avowedly racist in others. A more fruitful approach, he argues, is to explore where and how the lines of division were drawn in an era, after Reconstruction, when race relations and class structures appeared unstable and the potential for change seemed great.

The bulk of his research is dedicated to tracing these lines of division on two planes: the broader "movement-level narratives" created by the movements, and particular local or regional contexts. He finds that attitudes could vary drastically depending on a number of variables, such as which racial/ethnic group was being discussed. Gerteis contends that the Knights vilified immigrants from Eastern Europe and Asia while often portraying blacks as potential allies to their movement. Similarly, the Populists pedaled images of English bankers, particularly London Jews, controlling financial markets, but often claimed that both white and black farmers were victims of their manipulations.

The "type" of equality was also important, as the Populists in particular often supported expanded political rights for blacks but adamantly opposed social equality or integration. Timing was another factor, with views of blacks depending on whether one focuses on "the giddy heyday of the movements [when] they felt that everything was possible, even overcoming the 'color line' once and for all" (202) or on the periods after these high hopes were dashed.

The variable that receives most attention is local and regional conditions, with Gerteis offering detailed analyses of four different settings. In Richmond, Virginia, where there was a well organized black population with strong community-based institutions such as churches and schools, the Knights of Labor made major – and nearly successful – efforts to build an inter-racial alliance. (Chapter 3) But in Atlanta, Georgia, where the black community was not nearly as established, the Knights viewed blacks as "akin to the new immigrants, unorganized and unorganizable." (Chapter 4)

In contrast, the Populists in Georgia made considerable progress in organizing across the colour line, largely because the movement's rhetoric spoke directly to white and black farmers facing increased tenancy rates and financial pressures involving cotton production. (Chapter 6) But little headway was made in Virginia, not only because its rural economy had a different structure but also because of a complicated political landscape that made it difficult for the Populists to build loyalty among black voters. (Chapter 7)

Another notable way in which Gerteis takes the analysis of race relations beyond abstract categories imposed by scholars is to highlight how the ideologies of these movements served as "lenses" through which different racial and ethnic groups were viewed. At both the national and

local levels, these movements were particularly influenced by Republican radicalism, which provided a language to defend the interests of independent craft workers and farmers against the advances of capitalism.

Republicanism's preoccupation with "civic virtue" was especially influential in framing the movements' views of blacks and immigrants. In other words, the Knights' and Populists' openness to a particular people depended on whether they were deemed capable of not only holding "formal legal autonomy," but also "maintaining Republican institutions" by contributing to a vigorous political discourse and acting as informed and judicious voters. (74)

Nevertheless, there are important themes that Gerteis leaves underdeveloped, at least some of which are by-products of an innovative work that opens up many new questions. One part of the book that could have been expanded was the analysis of the movements' approach to social issues. Gerteis does show effectively that the Knights and Populists did not confine themselves to economic and political issues; social issues were also essential. But his analysis of social issues concentrates heavily on ideas of "civic virtue," and how they shaped the movements' views of a given people.

Civic virtue does not encapsulate all of the wide range of social questions these movements addressed. Certainly the Knights, including leaders such as Terence Powderly, were committed to engaging in debates about such issues as culture, religion, the spread of problems such as drugs and gambling, the growing strain on working families, and the increased threats to the "morality" of working-class women. Race, ethnicity, and immigration were bound up in these debates, and how this in turn influenced the views of immigrants and blacks as

either enemies or potential allies to the movement is an important question.

These issues connect to another problem in the book: the neglect of gender. The absence of a gender analysis is often jarring, especially given Gerteis' impressive command of the literature on this period, so much of which argues that class, race, and gender identities were inextricably linked. The book offers little exploration of the gender components of the movements' ideologies. The role of gender and "manliness" in shaping ideals of "independence" and "civic virtue" needed to be explored. As many scholars have also found, claims that blacks and immigrants were unorganizable often relied on claims that they were unmanly. Similarly, losing independence as a producer was often seen as fundamentally emasculating.

Moreover, despite the many insights provided into organizing across the colour line, little is said about crossing gender lines, or even where the possibility to do so may have existed. For instance, in his local study of Richmond, Gerteis states that the city had few working women, although he does note that some important industries – tobacco and box-making – had predominantly white female workforces. But the gender component to local labour organizing is not pursued. The role of women's work on family farms, and in the southern agricultural sector in general, also needed more attention.

Finally, in the treatment of the role of the Republican ideology, Gerteis would have profited from considering the growth of these movements, particularly the Knights, beyond the United States. The Knights' organizing in English Canada raises questions particularly about the role of the "Republican idiom," which could not be transported wholesale across the border. Yet much of the Knights' ide-

ology did have enormous appeal in English Canada, with influential thinkers such as Henry George (who receives little attention from Gerteis) gaining major followings. Moreover, the Knights in English Canada displayed the same pattern in race relations (hostility towards immigrants, relatively positive views of blacks) that Gerteis finds in the US. In the 1890s, the Knights enjoyed major growth in the drastically different political and social climate of Quebec.

On the whole, however, it is difficult not to be impressed by the caliber of Gerteis' scholarship. He covers key theoretical questions and large amounts of literature with commendable clarity and efficiency, confidently inserting his new perspectives. Moreover, his detailed treatments of particular events and characters, such as the upheaval over racial issues at the Knights' 1886 General Assembly in Richmond (95–99), or the evolution of Georgia Populist Tom Watson's ideology (151–173), make for compelling reading. *Class and the Color Line* has already won the (American) Social Science History Association President's Book Award, and it will likely make a lasting contribution to the scholarship on race, class, and popular movements, especially in the US South.

DAVID GOUTOR

McMaster University

**Robert M. Zieger, *For Jobs and Freedom: Race and Labor in America since 1865*** (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky 2007)

IT COMES ACROSS well in this pungent book that the history of US labour does not fit a classic picture of class-conscious workers nobly combating their exploitative and reactionary employers. For much of the history that Zieger covers, organized labour did not hold the moral

high ground over the state and private corporations with respect to its record on race relations. In the history of the labour movement before the 1930s, covered in the key second and third chapters of the book, the most reactionary political strains in the movement were exemplified by the “big four” white railroad brotherhoods and the craft unions which made up the core of the American Federation of Labor (AFL).

Zieger qualifies the notion of a deeply racist labour movement with the observation that as early as 1902 the AFL included a significant African-American minority among its members. African Americans were not admitted into the AFL by way of membership of its various affiliates although notable exceptions include the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) and the International Longshoremen's Association. Most were members of so-called “federal labor unions” which, Zieger argues, were segregated organizations which the AFL maintained “primarily to control blacks who worked with or near white unionists and who, if left unorganized might provide employers with a ready supply of cheap labor and strike-breakers.” (62)

Zieger shows nevertheless that necessity nuanced relationships between white and African-American workers often enough to offset racism with “significant examples of interracial labor co-operation.” (67) This had seldom to do with a socialist ethic of class unity, but rather plain good sense expressed most durably in the biracial and sometimes integrated unionism of AFL affiliates among mine workers, teamsters, and longshoremen. Zieger does well to observe that some white trade unionists made a concerted effort to enhance their organized strength by including African-American workers in their recruitment. A notable example was the work of the AFL's Amalgamated Meat Cutters (AMC) and the Chicago

Federation of Labour (CFL) which, during the height of the Great Migration, realized the importance of moving beyond craft unionism to embrace workers in mass production industries that were just beginning to gain prominence. Such efforts were overshadowed by U.S intervention in World War I and by racial tensions that surged in the early post-war years in both North and South urban centres.

During the 1920s and early 1930s, some black workers were resolved to organize independently. The most successful instance of this "independence" was, ironically, A. Philip Randolph's Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters (BSCP) which carved a vocal niche within the AFL. In the light of narrow-mindedness within the labour movement that compelled leaders such as Randolph to speak from a nominally separatist platform, readers may come away somewhat sceptical of Zieger's glowing assessment of the labour movement as a consistent support to "expansion of the suffrage, expansion of educational opportunities, and, at least since the 1930s, every important initiative on civil rights." (7) Since the mid-1930s, it is closer to the truth to suggest that it was that section of the labour movement identified with the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) which came to adopt the most strident progressive stance on civil rights. The CIO unions (e.g. UMWA and Ladies' Garment Workers' Union) did not emerge from the AFL completely reformed and above the racial prejudices of their past within the AFL. These unions, as Zieger suggests, were pushed more by circumstance than ideological commitment toward a more egalitarian approach to the situation of African-American workers.

Radicals attracted to the CIO strengthened the position of CIO leaders with a progressive ideological outlook. However, it was African-American workers'

enthusiasm for the CIO that gave content to the movement's egalitarianism. With migration from the South bringing hundreds of thousands of African-American workers into Northern mass production industries, African-American workers were strategically placed to influence the direction of the CIO. Zieger does well to place the CIO's efforts around the needs of African-American workers in the wider context of African-American political agitation for legislation proscribing discriminatory employment practices. He could have sharpened this analysis by more explicit attention to the inability of civil rights' bodies such as the National Association for Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) or the BSCP to create a political movement with the kind of mass power that would characterize the civil rights movement of the sixties.

Through the 1950s and 1960s, the CIO and later, the reunited AFL-CIO, publicly supported every government- or court-initiated civil rights reform. Yet Zieger does not provide a sufficient account as to why, during the heyday of the civil rights movement, white workers remained the majority in the movement and held onto most leadership positions. Zieger suggests that "some of the most extensive and effective examples of interracial unionism occurred in CIO unions with a communist oriented leadership." (156) He might have provided a far richer political examination as to why the situation of African-American workers in industry had not advanced substantially in the sixties over their situation in the 1930s, had he dug deeper into the damaging consequences of the anti-communism that gained ascendancy in the CIO during the 1950s.

In the sixties and seventies, black workers achieved affirmative action in employment by taking up civil action suits compelling employers to comply with the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The labour

movement has faced its severest crisis since the 1980s as a result of a decline in us manufacturing. Worst hit have been industries such as textiles and garment manufacturing, “the very industries that had been the focal point of job discrimination controversies in the 1960s.” (217) The irony, Zieger observes, is that while union membership fell off sharply since 1980, “African Americans continued to be among the most union-minded workers ...” (223)

The labour movement is still dominated by a white male leadership. Yet the movement is an advance over the racist and xenophobic movement of the early 20th century. Zieger attributes this to the ideological resilience of African-American trade unionists who actively opposed “harsh penalties on illegal immigrants and favoured legislative proposals that would facilitate undocumented immigrants’ transition from illegal to legal status.” (230) As recent immigration adds diversity to the question of “colour,” some readers may take exception to Zieger’s trenchant defence of a labour history that puts African-American workers at the centre. Zieger has sound factual and moral grounds for this, which he sets out clearly: “Despite a softening of racial attitudes in the past fifty years, in virtually every area of American life, Americans of all non-black ethnic identities have singled out African Americans as less worthy than people of other races or ethnicities.” (3) Although this book is an introductory synthesis of existing writing on race and labour, Zieger masterfully delivers an accessible narrative that does not shy away from controversy or the complexity of academic debate. The book is generously illustrated. The closing bibliographical essay rounds it off nicely with Zieger’s incisive comments on the best recent literature on the subject.

JOE KELLY

Athabasca University

**Kim Moody, *US Labor in Trouble and Transition: The Failure of Reform from Above, the Promise of Revival from Below*** (London: Verso 2007)

IN MARCH 2005, hundreds of tomato pickers in Immokalee, Florida won their four-year campaign to secure a penny more per pound of tomatoes picked for Taco Bell. The raise, which doubled the labourers’ wages, was attained after a campaign that included nation-wide informational tours by the workers and their representatives, a month-long hunger strike, three general sympathy strikes, a public relations campaign targeting Taco Bell and its giant parent company Yum! Brands, and most importantly, a national boycott against Taco Bell itself. Like the United Farm Workers’ boycotts of the 1960s this struggle involved massive outpourings of community support from church, student, and social justice groups. By March 2005 the farm labourers had gained all their demands from Taco Bell; later they brought both McDonald’s and Burger King to heel with similar tactics.

A year after the agreement between Taco Bell and the Immokalee pickers, on May Day 2006, upwards of six million immigrant workers participated in the “Day without Immigrants,” a one-day general strike. The strike was initially called to protest a restrictive immigration bill before Congress. But it also served notice to much of the American public – including the unions – that immigrant workers possessed significant economic power, including the ability to strangle production and transportation capabilities for several key us industries. The one-day strike gave a vivid demonstration of the latent potential of militant immigrant workers, who, when equipped with the necessary resources, were able to effectively fight back against exploitation by their bosses and state oppression, in spite of the high risk of employer retali-

ation and deportation. Like the Immokalee farm workers, the May Day strikers enjoyed a wide degree of community support, including that offered by several labour unions. Just as important was that the "Day Without Immigrants" vividly demonstrated the promise of an often overlooked segment of the US workforce to act militantly in the face of enormous pressures, and to have those acts arise from below.

Stories such as these occupy a central place in Kim Moody's welcome new book, *US Labor in Trouble and Transition: The Failure of Reform from Above, the Promise of Revival from Below*. These labour actions stand in stark contrast to most activity by American labour over the past three decades. These actions were strikes, the traditional best weapon of unions, and yet one that has fallen by the wayside since the early 1980s. Equally, their impetus came from below.

The Professional Air Traffic Controller Organization's (PATCO) strike of 1980–1981 differed greatly from the events described above. In this strike, usually cited as the turning point in the history of the American labour movement's fortunes, a concerted demonstration of working-class militancy was quashed under the heel of a united employer offensive, led, in this instance, by President Ronald Reagan. The offensive was met by an equally uniform retreat by American labour as several union leaders abandoned the strikers to twist in the wind.

Despite its significance as a major loss for the air traffic controllers and a symbol of labour's impotence, the PATCO strike was far more a symptom of a diseased labour movement than the onset of the disease itself. The labour leaders who let the unionized air traffic controllers go down to defeat had been raised during an era of post-militancy, in which rank-and-file direct action was avoided, repressed, and controlled. These same officials had

risen to their cushy positions by beating back rank-and-file militants within their own unions, particularly those men and women who had generated the outbreak of wildcat strikes and a more general labour upsurge during the 1960s and 1970s. These union bureaucrats' ideological mindsets, the strategies they pursued, and the structural transformations they brought about within their unions, all help explain labour's decline during the past three decades. Explaining why this happened, why the reforms proposed from above have failed or are in the process of failing, and pointing out the hopeful signs of labour reform from below, are the central subjects of this welcome new addition to the field of Labour Studies.

In the second chapter, titled "The Great Transformation," Moody analyzes the aggressive American employer offensive implemented since the recession of the 1970s. As a result of a long-term decline in the rate of profits, American employers searched for "alternative means of recovering profitability and improving competitiveness." (15) Their solution was a "lean" reorientation of work processes, including the "brutal intensification of work," the reorganization of the nation's industrial geography, longer hours, an overriding focus on increased efficiency, and a vigorous fight to remove any semblance of workers' control over production. (35)

The spatial changes of American manufacturing and transportation industries since the 1970s are evident in the transfer of manufacturing jobs from areas with high union density (the Midwest and Northeast) to "labor's historic Achilles' heel: the South." (9) Transportation methods, too, have been diversified and made more efficient. Technological innovations, such as the containerization of ports and the use of cutting-edge communications technology, have enabled the seamless transport of goods across



sites. The changes have most dramatically affected the trucking industry, which, through the consolidation of small trucking firms, the withdrawal of several companies from the Teamsters' National Master Freight Agreement (NMFA), and the closure of less profitable routes have reduced the number of unionized truck drivers covered by the NMFA from over 300,000 in 1970 to only 80,000 in 2006.

