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*Unions and the City: Negotiating Urban Change*, Edited by Ian Thomas MacDonald (2017) Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 260 pages. ISBN: 978-1-5017-0654-7

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indirects des exigences du capital. Ce qui n'enlève rien à la demande managériale excessive et au maintien de la tension du flux et des encadrements hétéronomes souvent inavoués de la part des entreprises. Au total, cet Homme nouveau, c'est donc celui qui doit être en mesure de répondre à des injonctions antinomiques, soit plus d'autonomie et de responsabilité dans un type d'encadrement plus étroit. C'est un homme disjoint : disjonction entre les promesses de réalisation de soi et la réalité, disjonction entre promesses et attentes, entre autonomie et cadre d'action, autrement dit « un travailleur clivé, failli entre une autonomie/responsabilisation promise et un cadre trop étroit pour autoriser celles-ci » (p. 67 *sq.*). Mais il y a plus : cet Homme nouveau, c'est aussi celui qui doit lui-même se construire comme sujet disjoint (voir p. 53 *sq.*). Il est, nous dit Durand, entre le roseau et le chêne : entre l'adaptation insatisfaisante ou la cassure. Dans ce dernier cas, la voie des problèmes de santé mentale est toute tracée, ce qui est bien exploré par l'auteur. C'est sous l'influence de cette lecture empirique que Durand propose des réflexions riches en quatre voies divergentes sur l'identité au travail, voies sur les chemins de l'adaptation, du retrait, de la cassure, etc.

En refermant le livre, le lecteur ne peut s'empêcher de réfléchir aux différentes théories sur les formes d'adaptation des travailleurs aux situations de travail considérées aussi bien sous les angles symboliques que matérielles, depuis les injonctions à l'autonomie et à la responsabilisation jusqu'aux marges de manœuvre accordées aux travailleurs en regard précisément des demandes symboliques. Ce questionnement repose évidemment sur la thèse de l'ouvrage, à savoir cet homme clivé qui doit répondre à des injonctions contradictoires. Mais avant même de poser la question de l'adaptation, une autre réflexion s'impose. Que se passe-t-il donc dans la tête des managers? Bref, on aimerait que Durand

nous explique pourquoi les entreprises suscitent à ce point ce qu'elles savent ne pouvoir donner. N'en déplaise à certains de mes collègues, il y a quand même des limites à la bêtise humaine en GRH. C'est quand même l'abc du domaine que d'éviter de susciter des attentes auxquelles on sait ne pouvoir répondre. Alors, pourquoi en est-il ainsi? Ici, le lecteur reste sur sa faim. Peut-être que la réponse à une telle question nécessite une vue plus élargie, qui commande de circonscrire l'univers des attentes globales de la main-d'œuvre. De telles attentes ne seraient-elles pas un produit de facteurs culturels plus diffus, véhiculés par le discours idéologique de nos sociétés capitalistes, et évidemment bien repris par les entreprises, elles qui en furent aussi la source partielle, sinon principale. Bref, un examen plus attentif des *ethos* du travail et du rapport au travail serait peut-être de nature à compléter la réponse, qui ne peut, néanmoins, faire abstraction des pratiques concrètes des entreprises.

Quoi qu'il en soit, ce livre intelligent pose des questions fondamentales; il comporte aussi des observations pertinentes et des analyses stimulantes; en outre, il est porteur d'un niveau de réflexion très avancé sur nos sociétés de service. Un plaisir pour l'esprit.

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### **Unions and the City: Negotiating Urban Change**

Edited by Ian Thomas MacDonald (2017)  
Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 260 pages.  
ISBN: 978-1-5017-0654-7.

This edited volume explores labour's urban strategies and their potential for promoting union renewal. In the introduction, MacDonald states the future of organized labour is an urban one. Accordingly, the focus is on labour's urban strategies revealed in a series of case studies involv-

ing efforts “to forge alliances with local employers and community organizations around public policy issues, mobilize union members as democratic citizens to move these issues forward with local elected officials, and finally bring this leverage to bear on the reregulation of the workplace”. These strategies are comprised of four elements: 1- the political mobilization of union members as worker-citizens and residents with diverse needs and identities; 2- coalition building with community groups, local firms and real estate developers; 3- exploiting divisions between powerful economic and political actors, e.g. developers and middle- and upper-class residents; and 4- creatively using local government regulatory powers to advance and protect labour standards and interests. In the concluding chapter, MacDonald provides a synthesis of the case studies, including the relative success and contradictions of labour’s urban strategies, and assesses the prospects for union renewal.

