

## BOOK NOTES /

## RÉFÉRENCES BIBLIOGRAPHIQUES

Paul Axelrod, *Scholars and Dollars: Politics, Economics, and the Universities of Ontario, 1945-1980* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1982).

AXELROD TAKES US back in time to a period that some of were never part of, but that others in the university remember and indeed, to this day, live in. Those who have been teaching in universities since the 1950s recall a time of economic buoyancy, corporate largesse (reaching its peak in Ontario in 1957, when the Soviet Sputnik pushed corporate aid to provincial universities to \$11.6 million, an increase of 450 per cent in one brief, eventful year), and an unchanging and uniform curriculum governed not by relevance but by "standards" (a word usually pronounced with distinctively non-Canadian accents). Changes came. The mid-to-late 1960s witnessed the transformation of academic life. Economic needs and demographic pressures unleashed a reckless expansionism, while student activism and the politicization of intellectual life posed new demands and raised serious doubts, in the public mind, about student and, in some cases, professorial antipathy to the values of the "free world." But throughout the entire post-war pre-1968 period, in spite of dramatic shifts, two constants remained in the history of higher education. First, universities were supposed to be both centres of critical thought and a utilitarian training ground for a materialistic world. This dual purpose, however, posed no contradiction: a growth economy had places for engineers and thinkers, and actually premised its

self-conception on the need for thinkers and engineers to be interchangeable. At least that was the corporate and academic rhetoric. Second, because of this dual purpose higher education was to be publicly funded, but privately run: the benefits of education were to accrue to all, but the guidance of programmes must be left to those who knew what to do with them. When businesses gave money to the universities, for instance, it overwhelmingly went towards the concrete, in both senses of the word, capital outlay in construction being the corporation's favoured path of support. Planning, as a consequence, was piecemeal and inconsistent, and university administration rather haphazard. This was affordable in the days of limitless educational growth and unrestricted horizons. But stagflation in the economy, and the narrowing employment prospects for all Canadians, including university graduates, brought the state to a new set of senses in the post-1968 years. Decisions that had supposedly long been governed by abstract ideals turned increasingly on the hard realities of costs and marketability. More scholar for the dollar was the government demand, but there was as yet no policy or programme to realize this end. Ontario's universities were plunged into the chaos of cutbacks, where they have been balanced uncertainly ever since. If Axelrod provides only tantalizing glimpses into some of the consequences of this deterioration — faculty unionism, the shift from student activism to apathy, the reification of the "hard" sciences and the waning of the humanities — he has

laid the material foundations upon which an appreciation of the state of higher learning in Canada can be built.

Ronald Wardhaugh, *Language and Nationhood: The Canadian Experience* (Vancouver: New Star 1983).

THIS IS A pessimistic but serious look at bilingualism and multiculturalism in Canada, with stress upon the inadequacies of state policy and practice. It is distinguished from the current crop of studies on such issues by its attempt to broaden the discussion beyond the limitations of the French and English ramifications, including as well treatment of ethnicity and the dilemmas of native peoples.

Bill Freeman, *Trouble at Lachine Mill* (Toronto: Lorimer 1983).

LABOUR HISTORIANS in the making will enjoy this fictional account of working life in Montreal in the 1870s. The fourth in Freeman's adventure series for those aged 9 to 13, *Trouble at Lachine Mill* is the story of two child workers, Meg and Jamie Bains, and their acclimatization to the Lachine Shirt Factory. Hired as strikebreakers, this precocious duo eventually lead a strike themselves, overcome the barrier of French vs. English, drive a tyrannical foreman from the shop, and secure the original skilled strikers their old jobs. Life in the new factory was not so bad after their intervention: "There were no more fines, no beatings, and the black hole was closed for good." Too good to be true, perhaps, and certainly unlike Fortier's cigar works in Montreal, known for its black hole well into the 1880s. But truth is often stranger than fiction, and usually more perverse.

Allan Moscovitch *et al.*, *The Welfare State in Canada: A Select Bibliography, 1840-1978* (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press 1983).