A frequently cited reason for the decline of American labour is the transition from a manufacturing to a service economy. However, as Moody stresses, the US has retained a significant manufacturing base. The number of workers engaged in service industry jobs has climbed by 44.5 million workers between 1979 and today, while over that same stretch the number of manufacturing workers has dropped by about 5 million. But the discrepancy in terms of workers in the two sectors has not resulted in the loss of the strategic position occupied by labourers in manufacturing, the same group of workers at the heart of so many of America's historic labour upsurges. In fact, in terms of Gross Domestic Product, manufacturing continues to command a powerful place in the US economy. Equally significant, "the industrial core remains the sector on which the majority of economic activity is dependent. Hence it is the power center of the system." (39) And yet, American unions have been more successful at organizing workers in service industries, particularly in local government and health care, over the past three decades than at adapting to the changing industrial landscape by organizing manufacturing jobs in southern states. But, it is this latter sector, in America's manufacturing industries, where workers possess the greatest opportunity to strike decisive blows against capital. To put it another way, while the nation has experienced drastic socioeconomic changes over the past several decades, auto and meatpack-

ing workers in the Carolinas today continue to have as much potential power as their predecessors in Detroit and Chicago once had. The difference is that there is little in the way of an established framework for organizing these workers, and they have not yet been part of a major upsurge aimed at the heart of employer power in the US. Why unions have failed in this regard is a key element of Moody's second section.

Moody emphasizes that the lacklustre performance of the American labour movement since 1980 has less to do with economic transformations than the inability and unwillingness of the unions to adapt to the changes. The culprits are the structure of American unions and the business unionist ideology of their leaders. The decline of the American labour movement was not inevitable. The massive loss of union density during the 1980s and the more gradual decline afterwards were the products of a non-militant labour leadership committed to top-down rule and an ideology favourable towards capitalist accumulation. On this final point, Moody stresses the importance of "the ideological heritage of business unionism," arguing that American labour leaders have largely rejected socialism. A basic tenet of their philosophy has come in energetic expressions of their "belief" in the identity of interests between labour and capital: "I say economic belief because it does not amount to a theory. . . . in itself it is more a matter of faith than science." (164)

In his chapter entitled "Lost Decades," Moody demonstrates what was "lost" over four decades for American workers as a result of "lean" production and a labour movement in retreat. These losses include wages, pension plans, any semblance of a social safety net, the 40-hour work week, and the two-day weekend. Even in the supposedly prosperous 1990s, the wealth of a tiny percentage of exploiters,

including CEOs and corporate directors, skyrocketed, while working people were left in the dust. The greatest percentage of growth in wealth came in the form of accumulated wealth – stocks, bonds, real estate – of which working people own only a tiny percentage. “Far from moving in the direction of broader ownership,” Moody points out, workers remain excluded from anything close to an equal share of so-called capitalist prosperity. (94)

Labour leaders go to great lengths to put the blame for union losses on deindustrialization and trade liberalization. Moody affixes the blame elsewhere: squarely on the shoulders of the labour leaders themselves. In the course of quashing any signs of militancy by their members, these high-ranking bureaucrats developed a hostility to working class self-activity, militancy, and even labour’s single great equalizer: the strike. It is in his discussion of “the end of militancy” that Moody is truly at his best. (98) Arguing that “unions grew in the years when they displayed militancy,” he notes the positive correlation between the decline of militant direct action since the 1970s and the drop in standards of living over the same period. (101) He notes that “the notion that growth and militancy have any connection, except possibly a negative one, is angrily dismissed precisely by those who lay the greatest claim to strategies for growth – namely the Change to Win Federation and, above all, of the SEIU.” (101) Their denial rests not simply on a commitment to a class collaborationist business unionism but just as fundamentally on this labour leadership having risen to power by beating back the militant direct action of their unions’ members.

In their struggles with shop floor militants, particularly those who carried out the waves of wildcat strikes during the 1960s and 1970s, labour leaders have consolidated greater power for them-

selves. Nearly all unions – or at least their top brass – signed away the right to wildcat strikes during the 1970s. Gone too were the short-run contracts, replaced by longer agreements meant to stretch out the period before workers could strike. One contractual innovation was the “living agreement,” a multi-year deal during which employers and labour leaders can negotiate and change a contract without reference to workers’ opinions. (111) Robbed of their main weapon, workers enter these “living agreements” at their own risk, while the boss gains a sure way of getting concessions from unions.

Instead of focusing on militancy and organizing from below, unions have focused on saving the company and the union. For several decades businesses have successfully wielded the threat of plant closures as a method of discouraging strikes and other forms of working-class resistance. The tactic has worked, and there are few manufacturing sector unions that do not fear the loss of their jobs to the South or abroad. But, as Moody points out, militancy does not cause offshoring or outsourcing. Instead, it is an inherent part of capitalist societies for employers to seek out new and cheaper markets, and reorient production towards more efficient modes of production. A strong labour movement capable of forcing working-class priorities on policy makers and employers would serve as a far greater deterrent to outsourcing and plant closures than a weak movement beholden to capital.

The other main goal of labour leadership has been institutional preservation and growth. Since at least 1979, this has largely meant mergers rather than new organizing. The number of union mergers averaged about four per year during the 1980s and 1990s. The result has been the creation of a number of mega-unions: graduate students now belong to the United Auto Workers (UAW), while

the textile and garment workers function inside the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW). Since 1980, the number of National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) elections has declined from about 8,000 to 3,000 per year. As Moody forcefully argues, “Mergers did, indeed, become a substitute for new organizing in the period of retreat.” (119)

Union mergers have helped usher in what Moody terms “the return of ‘big labor,’” which he sees as large, bureaucratic structures dominated by top-down decision-making with little or no regard for union democracy. The Service Employees International Union (SEIU) (2 million members), American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (1.4 million), and the UFCW (1.3 million) tout their large memberships. While acknowledging that large memberships are important to a strong labour movement, Moody argues that density alone does not make a movement. Rather, for unions to succeed and grow in the persistently anti-union climate of 21<sup>st</sup> century America, they need to cultivate deep roots within their own ranks. In this regard, Moody cites approvingly the work of Teamsters Local 174 in Seattle during the 1990s. Not only was this local run via rank-and-file control over union affairs, which gave members a sense of ownership of their union, but the members pursued policies explicitly focused on organizing new members. Local 174 also pursued alliances with community and environmental groups, and became “an organizing social movement unionist local.” (182)

The SEIU, the largest US union, is the quintessential example of the “shallow power” Moody condemns. (184) From 1980–1993 the SEIU extended its jurisdiction over more than 100 national or local unions, and the union appears more committed to progressive causes than most US unions. But the union’s leadership has

pursued what Moody calls “corporate-style centralization,” aimed at emulating the bureaucratic structure of American corporations, and at reducing rank-and-file influence over union affairs. (192) This concentration of power at the top of the union hierarchy has given top SEIU officials the ability to reorganize affiliate unions without input from the rank-and-file. It has also led to the creation of “mega-locals” with geographically dispersed memberships where members have little influence over the daily affairs of the union, and where shop stewards, and the shop floor power they represent, are abandoned in favour of decision-making solely from above and afar. (189) Stern, the architect of the SEIU’s brand of corporate, top-down style of unionism, is fond of telling audiences “that shop stewards are a bad idea.” (192) Moody explains the antipathy of SEIU leadership towards shop stewards, labour’s traditional lead dogs in its war against capital, in terms of overarching SEIU strategy of avoiding workplace struggle, cooperating with capital, and hence limiting workers’ power.

In the next two chapters Moody focuses primarily on union democracy. He examines the failure of reform from above, through the election of top level “reform” candidates like John Sweeney, first elected president of the AFL-CIO as part of the “New Voice for Labor” slate of candidates in 1995. Sweeney has consolidated more power at the top of the federation, centralized more bureaucracy in Washington, D.C., and created new institutions each complete with its own bureaucracy. Gone from this equation is any consideration of decentralizing power back to local unions or empowering the rank-and-file. Electioneering, too, has been a central focus of the “New Voice,” as Sweeney and other top AFL-CIO leaders have shifted more resources to campaigning for and lobbying Demo-

crats, rather than organizing workers. All this is unsurprising. Sweeney and his allies were elected by top labour leadership and not the rank-and-file. He shares with his predecessors from the old guard the prejudices against rank-and-file decision-making, particularly when that leads to militant direct action. Most tellingly of all, Sweeney has always been a flag-waving supporter of American capitalism, from which he has drawn benefits by promoting his belief in the identity of interests between labour and capital.

One constant for organized labour during its decline has been what Moody calls its "addiction" to the Democratic Party. Though the Democrats' economic policies have consistently moved to the right since the 1970s, labour has accepted the age-old wisdom that a right-wing Democratic Party is the lesser of two evils. (144) Yet the Democrats do little to promote labour legislation, accepting, like labour leaders, the desirability of American capitalism. This book is packed with examples of the historically one-sided nature of the relationship between the Party and the unions.

Moody shows the importance of changes in post-Watergate US campaign finance laws, which have required corporations and unions to set up political action committees (PACs) to raise and donate money to candidates. This was partially responsible for the massive growth in fundraising and spending by both parties beginning in the 1970s. Accompanying these new regulations was capital's successful re-organization "as a class," urging new legislation through its full-time lobbyists and massive contributions for greater privatization, deregulation, and tax cuts for the rich. (149) With all serious candidates in need of soliciting great amounts of money, both parties have become inextricably tied to corporations. And yet, in a buying war that labour cannot win, unions have remained

committed to their losing strategy of supporting Democratic candidates no matter what. The 2000 presidential campaign provides a case in point. During that election, the AFL-CIO spent \$40 million on the presidential race. By the end of that year, in which nearly all of their attention was turned towards electing Democrats, the number of workers represented by AFL-CIO unions declined, as did the number of NLRB elections held.

Moody clearly has a different vision for the American labour movement than most labour leaders and Democratic politicians. Since at least the 1980s American unions have consciously avoided confrontation, militancy, democracy, and even acknowledging the reality of class warfare. Whether ignorant, ashamed, or fearful of American workers' long history of shop-floor struggles, union leaders have spent three decades in the boardrooms and on Capitol Hill, bargaining long-term and concession-riddled contracts, all the while asking their Democratic Party "allies" for assistance. Yet, by avoiding confrontation at the workplace, the main site of working-class power, unions have given away their best bargaining chip: the ability to choke off production, to bring employers' extraction of profits to a screeching halt.

While the book is highly critical of many aspects of the mainstream American labour movement, it is not simply an exercise in despair. In fact, Moody finds much to applaud in the current efforts of workers to organize and fight the boss, including the growth of worker centres, which numbered nearly 140 in 2005; the persistence of democratic challenges within unions, like the Teamsters for a Democratic Union and the Progressive Educators for Action in Los Angeles; and the official support of several unions for immigrant rights, including their financial and logistical support for the 2006 "Day Without Immigrants." These signs

of renewal are the stuff out of which Moody's final section is made. The three chapters probe the heavily-publicized 2005 split between the AFL-CIO and Change to Win (CTW), the resurgence of "resistance and change from below" that has gained far less attention, and finally conclude with some of the recent positive steps taken by organized labour that point to new and potentially fruitful paths for the future. What separates these strategies and struggles from the concessionary bargaining and politicking of "big labour" is that they are driven almost completely from below, by workers themselves, through institutions of their own making and with strong ties to community groups.

This is an overtly political book. Moody deftly straddles the line between scholar and activist. His earlier books as well as his work with the pioneering journal *Labor Notes* make Moody one of the foremost experts on recent labour history. Eschewing the esoteric and jargon-filled rhetoric of the academy, he has a mastery over the contemporary and "classic" works of the field, and he sprinkles in references to several of the pioneering works to elaborate upon the points he is making.

Despite Moody's wide-ranging knowledge of contemporary and historical labour struggles, his strength comes less as a journalist or labour historian than as an acute observer and critic of capitalism. He carefully examines the historical relationships of American capitalism, noting capital's ability to completely reshape the world: "the system itself transforms old social structures, introduces new technology and organization, expands both economically and geographically, and draws more of humanity into the machinery of production." (58) Declining profits during the 1970s pushed employers time and again to exploit every market: "to seek cheap labour at home and abroad; to

reorganize and intensify work; to merge, downsize, and outsource; to pressure governments to deregulate, open their treasuries to business, and repress labor." (6) But in employers' strongholds also lies their main weakness. As the site of exploitation the workplace also functions as the site in which workers can exact the most damage against their employers.

*US Labor in Trouble and Transition* arrived in a year marked by several important labour conflicts. During the winter of 2007–2008, Hollywood writers engaged in a 100-day strike that massively curtailed television production; on May Day 2008, every port of the US West Coast was shut down by members of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) to protest the continued US occupation of Iraq; and in late summer, 27,000 members of the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers (IAM) struck the airplane manufacturer Boeing, shutting down a corporate behemoth making record profits. As Moody repeatedly stresses in this book, "simply adding up labor and social movements is neither a formula for upsurge nor a strategy for changing the balance of forces in American society." (223) But, with modest growth in the number of organized workers during 2007, and several significant and highly-publicized conflicts emerging, Moody is correct to argue that this new generation of innovative strategies "rooted in capitalism's most fundamental relationship, that between labor and capital in the heart of production," give cause for hope to the millions of Americans who have suffered as a direct result of the retreat of labour leadership in the face of capital's unrelenting drive for profit.

The lessons to be drawn from this book are applicable to all capitalist states, including Canada, which has also suffered a dramatic fall in union density and power in recent decades. Equally

applicable will be the parallels drawn between the adverse effects of a labour movement tied to a single political party and unabashedly committed to labour bureaucrats who view rank-and-file self-activity, especially militant activity, with suspicion and hostility.

AARON GOINGS

Simon Fraser University

**Scott Martelle, *Blood Passion: The Ludlow Massacre and Class War in the American West*** (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press 2007)

IN THE UNITED STATES between 1911 and 1915, bitterly contested strikes escalated into sustained armed conflict in widely separated areas of the South and West, notably the coal fields of southern Colorado, southern West Virginia, and western Arkansas; along the copper range in Michigan's Upper Peninsula; and in the forests of western Louisiana and eastern Texas. Most of these violent episodes occurred in relatively isolated sections where employers controlled or strongly influenced local government and law enforcement. Employers imported strike-breakers in significant numbers, often over great distances, and contracted with detective agencies that supplied gunmen to protect them and intimidate union workers. Governors sometimes ordered state militia to intervene as well, providing the employer with further leverage.

*Blood Passion* is a traditional narrative account, by a journalist, of the southern Colorado coal strike of 1913–14, the subject of much previous scholarship. This conflict included one of the most famous episodes of violence in American labour history, the suffocation of two mothers and eleven children seeking shelter in a bunker beneath a tent during an attack by Colorado National Guardsmen and corporate mine guards on the strikers'

largest tent encampment, at Ludlow. The book provides considerable detail about the 1913–14 southern Colorado labour "war" but limited insight, in part because it lacks context. It does not compare southern Colorado with other armed labour conflicts in the mining and timber industries that erupted around the same time. Nor should the author simply assert that this strike "marked the beginning of the modern era of labor disputes" (3) without comparing it with such conflicts as the earlier Homestead strike (1892) or the nearly six-month long Pennsylvania anthracite strike (1902). The former dramatized the big corporation's new reliance on armed hirelings to break a union; the latter involved 140,000 miners, constituting the largest strike the world had ever experienced, and resulted in direct presidential intervention.

Martelle's approach is too narrow to provide an adequate understanding of the dynamics of strikes or labour violence. He fails to examine southern Colorado miners' attitudes toward family and respectability, or their conception of masculinity, which clearly shaped their responses to provocations by their employers' mercenaries. Immigrants from southern and eastern Europe and from Mexico constituted much of the strike force; yet the author makes little effort to explore how ethnicity and religion shaped the miners' outlook and how their adversaries responded to them. Was the miners' combativeness influenced by worry that their long hours beneath the surface left their wives and daughters vulnerable to sexual harassment and abuse by the corporations' imported Baldwin-Felts gunmen? These were men without family attachments who violated the sanctity of the home, which women maintained, while carrying out evictions.

