

## REVIEWS / COMPTES RENDUS

**Christopher Dummitt, *The Manly Modern: Masculinity in Postwar Canada***  
(Vancouver: UBC Press 2007)

CHRISTOPHER DUMMITT'S *The Manly Modern: Masculinity in Postwar Canada* tackles two huge topics: masculinity and modernity. The author limits the scope of his study by examining his twin themes in the context of one city – Vancouver – from the end of the Second World War until the late 1960s. A revised version of Dummitt's doctoral dissertation, the book is a series of case studies – probably the most feasible way of analysing two vast concepts in an empirical fashion. The result is a polished, well-written, and provocative exploration of two phenomena that remain understudied by Canadian historians.

Modernity is a term often used loosely by historians to refer to a number of different periods and processes. Dummitt chooses to examine the postwar period of high modernity that Eric Hobsbawm has called the "Golden Age." Inspired by such scholars and theorists as Anthony Giddens and Ulrich Beck, he focuses on the concept of risk as a defining characteristic of modernity. Under conditions of modernity, technocratic and bureaucratic visions transform "dangers" into "risks" that can be predicted, measured, managed, and, ideally, prevented. The idea of control is central here – control, in Dummitt's words, "of the physical, social, and psychological environment." (153) Dummitt argues convincingly that the high modernity of the postwar era

was gendered masculine. Reason, technical expertise, and self-control were all, he persuades us, phenomena associated with men and masculine attributes. Yet what Dummitt calls the "doubled nature of manly modernism" (21) meant that if men were seen to be the principal actors of modernity, they could also be perceived as its victims. Not only does modernity create alienation but, claims Dummitt, "this alienation was mapped onto other social hierarchies such as class and race." (6) Working-class and racialized men were sometimes regulated and controlled by the postwar modern project in ways that they would not have chosen. Moreover, while middle-class men such as the mountaineers considered in Chapter 4 voluntarily undertook risks as part of their leisure pursuits, working-class men (such as the soldiers and ironworkers analysed in Chapters 2 and 3 respectively) were compelled to face risk as an everyday matter of course.

Dummitt draws effectively on most of the recent Canadian historiography of the postwar period, as well as on recent international studies of masculinity, risk, and modernity. His book is based on thorough and wide-ranging research in such sources as newspapers, the records of two Royal Commissions, capital case files, and the papers of associations such as the British Columbia Mountaineering Club and the Vancouver Traffic and Safety Council. The book is well organized and tightly structured. A thorough Introduction provides a thumbnail sketch of postwar Vancouver and a valuable his-

toriological and theoretical discussion of modernity and gender. The five chapters that follow each deal with an episode that allows us to glimpse the ways in which risk structured postwar Vancouver and the particular kinds of masculinity found there. In these chapters, primarily middle-class risk managers (engineers, civil servants, safety experts) rub shoulders with primarily (but not exclusively) working-class risk-takers (soldiers, ironworkers). Most of these case studies provide intriguing insights into masculinity and risk in the postwar city. The exception is Chapter 5, on capital-murder cases. While the evidence in this chapter points to a certain number of contemporary conceptions of masculinity, and shows us the prominent role played by 'experts' (notably psychologists and psychiatrists) in this period, these two things on their own don't tell us much about risk. The concept of risk, as proposed by Giddens and Beck, also figures less centrally in the chapter on war veterans than in those dealing with mountaineering, automobiles and the safety movement, and the collapse of the Second Narrows Bridge. The book closes with a substantial conclusion that reflects upon the emergence, in the 1960s, of multiple sources of opposition to the masculine voice of technocratic and bureaucratic authority.

*The Manly Modern* is a stimulating and valuable study. Like any stimulating work, it raises questions and leaves room for debate. To begin with, Dummitt states that his book is "not a history of *Vancouver* modernity and masculinity but a history of manly modernism as it took shape in Vancouver" (25–26, emphases in the original); he treats the experience of Vancouver as "characteristic" rather than unique. The book is thus subtitled "Masculinity in Postwar Canada." This seems to me to be both audacious and somewhat misleading. While some of what we see in this book no doubt played

out in similar ways elsewhere in Canada, local and regional inflections are nonetheless important. Postwar Vancouver was not simply a "vacant lot," to borrow a term used by Ian McKay in another context, and I would argue that it is worth reflecting in a sustained fashion upon its specificities.

Second, Dummitt acknowledges in his Introduction that he did not explore gender *relations* as fully as he would have liked. In this period, most war veterans, civil servants, and mountaineers were men – but not all of them. Without necessarily undertaking parallel studies of masculinity and femininity in postwar Vancouver, the author might have asked what the presence of women in these milieus, even if they were a small minority, meant for the masculinity of these men. Such an approach could be even more fruitful in the chapter on automobiles and traffic safety, as a significant number of drivers in postwar Vancouver were women. How did these women perceive "manly modernism"?

Finally, readers of *Labour/Le Travail* might wish for a bit more social history in what is essentially a work of cultural history. Dummitt's analyses of the case studies chosen are clever and persuasive, but at times his attention to the construction of the various narratives of risk seems more clinical than compassionate. I was particularly struck by this in the chapter on the collapse of the Second Narrows Bridge, where the very real tragedy experienced by these risk takers and their families seems underplayed. The slightly ironic tone found in parts of this work extends to the book's cover, which represents the vulnerability of the modern man by depicting a masculine face adorned with a scrap of toilet paper stuck onto a shaving nick.

One of the first monographs to focus explicitly on masculinity in a Canadian setting, Dummitt's book is the product of

a particular historiographical moment, building effectively upon the wealth of research in women's history as well as the insights of gender history. Whether *The Manly Modern* will be followed by full-length studies of masculinity in other Canadian settings at other moments remains to be seen. Such future studies should be encouraged and would allow us to assess the specificity of the masculinities, and modernity, seen here.

MAGDA FAHRNI

Université du Québec à Montréal

**Jarrett Rudy, *The Freedom to Smoke: Tobacco Consumption and Identity***

(Montréal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press 2005)

THIS BOOK TELLS the intriguing story of smoking's history in Montréal from the late 19th century until World War II. Montrealers, Jarrett Rudy reveals, once perceived smoking as a middle-class male activity. Yet by 1940 smoking had lost some of its masculine, bourgeois connotations and had become the preserve of male and female working- and middle-class residents alike.

Central to Rudy's inquiries are the gendered, classed, ethnic, and racialized meanings of smoking. Prior to World War I, bourgeois men believed smoking was one of the rights of genteel manhood. It was a homosocial activity that encouraged male camaraderie and accompanied serious political and economic discussion. Connoisseurs idealized two mediums of tobacco consumption: Cuban cigars and Greek meerschaum pipes. Both were considered to provide the best taste and smell. The best, that is, for men. It was widely believed that tobacco smoke was offensive to respectable women.

White bourgeois men ostracized the smoking practices of women, non-whites, workers, and rural francophones. Those

who smoked *le tabac canadien* were especially criticized. Quebec farmers had long produced, cured, and sold their own tobacco. *Le tabac canadien* was cheaper than imported tobacco; and when smoked in a clay pipe, it carried connotations of Quebec's *habitant* heritage. Yet in the late 19th century, connoisseurs began disparaging homegrown tobacco. They saw it as uncivilized, unpredictable, and harsh. Canada's largest tobacco manufacturer thus promoted American tobacco over Canadian homegrown.

In the early 20th century domestic tobacco crops became more important. Laurier's second National Policy included high tariffs on imported tobacco, causing Canadian tobacco production to expand. The government regulated tobacco crops, and Ontario and Quebec farmers began selling standardized products to manufacturers. By World War I such leading manufacturers as the Hudson's Bay Company and the American Tobacco Company of Canada were using domestic tobacco. *Le tabac canadien* also continued appearing on retailers' shelves, but its presence was on the wane. In 1940 the federal government applied an excise tax on raw leaf tobacco. Unlike taxes on manufactured tobacco, retailers were responsible for paying this tax. They stopped stocking homegrown leaf and *le tabac canadien* nearly disappeared from urban markets.

If pipes were the tobacco medium of choice in the 19th century, cigarettes became that of the 20th. The 1881 invention of the Bonsack cigarette machine revolutionized cigarette production. Whereas cigarettes used to be rolled by hand, in the late 19th century manufacturers began producing them in large amounts. Cigarette prices dropped and this form of tobacco consumption became more socially acceptable, particularly among young men and workers. The speed by which cigarettes could

be consumed added to their popularity: people waiting for streetcars and taking breaks at work could more easily smoke cigarettes than pipes. The Great War cemented cigarettes' place in 20th century life. Overseas, Canadian soldiers who did not already smoke cigarettes soon picked up the habit. At home and abroad, it was believed that cigarettes enabled soldiers to keep their sanity while waiting for combat, being shelled, and convalescing in hospital. Domestic campaigns that sent cigarettes overseas enhanced the growing connection between masculine militarism and cigarette consumption.

The early 20th century also marked an increase in female smokers. A few feminists noticed the connection between smoking and male privilege, and began asserting their right to smoke. Despite opposition from the Catholic Church and the Women's Christian Temperance Union to women's tobacco consumption, by the interwar years female cigarette smokers had become more publicly visible. Rudy attributes women's new smoking habits not only to increased feminist consciousness, but to the rise of women in the workforce, the expansion of commercialized leisure, and the presence of women smokers in Hollywood movies.

Smoking's gendered, classed, racialized, and ethnic meanings form the core of *The Freedom to Smoke*. Superimposed onto this base is an argument about liberalism. According to Rudy, smoking offers an example of the changing cultural construction of the liberal individual. In the late 19th century, tobacco helped white, bourgeois male smokers demonstrate their adherence to liberalism. When they puffed their expensive pipes and cigars, they demonstrated rational individuality. This growing connection between smoking and liberalism turned tobacco consumption into a badge of political inclusion. Thus when women started

smoking publicly in the early 20th century, they were laying claim to the world of civil thought and liberal citizenship.

Some historians might find the link Rudy draws between smoking and liberalism unconvincing. Women smoking in public may have demonstrated this social group's claim to liberalism and its privileges, but it does not immediately follow that non-white and working-class tobacco consumption represented these groups' claims to the rational public sphere. Rudy is nonetheless right to point out that smoking has been since the late 19th century embroiled in liberal politics. Defining who has and who does not have the right to smoke – and where – is the subject of an ongoing public debate.

This book's strongest contribution is its in-depth exploration of the history of a particular commodity. In this sense, it is a case study in the rise of consumer capitalism. Revealing the cultural, political, and economic decisions that shaped the production, distribution, and consumption of tobacco in Montréal, Rudy provides an engaging and broad-minded inquiry into a specific area within the history of mass consumption. Given the need for more such works, especially within Canadian scholarship, it is hoped that *The Freedom to Smoke* will encourage further research into this important field.

DONICA BELISLE

University of British Columbia

**Walter Hildebrandt and Brian Hubner,**  
*The Cypress Hills: An Island by Itself*  
(Saskatoon: Purich Publishing Limited  
2007)

THIS BOOK FIRST appeared in 1994. It grew out of research connected with the development of interpretive programming and the conservation of Fort Walsh National Historic Site. This edition includes some

new material such as recent archaeological work in the Cypress Hills as well as a new chapter on the Nakoda in the 1880s.

The Cypress Hills are physically anomalous on the Canadian Prairies: rising up to 600 metres, this 2,600 square kilometre patch of land shelters flora and fauna unique on the prairies. Even at the greatest extent of the last ice age about 16,000 years ago, parts of it were never glaciated, and it is thus a remnant of the times before the prairie landscape was remade by the grinding weight and then the retreat of the great sheets of ice.

In this sense, the Cypress Hills district is, as Hildebrandt and Hubner subtitle their book, "an island by itself." But as this history of the district reveals, the Cypress Hills were in other ways firmly a part of Canadian and North American history and development. The district was long a meeting point, and its resources and security drew different people who coexisted or sometimes warred in the shelter of the hills. The Cypress Hills were a point of convergence for Plains Cree, Nakoda, and people of the Blackfoot Confederacy who went there as part of the seasonal rounds of the buffalo economy or sought food, timber and shelter in winter. Recent archaeological work by Gerry Oetelaar has shown that such convergence had ancient roots. One site alone has shown continuous occupation for 8,000–9,000 years, and his findings reveal that the Cypress Hills were part of a connected world of surprising breadth. As Hildebrandt and Hubner note, "copper from Lake Superior, and shell beads from Atlantic areas provide clues not only to their makers' belief systems but to their trade systems as well." (19)

Similarly, Hildebrandt and Hubner demonstrate that the evolution of the Cypress Hills district in the 19th century was directly and indirectly part of the history of the region and the nation. Cree

middlemen connected the Cypress Hills to the Canadian fur trade, while the bison hunts of the 1860s and 1870s brought American hide traders and wolfers north. While hides were shipped south, pemmican from the district was traded a thousand kilometres north to sustain the fur trade. The opportunities of this trade and the upheaval at Red River during the Resistance of 1869–70 brought Métis settlers, hunters, and traders to the district.

The pathology of the relationship between American wolfers and hide traders with Aboriginal people in the district culminated in the most famous national event to occur in the district. The Cypress Hills Massacre of 1873 was a local event that became emblematic of Canada's need to assert control over its new hinterland through a paramilitary police force. In 1875 the NWMP established Fort Walsh near the site of the massacre as one of a string of posts across the west. But Fort Walsh and the authority of Canada it represented did little for local people. The disappearance of the buffalo by the early 1880s – part of the continent-wide decimation of the herds – brought predictable results to a society in which buffalo were central in economic and social life, and Fort Walsh largely became a welfare distributing point where rations were doled out to First Nations.

Hildebrandt and Hubner detail the impact of local events, whose motivation so often lay far away, on the social and economic life of the Cypress Hills. They pay close attention to this impact across a broad spectrum: how gender relations in First Nations in the district were reshaped, how economic life was transformed, how local conflicts shaped national policy, and, most dramatically, how the social and political structures of everyday life were altered by economic and political change. In part, this story is well known and familiar: how the pace

of change grew in intensity between the 1860s and the 1880s, sweeping up people whose adaptation to the land over thousands of years now meant nothing in a new economy dominated by national and global forces and powered by different technologies, ideologies, and concerns. Hildebrandt and Hubner never lose sight of the local but link it to its context. For example, the relocation by the Canadian government of Nakoda people in the early 1880s from the Cypress Hills to a reserve near Indian Head, Saskatchewan is dealt with in terms of Canadian policies and attitudes towards First Nations. This event occurred less than a decade after Treaty 4 had promised the Nakoda tenure of land with spiritual and cultural significance for them, and it was achieved by the brutally simple tactic of reducing food rations to starvation levels. The impact on the Cypress Hills district was the elimination, for a time, of Nakoda people from the area, at great cost in personal and collective grief and pain.

The history of the Nakoda relocation forms the concluding two chapters in the book. One of these chapters is new, but it does not sit well with its adjoining chapter, and the two could have been more smoothly integrated. Indeed, the book ends rather abruptly and concludes with what is, in effect, a short postscript about Fort Walsh National Historic Site. This disappointing conclusion does not limit the strengths of the book. This is local history with its eye focused firmly on broader explanations and context, and it demonstrates that while the local can be most precisely understood as part of the general, the general can also be best understood by how it shapes, and sometimes is shaped, by the local.

DONALD G. WETHERELL  
Athabasca University

Henry Kreisel, *The Rich Man* (Calgary: Red Deer Press, 2006, first published 1948)

THERE'S NOTHING unusual about Jacob Grossman, the protagonist of Henry Kreisel's novel, *The Rich Man*, originally published in 1948. Grossman is a 53-year-old presser in a Toronto clothing factory, the same job he's held since his arrival from Galicia 33 years earlier. He's "a short, narrow-shouldered, pot-bellied man. His face was round and of a reddish colour, a bit flabby and wrinkled, and there was a large bald spot on the pate of his head." (12) In Grossman's imperfect English, "I am a ord'nary man..." (47)

In one way, though, Grossman is far from ordinary when the novel opens. By saving his meager wages, the Jewish widower has amassed several hundred dollars. He plans to take a few weeks' trip to Vienna in the spring of 1935 to visit his elderly mother and relatives. Defensively, he figures that once in a lifetime a man has the right to be a little extravagant.

Grossman is a captive of vanity. Moreover, as an immigrant, he wants his old-world relatives to consider him a success. He's secretly pleased when his factory mates ironically joke that he's "J. Rockefeller Grossman" for asking Mr. Duncan, the manager, for several weeks' leave. (21) Grossman's daughter is bitter about her father's trip and sarcastically calls him "[a] rich man! A millionaire!" (16) He buys himself a fancy white suit, which he's long coveted, along with an array of presents for his mother and sisters, whom he hopes will view him "like a merchant arriving after long travels in foreign lands, bearing great gifts." (33) Though poor, he is trying to sustain an illusion and "the dream of every immigrant – he was going back, a settled, prosperous-seeming man." (42)

The first 23 pages of the novel, before Grossman takes a boat to Europe, provide sketchy glimpses of workers' lives



in Toronto. The most thoroughly developed aspect is Grossman's noisy, steamy workplace: "The familiar smell of the factory, the stale smell of cloth, mingled with the steam of the Hoffman presses and the sweat of hundreds of workers, enveloped him, and a familiar noise, the steady, vibrating hum of whirring sewing machines broke against his ears." (20) Later, on the boat, the author tells us that Grossman "had never been aware of the sky and of floating clouds....The sky in the factory was a dull, grey ceiling, and there was no wind to waft a fresh breeze, but only hot, steaming, suffocating air that swished from the Hoffman presses and made the face grow crimson with heat, and drenched the body with a thick, unhealthy sweat." (45) Grossman has a nightmare that takes place in his factory: a monster attacks him in a cloud of steam.