THIS IS A detailed and sensitively-organized bibliography encompassing both primary and secondary material relevant to an understanding of social policy in Canada since the 1840s. Introduced by an overly brief essay on the historical evolution of the welfare state, it is appropriately catholic in its inclusion of works attending to trade unions, housing, education, child immigration, and literally scores of other topics. At times the organizational precision presents a daunting maze, but researchers in many fields will benefit from wandering around in it. They will find omissions, of course, and question why some works are cited while others are ignored. In the end, however, they can only agree that this compilation is a major help, saving them countless hours and endless frustration.

David H. Breen, *The Canadian Prairie West and the Ranching Frontier, 1874-1924* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1983).

HERE IS A reminder that the bread-basket of the world was something more than it seemed. Breen presents an assessment of the bonanza years of the beef companies between 1874-1896 and the political struggle that resulted as the ranchers contested squatting and settlement before 1911. The final section of the book outlines the ranchers' increased political fortune with the Conservative electoral victory of 1911 and then explores the cattlemen's rush to organize and secure markets in the post-war years. Few "hands" put in an appearance besides the ranchers. But as Breen notes in passing, the ranching frontier rested on a bedrock of waged labour that encompassed mobility, race, ethnicity, gender, and patriarchy: "[One] factor setting the ranch apart from the farm was the matter of labour. . . . The ranching enterprise. . . was much more congenial to the establishment and maintenance of a country estate. Those who would not labour on farms

would herd cattle on a ranch, for even in its own day there was a mystique about the cattle industry that ensured a ready supply of 'cowhands.' The retinues, including governess, cook, foreman, and cowboys, reached substantial proportions on some larger ranches. . . . In their comfortable homes with a Chinese cook and a maid or governess to look after their children, members of the cattle compact lived in a manner that contrasted sharply with the agriculturalist in his sod or frame house situated on the often treeless and windswept plain."

Rhys Isaac, *The Transformation of Virginia, 1740-1790* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press 1983).

AN EXCITING AND bold exploration of the material culture, social relations, and sources of religious and political discord in early Virginia, this book is an imaginative effort to reconstruct the texture of a colonial society. Isaac scrutinizes the land and its uses, church and home, occasions of leisure, and the consolidation of the gentility's authority prior to the Revolution. He then provides analysis of movements of religious dissent and the ways in which they chipped away at authority and order, contributing to the revolutionary ferment of the 1770s. Finally, the book ends with a discussion of the transformation of Virginia, where "the principle of individual autonomy . . . was reorganizing late eighteenth-century Anglo-Virginians' perceptions of their world and the expectations they had of it."

Peter Conn, *The Divided Mind: Ideology and Imagination in America, 1898-1917* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1983).

THE CORE OF this study examines themes of interest to students of working-class

life, situating particular discussions of the failure of socialism in America, the black experience, and women's place within the cultural (largely literary and artistic) history stretching from the Spanish-American War of 1898 to the end of World War I. Focusing on figures like Henry James, Emma Goldman, and W.E.B. DuBois, Conn argues that America experienced a fundamental cultural schizophrenia in these years. It wrapped itself in contradiction as it turned anxiously to the past at the same time that it gazed hopefully into the future. It is E.L. Doctorow's *Ragtime* and Robert Wiebe's *The Search for Order* revisited, structured around the facts of fiction and other creative endeavours.

*The Hawsepip: Newsletter of the Marine Workers Historical Association, Volumes 1 & 2* (1981-1983).

STARTED BY Jack and Judy McCusker, this newsletter is now entering its third year. The Marine Workers Historical Association was itself started in 1979, the product of a gathering of ex-shipmates drawn largely from the New York City metropolitan area. They have members across the United States and Canada, and are "dedicated to record a true account of the maritime struggle against the ship-owners, in collusion with phony union officials." Filled with oral histories, work poetry, reminiscences, epitaphs, accounts of specific struggles, and letters, the newsletter is, like some of the products of the History Workshop in England, an exercise in democratizing history. Both the political combativity of the newsletter and its broad treatment of the maritime work experience emerge from a glance at the contents of specific issues. In the final issue of 1983, for instance, a former vice-president of the NMU responds critically and bluntly to official union views of the organization's origins, a lively account of the Great Lakes Strike of 1947 appears, sources from the 1930s are

reprinted, and a number of recollections are offered by a host of seamen. Membership in the MWA, which includes a subscription to *The Hawsepipe*, is \$10.00 yearly. Send cheques or money orders to Marine Workers Historical Association, 10 Mitchell Place, Apartment 3B, New York, New York, USA 10017. If you have material for publication send it to Loretta Szeliga, 137 Avenue A, 3G, New York, New York, USA 10009.