Martelle also neglects to consider how the miners' highly traditional view of gender roles, shaped by an all-male work

environment and by Catholic and Greek Orthodox beliefs, intensified their fury over mine guards' depredations against women. He notes that labour organizers in Colorado believed that employers deliberately hired from a multitude of ethnic groups, speaking many different languages, to inhibit communication among them and disrupt organizing. But he does not explain how the miners formed, or attempted to form, inter-ethnic alliances.

Martelle notes the "efficiency of [the miners'] guerilla attacks" (5) and states that they killed nearly twice as many of their adversaries in the fifteen-month-long labour conflict as they lost. He could have examined how the Greek and Italian miners' discipline and confidence in the fighting, which commentators noted at the time, derived in part from combat experience in the Balkans or Libya in the years immediately preceding the 1913–14 coal conflict.

Martelle states that Colorado coal mines were particularly unsafe, with a fatality rate nearly double the national average. How did the considerable danger and physical challenges of work underground influence miners' often violent reactions to provocations from the corporations' armed mercenaries and the Colorado National Guard?

The author devotes no attention to how strikebreaking emerged as a national business during the first two decades of the 20th century, even though he reports that Colorado's coal operators hired the Baldwin-Felts Detective Agency, headquartered at Bluefield, West Virginia and Roanoke, Virginia, to suppress the southern Colorado strike and the smaller walkout in the state's northern fields that preceded it. By the first decade of the 20th century, many employers could procure strikebreakers from distant locations by contracting with a "detective" firm specializing in such a service.

Baldwin-Felts gunmen imported to southern Colorado also harassed and fought union miners, and carried out evictions, during the violent southern West Virginia mine conflicts in 1912–13 and 1920–21. Indeed, Albert Felts, who supervised company mine guards during the 1913–14 southern Colorado conflict, was shot dead in Matewan, West Virginia in 1920 in a violent altercation with union miners and sympathizers. The commander of the Burns Detective Agency guards in the western Arkansas coal conflict in 1914 had served in Michigan's Calumet copper strike the year before.

The author does not sufficiently explain coal's importance in the nation's economy during the early 20th century, or the impact of a significant production stoppage in southern Colorado, as compared with other coal-mining regions in the United States. A more systematic comparison of the weaponry available to each side also would have been helpful.

The book provides useful detail about the gun battles and other acts of violence during the 1913–14 southern Colorado coal conflict, and some sense of how a state National Guard's pretence of impartiality was compromised by the inclusion of many of the employers' armed mercenaries. But its insights are greatly limited by the author's failure to address larger social-historical questions and to make comparisons with other contemporaneous violent labour conflicts.

STEPHEN H. NORWOOD  
University of Oklahoma

**Ellen Dannin, *Taking Back the Workers' Law: How to Fight the Assault on Labor Rights*** (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press 2006)

THE WEEK I RECEIVED this book the Alberta government introduced, insti-

tuted closure on, and passed several amendments to the Labour Relations Code. They removed the right to strike from ambulance workers, restricted the role of salaried organizing construction workers, allowed for immediate decertification of construction unions, and limited the power of construction unions to subsidize contractors in competition against non-union contractors (Legislative Assembly of Alberta 2008 Bill 26). As I write this review, the Supreme Court of Canada, in *Honda Canada Inc. v. Keays* (2008 SCC 39), has decided that it is reasonable for an employer to demand that sick workers see the employer's chosen doctors without any restrictions and that employers' requirement to demonstrate good faith in dismissals is limited. Both of these sorts of events are common in Canada: governments regularly amend their labour and employment statutes; courts routinely interpret the common law, statutes, and the constitution to restrict (or, at times, expand) workers' rights. In this book, Ellen Dannin writes about the state of labour law in the USA today and encourages a new litigation strategy for unions to better reconstruct the US labour law regime against such depredations. It is a good start for all union activists. Alas, the peculiarities of Canadian labour law make the book of positive but limited value north of the border.

Dannin builds her strategy around the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA or Wagner Act) of 1935, which remains the core of labour law in the US, and is, on its surface, pro-unionization. The biggest legal impediments faced by trade unions today are the judicial decisions that have accumulated over the intervening 70 years to restrict workers' rights under the act and to create new powers for employers. Her second chapter accounts for why the courts have done this – something done by many others in the past, but

Dannin's take is brief, clear, and to the point. She concludes that judges by their very training in the common law as lawyers are often ill-suited to understand the NLRA or labour law generally.

To overcome judicial labour law ignorance, unions and their lawyers must "anticipate each detail and nuance [of labour law] that judges will not understand and then figur[e] out how to help them understand." (45) This means making sure that sufficient evidence is presented at first instance (when the judge may in fact know labour law) so that appellate judges will have a rich enough record upon which to both understand labour law and make the right decision. She identifies several examples when this was either done or not done with attendant positive or negative results. This has not been done much in Canada, although Judy Fudge provided significant expert evidence for the UFCW in *Dunmore v. Ontario* that was relied upon in the Supreme Court decisions ([2001] 3 S.C.R. 1016).

The next stages of Dannin's strategy are to: 1) highlight the principles of the NLRA, 2) convince judges to evaluate their decisions against NLRA principles, and 3) show judges the consequences of their decisions. In discussing principles, she returns to the opening sections of the NLRA and expands on its stated purposes as providing meaning for interpretation. She then shows how several of the rights created by the NLRA were interpreted by courts to undermine the act's principles. To drag judges back to the principles is a five stage process, beginning with a call to rethink property rights in work: according to Dannin, the US courts have narrowly interpreted property rights in employment as belonging to the employer. On the contrary, she argues, workers and the society (or community) in general should have property rights in the jobs at any one firm. The trick comes in get-



ting judges to accept this theory by narrowly identifying the rights in question in a particular dispute and explain their content. Asserting that property rights in work are shared rights means that union lawyers need to present to judges a way of accommodating *both* worker and employer rights. This is not the same as balancing the rights, but is premised on recognizing that the employer has rights that the judge is inclined to recognize, so that any successful argument has to be alert to the effect of the union position on those rights. Finally, the lawyers have to overcome judicial stereotypes about employers and workers or unions and have them focus on the particular parties involved in the litigation.

In her final two substantive chapters, Dannin walks through some core legal ideas for non-lawyers and argues for working with and using the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) in litigation. On the former Dannin begins with a story about labour historians at a conference presenting their ideas for labour law reform – all of which would be illegal in the USA at the moment. This story suggests to her the lack of awareness that labour lawyers, historians, economists, and trade union activists have of each other's realities. To rectify what she can, she tries to explain some key elements of law: statutory interpretation, the burden of proof, and basic legal process. In the other chapter she describes what the NLRB does and suggests methods of opening up links between the NLRB and union activists and lawyers.

The overall goal of this book is laudable. The strategy Dannin maps out contains many useful suggestions. Her goal in the end is to develop a strategy for labour that parallels the NAACP's litigation strategies in the post-war civil rights campaign. Even partial success at this would mark a major advance for US unions and workers.

The Canadian situation, however, is fundamentally different at many points. Federalism is the first problem: although there is a Canadian Labour Code, it applies only to federally regulated workers. All others are covered by their provincial labour relations acts and employment standards acts. There are broadly similar features to these acts, but each is different, sometimes shockingly so. None of the acts have as detailed a statement of principles as the NLRA either, although some, like Ontario's, come part way there. The one law common to all jurisdictions is the Charter of Rights, and many of the most important failures and successes for organized labour at the Supreme Court of Canada have turned on section 2d, freedom of association cases. A national strategy that pushes the boundaries of 2d or seeks to expand or secure other labour rights may be a good idea, but it has to be devised alert to the nuances of federalism.

The next hurdle is the division of labour among the provincial and federal labour boards, as well as grievance arbitration and other administrative tribunals. Although the labour boards are responsible for applying and enforcing the labour codes, much of the common law of the shop over the last 60 years has developed through grievance arbitration decisions and judicial review of these decisions. A national strategy in Canada will have to be more alert to the intricacies of argument in different forums.

Finally, and this returns to the Alberta government's recent amendments, labour law reform through legislatures is significantly more common in Canada than it appears to be in the US. In arguing for reform through litigation, Dannin asserts "while easy to propose, even small [legislative] changes to labour and employment statutes have proved impossible for political reasons." (17) The relative ease with which governments change labour

and employment codes in Canada does not mean that a litigation strategy is a bad idea, only that it has to be combined with a political-legislative strategy to encourage positive change and fight against changes to evade or limit successful litigation.

Dannin's book is a rousing call to arms to develop a litigation strategy for workers. Canadians should take the message but be conscious of our local circumstances as they plan their own.

JAMES MUIR

University of Alberta

**Robert Pollin, Mark Brenner,  
Jeannette Wicks-Lim, and Stephanie  
Luce, *A Measure of Fairness:  
The Economics of Living Wages and  
Minimum Wages in the United States*  
(Ithaca: Cornell University Press 2008)**

IN RECENT YEARS, across the United States, hundreds of local communities have passed 'living wage' legislation, and the objective of this book is to summarize the policy lessons that can be taken from those community experiences. Since the most frequent objection to minimum wages is that jobs will allegedly be lost, the key question the book addresses is: "to what extent do legislative attempts to increase the pay of low-wage workers imperil the jobs that they now hold?"

"Not much, if at all" is the basic answer provided here. Reporting the results from case studies of communities (e.g. New Orleans, Sante Fe, or Boston) and econometric analyses of secondary data, the authors argue that legislation to increase the minimum wage has little impact on the employment of low-wage workers, but does increase the earnings of those both at the minimum wage and just above it (via a 'ripple effect').

In coming to this conclusion, the authors are firmly in agreement with many other labour economists. As Free-

man summarizes the literature (in a quote which appears on both pages 97 and 217 in the current volume): "The debate is over whether modest minimum wage increases have 'no' employment effect, modest positive effects or small negative effects. It is *not* about whether or not there are large negative effects. (emphasis in original)." The authors also cite a survey of labour economists which indicates that most share this opinion.

If this is true, it is fair to ask what another book on the subject can add to the debate. One contribution of the current volume is to draw together a good deal of disparate evidence, from prospective and retrospective studies and using both case study and econometric methodology.

Disparities in the data arise because the 'living wage' idea is more a social ideal than a specific policy proposal. As the authors note, 'living wage' legislation sometimes only constrains local governments, and private firms supplying those governments, to meet a minimum wage obligation but in other instances covers all workers within a given jurisdiction. These differences in target population crucially affect impacts and in addition the target hourly wage varies widely. Chapter 4 examines a target of \$6.15 (New Orleans), but chapter 5 on Sante Fe specifies \$8.50 (rising to \$10.50). Chapter 6 on Arizona (\$6.75) is followed by chapters 7 and 8 on Santa Monica (\$10.75). In chapter 2, the authors conclude that for the Boston area in 2005 "a reasonable range is somewhere ... between \$12 and \$24" – which is surely a pretty dramatic expression of uncertainty.

Although it is individual workers who get wages, most people live in families. Whether or not a specific hourly wage produces a socially acceptable living standard for a family depends on how many workers there are in each household, how many hours they work, how many depen-

dents they have, and the income needed for adequacy in each local area. Sixty years ago, when social policy could plausibly be premised on the 'male breadwinner model' of a single full-time, full-year worker per household, it was much easier to calculate the hourly wage which corresponds to the 'living wage' ideal. But the present volume never really addresses the complexities of modern family life. The numeric examples provided jump around – sometimes being for three or four person families, sometimes one or two workers, sometimes each working 1700 or 2000 hours a year – but certainty is always presumed. The health, job availability, and household composition insecurities which dominate the lives of poor people are unmentioned.

Nevertheless, whether or not the 'living wage' is a shifting target, it is a remarkable testament to grass-roots organizing in the United States that during a long period of time in which anti-poverty policy has dropped off the national agenda, local communities have tried to act directly against the widening inequality and deepening deprivation this has produced. The current book is clearly aimed at reinforcing this trend. The case studies of chapters 4 to 10 provide exhaustive calculations which detail, for realistic examples, just how small the burden of minimum wage increases for employer costs actually is – which motivates the authors' finding of minimal employment impacts. A more academically oriented economics book would probably not have apologized for statistical technique in making the same point, or relegated these studies to Chapters 11 to 14 at the end, but this book is primarily aimed at activists, not econometricians.

However, there is a problem. As Polin notes: "The living wage initiatives that have become law throughout the country are motivated by a common initial prem-

ise: that people who work for a living should not have to raise a family in poverty." (111) Does focussing a social movement around this premise imply that it is seen as socially acceptable for the unemployed or the disabled to raise a family in poverty – or that it is OK for people who do not have families to be poor?

The authors would possibly respond "of course not," but they do not actually say. It is unclear what network of social supports they envisage for those individuals who cannot work, and their families. The current US social welfare system is only tangentially mentioned – so, for example, the reader is assured that "the truly needy already receive income support in the form of the EITC, food stamps and related subsidies." (108) Although one could imagine a book which notes the inadequacy of such transfer payments in the US, the authors of this book choose not to mention this. Neither do they discuss how people should qualify for transfer payments or how such payments should be adjusted, although they do decry "government agencies, rather than low-wage workers and their families, becoming the beneficiaries of the law" when transfers are reduced because earnings increase. They also argue that it is an "important consideration" for family income increases to come in the form of earnings rather than as transfers.

So is this a book about a policy whose intended beneficiaries are "the deserving poor"? Does advocating such a policy increase public consciousness of poverty and deprivation and provide the social empathy underlying more generous transfer programs for those who cannot work? Or does restricting discussion to families who work reinforce the idea that they are the only poor people who have a legitimate claim for public support? No book can cover every topic, but some readers may want to know whether

the 'living wage' is part of a broader social vision, and what exactly that larger framework is.

LARS OSBERG

Dalhousie University

**Brian Steensland, *The Failed Welfare Revolution: America's Struggle over Guaranteed Income Policy*** (Princeton: Princeton University Press 2008)

SYMBOLIC POLLUTION is the cultural theme to be derived from this book. It is a vitally important cultural concept that explains the failure to implement an economic security and poverty elimination program in the United States, particularly in the Johnson, Nixon, and Carter presidential administrations when conditions were most favourable to such action. The failure of liberals and progressives to fully grasp this concept and their embrace of language that reinforced the notion opened a path for Ronald Reagan's "California-style" workfare reforms in the 1980s, and permitted the ideology upon which it is based to persist and strengthen.

Symbolic pollution, or 'moral contamination' arose within the context of the "welfare mess" that preoccupied government administrations in the 1960s and 1970s. Despite growing economic productivity and affluence it was acknowledged by all sectors, as Steensland demonstrates – business, policy experts, politicians of every persuasion and at every level – that full employment goals were not being attained, that many who had jobs were "working poor," and that the welfare system was stigmatizing, bureaucratically complex and wasteful, and riddled with disincentives to work. (187) The comprehensive solution that came closest to implementation in addressing these widely held concerns

was Nixon's Family Assistance Plan (FAP), which was a form of guaranteed income, but one that stressed work and family as core elements. Its fatal flaw, which ultimately opened the path for Reagan's radical and antithetical approach to the one being considered since John F. Kennedy's initiation of a new policy framework for economic security, (38) was in rhetorical framing. Nixon characterized the FAP as "welfare." Negative connotations attached to the term were reinforced, often unwittingly, by groups such as the National Welfare Rights Organization (NWRO) and liberal policy experts. They failed to realize that the working poor did not want to be categorized under the same program (FAP) as "welfare recipients."