Once reunited with his Viennese family, Grossman enjoys the illusion of being a rich professional designer. For poor European Jews, "anybody living on the North American continent must needs have money." (70) His white suit, along with a surreal painting he purchases from an artist on the boat, enhances the impression.

Meanwhile, anti-Semitic incidents are increasing dangerously. The painting, which portrays a Hitler-like demagogue with a booming voice, seems to presage trouble. The Jews of Vienna are sitting on the knife edge, debating their alternatives in the face of an expected Nazi takeover and their destruction. After all, as one relative says, "even if I didn't take an interest in politics, politics took an interest in me." (89)

As expected, Grossman's trip and modest savings eventually entangle him in painful conflicts. The accidental death of a brother-in-law precipitates Grossman's relatives' plan to borrow a substantial sum from Grossman to pay their debts. At last, "the wonderful illusion of the past

few weeks had now suddenly come to a shattering, painful, ugly end." (253) He is forced to admit to his quarrelsome and mostly unpleasant relatives that "he was poor and insignificant and of no account." (267) All but one reacts with disbelief and scorn. Grossman leaves Vienna in terror of disappointing his mother. At the finish, he tosses the painting of the demagogue – a totem of trouble to come, of "millions of other people, caught and helpless" – out the train window on his way back to Canada. (293)

While the reviewer for the Communist Party's *Canadian Tribune* regarded *The Rich Man* as "sound working-class fiction," the novel's theme is truth and deception, and the difficulties Grossman brings on himself because of his desire to be seen in Vienna as a rich man. The novel is based on dualities, opposing forces in the lives of poor Jews in Vienna and North America: the old world and the new, wealth and poverty, Yiddish and English, exile and home, the idealized, romantic image of Vienna and the gritty reality.

*The Rich Man's* plot sometimes seems contrived, the characters one-dimensional. Still, the novel is a valuable contribution to the historically slim body of Canadian literature by Jews about Jewish life. The novel attempts to explain and defend elements of European Jewish life to a gentile audience. Kreisel explains the rich and expressive uses of the word "Noo": "this little sound was capable of expressing the profoundest emotions and the most delicate shades of meaning." (22) Of Grossman's mother, Kreisel writes, "She possessed fully the wonderful gift of her race, a gift acquired in centuries of persecution. It was the gift to endure an almost unbearable burden of suffering and to grow even stronger in the face of it." (217) And Kreisel obviously shows how attitudes toward money and material success are shaped by dire poverty.

*The Rich Man* was produced at the start of Henry Kreisel's successful academic and writing career. Born in Vienna in 1922, he fled to England in 1938. During the early part of World War II, he was interned in England and Canada as an enemy alien for about 18 months. An "accidental immigrant" to Canada, and inspired by Joseph Conrad's success in learning and writing in English, Kreisel studied at the University of Toronto and started teaching at the University of Alberta in 1947. Eventually he served as Chair of the English Department and Vice-President of the university. He became an Officer of the Order of Canada in 1988, three years before his death.

GENE HOMEL

BC Institute of Technology, Burnaby

**Michael Welch, *Scapegoats of September 11th: Hate Crimes and State Crimes in the War on Terror***

(New Brunswick, NJ, and London: Rutgers University Press 2006)

FOLLOWING UP ON his earlier work on crime, punishment, and human rights in such works as *Ironies of Imprisonment* (2005), *Detained: Immigration Laws and the Expanding INS Jail Complex* (2002), *Flag Burning: Moral Panic and the Criminalization of Protest: Punishment in America* (1999), Michael Welch offers a powerful indictment of the government's self-proclaimed "holy war" on terror and, moreover, those it would like to muzzle or choke with the stars and stripes. His approach highlights two sides to the war on terror coin, one that exacts revenge for the specific events of 9/11, and the other that follows up on a "more ancient campaign against evil," with the two combining to produce scapegoats for specific actions in a context that permits the government to weaken "key democratic principles developed to protect all people

against the abuses of government power."

(4) Welch's overall conclusions are that "any comfort that the war on terror delivers is merely illusory" and that support for this war "involves a good amount of wishful – and in some instances magical – thinking, reducing the battle against terrorism to symbolic ritual in lieu of pragmatic policy." (5)

The examples that Welch provides to support his claims are appropriately harrowing: new airport screening technologies that produce anatomically correct naked images of passengers who, so terrified by the carefully manufactured "fear factor," are actually willing to submit to this scrutiny; or cynical election tactics that allowed Bush to critique John Kerry's proposal to loosen restriction on Canadian prescription drugs by referencing (unsubstantiated) "cues from chatter" by supposed Al Qaeda operatives who planned to poison imported drugs. Perhaps we'll come to realize, as the orange alerts turn to yellow, and then as the coding system itself fades into the distant past, that we have been bamboozled into outrageous military spending and unjustifiable wars and invasions at home and abroad. More likely, though, is that the vagueness of the threat and the constant effort to reiterate potential consequences have shifted our political landscape in favour of fear-mongering, and communications from on high will from this point onwards morph into a ridiculously successful wooden rhetoric that, without any reference to facts, can convince the populace to swallow reductions in their civil liberties and human rights by paradoxically linking them to the growing threat to our ways of life.

To explain how this whole process works, Welch brings to bear his considerable research and theoretical talents, referencing literally hundreds of works (two pages in the bibliography are dedicated to his own writings) on attitudes,



media, propaganda, sociology, political theory, discourse studies, and so forth. For instance, since so much of the work on scapegoating relies upon how ideas are disseminated, he works through an array of discursive practices, contributing to our understanding of informal communication like rumors, "negative emotional language," "empty language," blame, and the logic behind linking concrete acts of violence to mystical or quasi-religious acts to either justify or demonize them, depending upon the outcome sought. He then moves into a more academically informed realm of explanation, referencing moral panic theory and risk society literature as he looks at crucial events which provide a sense of where we've been and, more worrisome still, where we're headed: ethnic profiling, detention, hate crimes, state crimes, torture, Abu Ghraib, Guantanamo Bay, and falsely reported claims of legitimacy and effectiveness. The powerful side of this book is Welch's linking together of varying government efforts aimed at keeping us in fear, on the one hand, and reassured, on the other, as military spending, scapegoats, imminent threats, and the weakness of other alternatives are brought up simultaneously. The net effect is a thorough and well-informed work on the growing horrors of contemporary US government practices, and the amazing effectiveness of blatant tactics on a population that is wooed by quasi-mystical rhetoric. Perhaps this phenomenon can be attributed to the growing religious fanaticism at all levels of US society, with one of the vanguards of the movement in the prayer-filled White House? Or is it just that the kinds of irrational fears drummed up by authorities play into areas of weakness in the human psyche, those areas that are targeted by (say) the endless array of horror films we consume in a given year?

Questions like these can be addressed in a book like *Scapegoats of September*

*11th*, because, as the bibliography indicates, there are theories which try to understand complex phenomena relating to how we absorb and process information, and Welch draws from an impressive range of things as he tries to understand the "culture of control" and contemporary crusades. There is also a tremendous amount of information available to those who simply read daily news reports, suggesting that it would be possible to put variant notions together for ourselves, and figure out how this whole game is working, without reference to complex theorization. And indeed this is the area in which I'd have to express some reticence, despite my admiration for the work that Welch undertakes in this book and elsewhere. The 'general reader' would find many reasons to engage a text like this, particularly if she is trying to understand just what is at stake as Americans continue to support indefinite incarceration of "terrorist" suspects, the (limited?) torture for our prisoners, and the apparently God-given right we have to murder millions of people in the name of our own best interests even when totally unconnected to these people; but as a general reader I find myself constantly distracted by the claims of the social sciences theory employed for the task, the endless references to texts which refer us to theories about what is being discussed, and the intrusion of what oftentimes seems like an academic apparatus into discussions which benefit from Welch's common-sense and decent value system rather than his vast erudition in sociological, political, and criminal studies. Many of the events described in this book are outrageous, and that we buy into the cheap trick tactics employed to obfuscate the facts relayed here is worrisome. But most, if not all, of the theory takes on elements of the human mind too little understood for the methods described, leaving us at times with a new level of obscurity rather

than the decent values and powerful sentiments Welch himself expresses.

ROBERT F. BARSKY  
Vanderbilt University

**Paul A. Gilje, *Liberty on the Waterfront: American Maritime Culture in the Age of Revolution*** (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press 2004)

PAUL GILJE APPROACHES maritime labour from a different tack than historians concerned with the work regimens and class relations of the sea, or those who view mariners collectively as a plebeian leviathan that worried merchant capital. Instead adopting the concept of liberty as his compass, he charts a course for the heart of the American maritime world. Rather than engaging the idea as an abstract notion as espoused by the American elite, the book "examines the meaning of 'liberty' to those who lived and worked in ports and aboard ships." (xii) Sailors, Gilje affirms, embraced liberty in a number of forms, ranging from patriotic love of country to the desire to escape land-bound responsibilities, but most commonly involving license to carouse on shore. In this book, liberty, not maritime workers, proves hydra-headed.

Gilje first examines the liberty sailors practiced ashore. Rampant drinking, profanity, ostentatious display, and frequent violence flowed along the waterfront, stoked by the sailors' ready cash, having been fronted wages before sailing or paid off after a voyage. Such conduct both challenged hierarchical pre-Revolutionary society and later the bourgeois culture of the early republic. But Gilje warns against attributing any coherent consciousness to sailors' actions, viewing them as driven more by the desire for instant gratification in a life that proved "often cruel and nasty." (14)

Broadening his gaze, the author

analyzes the impact of the sailor's pursuit of liberty on gender relations. The seafarer identity rested upon presumed masculine traits of mobility, skill, and sexual prowess, all bundled with freedom of action. The homosocial world aboard ship reinforced sailors' separation from the female, who was objectified as a sexual being or sentimentalized as domestic icon. In more misogynistic archetypes, such as the thieving whore, cheating sweetheart, or grasping wife, the female prompted seamen to take flight aboard ship or to worry away their voyage. These gender constructions obscured the focal role women played in waterfront culture. As deeply enmeshed in the maritime economy as their often absent men, women came to play essential roles in the support of the industry, but in ways that exposed them economically and sexually, as well as to moral condemnation. The masculine ideal of the libertarian sailor also clashed with the reality of seafaring, which Gilje characterizes as a peculiar combination of unhindered freedom and structural constraint that he likens to slavery given the overbearing authority of captains and officers onboard ship. Yet, the shared nature of work and living conditions in the fore-castle brought sailors together and at times in opposition to the quarterdeck. Resistance ran the gamut from cursing their lot in life, through avoidance of work, jumping ship, on up to mutiny. It is in this context of workplace conflict that the tar's actions most directly challenges authority in the interest of liberty, but it is a context that is left curiously underdeveloped by the author.

Love of liberty and dislike of authority seemingly prepared sailors for the Age of Revolution. But Gilje argues they displayed ambivalence to the Revolution (as they did with the later French and Haitian revolutions and the British naval mutinies of 1797). Sailors deserted to the

enemy when it proved in their interest, and escaped as prisoners of war only to return to their jails after indulging themselves in local taverns. Rather than an abstract revolutionary ideal of liberty, they aspired to "immediate liberty," (129) in which their person was unrestrained and their desires unencumbered. The meaning of liberty for sailors and the American nation converged more exactly in the growing conflict with Britain leading up to the War of 1812. The issues of impressment and restriction of trade, affecting the personal freedom of sailors, became matters of national sovereignty for the young republic. The sailor emerged as a powerful patriotic symbol of American independence, both acting out its right to free commerce and, ultimately, sacrificing life and limb to protect the nation, a sacrifice captured most graphically in the shooting of rioting American prisoners by British guards at Dartmoor Prison in the wake of the war.

After the war sailors received increasing attention from evangelical reformers who saw the waterfront as a sink of iniquity and its denizens as morally at risk. By bringing the word of god and providing alternative community centres to the boardinghouses, including sailors' homes and savings banks, middle-class reformers sought to remake sailors in their own image, but only with limited success. Meanwhile, mariners found a home in developing bourgeois literature. Reviewing the classic texts of seafaring life by Dana, Cooper and Melville, Gilje argues that common seamen came to represent "the democratic man." (234) Paralleling such "high" culture were various strands of "low" culture, which tended to dwell on the central role sailors had played in the formation and preservation of the republic. In the real world, seamen had greater difficulty securing all the democratic rights that, as popular culture presumed, they had

been so central in laying down, with their attempts at labour organization proving evanescent, a condition he partly attributes to the "varied meaning of liberty on the waterfront." (258)

This last observation points to what will be for readers of this journal a central weakness to the book. There is really little discussion of the work processes and class relations of the maritime industry, and a stunted treatment of labour organization among its workers. Clearly, sailors as workers did not number among Gilje's main concerns; in fact, he goes out of his way to deny that seamen were either members of a proletariat or revolutionaries, clearly meant as swipes at various other historians of the seafaring class. The author's concerns seem more liberal in kind: how those at the fringes of society acted out notions of liberty pragmatically in a bid to secure their individual freedom. Too often, however, the author reduces the liberty practiced by seamen to rowdiness and drunkenness. Without a counterbalancing view of their collective importance as a class of working people, they can be too easily dismissed, as they were all too often in their own time, as the dregs of society.

The fragmented and contradictory nature of liberty envisioned by Gilje suggests the complexity of maritime culture, but it also points to dangers inherent in the approach. Utilizing an abstract concept open to multiple meanings as the central paradigm tends to atomize the historical subject. Just as liberty is contextual, so are Gilje's sailors. However vivid they appear individually as a result of the often-compelling source material, they remain elusive as a whole. Sailors may not have constituted a "proletariat ready to assert class consciousness," (xiii) a straw effigy he swings from the yardarm in his preface, but they exceeded the zero sum of their yearnings for freedom of body and spirit. More

a kaleidoscope than a spyglass in its focusing of the subject, Gilje's book will prove interesting to casual observers of maritime culture, but less compelling to those more interested in the political economy of the sailing industry or plebeian politics.

PETER WAY  
University of Windsor

**Kris Paap, *Working Construction: Why White Working-Class Men Put Themselves – And the Labor Movement – In Harm's Way* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press 2006)**

IN THIS BOOK, Kris Paap makes a bold and useful contribution to understandings of the intertwining relations of gender, race, class and labour processes in capitalist economies. Based upon her two and a half year foray into construction trades as a unionized carpentry apprentice in the American Midwest, this volume traces the ways in which a hierarchy of gender, race, and class is produced and maintained through the processes and relations of construction work, not only among workers and employers, but within the consciousness and embodiment of individual workers.

This well-written book transmits the visceral intensity of construction labour to explain how hard, risky, physical labour performed by groups of men is a resource for a particular kind of white working-class masculinity, one that establishes construction workers as "real men" while simultaneously maintaining them as subordinate to those in management and other white-collar work. Further, Paap argues that this production of masculinity, when combined with the precariousness of construction employment, has shaped a relation between workers and employers in which construction workers are undermining their own positions in

the labour market by aligning with interests of their employers.

Paap describes the construction work environment as one where "getting her [the job] done" is not only the goal of employers, but is central to the attribution of merit and masculinity among workers. Due to the absence of employment protections from arbitrary dismissal in construction even in the unionized situations where Paap worked, workers strove to stay employed by maintaining a high rate of productivity. This motivation to be productive was reinforced by a dominant ideology that equated being truly masculine with the ability to work while in pain and to ignore or minimize injuries and risk. Therefore, construction workers place their means of production – their bodies and lives – on the line.

This central argument of the book is developed around the notion of "pigness," a term used by the men who worked with Paap to describe themselves. This term connotes a rough, tough masculinity of which these men are collectively proud, a license to act in racist and sexist ways that maintains their dominance over others in the industry, and a requirement that workers ignore risk and take injury lightly (like a man). Paap shows how this label is deployed to empower men on the job, and how it also subordinates and constrains construction workers outside of the industry. While it allows workers to draw positive meaning from what is frequently tedious and difficult work, it also reduces these men by equating physical labour with stupidity and base sexuality. While it rewards workers with a feeling of manliness, it makes them amenable to overwork and other workplace risk in a dangerous industry. "Pigness" also mediates against solidarity with other workers by legitimating practices of dominance among white working-class men as well as between these men and others.

Paap's analysis is advanced by her dis-

cussion of racism and sexism, to show how the relations of gender and race are co-constituted with labour processes. In Paap's experience, women and people of colour were regularly subjected to discrimination and harassment. She describes how pervasive sexism and racism on the job was naturalized by an ideology that attributed these behaviours to the animalistic nature of these ruggedly masculine workers. This naturalization made overt sexism and racism disappear as a problem ("they can't help it – it doesn't mean anything"), while preserving white men's dominance over women and people of colour who work construction, and putting those who are harassed in the position of accommodating to their own harassment. When challenged, the charge of intolerance was directed at those who complained.

Paap's experiences reveal the paradoxical results of affirmative action programs for women and people of colour. She argues that white men in construction do not acknowledge that their workplaces have been closed to capable workers due to discrimination. Therefore they tend to assume that women and people of colour achieve their job status solely through affirmative action, rather than through capability and job skills.

Paap notes that when she was working for a smaller, family-operated company, no harassment of any kind occurred. This employer not only censured racism and sexism in policy (like the two larger companies in the study), but did not tolerate them in practice. Paap concludes, therefore, that employers have the power to prevent racism and sexism on their work-sites due to the very conditions that lead workers to unsafe and over-work situations: the lack of employment protections from arbitrary dismissal. However, here, Paap's analysis becomes thin. She notes that harassing language and behaviours increase with distance from supervisors,

and suggests that more control and consistency in following existing policy would lead to less harassment. But what if the attitudes and behaviours of "pigness" are shaped by the depersonalization, alienation, and fragmented work processes associated with large-scale companies and projects? Paap describes labour processes that reduce worker contributions to repetitive, disconnected tasks at other points in the book, but does not discuss the relation between this fragmentation and individual consciousness or group interactions. Given that on large construction projects, "factory-style" labour processes tend to be implemented more intensively than in smaller projects, the influence of scale needs further consideration, in our view.