Jonathan Schmeer, *Ben Tillett: Portrait of a Labour Leader* (London: Croom Helm 1982).

BEN TILLETT's rise from the obscurity of working-class radicalism in the 1880s to a socialist unionist of national standing by the turn of the century is chronicled in this biography by Jonathan Schmeer. Cast into the very centre of British labour history in the Victorian age by his prominence in the London dock strike of 1889, Tillett's trajectory captured the direction of the labour movement as a whole. Agitator and organizer, orator of uncommon ability, Tillett's grasp of theory and principle was less than impressive. His failings may thus have been those of the very same rank and file in whom he placed so little faith. He was the archetypal "labourist" or, what to many may be the same thing, the archetypal proletarian.

Robert Schrank, ed., *Industrial Democracy at Sea: Authority and Democracy on a Norwegian Freighter* (Cambridge: MIT Press 1983).

THREE AMERICAN merchant seamen provide their own accounts of reactions to experimental democratization of working life aboard a Norwegian freighter. Six academics and consultants then respond to these workers, among them William Foot Whyte. Premised on corporatist notions of the compatibility of labour and capital, such Scandinavian innovations are much

acclaimed in the industrial relations and QWL literature. What do workers have to say about them, however? As one seaman suggested, worker satisfaction does not turn on "such words as *democratization* or *autonomy* or *self-actualization*." These are often abstractions, against which the more tangible realities of wage rates and job conditions weigh rather more heavily. But as this seaman also noted, some intangibles seldom captured in the conceptual ordering of the quality of working life are equally important to those who labour, including the opportunity to do work that generates pride. Democratization, so-called, does not always address such concerns, tangible and intangible, as some of the academic commentary following the seamen's accounts makes abundantly clear.

Sydney Labour History Group, *What Rough Beast? The State and Social Order in Australian History* (Sydney: George Allen & Unwin 1982).

THIS EXCITING IF eclectic collection of essays will prove invaluable for those with an interest in the history of crime, women, and workers. Organized in sections concerned with state intervention in popular culture, containment of potentially disruptive social groups (criminals, the unemployed, and those who refused to adapt to domesticity and conformist views of sexuality), and the political place of repression, the book ranges broadly across time and topic. The result is a rare assortment of empirical essays that are tied together by common theoretical concerns, associated with Australian confrontations with capitalist, racial, and patriarchal relations and authorities.

M.I. Finley, *Politics in the Ancient World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1983).

AN ACKNOWLEDGED authority on the ancient world offers a succinct sweep

through state, class, and power in antiquity. He looks at politics and ideology, with particular concern for how the consent of the ruled was sustained over time. This is a topic of concern to all who study labour, in the past or in the present. Neo-Weberian in his approach, Finley lays stress upon the "acceptance in all classes of the legitimacy of status and status-inequality," exploring how patronage and shared values consolidated such consensus. His arguments will inevitably be compared to G.E.M. de Ste Croix's *The Class Struggle in the Ancient Greek World*.

B.D.P.

Eric Hopkins, *A Social History of the English Working Classes* (London: Edward Arnold, 1982).

IN THE FIVE YEARS since it was originally published, Hopkins' book has become one of the most prominent lower-level texts on its subject. It is aimed primarily at English "A" level students, but is written at a level for beginning undergraduates in U.S. and Canadian universities. The book's coverage is good, both

in terms of issues and perspectives in the research literature. It is, perhaps, skewed a bit away from the recent revival of Marxist-inspired critical social history. A new edition (rather than just a reprinting) might easily remedy this, and in general improve the book's scholarly currency. The scholarship is sound, however, and treatments usually fair. Hopkins does have a tendency occasionally to throw in his own unsupported challenges to the scholars he cites. See, for example, his suggestion on p. 37 that Thompson's evidence is inadequate to his characterizations of Peterloo. Though I am sympathetic to the notion that there are difficulties with Thompson's language of "class war," these are not pointed out to the student-reader. Instead, Hopkins just alludes to inadequate evidence for "proof." It's hard to know just what sort of evidence "proves" terminology, but students do need to know more precisely on what sorts of bases such arguments turn. Still, this is, as its printing history indicates, a very usable textbook.

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