Steensland details how Nixon repeatedly drew upon this distinction by subtly, yet effectively, conjuring up the negative welfare stereotypes, which were at cross-purposes with the very FAP program design that he was campaigning on. This was in part due to compromising with forceful actors such as Arthur Burns in his administration, and Nixon's own worldview, which took a largely rehabilitationist view toward the poor and strongly emphasized the American "work ethic." Despite wide recognition since Kennedy's administration among policy experts of systemic problems rooted in the structure of the labour market, Nixon focused on the narrow work ethic notion as the foundation of the "welfare mess." This was often against the advice of policy experts in the administration and caught them off guard when Nixon introduced denigrating comments about welfare into his discourse.

Steensland outlines some of the highly advanced social science experiments that were devised and carried out in the late 1960s and 1970s to determine the impact upon "work ethic" among other things of the NIT (Negative Income Tax)

form of guaranteed income. The results of these experiments in New Jersey, Seattle, and Denver dispelled the notions of the 'rehabilitationists' who emphasized work ethic and took the view that those targeted under FAP would choose not to work, creating a labour crisis, if they received sufficient income through such a redistribution model. (213–214) "If anything, findings suggested that the program increased the work effort of participants receiving these payments. [Donald] Rumsfeld clarified that the FAP was different ... in that it contained work requirements.... Therefore, if anything, the OEO's results underestimated the FAP's potential efficacy." (142) Donald Rumsfeld, though now notorious for other reasons, was director of the Office of Economic Opportunity that conducted the NIT experiments. By the time of the Carter administration when all the results of the NIT studies were in, there "was no evidence from the experiments that receiving GAI [Guaranteed Annual Income] benefits would lead wage earners to defect from the labor market altogether" as many conservatives had worried. (214)

The unexpected twist in the NIT/guaranteed income experiments was that family break-up appeared to increase. This obviously had a positive side in that women in abusive relationships were freer to leave from an economic security standpoint in a quite patriarchal era. Given the strong focus on conservative family values across the US and particularly among influential members in Congress and the Senate, the family break-up issue set off alarm bells and became a disproportionate focus, and distraction, from the original foci of economic security, labour market failures, the "welfare mess," freedom (a particularly strong focus of libertarian proponents of guaranteed income such as Milton Friedman and George Shultz) and economic citi-

zenship (81) that guaranteed income was intended to resolve. Suddenly the spotlight shone only on "welfare" and its impact on "the family."

The final two chapters are dedicated to "Lost Opportunities, Consequences, and Lessons" and the role of culture in policy development. Steensland's precision in analyzing the guaranteed income debates throughout the book is impressive, as is his use of extensive original research from presidential archives. He has done a great service in so thoroughly deconstructing for the first time a neglected episode in the history of US (and Canadian) social policy. "This episode has largely vanished from America's collective memory," states the inside jacket of the book. It is only in the concluding chapters that one finds missing elements in making the case for GAI and the way forward.

Steensland's work points consistently to the need for universal social and economic programs to break down the barriers of symbolic pollution, moral contamination, and false notions of the deserving and undeserving poor (ironically Warren Buffett has been recently shifting this spotlight onto the rich, reminiscent of David Lewis' "corporate welfare" critique). In a couple of instances he refers to the Canadian health-care system as a model program that can provide positive policy feedback loops and a precedent to support universal income support and economic security programs. Having built this essential argument Steensland states that "blurring" the distinctions between undeserving (welfare) and deserving (working) poor through improved rhetorical framing can remove the cultural obstacles to economic security policy development.

This "blurring" of categorical distinctions among the poor (229) is far from the universal model Steensland points to in the Canadian health system or other successful universal models found else-

where. Most significantly, he fails to avail himself of successful universal wealth distribution programs developed since the end of the guaranteed income debates in the late 1970s, as examples that not only blurred the distinctions among the poor, but eliminated them among all citizens/residents. The Alaska Permanent Dividend Fund, along with many other sovereign wealth funds, achieve this by reinforcing constitutional legal axioms such as the common ownership of natural wealth and equality of citizens, which translate easily into guaranteed income rhetorical and policy frameworks, while bypassing the entanglement of morality and categorization of citizens based on “work ethic.”

RICHARD PEREIRA  
Athabasca University

**David Barber, *A Hard Rain Fell: SDS and Why It Failed*** (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi 2008)

DAVID BARBER HAS written an interesting book about the failure of Students for a Democratic Society (SDS). The story of SDS – which formed in 1960 and dissolved in 1969 – has been told by many scholars and former participants in the group. Barber himself falls into both categories, as a historian as well as a former activist associated with SDS.

As the title indicates, Barber seeks to explain why SDS failed. His central argument is that it failed because its members – young, white American radicals – failed to grasp how white supremacy shaped their own thinking and action, failed to develop an analysis of imperialism that linked it to domestic conditions, and failed to challenge male supremacy within their own ranks. In short, says Barber, the white New Left (which he sometimes uses interchangeably with SDS) “failed because it ultimately came

to reflect the dominant white culture’s understandings of race, gender, class, and nation.” (5) While Barber devotes separate chapters to race, empire, and gender, the theme of failure to transcend white privilege infuses the entire study, including the chapters on SDS’s deterioration and demise. Unlike many scholars and former ‘60s activists, Barber contends that “the New Left failed not because it was too radical in its support of the black nationalist movement but because it was not radical enough.” (15)

Race, Barber argues, is paramount in understanding the fate of SDS. In a 1965 paper, for example, two SDS leaders identified the black anti-racist struggle – alongside campaigns by poor people, students, and faculty – as a key element of the larger radical movement. This, Barber says, indicates that SDS failed to place black activism front and centre, instead viewing its own actions “as the central work for social change.” (23) Barber also discusses the Black Panther Party’s (BPP) decision to run Eldridge Cleaver for us president on the Peace and Freedom Party slate in 1968. When Cleaver asked that white SDS leader Carl Oglesby join the ticket as the vice-presidential candidate, SDS leaders refused on the grounds that this would require them to engage in (presumably reformist) electoral politics and ally with white left-liberals with whom they disagreed. Instead, they called for building a “white revolutionary mass movement” (49) and proposed other means of promoting the BPP. According to Barber, this response constituted a rejection of black activist leadership and reflected an attitude that black radicals “needed to know their place.” (49)

Race, intersecting with empire, permeated SDS’s approach to the Vietnam War. In a lengthy analysis of Oglesby’s speeches and writing on imperialism, Barber argues that the SDS activist ignored the theoretical leadership of radical black

intellectuals such as W. E. B. DuBois and Malcolm X. According to Barber, this failure – which he considers “a failing of the entire white New Left” (73) – not only “undermined SDS’s ability to understand imperialism” (73) but also demonstrated its commitment to “imperialism’s division of labor – reserving mental labor for whites.” (77) Barber further asserts that the growing influence in the late 1960s of the Progressive Labor Party – which envisioned a “working class unaffected by U.S. imperialism” (92) – hindered white New Leftists’ ability to grasp how imperialism “shaped America’s domestic social life.” (91) White activists, Barber argues, had to recognize that, as beneficiaries of empire, they themselves were “part of the oppressor class.” (93)

Barber also examines the genesis of the women’s movement, a story that has been told by Sara Evans (*Personal Politics*), Alice Echols (*Daring to be Bad*), and others. Barber describes the often bitter conflicts that emerged when white feminists insisted that SDS challenge women’s subordination not only in the larger society but also within SDS itself. At the same time, he notes the ways in which white women who advocated women’s liberation often universalized the female experience without acknowledging distinctions among women based on class and race. Here Barber draws on a wider range of sources, including the New Left press and observations by women activists, whether they embraced feminism, rejected it, critiqued its limitations, or hoped to advance it from inside SDS. In perhaps his strongest chapter, Barber allows the voices of participants to predominate rather than injecting his own voice forcefully into the debate.

In the final chapters, Barber chronicles SDS’s collapse. In the book’s introduction, he insists that the factional divide often credited with the group’s destruction was not the real source of failure, since rival

factions “operated within a single broad ideological consensus.” (5) His account shows, however, that sectarianism made it increasingly difficult for activists to mobilize a broad base or build alliances around the issues Barber considered most important for advancing the New Left’s cause.

Barber’s account could have been strengthened in several ways. While the book is intended to explain SDS’s failure, it is not clear what Barber believes SDS failed to do. In the introduction, he points out that its membership rose from 250 in 1960 to 80–100,000 by late 1968, suggesting that by failure he means the group’s failure to sustain dramatic membership growth. In the conclusion, he writes: “America’s fundamental social, cultural, political, and economic structures were not destroyed and replaced with something better, the goal the New Left ultimately set for itself.” (226) While this may be the source of Barber’s frustration, expecting SDS to have completely overthrown US institutions seems a tall order indeed. Given the uncertainty about the meaning of failure, it is not at all clear that SDS – had it adopted the “correct” political positions that Barber outlines – could have achieved greater success.

While Barber forcefully argues his positions, his evidence does not always support his claims. When analyzing the writings of a few national SDS leaders, for example, he tends to generalize about the organization as a whole. For this strategy to be effective, we need to know more about the extent to which such writings reflected or reinforced the views of the broader base. Barber notes that SDS had more than three hundred chapters by the late 1960s. What was happening at the chapter level? Were no chapters allied with black radicals? Were none of them engaged in projects that challenged white supremacy? What about the groups that engaged in BPP support work? Bar-

ber's account would have benefited from greater attention to local SDS activities as well as to the evolution of rank-and-file members' thinking about race, empire, and gender over time.

In *A Hard Rain Fell*, Barber seeks to identify intellectual currents and organizing strategies that could have made '60s activism more influential, and that perhaps can inform activism today. Some of our best scholarship has been produced by those who are passionately engaged in their subject matter and deeply committed to social change. But Barber's book is marred by the frequent use of sarcastic commentary that clearly reflects his own bitterness and hostility about the "errors" that SDS made. Such remarks are not a substitute for solid evidence and should not be used as such.

In the end, Barber has an important point to make. By emphasizing that white activists were shaped and often constrained by attachment to their own society and culture, he has made a real contribution to the study of the New Left. His book opens up numerous opportunities for other scholars to explore how such limitations played out in a rapidly changing historical context and how activists grappled with these and the many other challenges they faced.

TAMI J. FRIEDMAN  
Brock University

**Bess Lomax Hawes, *Sing It Pretty: A Memoir*** (Urbana: University of Illinois Press 2008)

BESS LOMAX HAWES has finally captured some of her fascinating story in this rich autobiography, although it is too short by half. Born in East Texas in 1921, the daughter of pioneer folklorist John Avery Lomax and Bess Brown Lomax, she has fond memories of growing up in a stimulating family environment. But much

changed when her mother died in 1931, leaving the young Bess to move around from school to school, living partly with her older sister's family in Lubbock, until her father remarried in 1934 to Ruby Terrill. In 1936 they moved to Washington, D.C., where John worked for the Library of Congress and the Federal Writers' Project. Bess now did research for the folk-song book her father and brother Alan were working on, as she became steeped in vernacular songs, while absorbing the hectic life of the nation's capital. She was particularly impressed by her father's close friends, Charles and Ruth Crawford Seeger. And while John was politically conservative, she absorbed leftwing politics from the Seegers as well as from Alan.

Her horizons were somewhat expanded in 1938 on an eight-month family trip to Europe. Accompanied by her friend, Elizabeth Watkins, she greatly enjoyed Paris, Vienna, Budapest, Prague, and even Germany with its frightening Nazi culture. Returning in September, she enrolled at Bryn Mawr College in Pennsylvania, where she seems to have made few friends, preferring to spend her leisure time at political meetings in Philadelphia or cultural visits to New York, where Alan worked on his network radio show, "Back Where I Come From." She now met Burl Ives, Woody Guthrie, Josh White, Aunt Molly Jackson, Pete Seeger, Sonny Terry, Brownie McGhee, and other budding urban folk performers. Upon graduating from Bryn Mawr in 1941 she moved to New York and joined the Almanac Singers, a loose group of political performers formed by Seeger, Lee Hays, and Millard Lampell, and soon to include Guthrie, Terry, McGhee, Butch Hawes, and various others. She worked at the New York Public Library during the day and performed with the group at night. While Bess passes over her move with a few of the Almanacs to Detroit in 1942,



she picks up the story with her marriage to Butch Hawes in early 1943.

During the war Bess worked for the Office of War Information (owi), in the library of the Music Department, which furnished recordings for radio broadcasts around the world. She was now exposed to foreign recordings, significantly broadening her musical horizons. At war's end her family began to expand with the birth of the first of her three children, and, while experiencing a budding anti-communist movement, they moved from New York to Boston, where Butch developed as a graphic artist. They became involved with the Progressive Party's support of Henry Wallace for President in 1948, and Bess co-authored, with Jacqueline Steiner, "Charley on the MTA" in support of Walter O'Brien's third-party run for Mayor of Boston, a song that eleven years later became a hit for the Kingston Trio. In addition to her political activities, she began teaching folk music to a group of local mothers, through which she discovered her knack for teaching various acoustic instruments in a group setting. In 1951, the family moved to Los Angeles, where Bess expanded her music classes, especially for UCLA's University Extension, as she became active in the vibrant local folk scene. She was soon teaching various folklore classes in the anthropology department of San Fernando Valley State College, the launching of her new academic life.

She devotes a loving chapter to her early teaching career, in particular her interest in researching children's songs, games, and stories. In order to improve her credentials, she entered the folklore program at the University of California-Berkeley in 1969 and soon obtained her MA. In 1971, however, Butch died. She continued her teaching in Los Angeles until contacted by Ralph Rinzler, who had launched the Smithsonian Institution's annual Festival of American Folklife.

Bess describes the complications and challenges in organizing the California part of the festival's "Regional America" section in 1976. Her new life as a cultural worker presented various problems but also numerous rewards, and she was so successful that she was asked to work for the Special Projects Program of the National Endowment for the Arts, where she was employed from 1977 to 1992. She handled numerous funding requests, mostly involving vernacular musicians and community festivals, as she traveled around the country, beginning in Maine where the Aroostook County Arts Council sought funding. She loved visiting remote parts of the country where they welcomed attention from the federal government. She next visited the opening of an exhibit of Southern arts and crafts at the Atlanta Museum. Working for the new Folk Arts Program, she feared that it "was dangerously close to presenting the folk arts as ancient, feeble, and moribund, or – contrariwise – countrified, sentimental, and/or comical." (130) The folk arts were serious business and had to be treated accordingly, with respect and sensitivity, and she describes her challenges, dilemmas, and successes. She worried about the problems of a government bureaucracy with its complicated paperwork, and tried to make the application process as easy as possible. She also had to work with the various state arts agencies, each facing a unique situation.

She ends with a brief chapter on the National Heritage Fellowships, beginning in 1980, one of her proudest accomplishments, and the thrill of receiving the National Medal of Arts from President Bill Clinton. "I have always had the unshakable belief that every single human being has some knowledge of important elements of beauty and substance," reads her final sentence, "whether everybody else knows them or not, and the appropriate introduction of

those items of intellectual power into the public discourse has been the unswerving thrust of my work, whatever form it took, all my life." (174) The daughter and sister of folklore pioneers, steeped in roots music, Bess Lomax Hawes deftly combined her leftwing politics, musical abilities, and cultural commitments. There is much more of her rich, fascinating story that has appeared in various publications over the years. Here she presents those memories perhaps the most noteworthy for her, along with a number of tantalizing photographs and a truncated timeline. Unfortunately, she has little to say about her time with the Almanac Singers, her relationships with her father and brother Alan, the flourishing folk scene in Southern California, her involvement with numerous folk music festivals, how she developed her technique for teaching group classes, and the controversies over defining "traditional" musicians for arts funding. She made one last move, to Portland, Oregon, in 2007. She has left some tantalizing memories for someone who is game enough to write her full biography, which will be a fitting companion to Nolan Porterfield's study of her father and a forthcoming biography of Alan by John Szwed. The Lomax family made an indelible mark on American musical history and vernacular culture, combining performance, scholarship, collecting, administration, and so much more, part of which is well captured in Bess's wonderful memoir.