One of Paap's more provocative arguments is her re-conceptualization of gender as a physiologically experienced emotion. She argues that the physical nature of this labour, combined with the sexualized vocabulary and metaphors used in construction, produces a low-level physiological arousal in workers. This sensation not only makes workers "feel like a man" but provides a physiological and psychological wage. She deploys social psychological and cognitive approaches to suggest that the reproduction of gender in this case is occurring through emotions, which are conceptualized as the socially bound interpretations of physical sensations. Thus employment activities which produce distinct kinds of physical sensations and arousal are resources for gender reproduction, due to their social interpretations. Due to masculinity's requirement that masculinity must not only be experienced but proved, construction workers' sense of themselves as masculine beings is tied to the labour process.

Paap's theorization of gender in terms of bodies and emotions contributes to understandings of the ways in which gen-

dered meanings adhere to what people do, thus shaping identities. While she describes how she herself acquired a sensation of being masculine from doing construction, likely providing her with a re-interpretation of her gender identity, she does not advance her analysis to a discussion of how social interpretations of bodies and emotions are re- or de-gendered.

Paap's portrait of labour processes and the relations of gender, race, and class in a specific historical context provides useful insight. Her theorization of gender reproduction has important implications for those working for change in the gendered divisions of labour. For white men, who are likely to encounter themselves in its pages even if they have never held a hammer, this book will bring their place in social relations into consciousness. Astute readers will situate Paap's bleak prognosis for unionized labour, and workers as a whole, within the broader context of changes in the construction industry more generally and in the character of employment relationships in late capitalism.

SUSAN BRAEDLEY  
York University  
with TOM JOHNSTONE,  
licensed carpenter

**Nelson Lichtenstein, ed., *Wal-Mart: The Face of 21st Century Capitalism* (New York: New Press 2006)**

THIS BOOK IS THE outcome of a conference convened in anticipation of the entry of Wal-Mart "Supercenters" into the southern California market. There is reason to be wary of collections based on conference proceedings – hastily written papers cobbled together under a loosely-defined theme – but this book is a clear exception. It encompasses twelve polished papers organized around a central

and salient question: does Wal-Mart represent the "template" for the 21st century capitalist firm?

In his introduction, Nelson Lichtenstein makes the case that Wal-Mart, just like General Motors before it, constitutes a new model of the capitalist firm. The quantitative dimensions are staggering: annual sales of over \$300 billion, 5,000 stores, and 1.5 million employees worldwide. It imports more goods from China than the United Kingdom and is the largest private sector employer in Canada, Mexico, and the US. Qualitatively, its impact can be found in its labour policies, its application of information technology to centralize control over inventories and global supply chains, its reorganization of the urban landscape, and its redefinition of the culture of consumerism. Subsequent papers take up various aspects of this argument and, to the volume's credit, offer differing views on Wal-Mart's uniqueness.

Susan Strasser emphasizes the historical continuity from earlier retailers to Wal-Mart. Chain stores like Sears, Woolworth's, and A&P lured households away from shopkeepers down the street on much the same business model (fixed prices, rapid turnover, and low overhead) and also made use of new technologies (such as modern accounting methods) to alter the system of distribution. Not surprisingly, then, opposition to early mass merchandisers, based on their poor working conditions, the concentration of wealth that mass marketers represented, and the need to sustain local economies, carried many of the same criticisms as opposition to Wal-Mart does today.

In contrast, James Hoopes argues that Wal-Mart's use of information technology has enabled it to achieve a size previously unthinkable in the retail sector. Its extensive satellite and computer network links managers and executives across the world, allows instant access to informa-



tion on inventories, sales trends, and overall operations. Moreover, its superior inventory information system has made it efficient for some suppliers to cede control over their own production levels to Wal-Mart, reversing the traditional power relationship between retailers and suppliers. Edna Bonacich and Khaleelah Hardie describe how Wal-Mart is able to dictate that its suppliers reduce their prices to the point of razor-thin profit margins. In countries such as Bangladesh, where Wal-Mart is the largest destination for exports, such strong-arm tactics have a large impact on economic well-being. In a similar vein, David Karjanen demonstrates how Wal-Mart radically transforms the American communities in which it situates. In locating on the outskirts of urban centres and in by-passing regional suppliers in favour of in-sourcing goods produced worldwide, Wal-Mart often undermines the viability of local banks, suppliers, and wholesalers, as well as the downtown retail core where these firms are traditionally located.

The strength of this book lies not in a singular attempt to argue that Wal-Mart embodies the 21st century business template, but rather in the wealth of information it provides as fodder for debate. In this respect, Bethany Moreton highlights the importance of Wal-Mart's agrarian roots, in the seemingly backward Ozark Mountain region of Arkansas, as ironically contributing to the rise of the world's biggest company. Ozark farm families' need for off-farm labour income was a source of retail labour. To ameliorate the threat to "manhood" that service work represented, Wal-Mart accommodated and reinforced perceived gender roles, by imposing an occupational hierarchy with male managers and female clerks, and even allowing male employees to arm themselves with dummy weapons!

Chris Tilly provides important insight into Wal-Mart's reach outside of the us

by examining the reasons for its success in Mexico. Although "Wal-Mex" followed the same formula, Mexico's extreme income inequality may limit its expansion by reducing the size of the middle class to which it caters. Indeed, as income inequality in Mexico has increased over the last decade, shoppers have returned to street markets at the expense of big box retailers. Wal-Mart's failure in Brazil reinforces this point. The lessons for the national economy are also informative. Although "Wal-Mex" provides wages and benefits comparable or superior to its chain competitors, its automated pricing and inventory management have led to a net job loss in the retail sector, while its propensity to import and its market power have stifled domestic entrepreneurship and production. There is a striking similarity between the impact of Wal-Mart in Mexico today and that of chain stores in the us in the early 20th century.

The final four papers of the book consider Wal-Mart's labour policies. Thomas Adams argues that low-mark-up, high-volume discount retailers did not create but perfected the managerial control strategies of the post-Fordist workplace. Aspects of shop floor control include deskilling of work through the use of automation, an "Orwellian atmosphere" of intense and continuous surveillance, and "often brutal and illegal" opposition to trade unionism. Similarly, Ellen Israel Rosen offers a depiction of Wal-Mart's labour policies that appears highly conventional. Technology which has permitted greater inventory control within a store has resulted in greater division of labour, while a general policy of understaffing intensifies the retail work process just as a speed-up in the assembly line does for production workers.

Brad Seligman examines the sharp gender division of labour in light of the Dukes versus Wal-Mart suit currently before the courts. Started on behalf of

six women seeking redress for inequities in pay and promotion opportunities, it has become the largest civil rights class action suit ever certified in the United States, potentially extending to over 1.6 million former women employees. It is no small irony that the very centralized control exercised from Bentonville reinforces the argument that differential rates of pay and promotion are, indeed, systematic.

The book ends on a sobering note that underscores the sorry state of the American trade union movement. In light of past failures of traditional union organizing drives, Wade Rathke makes the case for a "Wal-Mart Workers Association" that stops short of seeking union recognition and collective bargaining rights. The argument is as compelling as it is depressing.

One aspect of the Wal-Mart phenomenon not sufficiently addressed in this collection is the broader legal, political, and economic environment that has made Wal-Mart possible. Industries based on "low-wage, high turnover" labour policies are obviously only possible if general labour market conditions and anti-union legislation ensure that a continuous supply of workers is available at low wages. In this regard, several authors touch upon the rise of temporary and part-time work, outsourcing, the increase in undocumented immigrants in the US, and the rise of contingent work, all of which make unionization more difficult if not impossible. A more in-depth discussion of the economic and regulatory environments that have allowed Wal-Mart's labour exploitation to continue, however, would have been informative, especially in light of Lichtenstein's contention that mass retailers are the "driving force of American inequality."

Overall this is an excellent volume, providing background and context to the debate over Wal-Mart's wide-ranging impact. It is essential reading for anyone

concerned with the spread of 'big box' retailing in North America and abroad.

MELANIE O'GORMAN  
University of Winnipeg

**Ina Johanna Fandrich, *The Mysterious Voodoo Queen, Marie Laveaux: A Study of Powerful Female Leadership in Nineteenth-Century New Orleans*** (New York: Routledge, 2005)

OWING TO THE remarkable bravado with which New Orleanian Marie Laveaux led her life, literary artists, reporters, and filmmakers sensationalized her story in the fragmentary, fictionalized or semi-fictionalized works that proliferated both before and after her death. One needn't look far to understand the reasons for such myth making.

In one of the antebellum South's largest slave cities, Laveaux, a free woman of African descent, led an underground, African-based religion that had been central to slavery's destruction in the Haitian Revolution. She braved deadly epidemics of yellow fever to attend to the sick and the dying alongside the equally enigmatic Père Antoine (Father Antonio de Sedella), the Spanish cleric who controlled St. Louis Cathedral until 1829. She anticipated Sister Helen Prejean's modern-day Catholic ministry to Louisiana's death row inmates by over a century. And, she defied a state law prohibiting interracial marriage by living openly with a white man, Christophe Glapion, for nearly thirty years in a domestic partnership that produced at least five children. In 1874, newspaper reports that Laveaux would perform her Voodoo religious rites on St. John's Eve drew an estimated 12,000 New Orleanians, both black and white, to the shores of Lake Pontchartrain.

In 1984, author Fandrich entered Temple University's Religious Studies Program after just completing her graduate

degree in theology at the University of Hamburg. In Germany, she had grown frustrated with a prevailing theological scholarship that divided Christian Europe's strong women leaders into the saintly, submissive type on the one hand, and on the other, the assertive, independent type like Joan of Arc who was burned at the stake as a witch. In Pennsylvania, she resumed her search for spiritual "foremothers." (7)

A showing of Maya Deren's documentary film on Haitian Vodou, *Divine Horsemen of Haiti*, and Fandrich's discovery of Laveaux proved irresistible. For the author, Laveaux clearly bridged the "saint" versus "witch" dichotomy in her successful blending of devout Catholicism with deeply held African religious beliefs. Moreover, in New Orleans, just as in Haiti, Voodoo upended power relations in a society that demeaned all persons of African descent. In nineteenth century New Orleans, the phenomenon produced a powerful female leadership. In Laveaux's case, the results were extraordinary. Fandrich quotes an eyewitness: "She [Laveaux] come walkin' into Congo Square wit' her head up in the air like a queen. Her skirts swished when she walked and everybody step back to let her pass. All the people – white and colored – start sayin' that's the most powerful woman there is. They say, 'There goes Marie Laveau!'" (1)

Fandrich confronted considerable obstacles in researching Laveaux. Her project was considered undoable. After all, Voodoo was a persecuted, underground religion of an oppressed people who left no written records. Happily, she prevailed and this pioneering book is a revised version of her 1994 dissertation.

At the outset, Fandrich recognized that archival records alone could not explain Laveaux's influence. An understanding of her power required an examination of the African American oral tradition that

preserved her memory. The author's close study of songs, oral histories, and folk tales revealed recurring references to a mythical Marie Laveaux who possessed the wit of a trickster figure; the vision of an oracle; the healing power of a miracle worker; and the wizardry of a witch. In an impressive example of her command of the subject and her interpretive skills, the author shows how the city's dominant white elite, fearing the lore of Laveaux's supernatural powers, became complicit in the myth-making.

Fandrich rightly emphasizes that Voodoo is "one of the world's most misunderstood faith traditions" and explains that it "actually refers to a cluster of *bona fide* religions with great depth and beauty." (10) Building on the path-breaking work of Gwendolyn Midlo Hall, Fandrich shows how it emerged in Louisiana soon after the arrival of the first slave ships in 1719 when enslaved Africans blended their ancient religious beliefs with Catholic and Native American practices. French planter Antoine Le Page du Pratz, reflecting upon his experiences in the 1730s, offered evidence of Voodoo's presence when he described how Africans attached enormous importance to "little toys which they called gris-gris . . . [and] would believe themselves undone if they were stripped of these trinkets." (122) Fandrich concludes that by 1773, when Spanish authorities tried two enslaved Africans for attempting to kill their overseer with a "poisonous *gris-gris*," (123) Voodoo was widely practiced in Louisiana.

But Voodoo's greatest influence followed in the wake of an 1809 influx of Haitian refugees that nearly doubled the size of the city. The large proportion of African-descended migrants, both enslaved and free, reinforced the city's religious culture. Fandrich is careful, however, to distinguish between Haitian "Vodou" and New Orleans "Voodoo" for

neither in Haiti or Africa was there an African-based religious culture so dominated by women.

In part, the city's female leadership derived their power from West and Central African religious traditions in which the spirits of the dead remain among the living and participate actively in the life of the community. Important decisions require the consent of ancestors and deities. In the highest form of religious experience, the gods are contacted through the phenomenon of spirit possession. Communication occurs when the deities inhabit and speak through the body of a male or female medium. Since the medium becomes the vessel through which the gods make their wishes known, mediumship is considered an extraordinary power. Believed to possess such power, Laveaux and other influential women of colour dominated New Orleans Voodoo.

African religious customs alone do not, Fandrich explains, account for the feminization of the religion. Other factors included a population of influential free women of colour whose presence originated in the city's early history when a shortage of white women resulted in a high number of interracial liaisons. Owing to their access to the dominant white male population, Afro-Creole women enjoyed an exceptional degree of influence. One of their most important allies, Père Antoine, Laveaux's confessor and mentor, won their loyalty with his openness to African-descended peoples and their traditions. Under his auspices, free women of colour redefined Catholic rituals and sought sisterhood and greater prestige in Voodoo religious practices.

Fandrich counts Laveaux among the nation's most powerful African American women leaders including such luminaries as Harriet Tubman and Sojourner Truth. In the case of Laveaux and Tubman, the two women shared much in common.

Though great differences in social status, religion, ethnicity, and geography separated them, both women defied the repressive slave regime in which they lived; both were driven by the power of their religious beliefs; both were illiterate and suffered economic hardship despite their achievements; both had an electrifying effect on those with whom they came in contact; and both were lionized during their lifetimes. Now, happily, both are the subjects of three authoritative biographies each. A new generation of women's studies scholars has undertaken to disentangle fact from fiction in an almost simultaneous burst of academic publications: Jean M. Humez, *Harriet Tubman* (2003); Catherine Clinton, *Harriet Tubman* (2004); Kate Clifford Larson, *Bound For the Promised Land* (2004); Martha Ward, *Voodoo Queen* (2004); Fandrich, *The Mysterious Voodoo Queen* (2005); and Carolyn Morrow Long, *A New Orleans Voodoo Priestess* (2006). These twenty-first century scholars deserve high praise for giving two extraordinary nineteenth century women the serious academic study they so richly deserve.

CARYN COSSÉ BELL

University of Massachusetts Lowell

**Milagros Pena, *Latina Activists Across Borders: Women's Grassroots Organizing in Mexico and Texas*** (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press 2007)

SCHOLARS FROM a variety of disciplines have examined under what conditions individuals mobilize into grassroots organizations that address social problems. Extensive case studies exist but a systematic gender analysis of grassroots organizations and mass movements represents a major gap in this research specialization. Similarly, studies of feminist movements, both at the national and global levels, have often overlooked the

role of women from marginalized sectors of society, and this is certainly the case for Latin American women and women of colour in the United States. Pena's *Latina Activists Across Borders* is an important contribution because it successfully fills both gaps.

Pena examines the participation of two groups of women as they navigate through their local, regional, and national communities in search of social justice. *Latina Activists Across Borders* is a case study of two women-focused non-government organizations (NGOs) in two different locations: Michoacan, Mexico, and the border region of Juarez, Mexico, and El Paso, Texas. Pena argues that such NGOs transform women by creating a pivotal space within which they truly learn that the personal is political. Through their mobilization into NGOs, women in Michoacan and the us-Mexico border come to see that their own specific struggles are inextricably tied to larger struggles for social activism that may or may not be explicitly women-centred. These mobilization spaces nurture women's consciousness of their gender struggles and their need to engage in resistance strategies. Participation in NGOs also has the potential for women to expand their social justice causes by creating coalitions with other feminist groups at the national and global levels. Women in the two case studies formed alliances with other women's groups such as faith-based Catholic women's groups. This is a key finding and fills a gap in the general study of feminist movements. Women's religious groups have often been seen as non-political. In Latin America such a belief blocks a full understanding of social activism on the continent. Pena also found that women who participate in other organizations, such as labour unions, bring their feminist sensibilities to such organizations and, as a result, raise women-centred issues within these organizations. In

sum, participation in NGOs transformed women in ways that altered their lives as well as those of men.

These Latin American women faced a series of obstacles including the mysterious disappearances and murders of women along the us-Mexico border, immigration, domestic violence, and exploitation in the labor force. As these women came together through a variety of grassroots organizational methods, their understanding of their interconnectedness increased. The women carved out a safe space for themselves that ultimately led them to engage in political action. The women in Michoacan moved slowly but surely from a position of marginalization to one of self and communal empowerment. At the same time that their NGOs addressed local issues such as education and health, the organization's "movement towards Beijing" for the 1995 World Conference on Women sponsored by the United Nations enabled them to reach out not only to marginalized indigenous and peasant women but also women from diverse race and class backgrounds. Together they deepened their recognition of the importance of collective action by gaining a consciousness of gender.

Turning her attention to women living in the border region and their organizational strategies Pena argues that an understanding of differences in socio-political and economic factors provides the best method of comparison and contrast. Surprisingly, the chapter dealing with these differences is the weakest in *Latina Activists Across Borders*. Pena provides an analysis of women's marginalization and mobilization successes in the border region with examples comparable in kind and degree to those in Michoacan, but does not adequately contextualize one with the other. This is indeed ironic because the research literature on the us-Mexico border – *la frontera* – is

extensive. Her case study, nevertheless, succeeds in its analytical focus on the organizational structure of these NGOs, particularly in setting up similarities with those in Michoacan, both of which worked towards “reaching” Beijing. Their experiences at Beijing brought women together in ways that would have been otherwise difficult, if not impossible. In addition, the border women deepened their ties with faith-based organizations, particularly those based on Liberation Theology and as a result reached out to women from diverse backgrounds.