The main body of the book is divided into four parts containing a brief overview and case studies examining strategies associated with urban economic development. The contributors come from various academic disciplines (e.g., labour studies, industrial relations and geography) and worker education centres. The case studies are based on the experiences of labour activists and leaders and primarily focus on the influence of unions in “shaping policies and planning decisions” associated with important features of urban life in four sectors: the hospitality sector (the “hospitable city”), the film industry (the “creative city”), green building and manufacturing (the “sustainable city”) and child care (the “caring city”). This approach was adopted to provide “a more realistic way of evaluating the importance of labor relative to more powerful actors”. The case studies examine the extent to which labour strategies advanced institutional goals (e.g., organizing new workers and defending labour

standards) and social goals (e.g., building coalitions and promoting urban agendas).

With a focus on dominant global cities, the study is based on comparative case studies of the four sectors in New York and Toronto. While acknowledging there are differences between the two cities, the similarities are notable. They are comparable in terms of labour strength, economic structure, and they are the dominant financial centres in their respective countries. The case studies are diverse. The hospitality sector, for example, examines plans for building of new hotels in East Midtown (New York) and the location of a casino in Toronto. The other cases compare efforts to lure film production from Los Angeles to both cities, strategies promoting green jobs in manufacturing (Toronto) and retrofitting office commercial space (New York), and union campaigns supporting expanded childcare and defending public childcare programs. The childcare sector features two case studies for both New York and Toronto. Given differences in the case studies within each sector, including variations in the union strategies employed and whether they succeeded or not, as well as the breadth of sectors studied, one is led to the unavoidable conclusion the relationship between unions and cities is complicated, indeed very complicated.

In the concluding chapter, MacDonald summarizes the principle findings. He notes unions had greater success achieving goals in the profit-led sectors, but narrower strategies conflicted “with the broader class strategies that are associated with union renewal”. On the other hand, unions were better able to reconcile union and social goals in sectors that were not profit-led, but their outcomes were less impressive. Finally, narrower strategies worked better in the local context (in central locations with local government support), whereas broader class-wide strategies required support from higher echelons of government. None of the case studies demonstrated labour’s

ability to achieve both union goals and broader working-class interests.

This volume provides a timely and informative exploration of the role of unions in urban politics and fills a gap in the literature. MacDonald has done an excellent job of introducing the reader to the importance of unions as urban actors and the dynamics of urban politics. The case studies are well written and elucidate the complex relationship between unions and cities. The book will appeal to academics and students in labour studies, industrial relations, sociology and other social sciences as well as labour and community activists. Although labour is often found to be engaged in defensive battles with other powerful urban actors, e.g., real estate developers and urban gentry, the case studies provide many valuable insights into the development and execution of union urban strategies in different sectors under varying social, economic and political conditions.

One somewhat nagging aspect of the book seems to be an overly idealistic view of unions and the prospects for union renewal. It is hard to shake the idea that even where union strategies focus on advancing the greater “social good”, there is a strong and recurring theme of “what’s in it for us” and the pursuit of more immediate or short-term interests. Without question, MacDonald and the other contributors are keenly aware of and document what they consider the contradictions and dilemmas associated with various union strategies. As MacDonald notes: “The left has long lamented the absence of unions from political activity, and in particular from local and neighborhood-level politics that address a working class beyond the union membership and beyond the membership’s working identities” (p. 219).

That may be, but beyond the lament is a harsh reality. Unions are not homogeneous. They are often competitive, ideologically and politically diverse. Their visions differ and inter-union conflict is more common-

place than unusual. These divisions are most evident between unions representing the building trades and industrial workers, between private and public sector unions and among public sector unions. Yes, for some unions in the urban sphere, the pursuit of broader working-class strategies may be associated with the goal of union renewal, but that cannot be said for all or even most unions. The situation is further complicated when one considers the median union member. Many have migrated from the working class to the middle class and strive to solidify their middle class status. To boot, they have moved to the suburbs. One might reasonably ask whether we are truly speaking of contradictions and dilemmas or simply trade-offs made by unions and their members based on self-interest and satisfaction in achieving what is attainable.

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### **Managing Performance through Training and Development**

Par Alan M. Saks et Robert R. Haccoun  
(2016) 7<sup>e</sup> édition, Toronto : Nelson  
Education Series in Human Resources  
Management, 503 pages.  
ISBN : 978-0-17-657029-3.

À l’heure d’une compétition accrue en raison de la mondialisation, la seule certitude dans l’environnement économique des entreprises s’avère être la constante du changement qui demande, de leur part, une capacité d’adaptation rapide. Cette réalité requiert des entreprises de fournir à leurs employés des programmes de formation et de développement afin de leur permettre de mettre à jour ou de renforcer leurs compétences, leurs habiletés et leurs comportements. L’ouvrage de Saks et Haccoun répond, en grande partie, à cette préoccupation en fournissant aux professionnels des ressources humaines, aux cadres, aux enseignants et aux étudiants les