RONALD D. COHEN

Indiana University Northwest

**Lillian Pollak, *The Sweetest Dream: Love, Lies, & Assassination*** (New York, Bloomington, Shanghai: iUniverse, Inc. 2008)

FEW NOVELS ADDRESS the experience of United States Trotskyism. Harvey Swa-

dos's *Standing Fast* (1970) comes to mind, as do Earl Birney's cross-border reflections in *Down the Long Table* (1955). Both of these fictional accounts, however, unfold on the margins of American anti-Stalinist politics, the first focusing on the organizational life of Max Shachtman's break from orthodox Trotskyism, the second filtered through the lens of McCarthyism's later impact on a Canadian recruit to dissident communism.

Lillian Pollak has a different perspective and chronology from those of Swados and Birney. Her backdrop is a period of momentous struggles, in the United States and around the world, associated with Trotskyism's first decade and its leader's brutal Stalinist-orchestrated murder in Mexico in 1940. Woven into the plot, like connective strands, are illuminating commentaries on the Great Depression, reference to the mass strikes of 1934, and representations of the Spanish Civil War. Cultural movements, such as the rise of modern dance, are also a significant component of the novel, breathing a freshness into the storyline often absent in archetypal 'proletarian novels'.

Clearly autobiographical, Pollak's *The Sweetest Dream* presents all of this through the eyes of Miriam, a young recruit to Trotskyism in the 1930s. Miriam embraces Trotskyism, as did many in the young movement, against all odds, the barriers to her oppositional politics including: a mother whose dream is to capitalize on the seeming largesse of the real estate market, and whose cynical repudiations of revolutionary commitment parallel her often insensitive and hurtful treatment of her daughter; revered radicals who opted to stay in the Stalin camp, blind to the ways in which it was undoing all that the Revolution had accomplished; and the limitations always imposed by poverty. Given the small numbers of those won to the anti-Stalinist program of the Communist

League of America (Opposition) and its ultimate successor, the Socialist Workers Party (SWP), Miriam rubs shoulders with most of the major figures in United States Trotskyism. She eventually makes her way to Mexico where she meets Trotsky and those responsible for his safety, some of whom were Mexican revolutionaries, others individuals sent from the SWP, which was then a leading section of the Trotskyist Fourth International.

What is unique about Pollak's presentation is that Miriam's best and long-cherished childhood friend, the vivacious Ketzal, is something of her political mirror image. Born into a well-to-do Mexican family, where the mother and father whom Miriam idolizes as a child are deeply committed to the Soviet Union and to Stalin's leadership of the Communist International, Ketzal is bohemian and avant-garde, beautiful and impetuous. Miriam, in contrast, is the poor daughter of the New York Jewish ghetto, circumscribed by a plainness that she cannot ever quite transcend.

Designated "A Novel of the Thirties," Pollak's fiction explores what many careful histories sometimes find elusive: the troubled, but often inseparable, relations of Trotskyism and Stalinism; the complex and sometimes contradictory character of political 'choice' in the revolutionary left; and the deep mark commitment leaves on both politics and personal life. *The Sweetest Dream* masterfully recreates the dilemmas and delusions, as well as the defiant heroism that defined so much of a layer of youth won to the revolutionary refusal to endure the price capitalism commanded in the 1930s. Few histories give us a view of the 'Jimmie Higgins' of the left more powerful than this book.

Ultimately, *The Sweetest Dream* is about lost loves. Miriam and Ketzal never quite secure and sustain the loves their lives so desperately need and deserve. The novel makes the powerful point that

this is not only a matter of personal failures of all kinds, but is, as well, an issue of politics. And for Miriam, Trotsky's assassination, in which she and Ketzal are unwittingly associated, silences the voice that had spoken to her so forcefully in the 1930s: "Life is beautiful," Trotsky had written passionately, "Live it to the fullest." As Miriam and her comrades realized, the possibility of doing so was never separable from the revolutionary aspirations that they cultivated in their youth.

The love that Miriam and Ketzal have for one another, and the hopes, however different, that they share for a better world, manage, in spite of what is arrayed against all of this, to survive. Ms. Pollak, a 'Raging Granny' who, at 93, still puts in appearances at conferences, lectures, and gatherings of US Trotskyists, regaling crowds with her remembrances of struggles past, has followed the admonition of her mentor, Leon Trotsky. *The Sweetest Dream* gives us but a piece of her fascinating history, lived to its fullest. It is a fragment you won't want to put down.

BRYAN D. PALMER  
Trent University

**Laura Gotkowitz, *A Revolution for our Rights: Indigenous Struggles for Land and Justice in Bolivia, 1880–1952***  
(Durham: Duke University Press 2007)

THE MASSACRE of nearly 30 innocent, unarmed civilians in a remote northwestern province of Bolivia in mid-November 2008 brings into sharp relief the tensions and contradictions inherent in the state-building project. Although the precise motivations for the massacre are unclear, the victims were travelling to a rally in support of the indigenous, left-of-centre government when they were gunned down by armed men believed to be allied with the large landowners. Such sporadic episodes of politically motivated

violence that have erupted in the past few years highlight the precarious position of the White settler elite that has dominated the political and economic life of the Bolivian nation for more than four centuries, in a territory in which the majority of the population self-identify as indigenous. Evo Morales, an Aymara Indian and the nation's first indigenous president, and his left-of-centre political party, the Movement toward Socialism, were elected by overwhelming majority in December 2005, promising to nationalize key natural resources such as natural gas and water, to re-found the nation through the election of a Constitutional Assembly, and to "decolonize" the state.

Given the fact that 40 per cent of the economically active population in Bolivia is employed in agriculture, one of the most contentious issues in the government's reform program has been the issue of the redistribution of land. In a 2008 study published by the Centre for Economic and Policy Research, progressive economists Mark Weisbrot and Luis Sandoval report that Bolivia is home to one of the most unequal distributions of land in the world: 0.22 per cent of the farm units in Bolivia control over half of the agricultural land, while 84 per cent of farm units control only 2.4 per cent of the land. It is therefore not surprising that the government's promise to redistribute land has incited violent reactions from large landowning elites who have threatened to separate from the Andean departments of Bolivia under the banner of departmental "autonomy."

Laura Gotkowitz's delightful book, *A Revolution for our Rights*, provides the reader with a historical lens through which to understand these contemporary struggles. Based upon extensive archival research, Gotkowitz's book provides a snapshot of the struggles of Indian communities in the Cochabamba Valley to protect and defend their rights to land

from the War of the Pacific (1879–83) up until the eve of the national-popular Revolution of 1952. Most importantly, Gotkowitz fills a gap in the historical record (that is, in the English-language literature), by focusing on the role that rural rebellion played in bringing about the Revolution. While the principal demands of the struggle were "*Tierras al Indio*" ("Lands to the Indians") and "*Minas al Estado*" ("Mines to the state"), most contemporary histories have paid closer attention to the role of the revolutionary miners' organizations than to the struggles for land. With the help of progressive historians like Gotkowitz, the record is now being corrected.

Gotkowitz's major goal in this book is to provide a reinterpretation of the 1952 Revolution which "shows that rural indigenous movements also engaged with and shaped the populist pacts that marked the decades leading up to the 1952 Revolution." (9) The book concentrates on the struggles for the right to land and political authority amongst Indian communities in the department of Cochabamba, which may seem an unlikely choice since only a small proportion of Indian communities in the early Republican period were located in Cochabamba, a region dominated by smallholding mestizo peasants. As the author argues, however, "[i]t is precisely the limited presence – but political force – of Cochabamba's Indian communities, and the pioneering significance of its peasant unions, that make this region a propitious vantage point for exploring contests over the competing national visions and the origins of the revolutionary project." (9) Indeed, as Gotkowitz suggests, the 1947 cycle of rural unrest with its roots in the departments of Cochabamba and La Paz was an essential precursor to the 1952 Revolution. As Bolivian historian, José Gordillo, has also argued, Indigenous communities from Cochabamba played a central

role in national politics both before and after the Revolution, owing in part to the strategic alliances struck between Indian communities and the military populist government of Gualberto Villarroel (1943–1946).

While all histories are necessarily partial, Gotkowitz pays keen attention to detail, skillfully breathing life into the archival material so that the stories of the deceased come alive. She is also careful to point out when the archival material is limited so that she has been left to speculate. In the chapter on the 1947 cycle of unrest, for example, Gotkowitz writes, “[f]or Magarita Coca viuda de Coca, civilization hung in the balance on 7 February 1947,” (236) the day that the colonos working on her hacienda assassinated her husband, taking the typewriter, the sewing machine, clothes, potatoes and maize, and her deceased husband’s horse with them. By excavating the testimonies of the trial set up to investigate Mr. Coca’s death, Gotkowitz suggests that while the Ayopaya uprising was partly motivated by heightened labour burdens on the estates, the rebellion involved a much wider contest over the meanings of the laws inaugurated by the military-populist government of Villarroel in 1945: “In the course of the rebellion, the Ayopaya rebels connected an imaginary law for revolution with Villarroel’s real decrees against servitude. In doing so, the insurgents not only appropriated and redefined the state’s decrees against *pongueaje* [personal service on a landlord’s estate or in a mine] and other service duties: they enacted their own vision of justice and the law.” (238)

Gotkowitz’s study also makes an important theoretical contribution to the literature on state formation in Latin America by demonstrating how the liberal project has offered indigenous communities a double-edged sword. The first three chapters of the book explore how

liberal legislators inadvertently bestowed the legal tools for the resurgence of Indian communities in their attempts to abolish communal land and political authority and how indigenous leaders viewed, appropriated, and challenged the liberal project, while the latter half of the book demonstrates how Bolivia’s defeat in the Chaco War triggered the rise of a new generation of Indian and peasant leaders who forged strategic alliances with the military-populist leaders at the time. In the introductory chapter entitled “The Peculiar Paths of the Liberal Project” she notes the inevitable contradiction of liberalism in the republics established by Simon Bolivar, namely, that the promise of sovereignty can also be used by the “dangerous classes” to promote their own nation-building project on very different terms. Nowhere was this better expressed than in the post-1874 liberal land laws, which sought to privatize land and extinguish communal rights to land and political authority. As the author writes, “[r]ather than extinguish the Indian community or removing the category ‘Indian’ from the law, the liberal reforms unleashed a long-lasting struggle over the community’s juridical status and its powers of representation.” (41) Indeed, as the most recent massacre in the Pando suggests, this struggle over which people are to be considered political authorities continues to this day.

Although the book is dense due to its theoretical sophistication and extensive historical detail, the fluid writing by the author makes this book a page-turner. It is a must-read for anyone interested in the contested processes of state formation and indigenous movements in Latin America and beyond.

SUSAN SPRONK

University of Ottawa

**Alejandra Bronfman, *On the Move: The Caribbean since 1989*** (Halifax: Fernwood Publishing; London: Zed Books 2007)

THE CARIBBEAN IS a paradoxical collection of nations. Travelers come from all over the globe to enjoy a multitude of pleasures on beaches and casinos in the region. Yet the world knows little about the individual islands of the Caribbean, their varied histories, or their vast inter-regional and international connections. Historian Alejandra Bronfman addresses this problem in *On the Move: The Caribbean since 1989*, an engaging and informative set of interlocking essays in which she addresses the historic place of the Caribbean as a centre of circulating people, goods, capital, and information.

Bronfman tells us early on that her intention is to put the Caribbean people at the center of their own regional narrative, noting group intentionality and action in all important phases and stages of Caribbean history. At the same time, she wants to clarify the continuing role of the Caribbean in international exchange. There are several ways to focus on these questions, some of which would require an encyclopedic discussion of each island, language group, and political-economic trend. Bronfman instead opts to propose "circulation" as an orienting concept that illustrates the intensive historical integration of the Caribbean into world markets. This thoughtful and creative approach allows her to cover a multitude of issues and situations briskly and without losing the central point, that Caribbean nations have never been isolated islands passively accepting destinies imposed from outside or above.

People, capital, drugs, and information are among the important factors and products of production that have originated in the Caribbean and circulated throughout the world. Though

every nation in the area has in one way or another engaged in these trades, flows, and movements, some settings illustrate the nature of particular circulations better than others. Bronfman has chosen national exemplars that are both useful and informative. Four substantive chapters focus on these cases and themes: Haiti and the movement of people and their citizenship abroad; Cuba's recent capital investments in tourism, medicine, and biotechnology; Jamaica's history as a producer and marketer of illegal drugs; and the development in various islands of digital technology and communication.

The story of Haitian migration to the United States following the removal of the Duvalier family from political office and election of Jean-Bertrand Aristide is a tale well worth telling as one explores the continuing financial and political influence of émigrés. A largely educated group with strong monetary and affective ties to Haiti, the immigrant community living in the United States grew in numbers and influence through the 1980s and 1990s. With several newspapers and radio outlets, the group was easily mobilized by Aristide into a "tenth department." Dividing that sector into *arrondissements* proved to be considerably more complex, though the support of Haitian immigrants was critical to the reinstatement of Aristide to the presidency during the Clinton Administration. The effectiveness of the immigrant community living in the United States is contrasted with that in the Dominican Republic, poorer and with shifting patterns of political influence on events in Haiti. However, immigrants in neither locale have been able to stem the tide of neo-liberal economic policies and general economic disarray in contemporary Haiti.

Much commentary on Cuba today continues to focus on its economic weaknesses, with little recognition of success in the form of new industries. Bronf-

man uses the Cuban case to consider the circulation of capital in the region. She begins by describing recent Cuban state efforts to capitalize tourism and extend its appeal beyond the “sun and fun” associated with Caribbean destinations. She notes as well that tourists in Cuba are unable to avoid exposure to economic inequality and exclusion, even as their contributions to the national economy are in part diverted to social investment by the state. Two other industries of growing significance in Cuba are nickel mining and medical research and biotechnology. A Canadian company invested heavily in Cuban nickel mining and profited in the process, while enhancing Cuban job and trade opportunities in Canada and Europe. At the same time, Cuba’s investment in medical training and biotechnological research has yielded a boom in medical tourism, the exchange of medical personnel with other countries, and increasing sales of sera and other medical substances abroad. This success has at once inspired more US restrictions on travel and trade with Cuba while intensifying international business interest in the island economy.

The Caribbean has long been a site for illicit circulation, whether of money, people, or goods. Bronfman examines this phenomenon through an account of Jamaican involvement in the international marijuana and cocaine trades. Marijuana, or ganja in Hindi, was introduced to the Caribbean by Indian workers. It has been cultivated in Jamaica since the late 19th century when it was considered a benign substance. That changed in the 20th century as ganja was redefined as a dangerous drug and criminalized with ever more serious consequences for those possessing, growing, or selling it. Jamaican immigration to North America, the rising worldwide demand for marijuana, and the intensification of political violence on the island converged in complex ways

that resulted in, among other things, the development of gangs that traded in ganja and operated in Jamaica and abroad. The developing market for cocaine in Europe and North America drew Jamaican dealers and their “posses” into more lucrative and dangerous enterprises that interdictions by the United States and Jamaican governments have done little to stem. There is no doubt that the illicit production and trade in drugs have enriched many Jamaicans while creating a social and political juggernaut that has been impossible to escape.

Bronfman leaves the least decisive discussion, that of ICT (Information and Communication Technology), until last. Cell phones and computers have taken the Caribbean by storm, creating new avenues for communication and productive investment. Looking at the region in general, however, she finds that ICT utilization is wildly uneven. Cell phones are the most readily available form of new technology, with a majority of some islands’ populations possessing personal telephones for the first time. For every progressive experiment in introducing computers and the internet into remote classrooms, there are as many cases of off-shore data processing and gambling that reproduce the patterns of international domination and exploitation that have long plagued the region. Firm conclusions have yet to be reached on the impact of ICT on the nations of the Caribbean and their intra- and extra-regional economic, political, and cultural linkages.