Pena’s qualitative research methodology involves oral history interviews and is a logical choice for her study. Her extensive role as an ethnographer proved invaluable in gaining inroads into the lives of the women she interviewed. Her success in capturing the everyday life circumstances of her informants is clearly evident in the in-depth information found in *Latina Activists Across Borders*.

*Latina Activists Across Borders* provides the reader with an understanding of the world from “the bottom up” by documenting the triumph of spirit of women who had lived on the margins of society. Pena lets their voices be heard and in so doing enriches the lives of the reader. The two case studies stand as a testament that the personal is truly political. Pena concludes that “the experiences Latinas have and the work they do in NGOs not only broaden feminist discourse but create a space for the *chispa*, the spark or passion of women’s politics, to become a flame.” (152)

ALMA M. GARCIA  
Santa Clara University

Nick Henck, *Subcommander Marcos, The Man and the Mask* (Durham: Duke University Press 2007)

FOR GOOD REASON study of the Mexican Revolution has served as one of the key topics in Latin American history. After all, the civil war, which, depending on how one decides to assess it, spanned 1910 till as late as 1940, provided a clear demarcation line between the old-style *caudillismo* (strongman rule) of the nineteenth century and the hope of a more progressive approach to politics in the twentieth. Additionally, it provided inspiration as well as served as a tactical and strategic primer for revolutionary movements that came later in the hemisphere (e.g., Guatemala, Cuba, El Salvador, Nicaragua). Correspondingly, the conflict unleashed several revolutionary icons with universal appeal – Francisco “Pancho” Villa and Emiliano Zapata.

The world outside of Mexico knows the latter figure best, in part because when some of the ugly unfinished business of the revolution resurfaced into public consciousness and exploded onto the international stage on January 1, 1994, the day that the North American Trade Agreement took effect, the perpetrators identified themselves as “Zapatistas,” deliberately invoking Mexico’s great (though failed) revolutionary hero. On that day the Zapatista rebellion was born publicly as the group seized and briefly held a number of communities in Chiapas, Mexico. The group’s list of demands echoed those of its namesake, the historic Zapata, whose earlier efforts epitomized the struggle for dignity, justice, democracy, all tied inexorably to the desperate need for land reform.

Officially, the revolution ended in 1920; yet many of the issues remained unresolved. In fact, with a few exceptions – for example, massive land reform in the late 1930s and the simultaneous



nationalization of the oil industry – the promise of the revolution, as embodied almost fully in the constitution of 1917, remained for much of Mexico, especially indigenous Mexico, just that – a promise. Even the land reform and oil nationalization projects fell short or were quickly abandoned all but rhetorically. Hence the Zapatistas. Many of the stresses that gave rise to revolution in 1910 – population pressure, political marginalization, an abysmal and even declining standard of living, widespread and systemic abusive behavior directed at indios – had again come to a head. Moreover, as in 1910 when charismatic leaders such as Villa and Zapata emerged as if from nowhere, so too were the Zapatistas led by a dynamic and almost effortlessly cagey leader, one Subcommander Marcos.

Marcos is the subject of this excellent biography, the first of its kind published in the English language. Such a work is overdue, given the iconic stature and substantive historical importance of his life's work. And the book, divided into three carefully argued and deeply researched sections, makes it eminently clear that revolution has been Marcos's calling.

In pithy, elegant prose the first section (54 pages) briefly charts how Marcos, born Rafael Sebastián Guillén Vicente in the Caribbean port city of Tampico, the fourth child in a family of eight, grew out of a strict Jesuit-run primary school into a radical university student at UNAM (the National Autonomous University in Mexico City). The second section (145 pages) traces the development of "Marcos the Guerilla," as he took to the jungle of mountainous Chiapas to begin a grassroots movement aiming to improve the lives of indigenous peoples and to fight colonial injustice. The third section, "Marcos the Star Spokesman," (182 pages) delivers precisely what its title suggests, a narrative and analysis of Marcos as a canny, flexible, daring, articulate,

even sexy propagandist since NAFTA. Additionally, the study offers roughly 100 pages of wide-ranging and frequently creatively fashioned notes.

The nature and sophistication of that supporting documentation reveals careful attention to detail. Henck appears to have left few stones unturned. For example, early on, when plumbing the nature of what might have triggered in the young Rafael a revolutionary predilection, Henck admits first that the paucity of documentation makes conclusions necessarily tentative. Second, Marcos himself, whom Henck never interviewed (though he makes effective use of published interviews), has proved doggedly inconsistent and deliberately enigmatic on the subject of his past. Third, Henck employs the pathbreaking work of Frank Sulloway, the scholar who pioneered birth order research. The results are highly imaginative, even compelling. This sort of free-ranging intellectualism imbues the entire work with a graceful energetic intelligence.

Henck also constantly reminds the reader of Marcos's fascination and identification with "his hero" (165) Che Guevara. Again, such a tack provides useful contextualization – because many of the impetuses engendering Latin American revolutionary movements share common structural attributes – as well as a ready frame of comparison (that is, as poster boys of revolution: Marcos versus Che). That said, Marcos's charismatic character, like those of Villa, Zapata, Che, Hugo Chavez, and Fidel Castro, begs some discussion of the historical culture of *caudillismo*, a love affair that continues in Latin America.

Oddly, Henck also provides only a cursory description of Zapata and Mexico's own uneven revolutionary tradition. These matters deserve further attention and should be addressed in greater depth and earlier in the study. Further,

the aforementioned similarities between the struggle for social justice in Chiapas in the 1980s and 1990s and Mexico as a whole in 1910 remain curiously understated. Yet they are crucial to understanding why Marcos, a highly educated middle-class non-aboriginal, might have met a receptive audience in a heavily indigenous region.

On the other hand, the book explains cogently how Marcos operated to win hearts and minds, how Marcos spent 10 years in the jungle building trust and forging alliances before the fateful action of early 1994, and how Chiapas was “pregnant” (63) for rebellion. In this sense, the book should be seen as a triumph of biography. The author makes no sustained effort to hide his admiration of Marcos; and, indeed, such admiration seems entirely justifiable, as what stood at the core of the rebel project was nothing less than the liberation of a people from 500 years of brutal, paternalistic colonialism.

With considerable nuance Henck explores Marcos’s particular take on Marx, with a discussion focusing on the ideas of Louis Althusser. The result, of key significance, is that Henck unpacks an enigmatic pragmatist, whose ready flexibility he lauds at the same time as perhaps once too often labeling Marcos a “genius.” Henck might have noted some of the structural difficulties inherent in attempting to marry Marx with indigenous traditions.

Marcos, as is well known, became a media star through canny use of the internet as well as via more old-fashioned propaganda techniques. This story is told well. Yet other Latin American leaders – say, Villa and Venustiano Carranza in Mexico, the Sandinistas in Nicaragua, the Peróns in Argentina – likewise successfully employed well-oiled public relations machines to promote political causes.

Minor criticisms aside, this formidable study is one of those rare books that one might deem necessary as well as likely to remain of lasting importance. Engagingly penned, supplied with useful maps, photographs, a frontspiece explaining the acronyms used, as well as a “cast of main characters,” this book sheds significant light not merely on Marcos but on recent Mexican and Latin American history, and contributes to studies on globalization, social justice, indigenous studies, and the history of Marxism in the region. It is a must read for students of Mexican history and modern Latin American history.

MARK ANDERSON  
University of Regina

**Kurt Weyland, *Bounded Rationality and Policy Diffusion: Social Sector Reform in Latin America*** (Princeton: Princeton University Press 2006)

SOMETIMES AN omission can distort a narrative as much as outright lies. Kurt Weyland is guilty of many omissions in this account of social policy formation in Latin America but none so striking as the failure to note, never mind analyze, the importance of the fact that the regime of Augusto Pinochet in Chile was an American-backed military dictatorship representing the foulest comprador capitalist elements in that country. Yet this state-centred account of social policy change makes heavy weather of the impact of the Chilean example on policy diffusion in South America, particularly in the area of pension ‘reform.’

Weyland’s interest is in finding the sources of ideas that resulted in changes in pension and medical care policies in Latin American countries in the last three decades, roughly the international era of neo-liberalism, though one must caution

here that attempting to find a contrasting “post-war compromise” era in the history of many Latin American countries is futile. His focus is on Brazil, Costa Rica, Peru, Bolivia, and El Salvador. Weyland is particularly at pains to counter notions that international financial organizations (IFIs), such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, pull the strings of Latin American governments though he admits that they try to do so. He suggests, for example, in the area of pensions that extensive privatization occurred mainly in countries where World Bank pressure for change was least intense whereas results in obtaining privatized pensions were largely unsuccessful in countries where the IFIs exerted the most pressure for changes. From Weyland’s point of view, this is because the impact of IFIs on national economic policy-making has been exaggerated and the real drivers of decision-making are “cognitive heuristics” which seem to largely involve the happenstance contacts between state officials in different countries. While he does not deny that popular political forces play a role as well, he largely understates that role.

The argument barely hangs together when one places Weyland’s selective evidence in a larger context. In the first place, it seems rather obvious that the World Bank would not waste much of its time and considerable resources putting pressure on countries to get rid of expensive social programs if they follow suit without such pressures being necessary. In the cases of El Salvador, Bolivia, and Peru, the countries that followed the “Chilean model” for “pension reform” (the neo-liberal discursive practice of labeling every change that benefits capital at the expense of workers as a “reform” is worth noting) most closely, and Chile itself, Weyland finds scant evidence of World Bank prodding. In the Chilean case, such

prodding was made rather unnecessary by the imposition on the country of a government that enthusiastically embraced policies that created greater opportunities for capital while immiserating the workers and brutally suppressing any efforts at resistance. The World Bank is an agent of US imperialism but its urgings and economic threats do not have to be used when military aggression has more directly achieved the same ends. Chile got rid of its public, defined-benefit pensions in 1981 and replaced them with private, defined-contribution pensions. Every worker was required to pay 10 percent of earnings into a private pension scheme, with part of their contribution paying the salespeople and insurance managers, and with no guarantee of the size of their ultimate pension: that would be determined by the market performance of the funds invested by the private insurers.

According to Weyland, Bolivia adopted the Chilean model because the peak business association in Bolivia happened to invite one of the architects of Chilean pension privatization to speak to its members. That fellow was “widely credited with great persuasive powers” and “captivated” (101) the Bolivian Finance Ministry’s budget director, who then spearheaded a Bolivian version of the Chilean pension scheme with help from Chilean consultants. That’s it? Is it of no relevance that Bolivia is a country whose social policies were already negligible? With well less than 30 percent of Bolivians covered by any social program and a history of authoritarian regimes, Bolivia was a country where the peak business association, the military, and intellectual elites were closely intertwined. Much has changed since that time, particularly since the election of socialist Evo Morales as president in 2005. Would a budget director in Morales’s government likely adopt the far right social policies of

a dynamic guest speaker at a convention of the haute bourgeoisie? Not very likely. Yet, Weyland sees no need to place any context around his little story of the captivated budget director.

His explanation for El Salvador's adoption of the Chilean pensions policy is almost exactly the same: "the privatization plan emerged in a similarly unplanned fashion as the Chilean model suddenly became cognitively available." (101) Strangely, the Cuban model did not suddenly become "cognitively available." Weyland does not mention the kinds of people who were leading El Salvador at the time, that is the thugs whose only response to popular pressures from below, at least until the peace accord with the guerrilla forces opposing them, was murder. These were people rather likely to become "cognitively" familiar with what the ultra-right leadership of Chile were planning on behalf of the interests of capital. In El Salvador, only 12 percent of the population enjoyed any form of state social protection. There would hardly be an intensification of revolutionary pressures if that thin layer of protection was cut even further.

By contrast, Costa Rica, as Weyland acknowledges, was a country with extensive social protection. Democratic competition and decentralized authority meant that World Bank pressures to gut public pension programs would not be met with great enthusiasm. Yet Weyland's own evidence is that Costa Rica DID, however reluctantly, introduce a degree of privatization in its pension schemes. While the World Bank could not claim a total victory, they could claim significant inroads in a country which once mimicked social democracy in Scandinavia in the era before neo-liberalism, after which both Costa Rican and Scandinavian social democracy joined social democracy everywhere in at least

a partial embrace of neo-liberalism and welfare state cutbacks.

As for Brazil, Weyland's own evidence does not support the view that Brazilian governments held firmly against the pressures from the World Bank to reduce state pension payouts. Brazil did balk at copying the Chilean privatization because in Chile, as in other countries that followed the "Chilean" and World Bank models, transition costs in moving from public to private insurance were enormous and ate up savings that the "reform" might offer the government. Indeed, the IMF was never fond of insurance privatization as opposed to drastic cuts in state programs. As Weyland observes, Brazil ended up copying the defined-contribution but public plans that Sweden and Poland had implemented. He makes it clear that Brazil learned about these schemes at a World Bank seminar attended by pension specialists from Brazil. Nonetheless, because Brazil had not adopted the initial privatization scheme of the World Bank, he feels justified in concluding that Brazil had largely resisted World Bank intervention. Indeed, even for countries such as Bolivia and Peru that followed WB prescriptions on pensions and health care, Weyland is at pains to show the ways in which they failed to follow all the technical advice that the WB offered. This seems to miss the forest for the trees.

Weyland's emphasis on state officials and their role in frustrating or furthering World Bank goals is not completely without merit. But because of the overwhelming emphasis in his book on individual civil servants in nation x and their contacts with so-and-so in nation y, we never get any real sense of the class character of government bureaucracies and their various factions, much less a sense of the impact of "civil society" forces on the government. Throughout this book, there is an assumption, which is never interro-

gated, that “reform” of social policy was needed throughout Latin America to open the continent to the forces of globalization, a supposedly uncontested need. Social justice is simply not an issue for Weyland and indeed was not much of an issue for many of the governments whose “reforms” he lauds. To the extent that social justice issues are raised, it is to note that in many countries, state pensions were only available to a privileged group of workers as opposed to the whole population, and/or they were grossly unequal among recipients. This is certainly true, but it can be argued that the solution was to broaden the base of pension recipients to include everyone over a certain age, and to raise pensions for underprivileged groups to the levels received by those already favoured with good pensions. Instead, Weyland justifies the reduction of decent pensions to create an almost universal lack of social protection for the aged, an approach that smacks of cut off your nose to spite your face but which is really simply a rationalization for cutting state social expenditure budgets. In his view, the Chilean model, “by giving up most [state] responsibility for social security... depoliticized an issue area that had given rise to innumerable demands from special interests.” (23–24) Here we have the now classic neo-liberal formulation in which giving power to capital removes issues from politics, a formulation sometimes used to justify the imposition of military and other authoritarian governments when workers and farmers, with their unsophisticated views of politics, begin demanding reinstatement and even expansion of their former “special interest” rights.

ALVIN FINKEL  
Athabasca University

**Lawrence Mishel, Jared Bernstein, and Sylvia Allegretto, *The State of Working America, 2006/2007*** (Ithaca, NY: ILR Press 2007)

THERE IS AN ONGOING debate in North America between commentators on the left and right over the types of jobs being created, who is performing those jobs, and the economic rewards that workers receive. This debate continues despite the fact that, by most measures, a small percentage of the population continues to accumulate an ever greater portion of the economic spoils available in society. It is a discussion driven by statistics, some of which are quite accessible while others are so opaque that only the most experienced analysts can begin to divine their true meaning. *The State of Working America, 2006/2007* is a collection of compelling social and economic information that definitely falls into the former category rather than the latter.

This book has been produced bi-annually by the Economic Policy Institute, a left-leaning American think tank, for the last ten years. It contains a wide array of data from which one main conclusion can be derived: social class is still a very relevant measure of how well people do economically. The authors – Lawrence Mishel, Jared Bernstein, and Sylvia Allegretto – begin their analysis with a discussion of productivity. This is an economic indicator that is of much concern to business commentators and others on the political right. The implication is that people are simply not working hard enough, and that they would do better economically and enjoy a higher standard of living if they would simply devote more time to labouring. In fact, productivity grew at an average of 3.3% per year from 2000 to 2005. (17) Americans are working very hard indeed.

Working harder has not paid off for

average working and middle-income families. Their incomes dropped by 2.3% at the same time that productivity was increasing. (37) Working harder is not providing greater rewards for most people in American society. This is particularly true of non-white groups such as African-Americans and Hispanics. Gender-based analysis also proves of continuing value as the authors show the ongoing importance of both male and female wages on family incomes. Family incomes would have dropped precipitously had most families relied upon the wages of one income earner.

Educational attainment is shown to still be inextricably linked to income. Children from wealthier families tend to attend and complete college, while those from lower income groups are less likely to do so. Indeed, the authors surprisingly note that children in Britain – a traditional bastion of class difference – are more likely to enjoy social mobility than their American counterparts. Horatio Alger resides more in Europe than America.

The statistics on the workplace are particularly compelling. Workers absorbed most of the increased costs of health care between 2000 and 2004. (111) Unionized workers are much more likely to have health care coverage, and are less likely to make lower wages than their non-union counterparts. Compensation paid to corporate executives continues to vastly exceed anything paid to working-class and middle-class earners. CEO compensation increased by 186% between 1992 and 2005, while the average worker enjoyed a 7.2% increase during the same period. (112) Income disparity has led to serious overall wealth inequality. The bottom 80% of income earners only possess 20% of the economic wealth produced, while the top 20% controls 80% of it. (252) A significant percentage of the population – 12.6% – lives in poverty. (281)

The statistics on education, income, and wealth disparities are compelling but so too are the data presented on regional disparity. A major internal migration occurred in the 1990s as people moved from the North-Eastern states and California to the South and parts of the West other than California. However, most states across America lost jobs between 2000 and 2003. The loss of manufacturing jobs has been particularly grievous, and will continue to have a major impact on working families.

The authors conclude their analysis by comparing the state of working America to work in other industrialized countries. American productivity is the highest among the countries belonging to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), and its unemployment rate has been among the lowest. However, American workers also have the lowest vacation allotment. In comparison, Norwegian workers have much more vacation time and their country has a lower unemployment rate than the United States.

The overall image of the United States that is presented in this volume is one of a country with ever widening income inequality and lessening access to opportunity. Workers are labouring longer hours for less money, receiving less time off, and are unable to provide opportunity to their children. Families need two incomes to enjoy even working-class wages while corporate executives award themselves disproportionate incomes at the expense of the workers who actually create economic wealth. The United States is shown to be a nation plagued with worsening class inequality.

This book's statistical strengths are evident. It was clearly intended as a resource guide, but the evidence that it contains would have been even more compelling had it been accompanied by some more comprehensive analysis.



For example, how should education inequality be addressed? The measures used by the authors are appropriate for economic analysis, but the inclusion of broader quality of life indexes such as access to social services would also have been appropriate. Some discussion of politics would also have been germane to this analysis. Economic policy is inextricably linked to legislative activity and even a brief analysis of working and middle-class voting patterns would have helped illustrate what economic priorities are favoured by the average American worker.

The small methodological shortcomings of this book do not seriously diminish the fact that it presents complex statistics in an accessible manner. It is also a volume that academics who value class-based analysis will want to have on their bookshelves.

It is a highly useful resource that can be used by readers who perhaps need it the most: average American workers who want to understand why they receive so little from the economy after having contributed so much to wealth creation in their country

JASON RUSSELL  
York University

**Alan M. Wald, *Trinity of Passion: The Literary Left and the Antifascist Crusade***  
(Chapel Hill, N.C.: University of North Carolina Press 2007)

THE BOOK BEGINS with two epigraphs, one from the poet Edwin Rolfe: "I speak to you, Madrid, as lover, husband, son/ Accept this human trinity of passion," and another from the actor Ossie Davis: "I slammed the door of the tabernacle in His face and went in search of another God." (vii) The words suggest the intensity of passion among the small legion of cultural activists who participated in a

world of political and cultural commitments in the middle decades of the 20th century. This volume is the second in an overlapping trilogy that started with *Exiles from a Future Time: The Forging of the Mid-Twentieth Century Literary Left* (2002). In this equally impressive though somewhat more specialized second volume, Alan Wald explores the period between the late 1930s and the aftermath of the Second World War. Still to come is a sequel on the era of the Cold War and the transition to a New Left. Although the volumes are not strictly limited by chronological period, in this middle volume the animating ideals of anti-fascism provide a meaningful unifying theme for assessing the literary left. Passions are never simple, however, and Wald shows too that within the larger consensus there were unresolved tensions and contradictions that found expression in the life and work of his subjects.

Like its predecessor, this study succeeds as a series of interwoven accounts of individual writers, usually three or four in each chapter, grouped around the variety of poles of attraction within and around the American Communist movement. Always alert to the particularity of experience and conditions of cultural production, Wald sheds new light on the work of well-known writers while also introducing dozens of less familiar names.

Consider, for instance, the case of Leonard Zinberg, who also published long afterwards as Ed Lacy – "a secular Jew, a former Communist, and a proletarian writer turned pulp writer extraordinaire," (4) or Aaron Kramer, who started a lifetime of writing poetry when he was in public school in the Bronx, inspired by his African American teacher Pearl Bynoe for whom he later established a student prize. There is also considerable new research on the fate of authors who disappeared from literary history with

painful rapidity, such as Henry Roth, whose *Call It Sleep* was acclaimed as an instant classic in the 1930s and Lauren Gilfillan, whose *I Went to Pit College* was a bestseller throughout the decade. Wald's discussion of fictional heroes of the Spanish Civil War takes place within the shadow of Ernest Hemingway's Robert Jordan of *For Whom the Bell Tolls* (1940), but here we meet a number of more problematic protagonists created by novelists Alvah Bessie, William Her- rick, and Milton Wolff.

Meanwhile, when anti-fascist writers confronted the German "burden of guilt" arising from the Second World War, some authors were tempted to produce revenge fantasies rooted in their own racialized assumptions while others continued to articulate an ideal of class solidarity even under extreme circumstances.

For novelists of the Popular Front era, one of the most glaring contradictions was the push to suspend the left's well-established anti-racist politics in favour of maintaining a wartime consensus of national unity. Wald notes that this default was powerfully challenged by Black novelists such as William Attaway and John Oliver Killens and especially Chester Himes, author of *If He Hollers Let Him Go* (1945) and *Lonely Crusade* (1947). Himes was convinced that a "Double V" victory over world fascism must include the defeat of its domestic variation within American society: "How can we participate in this greater war without giving the same effort to our home fight against our native enemies?" (66) The tensions were especially visible in literary treatments of the 1943 urban uprisings in Harlem, Detroit, and Los Angeles, which were set off by incidents of domestic racism; for the mainstream left, however, the more palatable reading was provided in Benjamin Appel's *The Dark Stain* (1943), which attributed the riots to the subversive activities of fascist fifth columnists.

Nonetheless, the African-American novelists were not entirely isolated, for Jewish-American writers readily assailed anti-black racism as a surrogate for anti-semitism, which itself became a growing concern at the end of the war. Howard Fast, for instance, had the inspiration for writing his hugely popular novel about Black Reconstruction, *Freedom Road* (1944), while reading reports on the extermination of European Jews and working in the Office of Wartime Information on a plan for desegregation of the armed services.

The most general issue for the literary left was one of aesthetic and political strategy, a theme reflected in the experience of Ann Petry, whose novel, *The Street* (1946), dramatized the contemporary struggles of a single mother in Harlem. Petry had worked for the *People's Voice*, an African American newspaper founded in Harlem in 1942 by Adam Clayton Powell, who worked closely with a local, often Communist, left that shared similar class-based anti-racist and anti-fascist politics. Petry wrote the novel out of her experience as a reporter and activist, and it was praised on the left as a work of social criticism; but for some critics the fact that the novel had a tragic outcome rather than a message of interracial class solidarity was a shortcoming. Petry stood her ground, arguing that the novelist should not be a "pamphleteer" or a "romanticist." In doing so, Wald writes, she posed the classic dilemma for writers on the left who wish to avoid "the pitfalls of reductive characterizations and the interpolation of idealized solutions." (127) Petry did not stop writing, though much of her later work was in the form of popular fiction for young adults. But Wald also notes that a subsequent novel, *The Narrows* (1953), "would be a monumental work that reconfigured the issues of race, gender, and Cold War repression on a new and striking plane." (135)

The confused reception of Petry was not unique, for it occurred at a time when the left was actively debating the relationship of art and politics in essays such as Albert Maltz's "What Shall We Ask of Writers?" and Mike Gold's rejoinder, "The Road to Retreat." Another writer who at this time was also confronting the dilemma of how to produce meaningful content in a satisfying form was the struggling Marxist playwright Arthur Miller, whose experience merits a separate chapter. Wald questions the lately fashionable view that Miller was neither a Communist nor a socialist and situates him close to the centre of Communist-led cultural life at the end of the war. He does this in part by identifying Miller, under the name Matt Wayne, as the drama editor of *New Masses* for something more than a year in 1945–46. Miller's own memoirs are imprecise on such matters (and his biographers have not been equipped to pursue the question), but Wald presents strong circumstantial evidence and the oral testimony of other editors to support his conclusion. His striking observation is that the Arthur Miller of the soon-to-be written *All My Sons* and *Death of a Salesman* emerged from a year when he wrestled weekly in the pages of *New Masses* with the problems of political and aesthetic authenticity in writing for the stage.

Readers of this volume will come away with lists of new titles to read or older ones to revisit, and Wald makes it possible for us to understand this work as part of a larger tradition rather than a series of literary anomalies. Wald keeps the writers front and centre and reminds us that they wrote out of a vigorous response to existing social conditions and a compelling belief that a different world was possible. They shared, like the subjects of Michael Denning's *The Cultural Front: The Laboring of American Culture in the Twentieth Century* (1999), in a broad

consensus in which anti-fascism was for a time the most visible and urgent instrument of their passion for social justice. Wald also forces us to set aside the notion that writers on the left were naïve or unsophisticated in their political views and argues that the most uncompromising writers on the literary left exposed a "pattern of evasions" that characterized the era of the Popular Front and perhaps even ill-prepared many of them for what was to come at the end of the war. One way or another, the very intensity of their craft forced writers to come to grips with the human implications of social change and political engagement. As Wald also shows, the literary left shared more than a fractious frailty but participated in what one of the writers discussed in the previous volume, Meridel Le Sueur, called a "communal sensibility" – an irreducible common ethic which in turn influenced their art in the same direction. They did not always succeed, but one comes away from this latest installment in Wald's exploration of the literary left with an enlarged sense of the context and relevance of their ambition.

DAVID FRANK

University of New Brunswick

**Jeremy Nuttall, *Psychological Socialism. The Labour Party and Qualities of Mind and Character, 1931 to the Present***

(Manchester: Manchester University Press 2006)

THE "PSYCHOLOGICAL SOCIALISM" at the centre of this new study of the Labour Party's political thought is ambiguous in character. Partly it connotes an interest in the new twentieth-century discipline of psychology and in the insights it was held to offer the democratic politician. Mostly, however, it is employed in a more colloquial sense, as a synonym for the "qualities of mind and character" to

which the book's subtitle refers. Counterposing mental and material factors rather after the fashion of Peter Clarke's distinction between moral and mechanical reformers, Nuttall's contention is that non-material factors have been neglected in Labour historiography and by not a few Labour politicians.

In seeking to make good this shortcoming Nuttall gives centre stage to revisionists and proto-revisionists such as Evan Durbin, whom in an earlier article he had already characterised as Labour's "Psychological Socialist." Arguably it is as a vindication of this centrist or revisionist narrative of Labour's thinking that this fuller exposition works best. Durbin is one major protagonist; Tony Crosland, the subject of Nuttall's PhD, another; and a wide cast of lesser revisionists is handled with both insight and undisguised partisanship. With the ascendancy in recent years of Labour's latterday hyper-revisionism, the recovery of these lineages has become a relatively well-worked field. Nuttall's account can thus be grouped with studies like Radhika Desai's *Intellectuals and Socialism* (1994), which also discusses revisionism in a longer-term context and does not overlook issues of mind and character. Even so, Nuttall offers something distinctive. Essayistic in treatment, his arguments are presented vigorously, sometimes provocatively, and his aim is what he calls a "big-picture" or framework study. Some may nevertheless feel that his arguments work best when they are most focused – for example, in the recurring theme of Labour's educational policy – and supported by a wide reading of archives and political texts, as in the case of revisionism. At times, though, Nuttall seems to have taken on rather a lot, and he may have been better served by a thematic structure, or one focusing on key thinkers or debates, than the chronological arrangement he actually uses.

One danger with such a structure is

that of a sort of teleological temptation, culminating in this instance in a robust and somewhat inexorable defence of New Labour. Linked with this, Nuttall's distinction between moral and material factors needs handling with considerable care. Going back at least to the early socialists' campaigns for the eight-hour day, "material" reforms have repeatedly been promoted by them and other social reformers as preconditions or facilitators of the moral and cultural improvement with which Nuttall is concerned. Even the Fabian bugbear of "efficiency," apparently the epitome of an arid and technocratic materialism, was shaped and legitimized by a moral, often moralizing, discourse of improvement as well as functionality. "Let it not be forgotten," the quintessential mechanician, Sidney Webb, said, "that what we are in pursuit of is not the better housing, feeding and clothing of the people except as a means to an end – the development of individual character." Nuttall is unsparing about what he regards as material "proxies" for moral reform. There is a big difference, however, between a proxy and a precondition. Moreover, not infrequently, as in Clarke's work, a stark counterposition of mechanical and moral factors can lend itself to too easy dichotomies. There may be a case instead for thinking in terms of environmental factors, in which both the fluidity and the interdependency of the moral and material – for example, in the nurturing and educative qualities of kinship networks and a humane educational system – are a good deal more evident. Typically, Labour thinkers and activists thought in precisely this way; and it was just this appreciation of environmental factors, which included but were not reducible to "material" or institutional factors, that made them socialists of some sort and not just moral reformers.

The present reviewer leans towards the "pathological dissenters" (in Roy Hatter-

sley's phrase) with whom Nuttall (who cites it) is evidently not much in sympathy. As such I found Nuttall's attempt to recognize nuance not altogether equal to the challenge posed by these issues. "A moral and mechanical vision of socialism could logically be combined," he notes in relation to the "Bennism" of the 1970s and 1980s, "but what arguably could not be was a moral vision and an extreme mechanical vision." (129) The suggestion here of some sort of inverse correlation between moral and mechanical visions is problematic. At the very least, the extremism of "mechanical" or structural reform may reflect a sense, not so much of the self-sufficiency of structures in themselves, as of the perceived institutional obstacles to a new moral order, which might range from capitalism itself to excessive working hours. Few would fail to recognize such a position in relation to authoritarian regimes, in which in many cases only "extreme" or even revolutionary mechanical reform may be consistent with the moral vision Nuttall evokes. Nuttall himself recognizes it in respect of what appear to be intractable social problems. Thus, when he prefers the "toughness" of New Labour towards the criminal to the "lazy sentimentality" of progressives, he appears to have in mind extreme mechanical measures such as longer prison sentences, higher fines, and the possible withdrawal of state benefits.

Appreciation of these complexities is not assisted by Nuttall's third, looser usage of "psychological socialism" to designate the qualities of mind and character of the Labour Party itself. Championing revisionism and its culmination in New Labour, he stresses what he sees as a growing recognition of the rights and responsibilities of citizenship along with an ability to synthesize competing social and political values. Regarding these as signs of Labour's maturation, he

ascribes deficiencies in the party's moral outlook to its youth, impetuosity and "sentimentality"—which again he identifies predominantly with the left. Nevertheless, the connection with his other usages of psychological socialism is not always self-evident. Realistic assessment, not just of "mental" qualities, but of fiscal constraints and the limits of government, is thus described by Nuttall as representing the quality of mind required for effective government. "Responsibility" is identified with political realism, moderation, and the reconciliation of conflicting pressures. This seems a very traditional emphasis, and Nuttall's main objection to the "fixerist realism" of a figure like Harold Wilson appears to be its lack of inhibition, as compared with the high-minded scruples of Wilson's revisionist colleagues. Qualities of mind and character thus turn out to have some decidedly mechanical means of expression. It is defensible, for example, though contestable, to regard opposition to bellicose foreign policies as a sign of immaturity. On the other hand, to allow foreign policy "realists" a particular purchase on moral discourse, on grounds of their "shared realism about prevailing levels of 'mental progress' in the world," (16) risks obscuring such decidedly mechanical supports as NATO, nuclear arms programs, and the massive material interests which had a stake in these. Perhaps the distinction between moral and merely sentimental qualities also needs clarifying.

Nuttall sometimes stretches his arguments further than the evidence he produces will really support. Nevertheless, his book is to be wholeheartedly recommended. It fully meets his aim of stimulating discussion; anybody seeking to convince students of the interest and continuing relevance of these issues will be glad of it. If his categories of "mind and character" in my view need firmer theoretical moorings, the questions he opens

up are important ones and he makes a serious contribution to the literature.

KEVIN MORGAN

University of Manchester

**Beverly Lemire, *The Business of Everyday Life: Practice and Social Politics in England, c. 1600–1900*** (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press 2005)

IN THE LAST YEAR of his life, his health rapidly declining, his hand unsteady, William Smart continued to carefully record mundane details of earning and spending in his account ledger: “Robb. Plumpton dined with me, spt with him att Atk’son [a local hostelry] 8d.” (196) Even when nearing death, this seventeenth-century moneylender could not give up on accounting. Such a religious devotion to numbers was new in the 17th century but quickly became the norm, taking hold among both men and women of different walks of life. This is the kind of fascinating detail that can be found in Beverly Lemire’s new book, *The Business of Everyday Life: Gender, Practice and Social Politics in England, 1600–1900*, a study of ordinary people’s financial practices and household management.

Over the course of three centuries, Lemire charts the decline of customary, non-monetary transactions, such as the second-hand clothing trade, and their replacement with formal methods and institutions, such as double-ledger accounting and savings banks. A traditional culture of reciprocity, hospitality, and generosity gave way to calculation.

Lemire connects her work to Fernand Braudel’s exploration of what he called “material civilization” and also to the new and exciting field of the history of consumer culture. The innovative aspect of the book is not so much a focus on the household, which has been studied

before, but attention to women’s economic interactions, which have too often been ignored by economists. Also important is Lemire’s interest in the humble economic transactions of “plebeians” (ordinary people) rather than formal institutions like the East India Company.

The strongest chapters are chapters five to seven. Chapter five deals with fashion, and chapters six and seven contain Lemire’s fascinating depiction of something very peculiar to nineteenth-century English culture: an almost obsessive love of saving and accounting. Much more so than today or in previous centuries, these two activities dominated the lives of nineteenth-century middle-class households.

Lemire writes beautifully about fashion, and the chapter on it is the most enjoyable in the book. This is a subject she knows well and has written about at length in the past. Lemire argues that far from simply imitating the fashion of their betters, plebeians had their own styles and preferences. At the end of the sixteenth century the middling sort and also poorer people like servants began to adopt innovations in clothing. This caused an outcry. Traditionally one of the purposes of clothing was to let the observer see who was a gentleman and who was not. Plebeian fashion blurred these distinctions and threatened the social order. Through examples like the backlash against women wearing calicoes and servants’ dislike of livery, Lemire shows how the study of fashion can provide insights into gender roles, ideas of femininity and masculinity, youth culture, and social relations.