*On the Move: The Caribbean since 1989* closes with a brief essay by Bronfman on the difficulties of studying contemporary history in a region whose defining moments are often perceived to have occurred more than a century ago. While plantation slavery and emancipation established patterns of production, trade, and culture that have influenced the history of the region in profound ways, there

are meaningful and self-determining moments in the more recent past that must be related. Bronfman's discussion of the complicated and thoughtful ways that Jamaica's National Bicentenary celebration valorized a range of historical eras, constraints, and struggles, should interest scholars and students of the region. It is one more way in which this accessible and compelling work succeeds in rescuing the Caribbean from narrow categorizations.

MARIETTA MORRISSEY  
University of Toledo

**Anthony J. Barbieri-Low, *Artisans in Early Imperial China*** (Seattle: University of Washington Press 2007)

ONE OF THE GREAT ancient civilizations of the world, China is well known for its dazzling material culture. Each year sees an outpouring of popular as well as scholarly works celebrating thousands of years of breathtaking artistic and technological achievements. But while writers focus on the originality of Chinese art and technological innovation, analyze the superb artistic ingenuity and the skill that went into finely crafted tools and works of art, and decode the possible political messages it all conveyed, surprisingly little attention has been paid to the people whose sweat and toil created the masterpieces. *Artisans in Early Imperial China* fills an important gap in the field because the author looks at "the men and women" who made "the glittering objects and monuments of China," with a particular emphasis on "the complex social, commercial, and technological networks in which they participated." (17)

Most artisans appear to have been attached to the imperial court or to noble families until the Warring States period (403–221 BCE), when independent merchants and artisans appeared and the line

between the two groups was blurred. In a society that considered agriculture to be absolutely fundamental to people's livelihood and honoured scholars as the ruling class, the growth of an artisan class was slow. The state regarded artisans suspiciously because of their potential mobility and issued strict rules to regulate their commercial activity. The common people viewed them as cunning traders trying to peddle shoddy goods. Early Chinese philosophers paid little attention to artisans, although they used craftspeople or their crafts to illustrate sophisticated moral or philosophical principles. Regardless of the negative view of artisanship, the occupation developed rapidly during the Qin and early Han periods because it was becoming profitable. (44, 48, 53–54) Nevertheless, under the reign of Emperor Wu (Liu Che, 141–87 BCE) during the Han Dynasty, the private sector of the Chinese economy was severely weakened. The government took over iron and salt production and instituted rigorous laws to restrict and squeeze artisan-merchants. (126–127) This book covers the Qin and Han Dynasties (221 BCE–220 AD), eras that Chinese academics generally acknowledge as the golden age of the handicraft industry.

*Artisans in Early Imperial China* consists of six chapters, each focusing on one aspect of the life and work of Chinese artisans. Topics range from their social status, training, marketing strategies, and religious beliefs to the sharp distinction between court artisans and those in some form of bondage. Drawing upon three types of sources – historical documents, archaeological reports, and objects produced by ancient artisans – Barbieri-Low argues that production in state workshops and factories reached an extraordinarily high level after the Qin period. Government officials in charge of production closely scrutinized all levels of the manufacturing process. They devised



ways to increase efficiency by carefully calculating the quantity of materials and personnel needed for various jobs, and they took full responsibility for the work performance of men and women under their supervision. (19–20, 73)

Barbieri-Low discusses developments in Chinese handicraft production in terms of quality control, the division of labour, and mass production. He reveals that some efficiency methods, such as the scientific management employed in the West during the late 19th century, had in fact appeared in China's state workshops as early as in the third century BCE. Using the manufacture of arrows as an example, Barbieri-Low demonstrates how production was broken down into specialized tasks: one artisan straightened the shafts, another packed the feathers, while still another installed the arrowheads. Weapons and tools were not the only things produced using assembly line technology. For example, the Changxin Palace lamp, one of the most beautiful masterpieces of second century BCE Chinese artisanship, was constructed using eight different assembly stations. Even the seemingly unique design of the candlestick was made in accordance with "the demands of a standardized, modular design." (14–15, 74) Another distinguishing feature of early imperial handicraft was the way quality control was handled. Each state artisan was compelled by law to mark their name, work unit, and the manufacturing date on the finished part. Good work and good workers were rewarded; artisans who performed poorly or produced shoddy work were fined. (75)

In Chapter four Barbieri-Low takes readers into a strikingly different world, that of the private artisan-merchants who used various business techniques to increase their market share and profit. Some of the marketing strategies included "cutt[ing] corners on quality, recyc[ling] materials, creat[ing] knockoffs

of high-status designs, borrow[ing] imperial factory marks, compos[ing] rhyming advertising jingles, and engage[ing] in blatant self-promotion." (138) These practices remind one of the illegal commercial activities in present-day China, a country with the fastest economic growth but limited development in liberal democracy. Anyone familiar with the frequent media coverage of adulterated medicine and vegetable oil in China may find echoes from the past in the Han masons, who cut costs by using recycled stone to build tombs for the wealthy and influential clan elders. (138–141)

While admitting that very little material covering the activities of female artisans has survived, Barbieri-Low nonetheless makes painstaking efforts to give readers a glimpse of their contributions. Large numbers of female artisans were employed in both private workshops and state factories. They often worked with their husbands in family-run workshops or as independent artisans in large-scale state-owned industries, especially in those making delicate silk garments and lacquer ware. Since workers were required to engrave their name in finished pieces, the quality control system employed in Chinese workshops allows researchers to identify the gender of lacquer artists. It would appear that in state workshops the vast majority of lacquered pieces were painted by women. Occasionally, women rose to the high position of designer-painter or were in charge of accounting and record keeping, a position which required a fairly high level of literacy. (107–114)

The significant role women played in the handicraft industry in early imperial China indicates that, although Confucianism confined women to the home, most labouring women did not have the luxury to observe the Confucian ideal. The high visibility of women in prestigious positions in state workshops seems

to suggest that strict gender divisions were muted. It is perhaps well to recall that Chinese women did not begin to bind their feet until the Song Dynasty (960–1279 CE), a period when moral restrictions for women became so extreme that male moralists required them to put chastity above life. Barbieri-Low could have done more to compare artisans during the two historical eras, demonstrating the continuities and divergences in the organization of factory production and the gendered division of labour in the handicraft workshops.

Chapter five guides the readers through an art gallery of masterworks produced by court painters and craftspeople. Fascinating as these court paintings are, the author seems to spend too much time analyzing them, especially when there is little available evidence to allow him to pinpoint the authors of the works in question.

Barbieri-Low closes the book with a marvelous examination of groups of strikingly different artisans who were “the coerced, the convicted, and the enslaved.” (212) One interesting example concerns the way that the government recruited labour for large-scale projects. Because drafting large number of workers could interrupt farming or possibly trigger a revolt, the government cleverly enlisted peasants in February, a month when no major agriculture activities took place and retained them only for that month. Convicts on the other hand were brought in any time when they were needed and likely worked year-round. During the Han Dynasty, the most common punishment for people who supposedly breached the law was a term of hard labour. These men, usually shaved and iron-collared, were sent to do “the dirtiest, most arduous, and most dangerous jobs for the state.” Some of those jobs included building monumental city walls, constructing imperial tombs, working in

iron foundries, or mining. Subjected to harsh treatment and poor safety conditions, convicts suffered extremely high accident and death rates; most convict labourers never lived to see their freedom. Conditions were so bad that a large armed uprising broke out in a state arsenal located in today’s Shandong province toward the end of the former Han period. Thousands of convicts swept through a vast area before being suppressed by government forces. (227–245)

Drawing upon the most recent scholarly works published in Chinese, English, and Japanese, Barbieri-Low has produced a solid and insightful work on a topic neglected by scholars in both China and the West.

SHILING MCQUAIDE  
Athabasca University

**Kate Bronfenbrenner, ed., *Global Unions: Challenging Transnational Capital through Cross-Border Campaigns* (Ithaca and London: ILR Press 2007)**

ON FEBRUARY 9, 2006, this reviewer flew from Toronto to New York to attend, along with 560 others, a conference entitled “Global Companies – Global Unions – Global Research – Global Campaigns.” Representatives from trade unions and non-government organizations (NGOs) as well as academics from around the world gathered to explore how to build labour’s capacity to initiate more effective strategic corporate research and comprehensive cross-border campaigns.

Globally, unions operate in the context of a continuously changing and often hostile neo-liberal environment, dominated by transnational corporations. The result has been global problems that demand global solutions. These, in turn, necessitate cross-border cooperation and common action by a world-wide labour

movement. Based on the New York conference, this book builds on a developing consensus that transnational corporate power over working people and their organizations can only be successfully confronted if it is examined and understood in far more detail.

As the research director of the Ontario Federation of Labour (OFL) for the past 16 years my attraction to the book's first chapter, which outlines a model for strategic corporate research, is understandable. Tom Juravich argues that unions today need to acquire a comprehensive understanding of a company, an industrial sector, and the broader social-economic and political context in which it is embedded. "Only as a product of this kind of research analysis," he writes, "can unions design the appropriate strategies and tactics to be successful, taking into account both how power flows through the firm and how vulnerabilities can be exploited." (16) The potential strategic campaigns would go far beyond traditional organizing and bargaining. Juravich demonstrates such innovations historically, referencing key industrial confrontations, beginning with the 1912 Lawrence, Massachusetts, strike against the American Woolen Company. This famous, but decidedly local, strike by immigrant women workers, known as the "Bread and Roses" strike, brought the company to its knees via innovative local actions. At the time, though, a company had limited ability to move production, and the state had no institutional role in labour relations, although police violence in defence of capital was common.

By the 1930s, however, more unions were confronting large corporations like General Motors with multiple plants and new corporate structures, as well as new forms of state involvement. The auto workers adopted tactically selective strikes, in which the famous sit-down strike in Flint, Michigan, was central. Then, in the 1960s, as reflected in battles with United States

Steel, workers contended with continued corporate evolution, a post-war accord between labour and management, and the development of pattern bargaining. Juravich's fourth and final stage focuses on the Japanese-owned tire giant Bridgestone/Firestone (BSFS) in 1996. Here one finds a fully international corporation with plants located world-wide, capital mobility, a deliberate undermining of the post-World War II industrial relations system, and the necessity of innovative and comprehensive campaigns to stave off membership defeat. In this new context, experience suggests that there is no one easy solution. Rather, multi-faceted campaigns involving numerous players such as stockholders and lenders, broad alliances with community and religious groups, consumers and the central involvement of rank-and-file workers themselves are necessary.

After tracing tactical changes over time, Juravich outlines a strategic corporate map specifying four areas that need attention: the basics of a firm; their profit centre and growth plan; the company's decision makers; and key relationships such as main suppliers, customers, lenders, board members and regulatory institutions. This chapter then proceeds from a discussion of new research needs to a discussion of *how* to apply research findings to a strategic campaign.

The editor of this text, Kate Bronfenbrenner, is to be congratulated for her selection of the nine excellent chapters that follow. Together they portray the range of initiatives that unions are employing to more strategically respond to global corporate power.

Chapter 2, by Peter Wad, explores how workers at a Malaysian medical supply company unionized their factory in large part due to an interesting alliance with a Danish NGO connected to the Danish labour movement. Pressure on key decision makers outside Malay-

sia compelled Euromedical Industries to retreat. Wad provides concrete evidence of the value of researching the various company stakeholders and analyzing the specific vulnerabilities of a corporation. Union organizing succeeded thanks to such research and international campaign pressure even though the company ignored court rulings against it and the Malaysian government refused to enforce its own labour laws.

Next, Ashwini Sukthanker and Kevin Kolben provide two case studies that detail the challenges of building alliances between unions in the Global South and Global North. They maintain that “narrowly tailored cooperation between allies in the Global North and Indian partners can be successful when there is direct engagement and when competing and complementary interests are carefully defined and negotiated.” (57) They contextualize their piece with historical exploration of labour struggles and cross-border inequitable relations beginning with colonial India. Employment continues to be influenced by a racialized subcontract system with absent and unaccountable employers. Coordination between the Global North and the Global South is most effective when shaped by the interests and issues of Indian unions and consumers rather than being decided unilaterally by Northern unions and their allies.

The three chapters discussing campaigns in Asia are completed by Samantha Gunawardana with an ethnographic analysis of Sri Lanka’s Export Processing Zones (EPZs). She uses the voices of workers themselves who, in the most hostile of environments, build patiently and in stages women-to-women networks, then coalitions with local NGOs and then national and international labour and NGO networks, all the while engaging in escalating actions. This is not coalition building for one campaign

as all too often happens in Canada, but rather slow, patient relationship building on every level. This has contributed to a doubling of union density in Sri Lankan EPZs between 2003 and 2006. It is also worth heeding because EPZs are so deeply entrenched in transnational commodity chains of investment, business alliances, and subcontracting relations that their impact on the Global North as well as the Global South is gaining social weight.

The book’s next chapter focuses on Latin America and the Caribbean. Henry Frundt presents a case study of a comprehensive union campaign in the banana sector. My first reaction was that there wouldn’t be much to learn from this sector for those of us in the “developed” world. After all, bananas don’t rank high on labour’s organizing agenda in Canada. In fact, chapter 5 proved rich in lessons applicable world-wide. Banana sector unions developed collaborative relations with NGO networks and small-farmer organizations, becoming increasingly skilled at building independent certification programs that contribute to Fair Trade. Over time union repression diminished and increased space for union organizing appeared, leading to an expansion of union density to about 30 per cent.

The next three chapters focus on distinct campaigns in Europe. The first, by Peter Turnbull, involves dockworkers who have a long tradition of cross-border solidarity. Dockers’ unions in the International Transport Federation (ITF) launched a campaign of education and action, including coordinated strikes at international ports and demonstrations at the European Parliament to defeat a European Commission directive that threatened their job security and viability. Labour was “able to tilt the balance in response to the changing strategies of transnational capital and the supranational state.” (135) Valeria Pulignano presents a critical analysis of how the

European Metal Workers' Federation, absent, unlike the doctors, of historical traditions of cross-border campaigns, coordinated workplace and community actions across borders in Europe. Their actions were a response to corporate restructuring and threatened job security at General Motors. Unions were able to restrain, though not prevent, GM from forcing locals and regions to compete against each other to save jobs in their communities. The phenomenon of corporate-induced workplace/local union competition remains pivotal to many industrial workers' experience.

In chapter 8, Amanda Tattersall evaluates the challenges and potential of cross-border alliances in the service sector through research on SEIU's global partnership unit and the Driving Up Standards campaign conducted by SEIU and the Transport and General Workers' Union in Britain. Building on her framework of five key indicators of union-community coalitions, detailed in diagrammatic as well as written form, she assesses the barriers, difficulties, and possibilities of various forms of global partnerships. In Tattersall's chapter we again find the message that relationship building at every level is crucial to the future of global unions. Tattersall's perceptive chapter ends by suggesting that future global structures may well necessitate "not one single global union but global union coalitions capable of negotiating different interests and cultural practices at multiple scales of organization and power." (173)

Dimitris Stevis and Terry Boswell, in chapter 9, examine both the exciting possibilities and serious limitations of International Framework Agreements (IFAs). Such agreements are primarily a recent European phenomenon that many unions and Global Union Federations (GUFs) see as important accomplishments, perhaps even the closest labour has come to global negotiated arrangements with

transnational corporations. Yet Stevis and Boswell stress that IFA enforcement remains voluntary. The challenge is to restructure all such agreements to ensure they are enforceable. It is also to ensure their expansion beyond Europe, particularly to the Global South, making them genuinely international bodies. As a start, IFAs need to begin to incorporate company subsidiaries in the Global South under the same terms and conditions as the Global North. Finally, the authors explain that such arrangements need to complement, not substitute, comprehensive cross-border campaigns.

The last chapter, written by Darryn Snell, concerns the significant increase in foreign direct investment in the Global South and the detrimental practices of transnational corporations, including human rights violations. Media attention has recently focused on high profile court cases implicating companies such as Exxon Mobile, Coca-Cola, Wal-Mart, and Talisman. The concern is that major companies impacting millions of people have been charged with supporting military dictatorships, crushing rebellions, and condoning mass executions, rape, and torture. Following an exploration of the relationships between corporations and violence, Snell's focus is on what unions can and should do about such situations.

"The goal of this book," writes Bronfenbrenner in her conclusion, "was to provide a body of original scholarly research that captured global union efforts to take on and win against the world's largest transnational firms." (213) The book fulfills this objective admirably both through its clear approach to conducting corporate research and through the selection of articles from the Global Union Conference in New York City. In addition to the lessons extracted from the specific campaigns noted in the text's concluding chapter, several points deserve further comment.

The first concerns research on the changing nature of corporations. As the campaigns in the book demonstrate, it is paramount that workers and their unions, along with civil society allies, gain greater in-depth comprehension of changing corporate ownership structures and the vulnerabilities of transnational corporations. Despite the corporate consensus on neo-liberal policies, there remains substantive variation in how companies are structured, how decisions move up and down these structures, how they interface with their subsidiaries, and where most of their profit is created. To avoid marginalization, unions in Canada need to move more quickly to grasp this changed reality.

The second focuses on the role of the state. In my view there exists throughout the text an unspoken underestimation of the continued centrality of the state. This underestimation has taken on new life with the rise of neo-liberal ideas and policies. Neo-liberalism holds that only the free market can cure social ills and therefore all obstacles to capital accumulation should be removed. It follows that governments should privatize, deregulate, and otherwise get out of the way of private business. But the state continues to enable, promote, and protect national and global corporations. Simultaneously, it works to undermine, weaken, and repress the power of workers, their unions, and their allies. Put simply, the state in capitalist societies continues to represent the general interests of capital, of which transnational corporations are an increasingly important part. Second, it remains a decision-maker in terms of laws, regulations, and policies, even though this role has evolved given current economic thinking. Only in the rarest of crises do these two roles come in conflict. Perspectives in the text tend to confuse these two functions into an either/or dichotomy rather than see state

roles as multi-faceted, complementary, and pivotal.

True, there is an element of state autonomy that may be manifest in times of mass popular pressure, but just as often the state counters the desires of a particular corporation and favours the interests of capital as a whole. Yet to recognize a certain autonomy is not to adopt the strategy advanced in the text of trying to "actually separate the state from capital itself." (217) Tactically it may be possible to exacerbate whatever tensions exist between a particular transnational and the appropriate state structure, but it is illusory to think the two can be separated. States are far from neutral bodies from which capital can be peeled layer by layer. The two are intrinsically interwoven and fused in principal purpose. For this reviewer full social justice for union members and for working people generally requires a fundamental transformation of the current economic and political order, not an accommodationist approach.

This leads to my third point which concerns coalitions and other community alliances. Virtually every chapter in this text emphasizes the importance of coalitions, of working with NGOs, or of building networks, but the specific nature of these relationships and their weight in broader campaigns is largely unexplored. Yet even where unions succeed in gaining improvements against domestic and transnational employers, larger social and economic forces continue to erode living standards. A cursory examination of the most recent Statistics Canada figures on the decline of middle-income earners and the stagnation of workers' buying power demonstrably confirms this. The point is that although unions need to continue to struggle for the immediate material needs of their members they will also need to avoid succumbing to a narrow pragmatic vision which places their

local or national union above all others. Unions must strive to become more than a defensive shield against the worst of neo-liberal capitalism.

Today it is necessary to develop a vision which recognizes all workers, unionized and non-unionized, domestic and international, as allies in a common fight. With globalization it is essential to extend this broader class vision and see unions as but one, albeit important, form of organization within the broader workers' movement composed of many social and community organizations struggling for a better world. One also needs to be cognizant that this vision can neither be colour- nor gender-blind. Rather, it must be sensitive to particular forms of disadvantage and take steps to correct them. It should also extend this same determination to the benefit of workers in the Global South whose standard of living has long been negatively affected by economic arrangements inherent in advanced market economies stemming from the Global North.

My fourth and last point concerns education and new solidarities. Of central importance to moving workers into active participation in strategic research and cross-border campaigns is membership engagement and education. At least some union members can assist with the new forms of research outlined; many more can collectively develop a critique of a particular transnational and then participate in the process of designing and implementing a campaign. The latter is particularly important as even the best designed campaign is doomed to failure without the power of engaged members and their coalition partners. People increase their awareness and develop their capacities through actual activity as much as through formal educational classes and seminars which every union should be vigorously supporting.

It is also through such activities that workers' solidarity expands from a particular workplace and union membership across borders. The development of such nascent international solidarity should not be seen as some well-meaning abstraction. It will in all likelihood be quickly tested, for as the concluding chapter of the book notes, because one side of a cross-border campaign has obtained its goals in a campaign, does not necessarily mean that the other partners have. Indeed, it is unlikely that all sides reach their goals at the same time. Unions in the Global North will need to ensure that unions in the Global South win as well. Union campaigns will need to have the capacity and the solidarity to overcome the pressure to break ranks and not let transnational companies play one group of workers off against another. It should therefore be evident how crucial union education, membership engagement, and international solidarity are to the future of unions.

There are many more lessons to glean from this text, stemming from a first of its kind global union conference. The challenge ahead is to implement the key lessons of its findings. This will be accomplished by engaging in the kind of strategic research outlined and by using the examples of cross-border campaigns to launch more such vitally important actions in the transnational corporations located where we work, organize, bargain, and experience politics.

CHRIS SCHENK

Former Research Director  
Ontario Federation of Labour

**Geraldine Terry, *Women's Rights***  
(Halifax: Fernwood Press 2007)

*WOMEN'S RIGHTS* is part of Oxfam's "Small Guides to Big Issues," a series of resource books designed for and writ-

ten by people who are working to end poverty. Geraldine Terry is a British anti-poverty activist specializing in international development who has worked for NGOs (including Oxfam) as well as government-funded aid projects. Terry's analysis is based on her experiences working with grassroots women's groups in the global South, in particular those who use the international conventions that protect women's rights to empower women to fight poverty. The central premise of the book is that many of the most serious issues in the world today are "bound up with the denial and abuse of women's human rights." (3) International development programs continue to marginalize women's rights, despite the fact that 60 to 70 percent of the world's 1.1 billion poor people are women. This short volume explains how three decades of international development have been ineffective because they have not connected discrimination against women to child mortality, HIV/AIDS, lack of access to education and literacy, violence against women, and environmental sustainability. The book is not entirely pessimistic, though. Examples of successful local initiatives that are based on a rights-based approach to development demonstrate that empowering women to change their own communities is often more effective than benevolent initiatives that only address immediate material needs. The book's greatest strength is the focus on women in the global South as agents of change rather than beneficiaries of charitable development aid.

Focusing on rights rather than material needs changes the dominant image of poor women from "helpless charity cases" to "claimants of justice." (17) The book begins with a critical analysis of the human rights framework, in particular the conventions that protect women's rights. The key weaknesses of the human

rights framework are the focus on political rights abuses in the public sphere, which occludes discrimination in the home, and its failure to change customs and traditions that assume that women's subordination is the "natural state of affairs." Even though UN development policy includes goals and targets to improve women's rights, many activists with whom Terry has worked feel that policymakers merely pay lip service to women's issues. For example, the UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) set 2015 as the target to eliminate poverty. But one skeptical activist calls them the "Most Distracting Gimmick" (6) because gender equality is not the cornerstone of the policy. Terry identifies cultural relativism as one of the most significant threats to the universalism of human rights. Chapter 3 criticizes opponents of gender equality who argue that women's equality threatens traditional customs and values, and those who believe that the human rights framework is a form of imperialism on the part of the global North. Terry argues that despite the shortcomings of international law, human rights conventions that defend women's human rights, such as the Convention to Eliminate Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), must be defended because they resonate for women who are struggling to end poverty and to deal with the multiple issues that are associated with it.

Subsequent chapters elaborate on the interconnections between women's rights and fundamentalism, voting rights, globalization, education, violence against women, HIV/AIDS, and new technologies. Property and inheritance rights are a consistent theme in each chapter. Women's rights to property are restricted by law, convention, or traditions that were distorted under colonial rule. Dependency on male family members makes it difficult, and in some cases impossible, for



women to leave dangerous relationships or to acquire the education and skills that they need to move out of exploitative jobs. It is striking how many grassroots initiatives to end poverty include women's property rights as a fundamental goal.

Women's stories are the heart of the book. Discussions of legislation designed to promote women's rights initiatives are juxtaposed with quotations by women whose lives have not been improved by these initiatives. These quotations reinforce the interconnectedness of women's rights and the social issues related to poverty, as well as the need for rights-based development policy. More optimistic are the stories of women's groups that have changed ambivalence about violence against women, lobbied for legislation to end discrimination against women, organized programs to teach girls their rights, and established centres to teach women skills that have helped them to live independent lives. These success stories demonstrate that small groups of women can make change. But they are tempered by the reminder that globalization, new technologies, and deregulation have created new challenges, and that more and more women live in poverty as a result of international trade agreements that put profit before human rights.

The goal of this series is to motivate readers to do something to combat poverty. The book concludes with practical recommendations to support rights-based development organizations as well as a guide to alternative media sources and websites that will help people to keep abreast of changes in women's rights and local initiatives to end poverty. Students who are just beginning to learn about development should read this book because it explains complex issues and ideas in an accessible manner. Although those who are well-versed in human rights and international development may not learn much that is new, it

is still worthwhile to read *Women's Rights* because it is a powerful indictment of policies that maintain women's poverty.

NANCY JANOVICEK  
University of Calgary

**Gregory Clark, *A Farewell to Alms: A Brief Economic History of the World***  
(Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press 2008)

GREGORY CLARK'S brief economic history of the world seeks to explain the coming of the Industrial Revolution to England and the West and its failure to materialize in most under-developed countries. It is divided into three parts: the Malthusian Trap which presents a global model of traditional society that runs from the birth of civilization to 1800, the coming of the Industrial Revolution, and finally what Clark refers to as the Great Divergence or the failure of industrialization in most of the under-developed countries.

At the core of the British-educated economic historian's view is the notion that until 1800 the world's population was caught in a so-called Malthusian Trap in which such technological advance as there was created a larger population without generating any gains in income. Prior to 1800 the rate of technological advance or increase of the technological schedule was so low that incomes could not escape the Malthusian equilibrium in which living standards decline as population increases. Until the beginning of the 19th century human populations were as much subject to natural or Darwinian constraints as were animal or vegetable populations.

According to Clark, the way out of this impasse was through what he calls the survival of the richest. Over time from the Neolithic Age violence declined, work hours were extended, and literacy and numeracy increased. Societies became

increasingly middle class. Thrift, prudence, negotiation, and hard work became dominant values. Clark believes that this was so because those who were most successful economically were also most successful reproductively—what he calls the survival of the rich. In time these values, transmitted culturally and genetically, pervaded English society, particularly setting the stage for the Industrial Revolution. While cultural transmission of such positive values plays a part early in Clark's work, it is important to underline that it is genetic transmission of positive economic traits which comes to the fore in his account.

The historical evidence that Clark produces for this fairy tale – which is more Lamarckian than Darwinian – is to say the least quite scant. If we pursue his biological logic, what would we make of the well-attested fact that the most reproductively successful element of the population from the mid-18th century by far has been the least economically successful element of the English population. Most of the population of England today are the descendants of this group of economic failures. From Clark's biological point of view this should have enormous implications in explaining the course of modern English economic history. Clark is silent on this matter. Clark's Malthusian enthusiasm leads him to champion social and political viewpoints reminiscent of his Tory master. Demands of Adam Smith and his ilk toward the end of the 18th century for stable institutions, well-defined property rights, low inflation, low taxes, free markets, and avoidance of war could have made no difference to living standards in the Malthusian period which continued up to 1800 or could even have lowered such living standards by increasing population. On the other hand, asserts Clark, high taxes, luxury expenditure, waste, trade restrictions, and war improved living

standards by killing off part of the population. This absurd and unhistorical paradox follows from Clark's commitment not merely to Malthusianism but also to an anti-institutional bias. It leads him to an extended and frankly inept comparison of economic incentives between feudal and contemporary capitalist England. Clark sets out the supposedly universally applicable incentives for economic growth according to neo-liberal prescription, which include low taxes, modest social transfers, stable money, low public debt, security of property, social mobility, and free markets. His analysis leads to the mind-boggling conclusion that 13th century England was a more incentive-based society than England in 2000. The failure of feudal England to break through to sustained technological innovation supposedly demonstrates that formal institutions do not provide the key to the acceleration of economic growth. It is rather the growing genetic influence of the middle class that explains it. It is true that the English population grew slowly between the 14th and 18th centuries and this would suggest a Malthusian Trap. Yet, from a historian's perspective, Clark does not explain satisfactorily how such constraints were connected to millennia of living in stable societies, to gradual economic accumulation, and to limitations on fertility which he admits produced cultural forms that facilitated the Industrial Revolution. In particular his narrative fails to connect carefully his extensive discussion of fertility limitation in northwest Europe with his notion of the survival of the rich. Indeed, his account suggests a picture that puts into question the applicability of the notion of a Malthusian Trap.

It is a story in which the last nationwide famine in England occurred in the mid-14th century and where despite the relatively slow growth of agricultural productivity England became a net exporter

of grain by the beginning of the 18th century. It is one in which the annual hours worked increased and fertility limitation was widely practiced and one in which the level of literacy and numeracy rose. It is finally an account in which workers' incomes did not rise but those of the middle class quintupled between the medieval period and the 19th century. Such an evolution is associated more with the commonplace notion of the rise of the middle class rather than that of a Malthusian Trap. Indeed, following the consensus, Clark himself concludes that the Industrial Revolution was no sudden break but went back centuries prior to 1800. But he fails to square this conclusion with his notion of a Malthusian Trap. A further element noted by Clark leads one to be altogether skeptical of such a conception. He asserts that typically in traditional societies the state and elites took 50 percent of the gross product. Yet elsewhere in his account he notes that in early modern England the same elements took only 25 percent. Clark makes nothing of this. But it leads one to ask whether the traditional societies noted by Clark were really not entities caught in natural biological cycles but rather class societies in which the upper class appropriated and wasted most of the surplus and the mass of producers were left at subsistence levels.

According to Clark, the Industrial Revolution was largely the result of efficiency growth fueled by investment in knowledge capital. This corresponds with his notion of the superior cultural and biological level of the English middle class. The Industrial Revolution, contrary to some, did not lead to more poverty or inequality but the reverse. Indeed, the working class, in Clark's view, should be grateful because it was the primary beneficiary. The Industrial Revolution did not occur in China and Japan because, developed though they were, the rich did not have more children than the poor as in

England. Imperialism, especially British imperialism, was good because it allowed the free flow of Western technology and civilization to the under-developed countries. Alas, as his one example of the development of the Indian textile industry is meant to demonstrate, most under-developed states were unable to take advantage of such possibilities because of their inherently low "social energy," which he intimates reflected their cultural or biological inferiority.

HENRY HELLER

University of Manitoba

**Robert Chernomas and Ian Hudson,**  
*Social Murder and Other Shortcomings of Conservative Economics* (Winnipeg: Arbeiter Ring 2007)

WHILE NOT WRITTEN as a history book, this small volume explores the shortcomings of conservative economics, a brand of economics that one might hope will be relegated to the history books after the events of the past twelve months. Chernomas and Hudson have selected seven different topics and explored how they have been shaped by the teachings of conservative economists and those who advocate letting market forces direct social and economic development. There is little new in the volume. Most of the material will be familiar to many readers, drawn from well known sources. However, as a package, the book provides a useful service in bringing a range of material together to explore the claims of conservative economic theory and its impact. Its goal is to show how this brand of thinking is harming individuals and our society.