Chapter six is about the rise and spread of savings culture in the 19th century. After 1800 savings banks proliferated, suggesting a spirit of self-denial, self-help, and respectability. Savings culture transcended class, gender, and age. Saving was encouraged by evangelicals and



the authorities because it was understood to teach the working poor discipline and give them a stake in their country. One problem with this chapter is that Lemire implies saving was used as a means of social control (in Sunday schools, by evangelicals, by the authorities) but she does not explicitly address this issue. Her contention that the working-class bought into savings culture is not fully persuasive, because most of her examples are middle-class. It would be helpful to show what proportion of people saved and what did not: this would offer a truer representation of how pervasive this culture was.

Accounting may not seem like a riveting subject, but it becomes so in Lemire's hands. In chapter seven she explores what she calls the "new reckoning," the keeping of records of family finances by private individuals. This, she argues, came to compete with older ideas about reciprocity and hospitality. Accounting reduced real life to numbers, ignoring or downplaying non-monetary transactions and relations. In the 19th century family finances increasingly passed into the hands of women. Many women kept obsessive financial records, as is illustrated by numerous surviving gold-leafed, leather-bound ledgers containing mundane information about family expenditures. Unlike savings culture, it seems accounting was more firmly middle-class: when Fabians asked working women to keep accounts, they strongly resisted. The issue of class could have been more explicitly addressed in this chapter too. Lemire argues that as working women became more literate they too became committed to accounting, but again her examples are middle-class. It seems that accounting would be something dependent on one's wealth and the complexity of one's household (employing servants, etc.). If your income is miniscule, there are not that many ways in which you can spend it, and hence not as much need for

careful record-keeping. Like savings culture, the accounting culture of the nineteenth century is familiar, yet distant. Today most of us try to keep track of our expenses, but few of us would think of recording every minute expenditure in a leather-bound book.

Despite these three strong chapters, this is an uneven book. It lacks clarity both in terms of overall structure and, for chapters one to four, in terms of writing style. Unlike chapters five to seven, the first four chapters are difficult reading. Chapter two is about the humble financial activity of pawning, which was dominated by women, and which formed a kind of counterpoint to the development of more formal financial institutions like the Bank of England in the late seventeenth century. Chapter three is about the Charitable Corporation, which was an early effort to provide credit for the poor, while chapter five is about the trade in second-hand clothes and how they were used as an alternative form of currency. These chapters are dominated by generalizations, and there is not enough detail, nor enough reference to actual human lives and experiences to arouse the reader's interest. Generalizations need to be substantiated by examples. While the subject matter is very interesting and worth studying, it is not written up in an engaging way. Lemire shows broad knowledge of economic theory, but its invocation does not always seem justified. Applying words like "credit," "finance," and "accounting" to plebeians' simple transactions is not always effective. Sometimes it is difficult to tell what Lemire means, and in some cases this kind of language tends to obscure more than it reveals.

Another problem is that the chapters are not well linked. Yes, these diverse themes can be connected, but Lemire does not do so convincingly, and it is not fully clear why all of these chapters

are part of the same monograph. This is especially true of the chapter on fashion, which is excellent in itself but poorly connected to the book's other themes. The chapters seem better as stand-alone essays.

The book's overall thesis needs to be more clearly and explicitly stated in the introduction. As one reads the book, the idea of a calculating, monetary culture replacing custom, reciprocity, and hospitality emerges as a possible thesis, but this is not explicitly stated until the conclusion. The very title obscures more than it reveals: "business" can mean any kind of activity, not just financial and economic transactions, and the word "practice" is so vague it could mean anything.

In conclusion, this is a valuable book, despite the problems with the first four chapters. Lemire's discussion of fashion, saving, and accounting is excellent, and the book captures practices that are central to historians' understanding of western culture, but seldom explored in such an engaging way. Lemire's insights about these themes make us think of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century England in a new way. These chapters make the book worth reading and redeem the flaws of its first half.

ROBIN GANEV

University of Regina

**Richard B. Freeman, Peter Boxall, and Peter Haynes, eds., *What Workers Say: Employee Voice in the Anglo-American Workplace* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press 2007)**

THE EDITORS OF this book have assembled an impressive group of labour relations/human resources specialists to report on "employee voice" in the USA, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Britain, and Ireland and have asked other leading scholars to attempt a synopsis of

the varying national findings in terms of union, employer, and government perspectives. The directions given to authors of the specific country studies and to the summarizers have resulted in a far more consistent text than many edited collections: the book is an excellent guide to understanding workers' voice in the chosen countries.

The chapters documenting developments in individual countries rely heavily on survey material but are also informed in places by the authors' knowledge of case study material and other data sources. Employee voice in this collection is not only focused on union recognition, representation, and union involvement in managerial consultative bodies but also non-union "employee voice" mechanisms. While this may be understandable given the diminishing union density figures, it is difficult to assess how independent and effective such voice can be in the absence of an organizational structure to support critical observations by workers. We know workplace unionism along with national union hierarchies are susceptible to incorporation into managerial goals and can only surmise that non-union voice is even more susceptible: a professional employee may be listened to by management but will a line worker who cannot speak as a union representative?

The country chapters follow a similar pattern and provide some fascinating evidence on the similarities and differences among the primarily English-speaking countries studied. These countries are inevitably grouped geographically with some comparisons drawn between Australia and New Zealand, Britain and Ireland, and the USA and Canada. Canadian readers will be familiar with inter-provincial Canadian differences and the distinctiveness of Quebec legislation and workers' culture and the key differences between Canada generally and the USA, but may be surprised to find that Irish

developments are recognizably distinct from those in Britain: with higher union density and a more Euro-centred focus on structure and representation. The work had of course been completed prior to the recent change in government in Australia. It will be interesting to observe whether or not the new Labour government will reverse recent anti-union legislation and the focus on individual contracts and what impact that might have on workers' voice Down Under.

All country studies were able to report on a desire for higher levels of unionization by workers than they currently experienced and for more involvement in key decisions at work. In relation to the first point it's difficult to know what this means in practice if workers do not act on it, a point clearly acknowledged in one study but not in all: "This approach assumes, of course, that those who say they are fairly likely to join would actually join." (152)

In relation to the second point it was unclear how many private sector employers that trumpeted "employee empowerment" or "participation" or had "consultative" bodies understood that even consultation implies taking note of employee perspectives prior to decision-making and amending employer behaviours and goals. This lack of understanding was made clear to me more than 30 years ago by Tony Eccles who had been employed as a consultant to Arnold Weinstock's GEC; he reported that Weinstock never envisaged his company's participation structure being more than an information sharing, employee "involvement" body, but insisted on calling it a "consultative council." This point is picked up in the summary: "In most cases, employee representatives are merely informed of upcoming changes by management with no input into decision making." (177) But this is not always acknowledged in the individual chapters.

Reading through the chapters and reviewing the evidence provided, it is at times difficult to accept that a particular survey question can accurately reflect a tendency towards "individualism" rather than "collectivism" or that an answer accurately reflects workers' understanding of how union voice rather than non-union workers' voice would work in practice. (87) Surveys are notorious for not getting at deep understanding, or for sifting out culturally acceptable responses from concrete beliefs, let alone discovering preferences that go beyond current experiences. Overall however this is a fascinating study of country-wide workers' opinions that would be difficult to gather in any other way and is complemented by a number of thoughtful chapters drawing the data together and offering opinions as to what unions, employers, and governments should do to expand workers' voice.

The first of these chapters reflects on unionization across the six countries and notes that membership has declined but appears to have stabilized at lower levels. The chapter reviews what unions are doing to try and reach those who would be willing to join. This includes community organizing and some imaginative use of the internet. One area not discussed is the role union education can play in boosting representation and voice, a surprising omission given the extent of union education and the links with the differing organizing initiatives in Australia (Organising Works), Britain (Organising Academy), and the USA (Organizing Institute).

The chapter on employers' and workers' voice recognizes that private sector employers are using "direct voice" mechanisms to avoid unionization. It also reviews the rhetoric that organizational effectiveness is improved by employee involvement and looks at employee voice and grievance settlement. There is

some evidence to support the view that employers recognize that employee voice is socially desirable and needed to meet employee expectations.

While these concluding chapters are more considered than much of the “workplace learning” literature that has flourished recently, they fall short of insisting that union recognition should be considered a key element of liberal democracy, that legislation should support union rights and constrain anti-union employers. To some extent this is a reflection of what can be expected from the current climate but nonetheless could be clearly asserted in a study of this kind.

This book certainly adds to our knowledge of what workers want and say in these global neo-liberal times; it is realistic without being too bleak. The focus on the countries chosen is a limiting factor but the comprehensive nature of the country studies compensates for this limitation.

BRUCE SPENCER  
Athabasca University

**Libby Schweber, *Disciplining Statistics: Demography and Vital Statistics in France and England, 1830–1885***  
(Durham: Duke University Press 2006)

LIBBY SCHWEBER provides a comparative historical overview of the drive to recognize population statistics as a discipline in two liberal states (England and France) in the 19th century. Schweber compares the conditions and challenges that influenced the struggle to promote and institutionalize demography in France and vital statistics in England as disciplines that identify causes of social phenomena and inform social policy through the use of statistical manipulation and analyses. Disciplinary recognition of demography in North America was also an issue for much of the twentieth century, and recognition eventually benefited from an

influx of funds from the Rockefeller Foundation and a strategic alliance between demography and social policy. In her book, *Disciplining Statistics*, Schweber describes and analyzes the struggles of key figures in their pursuit to establish population statistics as a separate discipline and documents the historic use of some demographic terms and concepts.

The gatekeepers of “Political Economy” and the “Academy of Science” rejected efforts by Achille Guillard and Adolphe Bertillon to have their respective statistical approaches incorporated into mainstream academic thought in France. That rejection was a key factor in encouraging the two men in a bid to establish their demographic approach as a separate discipline in France around the mid-nineteenth century. Unlike France, the use of statistics in England was supported in medical science, and by 1839 vital statistics was institutionalized. The appointment of William Farr in the General Registrar’s Office was instrumental in its early success. Farr also played a key role in framing vital statistics as a problem-oriented approach especially in the domain of public hygiene (e.g. Farr’s work on the mortality rate of various districts). Despite some progress towards disciplinary recognition in the second half of the nineteenth century, success was short-lived, and demography and vital statistics were superseded by other disciplines (geometric methods in France and mathematical statistics in England), while the establishment of population statistics was overtaken by other established groups.

In documenting the history of disciplinary claims of demography and vital statistics, Schweber examines how and why statistical notions differed in the two countries. She compares the political, administrative, and institutional settings in England and France. Despite their access to similar statistical knowledge,

intellectuals and state officials in the two countries formed different views of population statistics and their purpose within liberal states that supported government intervention to serve the interests of their citizens. Unlike their English counterparts, French statisticians opposed the idea of a statistical population that is made up of the aggregation of heterogeneous individuals and/or groups. They feared that arithmetic averages would not accurately depict the experience of individuals and might provide a misleading image of the nation. Such fear was not shared by English statisticians.

The central argument of the book is that the differences in the "styles of statistical reasoning" between the two countries were largely due to differences in the political, administrative, and scientific environment in England and France. In making her argument, Schweber uses a broad definition of the discipline "as any activity associated with the introduction of a new disciplinary category." (222) Through the use of published records and an institutional context framework, Schweber analyzes the events and developments that had an impact on the struggle of demography and vital statistics for disciplinary recognition. The nature of the political, administrative, and scientific institutions shaped the purpose of population statistics. The use of vital statistics was instrumental in informing England's social policy, especially in influencing public opinion and evaluating the effectiveness of certain laws and public interventions.

The social, economic, political, and technical domains of vital statistics were interconnected in England, and political considerations were factored into the evaluation of new statistical techniques. English statisticians acted as experts in social policy (especially in public health), and this contributed to a problem-oriented approach. Similarly, demography

in North America for much of the second half of the twentieth century was problem-oriented. Population centres were established in various universities to train scholars to respond to the "crisis" of high fertility rates and high population growth rates in developing countries after World War II. The decline in fertility rates and the increase in the elderly population in developed countries are current issues which demographers are asked to tackle.

In contrast to Britain, statistical developments in France were not incorporated into the social and political context, and the acceptance or rejection of statistical claims in France was based on epistemological criteria only. There were also fewer opportunities for the French statisticians to participate in social policy decision-making as they were excluded in favour of the graduates of elite professional schools.

The new emerging political and administrative order in England and France in the 1870s and 1880s had a significant impact on the status of demography and vital statistics. The French Republicans promoted positivist science (to which demography subscribes) following their political victory; however, the graduates of elite professional schools took over the demographic movement. In England too, vital statistics had limited success in defending itself as a separate discipline. Population experts' access to social policy became restricted. The discipline did not survive especially after the professionalization of public health, and the techniques of vital statistics were incorporated into other existing administrative and scientific structures.

Schweber provides interesting insights into the status of demography and vital statistics in France and England in the nineteenth century. While the book traces the early origin of demographic disciplinary activity in France, the events that led to the institutionalization of

vital statistics in England are not equally developed. The introduction is a bit dry, and some of its sections seem to lack coherence or to connect well with other sections. Beyond the introduction, however, this is a lively book that assesses why some disciplines emerge as separate fields of study and maintain their separate existence while others, despite valiant efforts, fail to establish deep enough roots to earn longevity.

RANIA TFAILY  
Carleton University

**Padma Anagol, *The Emergence of Feminism in India, 1850–1920***  
(Hampshire and Burlington: Ashgate, 2005)

PADMA ANAGOL'S *The Emergence of Feminism in India, 1850–1920* is a most welcome addition to the growing number of monographs on the history of Indian women in colonial India. Unlike many recently published books on women and gender, Anagol breaks with conventional patterns to put women's feminist consciousness, assertiveness, resistance, and solidarity at the center of the discussion. Focusing on Maharashtrian women in the last half of the nineteenth century and the first two decades of the twentieth century, Anagol's book has the potential to change the way we think about Indian women in history.

As Anagol points out, historical work on Indian women falls into three main categories: the impact of colonial law and administration on women's lives, the reconstitution of patriarchy, and the work and lives of women who have been left out of the master narrative. Studies of colonial law and the reconstitution of patriarchy lead us to look at institutions that oppressed women, rather than at women themselves. And, while the third category makes women visible and pres-

ents their words and deeds, these works focus on individuals with too little attention to the larger context or the audience for their words and activities.

Anagol also faults the methodology that informs these works: methodology borrowed from androcentric history, the Subaltern School, and Western feminist history. Further distortions result from a teleological impetus to work backwards from a post-independence question: why are Indian women oppressed?

Padma Anagol urges historians to focus on women's agency, on women as feminist actors demanding civil, political, and religious rights. This means moving women to the center of the discussion and looking at what they were saying, writing, and doing in relation to dominant discourses in society. Her concern is Maharashtrian women, but Anagol suggests a method of studying women in late colonial India that could be applied to other regions.

This book is divided into five subject chapters with an introduction that discusses historiography and methodology, a concluding chapter on "Indian feminism and Its Legacy," an appendix with biographical notes about a number of women reformers, and an exhaustive bibliography. The five subject chapters are organized thematically: "Christian Women's Discourses and Work," "Hindu Women's Discourses and Work," "Women's Assertion and Resistance," "Women, Crime and Survival Strategies," and "Women's Discourses on Marriage and Marital Rights." Although this arrangement is not entirely satisfactory, it would be difficult to suggest a better way to present the material.

In her chapter on "Christian Women's Discourses and Work," Anagol discusses how Christian converts explained their attraction to Christianity and questioned Hinduism's treatment of women. Both the first generation (e.g., Pandita Ramabai) and the second generation (e.g., Krupabai



Khisti) gravitated towards Christianity because it did not define women as inferior to men. In a detailed account of the writings and work of Christian women, Anagol explains the appeal of their message to a wide range of women irrespective of class, caste, religion, and marital status.

In chapter 3, Anagol presents Hindu women as aware of their subordination, but careful about challenging traditional Hinduism. Working with male reformers who wanted to improve the status of women but feared female autonomy, and Western women, these women promoted change within an acceptable framework. For example, Ramabai Ranade employed an "ingenious adaptation of the contemporary discourse on motherhood." (69) Using a variety of sources including women's periodicals, novels, and short stories by Mahar woman, and women's response to the custom of tonsuring widows, Anagol draws attention to women's solidarity as they evoked the concept of *stri jati* (sisterhood), condemned the *sastras*, and supported each other.

Chapter 4, on assertion and resistance, demands a reexamination of the colonial state as the hegemonic oppressor of Indian subjects. Anagol demonstrates that Maharashtrian women from all social classes petitioned against laws and injunctions that would limit their right to property and maintenance, and control their sexuality. Looking at court cases, petitions, and newspaper reports, Anagol shows how women fought restrictive measures by adopting children, going to court, publishing their stories, writing role-reversal literature, complaining to the authorities, and defying the law. In some instances, they were merely a nuisance, but in others, they forcefully challenged men's version of society and culture.

In my favourite chapter, Anagol presents the female criminal as an example of violent resistance to patriarchal control.

In this rich discussion, the reader learns about women who belonged to "Criminal Tribes" (a new category in 1871), and those charged with killing their husbands or children. Anagol cogently argues that male reformers and colonial authorities colluded in reconstructing infanticide as a crime of sexual transgression committed by unchaste daughters, highly sexed widows, or wayward wives. In shifting the focus from the crime itself to the woman who bore the child, they overlooked evidence implicating others and refused to consider the responsibility of the child's father. Drawing from the petitions of 100 women accused of infanticide, Anagol finds their explanations at odds with those constructed by their accusers. First, it becomes clear that women were often assisted in disposing of their children, and when they did so it was under circumstances of extreme duress.