The authors systematically examine the assumptions and the reality behind conservative thinking on a variety of issues including macroeconomic stability, innovation, income distribution, deregulation,

the social determinants of health, and the effectiveness of US foreign policy in fostering prosperity and democracy. They address a number of pressing questions such as: is price flexibility the best strategy for avoiding economic downturns? Is the private sector better at finding innovations than the state sector? Does a market-based system for determining wages really mean that wages reflect merit? Is public safety best served by eliminating regulation?

Each chapter begins with a short section laying out the relevant conservative theory and its inconsistencies, followed by several case studies. Readers of the volume will be treated to discussions of whether it is ethical for Michael Jordan to be paid as much as he is, how Enron is an example of what is wrong with conservative thinking, how many of the innovations that are generating wealth today are the product of government investment, not private sector research, the legacy of lead in our paint, the decision to allow faulty gas tanks in the Pinto, and the Ethyl Corporation's resort to NAFTA's Chapter 11 provisions to extract \$20 million from the Canadian government which had been trying to protect the health of Canadians etc. We are told how conservative economic policy leads to these various outcomes and how they have dramatically harmed society. Some of these can be characterized as "Social Murder."

One chapter tries to debunk the notion that the private sector is dynamic and innovative while the state sector is stagnant and moribund as the followers of Milton Friedman would have us believe. Through case studies of the internet (a positive state-funded initiative) and pharmaceuticals (a not so positive innovation process driven by market forces), the authors explain that leaving innovation to market forces can be hazardous to society.

Of special interest is the chapter exploring US foreign policy and the contention by conservative economists that capitalism is necessary for political freedom. The authors explore the extent to which this is simply a justification for US foreign policy imposing its will globally in a way that serves US business interests. After a quick introduction to the ideas of Hayek and Fukuyama, three case studies are presented (Iran, Chile, and Iraq). Again, there is little new in these sections but they provide a useful look at the contradictions of US policy which claims to be about democracy, but really ends up looking a lot more like an effort to create opportunities for American companies. This is an interpretation that is reinforced by the US's own unwillingness to open its markets to foreign companies while demanding foreign countries open their markets.

The final chapter explores why a brand of thinking that appears to have so many negative effects on the majority of the population still has general support in a democratic society. Why have North Americans generally supported economic policies that have been so detrimental to their quality of life? The authors explore the roles of rational self-interest, the media, and the shift to conservative social values in leading voters to support parties that advocate conservative economic policies, even when they are not ultimately in their self-interest. Absent is any discussion of the failure of those opposed to conservative thinking to come up with convincing alternatives that might sway voters. Opponents of neo-liberalism have to be able to explain the social and economic failures of the 1970s and 1980s before conservative thinking became dominant and to provide a reasonable expectation that their alternatives, if adopted, would improve people's economic situations. The success of a number of countries in the global

south in escaping the logic of conservative economic thinking holds out hope for those in the more developed global economies.

The authors have done a service by looking behind the rhetoric of conservative thinking and exposing its inconsistencies in a clear and understandable way. The volume is well documented and the case studies are presented in an easily accessible style. While those well versed in the limitations of conservative logic will learn little in this book, its value is in bringing together all of these arguments in one place. This would be a great book for an undergraduate class in the social sciences focused on trying to understand the reasoning behind the current push towards letting markets decide the allocation of resources. It would also be useful for a group of adult learners at the early stages of trying to develop a critique of contemporary society. In the context of an economy in which everything seems to be going wrong at once, this volume is a welcome and accessible introduction to explaining why this is happening.

WAYNE LEWCHUK

McMaster University

**Cynthia Comacchio, Janet Golden, and George Weisz, eds. *Healing the World's Children: Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Child Health in the Twentieth Century*** (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's Press 2008)

MONA GLEASON's contribution to *Healing the World's Children: Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Child Health in the Twentieth Century* opens with a simple, yet provocative observation: "Indeed, the entire history of Western approaches to child rearing is a history of shaping, training, controlling, feeding, disciplining, and cleaning small bodies in particular ways." (176) Almost all of these rituals

were prescribed to keep young people alive and ideally allow them to become productive members of a family and society. Up until the 20th century, high rates of infant and child mortality rates showed that these tasks failed just as often as they succeeded. The eleven articles in this collection document how the advent of new vaccines, drugs, increased funding of child welfare programs, and a growing international commitment to child rights generally improved the chances of surviving childhood across the 20th century. However these reforms were not achieved without ideological and scientific debate over the causes and prevention of ill health, nor were the gains made universal. Certain types of illnesses and disabilities remained misunderstood, and constructions of race and class continued to have the power to determine a child's level of health. As a result, the case studies featured in *Healing the World's Children* are often framed as morality tales, not because the scholars are overcome by the maudlin territory attached to evidence drawn from the numbers of dead babies and stories of neglected bodies, but because each of the examples shared in this interdisciplinary collection is ultimately about the choices governments, medical professionals, parents, and even the children themselves made about the worst and best ways to keep young people alive.

The book opens with three historiographical studies of the history of child health in North America, Europe, and Latin America. Although the study of child health appears most popular among historians of Canada and the United States, at least according to the proportions in the studies cited in Neil Sutherland's article, Catherine Rollet's and Anne-Emanuelle Birn's essays show a rising interest from Europeanists and Latin Americanists. Each survey reveals that the common starting point was studies

on infant and child mortality, an inevitability due to the availability of demographic sources that allow historians to track this variable fairly consistently over time, even in pre-colonial and medieval settings. More recently, scholarship in this field has moved beyond traditional medical history to consider interactions with social, political, cultural, economic, and environmental histories. This development reinforces a common theme within the collection: how germs and genes form only one type of contributor to influencing health. Reading these three historiographies together offers a valuable comparison of the disciplinary approaches across borders. It is a shame that this transnational thread was not pulled through the entire collection. Beyond one article on South Africa, the other case studies remain firmly within the boundaries of North American culture and history.

Several articles examine how the financial costs of health often drove the characterization of those affected by disease and disability and determined their treatment. Preventative and curative measures for children were almost always considered more cost effective than caring for adults who were chronically afflicted with the side effects of childhood illnesses. An exception to this rule was post-apartheid South Africa where Didier Fassin argues that one of the many reasons that President Mbeki was reluctant to give HIV-infected pregnant women AZT to prevent mother-to-child infection was that he considered caring for their soon-to-be-orphaned healthy offspring a greater financial burden than letting the infected babies die. Meanwhile Richard A. Meckel's study of income lost in the Great Depression considers how free or cheap school lunches became a government relief staple to prevent the developmental effects of malnutrition in future generation of workers. The Laurie Block

and Jeffrey P. Brosco articles both associate the personal connections of President Franklin Roosevelt and the Kennedy family to disabilities with greater leaps in government funding and the creation of more positive narratives about living with a disability. In all of these diverse historic settings, the authors contextualize the state of children's health as a symbol of a nation's sense of justice.

The most significant contribution made by *Healing the World's Children* is the great care given by the researchers to find sources that extend beyond the world of politicians and caregivers and allow children a space to share their opinions on their health and the adults who monitored it. Their words and in the case of Loren Lerner's article, their artwork, offer an articulate, and at times angry or humorous perspective at being the centre of attention in this great struggle for life and death. The inspiring speeches of Nkosi Johnson, the young HIV/AIDS activist featured in Fassin's article, provide perhaps the most dramatic example of this rhetoric. However there are several examples of less visible children's voices. Anthropologists Myra Bluebond-Langner and Megan Nordquest Schwallie's interviews with young American cancer patients reveal a savviness that transcends their ages and often the parental silence over their grim prognoses. Bluebond-Langner and Schwallie argue that this unique maturity masquerades in many forms, allowing parent and child to claim a mutual pretence that things will get better, or in other situations, giving the child authority for input into their treatment. As part of Gleason's research on child health services in the school system, she asked adult Canadians to reflect back on their experiences with health education and childhood illness. Her oral histories show the gap between the prescribed ideals of health found in the school curriculum and the realities of

her interviewees' lived experiences, such as the memory of how their own schools rarely had the sanitary features promoted in their textbooks. Her interviews also draw out the alienation many children felt toward physicians, either for cultural reasons or because it was their parents' actions, especially of their mothers, that the children viewed as most helpful during an illness.

Oral history is not the only way to reveal how children experienced health and illness. Lerner's research on Norman Bethune and his circle of likeminded leftist artists looks at art as a form of non-biomedical therapy that Bethune himself had found cathartic as a young man with tuberculosis. The accompanying photographs of patient and artist artwork are a testament to how the vulnerabilities attached to ill health can lead to empowerment through visual representations. This sentiment is also captured in Vincent Lavoie's article on post-mortem photography, a popular late 19th and early 20th century ritual in which parents initially made use of professional photographers, and later, when cameras became more available, took pictures themselves, claiming one final proof of their child's existence. Although the children are silent in these poised, almost gothic photos, the motivations behind the documentation are quite loud. Lavoie proves how this photography informed a new understanding of childhood centred on the emotional value of sons and daughters, which helped trigger reforms related to improved child welfare in the 20th century.

*Healing the World's Children* succeeds in its attempt to present "a kaleidoscopic image of child health during the twentieth century," (5) as promised by the editors in their introduction. At times, I wished there was more attempt by the editors or the authors to pull these swirling images together through greater historical con-

text or transnational links. The inclusion of dozens of photos and figures, and a bibliography for each article, in addition to footnotes, are excellent features that add to the book's effective presentation of history. Overall the collection is a useful and intriguing examination of how and why some children lived and some children died across an era known as the 'Century of the Child.'

TARAH BROOKFIELD  
York University

**Wolfgang Sachs and Tilman Santarius, *Fair Future: Resource Conflicts, Security and Global Justice*** (Black Point, NS: Fernwood Publishing Company 2007)

IN 1987 THE RELEASE of the Brundtland Commission's *Our Common Future* cast international attention, as never before, on the connections between ecological sustainability and social justice. Yet subsequent global negotiations over the past three decades, be they focused on climate change, biodiversity, forest and soil loss, or persistent pollutants, have largely failed to develop a just framework for future global environmental governance. Instead much of the focus of these multilateral discussions has resulted in business transactions over specific items, like load limits or tradable carbon emissions and sinks, that have not only reinforced but exacerbated the hegemonic control of the powerful and rich to the ongoing detriment of the poor and weak.

In *Fair Future*, a group of researchers associated with the Wuppertal Institute for Climate, Environment, and Energy in Germany, refocus attention on the relationship between global justice and the fate of the biosphere. They frame their investigation by posing the following question: how in the future will it be possible for increased numbers of humans to have dignified lives in a

world of decreased natural resources and increased pollution? As they see it, the choice facing the global community is quite clear: it's a matter of either global apartheid or global democracy. To illuminate the multiple facets of this choice they present an analysis of the globalization of ecology – its asymmetrical distribution, uneven impacts, the geography and control of material flows, and what is required for transnational resource justice to be achieved.

The researchers establish the foundation of their argument by detailing how globalization has resulted in spatially and temporally compacting of the globe at three levels: technical, political, and symbolic. This cancellation of global remoteness has meant that not only good deeds but also threats are bound more closely together; a shrinking of distance between zones of profit and loss has more closely connected the lives of the benefactors and victims of the global model of development. As the finite nature of the biosphere has become evident, the belief that ever-expanding profit-oriented industrial growth eventually allows every nation and citizen to share in the fruits of progress increasingly rests on shaky ground; the failure of this promise in turn has fed a culture of increased global rage and resentment.

Chapter two reveals the extent to which industrial modernity has established and reinforced patterns of unequal demands on the biosphere. While the industrialized nations in the North tend to be better endowed with forest and agricultural land, countries in the South possess relatively more biodiversity and non-renewable resources; yet there is a disproportionate profiting from and use of all global resources by citizens in the North. At the same time, there is large variation within this North-South framework: as the transnational economic complex extends to newly industrializing

countries, these countries draw nearer to older industrial economies in their consumption levels; the industrialized nations of the United States and Canada consume nearly four times the amount of fossil fuels as countries like Sweden and Malta; and within nations there is a spectrum of resource use between citizens and regions. This unequal ecological exchange extends to the distribution of environmental damage. While industrialized countries frequently adopt a superior air over their relatively favourable environmental data and advanced pollution control measures, the Wuppertal researchers demonstrate that this is simply the "rich illusion effect." The clean environmental records of countries in the North are largely achieved by the relocation of the environmental burden to countries in the South from which come the bulk of unrefined resources.

The question arises, therefore, what enables this transnational economic complex to disproportionately direct resources to only a quarter of the world's population. In chapter three the authors examine the mechanisms of power at work in supporting the transnational exchange of a variety of natural resources: oil, agricultural products, water, and genetic materials. They outline the key instruments that have been used to secure access to each group of environmental resources and the dominant resulting impacts of this allocation. Overall, transnational globalization has resulted in a concentration of both control over, and benefits received from natural resources, with finance capital enjoying the biggest gains. Meanwhile those most detrimentally impacted by this pattern of resource allocation have been the indigenous peoples, farmers, and workers, particularly those located in the South.

The latter half of the book explores the concept of transnational environmental justice and the mechanisms required to



achieve it. In chapter four the authors provide an insightful analysis of the dimensions of environmental justice (recognition and distribution) and present four models that could inform resource justice at an international level: secure livelihood rights; cutting back resource claims; shaping fair exchange; and compensation for disadvantages. They argue for building a world of greater fairness through internationally recognizing the inheritance of both national environmental assets and liabilities, and translating this into two very different paths forward for industrialized and developing countries. Chapter five details the specifics of this "contraction and convergence model" whereby industrial nations reduce their consumption of resources and pollution loads, and developing countries increase their use of resources until they converge with the industrial countries at an ecologically planetary sustainable level. This transition in resource development would be guided by principles of efficiency, consistency, and sufficiency such that the overall model of development would ensure a livelihood for all citizens and the renewing of each nation's resource base.

Chapter six explores how these local and national resource strategies can be directed and supported at the international level. The Wuppertal researchers argue that the market-oriented form of globalization that currently dominates needs to be replaced by a politically driven form that seeks to find ways for nations to coexist, and they look to institutions of transnational governance to support this transition. They explore some specific multilateral strategies such as the creation of a climate trust that allocates emission rights, and the integration of global standards on human rights and environment into world trade regime policies, and advocate a reinventing of the WTO. They also focus attention on the role of transnational corporations and the

creation of a legally binding framework to cover the TNCs' activities to ensure they are transparent, recognize environmental, labour, and human rights standards, adhere to fair and balanced relations within the international production systems, and are accountable before the law.

The final chapter discusses the special role that the EU can and should play in advancing global policies and practices of production and consumption that are more resource-light. The Wuppertal researchers position the EU as an eco-social market economy model that can act as a "counterplayer" to the US and the Washington consensus and Washington security agenda.

Other than the final chapter, which offers a rather idealized view of the EU's role in the world, this is a sophisticated and insightful assessment of transnational globalization and its relationship to environmental justice, national and international security, and natural resource use. While many authors point to the need to integrate the three pillars of sustainability (social, ecological, and economic) into an understanding of the state of the world, the Wuppertal researchers adeptly demonstrate how this is done. While an edited collection, the book has a strong tone and argument connecting each chapter, almost as if it was written by a single author. It is a worthwhile read for anyone but would be an instructive addition to a senior undergraduate or graduate course in global studies, environmental studies, environmental justice, or international politics of the environment.

LORELEI HANSON  
Athabasca University