Addressing marriage and marital rights in chapter 6, Anagol asserts that Hindu men felt threatened by women's appeals to British law and by the end of the century forced legal authorities into a more conservative interpretation of law in matters of gender. Placing the well-known Rukhmabai case in historical context, Anagol informs us that the majority of petitions for the restoration of conjugal rights were filed by women, many of them deserted by husbands who took another wife or simply lost interest. By bringing their complaints to court, abandoned women frequently won what they were looking for – maintenance or alimony. Rukhmabai's case was a departure from the norm in that it was brought by her husband, and developed into a debate about female autonomy. As Hindu men hastened to quote the *Sastras* and re-inscribe patriarchal control, women supported Rukhmabai, and denounced religious texts. In her discussion of this case and the Age of Consent controversy of 1891, Anagol explains that these legal

issues did not pit colonial masters against Indian reformers and traditionalists, but rather triangulated the debate about female autonomy. Rather than seeing the British authorities as masters of the situation, Anagol presents them as under siege by men and women who wanted support for their own agendas.

My summary of Padma Anagol's chapters cannot do justice to the wealth of material included nor to the complexity of her analysis. Her objective was to put women at the center of the narrative and in doing so reveal the "long but hidden tradition of feminist thought and politics." (219) Using a variety of archival documents and theoretical insights from contemporary scholarship on European and Asian history, Anagol convincingly argues that women in Maharashtra were conscious of their oppression and acted in solidarity to fight it. In her view, the much vaunted twentieth century women's movement was pale in comparison with this movement. In hitching their star to the nationalist movement, women settled for less radical goals than they previously held.

*The Emergence of Feminism in India* is a good read, although repetitious in places and not always clear about the audience for women's writings and the connections between women. In my view, the author exaggerates the differences between Bengal and Maharashtra, differences I believe are more related to historical writing than to the historical record. Anagol faults Meredith Borthwick (1984) for using models developed by historians writing the history of European women, and comments extensively on Partha Chatterjee's assertion that nationalists fashioned a "new woman" controlled by a "new patriarchy." Meanwhile, historians such as Tanika Sarkar and Judith Walsh have complicated the picture of women's complicity with patriarchy. My work, with Tapan Raychaudhuri, on the

child-widow/ lady doctor Haimabati Sen, explodes the myth of compliant women inside social reform organizations, while the edited anthology, *Talking of Power: Early Writings of Bengal Women* (2003), collects the work of a number of women who were not silenced by purdah and feudalism. Using Anagol's methodology and research strategies, I believe historians of Bengal could find more evidence of feminist consciousness and solidarity.

This book is a must-read for those who study colonial history and would be a wonderful book to use in a course on Women/Gender in India. I expect *The Emergence of Feminism in India* to shift the dominant paradigm on colonialism, nationalism, and gender in India to recognition of women's consciousness, agency, and involvement in the reform agenda.

GERALDINE FORBES

State University of New York, Oswego

**Paul Mason, *Live Working or Die Fighting: How the Working Class Went Global* (London: Harvill Secker 2007)**

IN ENGLISH-SPEAKING advanced capitalist countries today, familiarity with the history of the working-class movements that emerged in the period from the early 19th century to the early 20th century is restricted mostly to academic specialists and a few activist intellectuals who came to the radical left in the 1960s or 1970s.

Paul Mason's book is motivated by a passionate desire to make this history available to those who, in his view, "stand in dire need of knowing more about it" (x): global justice activists in the countries of the North, and workers in the expanding industries of the South. Mason was born and raised in a British "blue collar" Labour-voting working-class town in the 1960s, a social world in which there was a great deal of continuity with the early decades of the 20th century. That world

no longer exists; it has been transformed by global capitalist restructuring and the defeats inflicted on workers by the neo-liberal offensive. Mason's response is neither a sentimental look back at what we have lost nor a dismissive farewell to the working-class. Instead, it is an effort to transmit a number of historical experiences from the years before the end of the Second World War to people engaged in contemporary struggles for workers' rights and social justice. It attempts this with hope but not certainty; Mason writes that we do not know if a new global mass workers' movement, "a much bigger, multi-ethnic movement centred on India, China and Latin America which communicates by text message in real time and in which women are the majority," (xiv) will successfully emerge or not.

Mason is not a professional historian but an award-winning BBC journalist, and *Live Working or Die Fighting* is not a conventional work of history of the kind most often produced by professional historians. It is also quite different from most popular histories of the workers' movement, which are usually linear, institutionally-focused social democratic narratives. Each of its nine chapters opens with a brief (sometimes very brief) look at a moment in working-class life in the years 2003 to 2006; the countries from which these scenes are drawn are China, India, Nigeria, Iraq, Bolivia, Argentina and the UK. In each case, we hear the voices of workers themselves, ranging from Li Qi-bing in Shenzhen, who lost his leg below the knee to a machine while making plastic flowers, to youth activist Abram Delgado in El Alto, Bolivia (this city is arguably the most radicalized part of the global reality referred to in the title of Mike Davis's *Planet of Slums* (2006)).

After its contemporary lead-in, each chapter then turns to its historical case or cases. These, which make up the bulk of the book, are early nineteenth century

Manchester and Lyon, Paris from 1867 to 1871, the rise of the Knights of Labor and the Haymarket Massacre, industrial union struggles in Europe, Argentina, Australia and the US in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Germany from 1905 to 1923, Shanghai from 1919 to 1927, the Bund in Poland, and workers' struggles involving factory occupations in Italy in 1920, France in 1936, and the US in 1937. All of these histories are presented with flair and insight. Mason skillfully uses the lives of individual activists (some well-known, like Louse Michel and Bill Haywood, and others not, such as Oskar Hippe and Toni Sender) as windows into the movements and events in which they participated. He constructs lively narratives, drawing on memoirs, oral histories, and other primary material as well as secondary sources. He makes an effort to ensure that some of the participants he profiles or whose reflections he quotes are women.

Mason identifies the struggle for control as a "recurrent theme." (xiii) In an Afterword, he offers some broad interpretive conclusions. Working-class history since E.P. Thompson has made great gains but "modern academics tend to avoid 'big truths' within the life stories of those they have rescued from oblivion." (279) Mason ventures to identify two. First, capitalism drives workers to organize themselves in and outside the paid workplace as they fight for control at work and try "to create the new society within the old;" (280) when this becomes impossible, they become more confrontational with "corporate power." (280) Second, a global economy begins to create a global workers' movement. This began to happen before the First World War, and it is happening today in the context of a very different world economy. But the process faces real obstacles.

*Live Working or Die Fighting* is a remarkable work of popular history. I know of no

other book which sets out to introduce a broad readership to the history of the rise of working-class movements up until the mid-point of the twentieth century in this way. The result is a real accomplishment. This and Mason's passion and dynamic writing make this a book that deserves to be widely read. The fact that Vintage will be publishing a North American edition early in 2008 can only be welcomed.

The book is certainly not without shortcomings. The extent to which the chapters succeed in linking thematically their contemporary openings and the historical materials varies widely. The first chapter, which moves from Shenzhen 2003 to Manchester 1819, is probably the most successful and the fourth, which couples Basra 2003 to Philadelphia 1869, perhaps the least. It would have been a stronger book if it had made more of an effort to integrate an analysis of gender and race. To give just one specific example, the Knights of Labor's mixed record in relation to African Americans is discussed but their anti-Asian racism is not. The Afterword describes unions across the advanced capitalist countries in the four decades after 1945 as "ubiquitous, passive, barely political, static." (276) This does not sit well with what Mason briefly and inadequately refers to as the awakening of labour's "dormant militant soul" (277) in the 1970s as a response to economic crisis. The upsurges of militancy and radicalism during the long post-war economic boom, whose most visible peaks included workplace occupations in France in May 1968, the Italian "May in slow motion," British strikes against restrictive labour legislation, wildcats and Black Power in the plants in the us and the radicalization of Quebecois unions, deserve more than a fleeting mention. To refer to the very real phenomenon of worker activists' concern for control and commitment to self-activity

as a "gut anarchism" (xiv) is misleading. The Afterword's silence about the significance and possibilities of working-class movements in the advanced capitalist countries today will leave some readers wondering. There are also a few references that will be unclear to readers, especially in Canada and the us.

My noting of these and other weaknesses should not obscure the fact that *Live Working or Die Fighting* is a unique and very welcome book. It deserves to be read in university and college courses and by labour and community activists of all kinds. Anyone who cares deeply about working-class history and who hopes to ignite the interest of someone for whom it is unfamiliar would do well to give them a copy of *Live Working or Die Fighting*.

DAVID CAMFIELD

University of Manitoba

**Jody Heymann, *Forgotten Families: Ending the Growing Crisis Confronting Children and Working Parents in the Global Economy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press 2006)**

WHEN JODY HEYMANN, a medical doctor who also holds a PhD in Public Policy, was interviewing families in Tegucigalpa, Honduras, in 2001, she encountered Ramon Canez, a 10-year-old who, rather than attending school, looked after six younger siblings, five under the age of 5, in the family's one room in a metal barracks that housed many families. His parents worked 12 hours a day, 6 days a week, dad as an electrician, mom as a street food vendor, and a 14-year-old brother was also in the labour force.

Try as they might, this family could not properly feed itself, provide medicines when the need arose, or attend to all the children's needs. Two-year-old Laurita was immobile thanks to rickets

that resulted from malnutrition. Five-month-old Beni, for whom Ramon did not know how to prepare a bottle, seemed a likely candidate for rickets as well. Beni had a bad cough and though the parents had spent the money for a prescribed cough medicine, fears that Ramon might overdose the baby prevented him from getting the medicine the prescribed three times a day.

Similar stories were common as Heymann and her team of researchers interviewed 55,000 families on 5 continents. Globalization, notes Heymann, has resulted in both a reduction in workers' ability to get decent pay and the provision of social services by the state. She asks what the impact is on working families. "Who will care for infants and toddlers? Who will care for six- and seven-year-olds when school is not in session in different countries? How will adults keep their jobs while caring for children who become sick with fever, diarrhea, or pneumonia? How can parents ensure that their young children receive essential preventive care, such as immunization, or receive breast milk, the best protection against the frequent malnutrition and illnesses accompanying infancy in poor nations around the world? Have the transformations helped to lift parents and children alike out of poverty around the world? If not, why not?" (11)

Most of what follows is unsurprisingly depressing. Poor families need to have every able-bodied adult and teenager in the work force. But they cannot afford private daycare and public daycare facilities are few and far between. The result is an international plague of children alone, and the sacrifice of kids' health, development, and education. Fifty-five percent of the families interviewed who had school-age children that they had to leave home alone indicated that an accident or emergency occurred at some point while

they were at work. In Brazil and Mexico, 29 percent of single-parent families with preschool children had at least one school-age child who was not attending school, a figure three times that of such households without a pre-schooler, a clear indication of family strategies for minding the youngest children. Some mothers take their youngest children to work, which has some advantages but creates many dangers for the child as well as difficulties for the mother in getting her work done and making a subsistence income. Employers often forbid the mothers from breast-feeding at work, which puts their babies at risk. When children are ill, working mothers often have no choice but to stay home, even though they cannot feed their families if they take any time off work at all. The overall situation of childhood poverty and neglect is especially precarious for children without parents. In Botswana, it is predicted that because of AIDS, 22 percent of all children under 15 will be orphans in 2010. Studies of Ugandan orphans suggest that half are depressed and 34 percent of Tanzanian orphans admitted to having contemplated suicide in the past year.

But Heymann points to positive signs amid the gloom in a book that may be the most eloquent book ever produced in making the case for universal, affordable childcare. In Vietnam, though the country has cut social spending since it introduced market-friendly reforms in the later 1980s, there are still vestiges of socialist commitment to working-class households. Figures for children being left home alone in Vietnam are only half of the figures in Mexico, though Vietnam is a poorer country, mainly because of an ambitious public daycare system. In Ho Chi Minh City, 57 percent of lower-income families and 62 percent of higher-income families had sent a child to a formal daycare facility as opposed to making use of older children,

relatives, or friends. In Otse, Botswana, a village of 3500 in Botswana, there is an after-school program called Dula Sentle for primary and secondary students with teachers who help with homework, and a playroom. Older children are relieved from having to care for younger siblings. "While developed to serve the stark needs of the increasing number of orphans created by AIDS, Dula Sentle could serve as a model for any after-school program." (66)

While Heymann's survey results are an indictment of neo-liberalism and the governments that follow neo-liberal policies, she focuses on a relatively small set of social policy reforms, primarily day-care, as noted, but also paid maternity leave which she notes is enshrined in the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women, to which 177 countries are signatories. But Heymann is well aware of the larger issues of economic power and the impact of major cuts in social insurance provision that generally now accompany efforts to promote the accumulation of capital. She cites the grim statistics for Russia in its rapid transition from communism to almost unmediated capitalism. Life expectancy for Russian men dropped from 64.9 to 57.7 from 1987 to 1994, and 74.3 to 71.2 for women, which it might be noted, is why some commentators have observed that Boris Yeltsin, the drunken buffoon, may have been responsible for more Russian deaths than Stalin. The government stopped paying social assistance, while subsidies for childcare, education, and health care were drastically cut. In 2002, 26 percent of the Russian people lived below a very modest poverty line of \$57 a month. Women's labour force participation had fallen from 74.7 percent in 1980 to 63.9 percent in 1999.

Overall, *Forgotten Families*, while it may stick to a few proposed reforms, suggests the bankruptcy of the entire project

of capitalist globalization which focuses purely on benefits for investors with no particular interest in impacts on working people and their families.

ALVIN FINKEL

Athabasca University

**Shareen Hertel, *Unexpected Power: Conflict and Change among Transnational Activists* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press 2006)**

AS PROCESSES OF economic globalization continue to raise concerns about the 'race to the bottom' in labour standards in both the North and South, international institutions such as the United Nations and International Labour Organization, as well as many labour rights NGOs, have identified the need to promote basic rights at work as a key challenge for the 21st century, and have sought to reframe labour rights as fundamental human rights. In this context, new strategies to organize for better standards have emerged in both the North and South, as unions, NGOs, community-based organizations, and other social movements seek to develop and advance international labour rights.

In this context, campaigns such as the anti-sweatshop movement of the 1990s emerged out of initiatives based in the North. By using a combination of strategies, including public-awareness tactics, government lobbying, and consumer boycotts, Northern activists have brought pressure to bear on large and powerful transnational corporations (TNCs) regarding labour standards abuses in their supply chains located in the South. Yet, as Shareen Hertel demonstrates in *Unexpected Power: Conflict and Change among Transnational Activists*, campaigns emerging from the North may be constructed in terms that fail to effectively engage with the principles



and priorities of activists in the Southern economies they seek to transform. Thus, activists in the South are often faced with not only labour rights abuses by TNCs, but also the challenge of re-framing campaigns emerging from the North in order to construct meaningful social and economic transformation. With the globalization of economic production as a backdrop, *Unexpected Power* is a study of the processes of contestation and change within campaigns designed to promote international labour rights. Focusing on two recent initiatives – a campaign against child labour in Bangladesh and a campaign against workplace-based pregnancy screening in Mexico – Hertel documents the efforts of activists in the South as they transform these Northern-initiated campaigns by integrating local principles and priorities.

In the early 1990s, activists and policymakers in the United States launched a campaign against child labour in Bangladesh. The campaign emerged in response to widespread reports of the use of child labour in the export-oriented garment industry that had become central to the Bangladeshi economy. US legislators threatened to enact formal trade sanctions against garment imports from Bangladesh. US-based NGOs and labour organizations launched campaigns to raise public awareness about goods produced with child labour, while consumer groups planned boycotts against such goods. Organized from the perspective of Northern consumers, activists, and policymakers, this campaign sought to put an end to the employment of children in Bangladesh's garment factories. Yet this campaign was resisted by activists in Bangladesh, who argued that the narrow focus on getting children out of factories would simply lead to their engagement with other much more harmful forms of subsistence, such as child prostitution, and would in no way address the root

causes that pushed children into wage labour. These activists pressured for a much wider definition of child rights, specifically re-framing the campaign around issues related to access to education and basic income. As result of this process of contestation, the focus of the initial child labour campaign indeed expanded. As Hertel documents, the efforts of Bangladeshi activists shifted the framing of the campaign away from minimum age of employment towards a focus on fundamental economic rights, prompted the development of a more expansive conceptualization of children's rights in international policy circles, and paved the way for the development of ILO Convention 182 on The Worst Form of Child Labour.

In 1995, Human Rights Watch (HRW), a New York-based NGO, launched a campaign against pregnancy screening that was taking place in the manufacturing plants along the Mexico-U.S. border. The campaign was initiated in response to the practice of employers either firing or refusing to hire pregnant women. This is a practice common in the border industries as a means to avoid payment of the three months of maternity leave required by Mexican labour law. After gathering testimony from hundreds of women affected by this practice, Human Rights Watch filed a complaint against Mexico under the labour standards side agreement of NAFTA. Shortly after, women's rights activists in Mexico City launched their own campaign against pregnancy screening. While the primary focus of the two campaigns was the same, Mexico City activists, like the activists in Bangladesh, constructed their campaign in much broader terms. First, they focused not only on women in the border region, but all those who were facing pregnancy screening from their employers. Second, they framed their campaign not simply in terms of discrimination in employment,

but sought to connect employment/economic rights to reproductive rights, and to direct attention to society's responsibility for human reproduction. Unlike the child labour campaign, however, Mexican activists did not seek to 'block' the HRW strategy; rather, these two campaigns proceeded alongside one another, with Mexican activists taking advantage of the political space opened by the HRW campaign and working at the grassroots, local level to expand the normative frame and action strategy. In terms of outcomes, while the HRW complaint to the NAFTA labour standards accord produced ministerial consultations and outreach sessions, these had little concrete impact at the workplace level. As for the campaign launched by Mexican activists, it succeeded in expanding the normative frame from one of employment discrimination to one of women's economic and reproductive rights. Yet, practices of pregnancy screening continue. Thus, according to Hertel, the legacy of these campaigns is still debated. Regardless, this case provides another example of the ways in which the actions of activists in the South may contribute to an expansion of the normative frame and strategic practices of campaigns originating from the North.

In addition to describing these campaigns, Hertel seeks to also develop new concepts aimed at explaining how campaigns are transformed through the framing strategies of movement activists. For example, she introduces the concept of 'blocking' to explain the ways Bangladeshi activists contested the anti-child labour frame of US campaigners. And she describes the Mexican activists' strategy of broadening the frame of the HRW campaign as involving 'backdoor moves.' Explanation is provided throughout the text as to how these are new ways of thinking about the construction of social movement campaigns. Yet, it is in this

theoretical intervention that the book shows its limitations, as these concepts fail to add theoretical clarity, and simply end up sounding like academic jargon. Nonetheless, with a research methodology well-grounded in a large number of interviews with campaign activists, the text clearly delivers on its primary point: that challenges to corporate globalization will be most effectively constructed when they emerge from the grassroots in the locales where they are meant to directly impact. It is a resource that will be of great interest to those teaching and conducting research in the areas of both social movements and international labour rights.

The struggle to advance international labour rights has emerged as a key site of transnational activist organizing in the contemporary global economy. Campaigns and efforts to improve and promote labour rights like those described in this book illustrate the ways in which transnationalism 'from below' has emerged to counter the power of TNCs and corporate-led globalization. By forcefully pointing to the ways in which activists in the South have transformed these campaigns, challenging not only the TNCs, but also the terms through which campaigns are constructed in the North, *Unexpected Power* provides an important contribution to our understandings of the true dynamics of grassroots organizing in the global economy.

MARK THOMAS  
York University

**Susanne Soederberg, *Global Governance in Question: Empire, Class and the New Common Sense in Managing North-South Relations***  
(Winnipeg: Arbeiter Ring Publishing 2006)

THE SUBTITLE that Marx gave to *Capital*, his magnum opus, was *A Critique of Political Economy*. In that work, Marx seized the fundamental categories of bourgeois political economy – land, labour, capital, wages, rents, profits and commodities – and subjected them to a penetrating analytical critique. Marx argued that these bourgeois concepts were in fact ahistorical abstractions. As such, when they were deployed in social analysis, they obscured as much as they illuminated. Bourgeois political economy, constructed uncritically upon these concepts was necessarily silent on some of the fundamental features of capitalism, such as the social relations that stamp the structure of capitalist society and the nature of capitalist exploitation.

In the volume under review, Susanne Soederberg takes a similar methodological approach, and does for the concept of global governance what Marx did for the bourgeois conceptualization of capital and the other categories of classical political economy. Marx's critique of political economy finds a modern-day parallel in Soederberg's critique of the mainstream, conventional understanding and analysis of global governance. Specifically, the critique lays bare the hierarchical class relations and power structure that, for Soederberg, actually constitute the apparatus of global governance. Furthermore, the critique pointedly identifies the ideological and legitimating services that the mainstream approach implicitly provides.

The book begins with a presentation of the conventional understanding of global governance. For Soederberg, this per-

spective is best represented by the 1995 "highly influential" (1) report issued by the Commission on Global Governance (CGG). The CGG, established in 1992, evolved out of a set of earlier commissions and initiatives that includes the Brandt Commission on International Development, the Palme Commission on Disarmament and Security, the Brundtland Commission on Environment and Development, Nyerere's South Commission, and the Stockholm Initiative on Global Security and Governance, all of which confronted emerging issues of international concern and policy.

The CGG's own definition of governance, quoted by Soederberg, is given as follows: it is "the sum of the many ways individuals and institutions, public and private, manage their common affairs. It is a continuing process through which conflicting or diverse interests may be accommodated and co-operative action may be taken." (1) Soederberg's particular focus is global *economic* governance, but she uses the CGG definition as a point of departure. In developing her critique, Soederberg argues that the mainstream understanding of global governance is in fact underpinned by a view of globalization that attributes this phenomenon primarily to exogenous factors, particularly technological innovation; a view of civil society that abstracts from the structured power relations that define the character of that society; and a paternalistic view of international economic development that abstracts from the historical effects of colonialism and imperialism, but which promotes capitalism as "the only desirable form of social organization." (31)

Soederberg rejects these conventional underpinnings and draws instead upon core propositions of radical political economy. This tradition demands explicit recognition of the social relations that define capitalist society, capitalism's inherent tendency to produce economic

crises, and the economic restructuring that such crises induce; as well as the role of the state in this restructuring process. In conjunction with these, the particular nature of contemporary US imperialism is essential to understand the current functioning of international capitalism. This foundational shift produces an effective transformation of the concept of global governance. As a result, global governance can now be "understood as a moment of global capitalism, with all its underlying contradictions and class conflicts." (51)

The specific understanding of global governance developed in this book is, however, dependent upon Soederberg's particular theoretical stance concerning each of these underlying elements. This is especially relevant in regard to the issues related to economic crises under capitalism. For example, while there is widespread agreement within the political economy tradition that capitalism possesses an inherent tendency towards crisis, there is decidedly less agreement on what the forces generating that tendency actually are. Soederberg, drawing upon the work of David Harvey, adheres to the position that crisis is essentially a crisis of overaccumulation, understood as a lack of profitable investment opportunities. Following Harvey, resolution of the crisis involves some spatio-temporal fix, and in the neo-liberal era, that fix is achieved to a significant degree through accumulation by dispossession. Harvey has his critics though, and adherents of alternative theories of economic crisis will need to make their own emendations and qualifications to Soederberg's analysis of global governance.

Harvey's influence, along with that of Leo Panitch and Sam Gindin, is also prominent in Soederberg's position on the nature of the state and American imperialism. On the nature of the state, Soederberg, following Panitch, argues that the state seeks both to recreate the

conditions of its own power while simultaneously addressing the crisis tendencies of capitalism. American imperialism is understood as a set of "contradictory and international class-led strategies aimed at the wider restructuring of the social relations of capitalism." (45) These particular perspectives are well established in the global political economy literature, but competing views of the state and imperialism remain extant. Soederberg virtually ignores these debates, and it would be interesting to see what the implications for our understanding of global governance would be if alternative radical approaches to crisis theory and the theory of the state were developed and deployed in a manner analogous to the project undertaken here.

The effectiveness of Soederberg's critical reconstruction of global governance is put to the test in the form of three applications. These address, respectively, the issues of corporate social responsibility, sovereign default, the structure of transnational debt, and, finally, development assistance in the form of the US's Millennium Challenge Account. The analysis here is rich and illuminating, and Soederberg's reconstruction proves to be quite robust. The specific character of global governance as it pertains to each of these issues is effectively situated in its historic context as the imperatives of economic restructuring are constrained by and often clash with the challenge of maintaining the legitimacy of capitalist power and imperial rule. The issue of corporate social responsibility, for example, was ostensibly the rationale for the United Nations' launch of the Global Compact (GC) in 2000. Soederberg convincingly argues that this is in fact the modern-day counterpart to the UN's 1974 Code of Conduct for Transnational Corporate Activity in the South. Both were arrangements intended to normalize and legitimize the power of transnational

corporations in the South, but the GC is a specific form incidental to contemporary neo-liberalism, and, as such, is structured to distance capital and trans-national corporations from the state and state-based regulatory apparatuses. The chapters on managing Third World debt and international development assistance follow a similar format, and the overarching theme is that neo-liberal versions of the institutional arrangements for addressing debt and development are the outcomes of the larger, ever-evolving struggles surrounding the capitalist accumulation and legitimation processes.

The demands placed upon social scientists endeavouring to fully comprehend the ongoing interplay between political and economic forces are not eased by the institutionalized demarcation of the various disciplines. The division between economics and political science is a case in point, and Soederberg's strengths manifest themselves more effectively in the latter sphere rather than the former. As a result, economists are not likely to glean much from those parts of the book where the economic analysis itself is given centre stage. An example is the somewhat casual description and explanation, presented in Chapter 5, of US economic growth from the 1990s into the new millennium. Soederberg attributes the growth in the 1990s primarily to "a speculative bubble in the stock market," (138) a proposition which is highly debatable given the restructuring and successful war waged by capital against American workers throughout the 1980s and 1990s. The twin deficits which have marked the US macroeconomy in recent years are noted by Soederberg. She repeats the conventional wisdom that they pose a potentially huge risk to the global economy, but a deeper analysis of the issue is not offered. In Chapter 4, a table of Global Current Account Balances, expressed as a percentage of GDP,

is provided. Soederberg refers to the table and claims that it "confirms ... [that] ... capitalism does not lead to economic prosperity and equality." (102) This argument, however, is wholly unpersuasive. A connection between changes in current account balances and economic prosperity and equality, on its own, is spurious.

Overall, the economic analysis in the book is rather perfunctory. Fortunately, it does not undermine the strength of Soederberg's conceptual framework or the power of her exposition of global governance as it operates in the specific arenas identified above. This is a welcome and important contribution to global political economy.

FLETCHER BARAGAR  
University of Manitoba

**Mark Leier, *Bakunin: The Creative Passion*** (New York: St Martin's Press 2006)

THIS IS A COMPLEX, awkwardly structured work, with some strengths and some failings. Mark Leier begins with a good point: the anti-globalization movement of the 1990s has re-kindled an interest in anarchism. Often, unfortunately, this takes the form of sloppy, hostile media stereotypes produced by the type of "instant expert" (xi) who claimed to see similarities between Bakunin and Osama Bin Laden in the aftermath of 9/11. Leier proposes a more challenging, more accurate portrayal of anarchism, more relevant to the political culture of the anti-globalization activists. So far, so good. However, the next step is more worrying: Leier sets out to make such connections through a new political biography of Michael Bakunin.

Why Bakunin? One could make strong cases that, among the classical anarchist thinkers, Godwin, Stirner, and Kropotkin were probably more original, more

coherent, and more interesting thinkers. Bakunin's importance is more contingent: he was the man who was in the right place (sometimes the wrong place) at the right time. He was the figure who represented the anti-authoritarian forces in the First International against Marx's embryonic attempts to create a centralized political organization. Intellectually, Bakunin's thought was varied and constantly changing: he wrote some fine polemical pieces, and was certainly capable of sharp, perceptive, pointed criticisms of political authorities, economic despotism, and clerical power. But he was also clearly a nineteenth-century thinker, often influenced by ideas of nationhood and ethnicity, with only partial awareness of ecological issues or sexual politics, and a curious, incoherent attitude to the legacy of Enlightenment rationalism. Why does Leier propose this figure as the means by which to connect the anarchisms of the nineteenth and twenty-first centuries?

In practice, this book dissolves into a number of strands. Leier produces some sharp, clear chapters on Bakunin's early life. In these sections he opens a dialogue with hostile critics who have reduced Bakunin's political passions to a sexual dysfunction, and debates such issues in a sensitive, convincing, and comprehensible manner. Leier is to be given credit for his constant wish to make nineteenth-century political and social issues relevant and comprehensible to the non-specialist. However, in the course of the book, this imperative comes to divert attention from the structure and the substance of the arguments.

Within chapters one and two the strands of Leier's writing are carefully pulled together. But problems begin to emerge. On pp.16–17 there is an attempt to summarize the political issues of the French Revolution in one paragraph, reducing it to a contest between, on the

one hand, moderates and, on the other, radicals, workers, and peasants. This is simplistic: it ignores, for example, the massive counter-revolutionary movements supported by peasants, the independent petit-bourgeois radicalism of the *sans-culottes* and the patriarchal values of many Jacobin radicals. The French Revolution is simply too complex an event to be reduced to a fight between the good guys and the bad guys. Possibly a skilled writer could weave such political dimensions into an analysis of a single person's itinerary: Leier is not such a person. Simplistic, misleading, one-paragraph summaries of complex social and political issues disrupt the narrative and, in the long run, make this a weaker work. In particular, one notes that Leier rarely refers to recent critical works on these episodes. The assumption seems to be that the history of this period is obvious or easy, and therefore has no reason to be debated. One unfortunate result of this attitude is that, in this book, the workers and peasants remain as anonymous masses on whom history is written. In fact, Leier's bibliography is quite short. He demonstrates that he has carefully studied Bakunin's own works, some relevant works by other nineteenth-century thinkers, and some of the many works concerning Bakunin's thinking. What he clearly has not done is to consider in any depth the historical and socio-political context in which Bakunin developed.

When Leier sticks to the main topic, Bakunin, his writing is generally clear and perceptive. Leier is a competent guide to Bakunin's awkward political development, from Hegelianism, through nationalist-tinged Republicanism, to worker-based revolutionism, and finally to anarchism. However, there is little here which is original. While Leier is effective when debating Bakunin's psychology and biography, he is less impressive as a political analyst.



What of Leier's main project: to connect Bakunin to the anti-globalization movement? This has to be seen as one of the book's great failings. Instead of drawing up a substantial analysis of political themes (which would have also involved interrogating, critically, the anti-globalization movement itself), Leier makes some silly, even patronizing, gestures. In an effort to help – presumably – young, ignorant, and American anti-globalization activists, Leier tells us that Hegel had an accent like “Jed Clampett,” (72) that Bakunin criticized empiricists who adopted the “Joe Friday school of history,” (84) and that Stirner's true character is revealed by his real name (Johann Kasper Schmidt – 97). This tendency reaches a ridiculous level on p.151. One point which emerges – incidentally – from this work relates to the dreadful conditions of Tsarist prisons. This book includes a number of photos: the difference between the upright, smart young man of the 1840s and the haggard wreck, with horrible sunken cheekbones, of the 1860s is striking. Leier points out that Bakunin suffered from scurvy while in prison. How does he explain this point? “Today one hears the word usually in pseudo-pirate patois, that is to say, in growled expressions like, ‘Avast there, ye scurvy dogs!’ “ (151) Does anyone really believe that this type of reference will help a reader better understand a relatively important point?

The idea of a work that will connect nineteenth-century and twenty-first century anarchism is a good one. Whether this can best be done through a biographical work is open to question. What is clear is that this work clearly fails in its prime function. While Leier does present some sensitive and well-focused passages concerning Bakunin's biography, he adds nothing new to the debate concerning Bakunin's thinking.

SHARIF GEMIE

University of Glamorgan

**Tom Zaniello, *The Cinema of Globalization: A Guide to Films About the New Economic Order*** (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press 2007)

FILM GUIDES ARE a curious form of literary text. They require a great deal of writing because they often cover substantial amounts of material and yet they do not require the creation of a sustained argument like a monograph. Metaphorically, they are more like postcards rather than letters – brief statements that are meant to encapsulate a specific moment or express a mood. In the case of film guides the text is meant to provide an assessment of the worth of the films that are also described. Description and assessment are the two essentials because users of guides are looking for short bursts of information to help them decide about a particular film.

Tom Zaniello is an academic at Northern Kentucky University and an Adjunct Professor with the National Labor College's George Meany Center for Labor Studies. Among other books, he has published a previous guide titled *Riffraff: An Expanded Guide to Films about Labor*, which, I suspect, has contributed content to this new book.

He is an educator and this book is meant to help other educators discover films that help them discuss issues of globalization and labour with students of the subject. While the goal is worthy, the key question concerns Zaniello's success or failure in its pursuit.

The book begins with an introduction that outlines the terminology and issues associated with globalization and provides a list of recommended readings. It offers two ways of accessing the films – by title or by topic/ key term. The films are listed in alphabetical order with topic areas underneath. There is a topic index at the back of the book, which allows one to pick a film or films under the topic area and then return to the main text alpha-

betically under the film's title to access its description and assessment. There are suggested readings associated with each film. The mechanics of searching through the material work well in general, though films on the same topic can be spread throughout the book, which means that flipping through the book to compare commentaries on each film can be irritating. Sticky notes help. The commentaries themselves range in length from half a page to a full page per film with text that uses small script. So there is sufficient detail to imagine the film's content and approach. The technical details on the film's length, director, and distributor are also available for each film.

There are two hundred films covered in the guide, including animation, documentary, and feature films from the 1970s to the present day. As a reference work the book covers the field well, but it is aimed toward an American market with US distributors and a US orientation and approach. What do I mean by "US orientation and approach?" Under the topic of "Canada" there are 3 entries out of 201! In contrast Wal-Mart gets 17 entries because it is an important socioeconomic phenomenon in the US, more entries than "oil" or "outsourcing." The recommended readings, when taken from newspapers, are usually American. This does not mean that Latin America, Asia, Europe, and Africa don't get coverage. They do. It means that even for an internationally oriented guide, it is still predominantly American in its focus and viewpoint. However, Zaniello should be complimented on his serious efforts to include a wide range of titles from different national film cultures.

What about the writing itself? The publicity blurb for the book describes the writing as "smart, concise, and funny." I wouldn't go quite that far. Judge for yourself. For example, on the topic of neocolonialism, he offers the following description

of a Belgium/Benin co-production in French titled *Divine Carcasse* (1998) that uses the fate of an imported Peugeot that is turned into a fetish as an allegory of the neocolonial relationship: "Secondhand neocolonialism becomes first-class colonized semideity: the perennial struggle in African films between modernizing forces and cultural traditions is resolved in a curious way. As a car the Peugeot works fitfully; as a divinity it works superbly. As a former colony Benin must turn shadows of things into realities."

These rather cryptic phrases and sentences are insightful, but they are often left as "shadows of things" for readers rather than realities. The smartness, conciseness, and laughter may belong more to the films. Even so, Zaniello is a lively writer with his own idiosyncratic style, who comes across as someone engaged in his topic. He likes films and this shows.

He has produced a valuable guide that offers a wide selection of material for use in labour studies courses. It is doubtful that people who work in this field would know even half the films he discusses. And for those who know only what comes across the big screen from time to time, it is a revelation. So here is something of value. The topic is important, the approaches to it are varied, the subject areas he has identified are extensive, and he has been able to muster a valuable multinational commentary on globalization. He has met his goal. On the other hand, the users of the guide, if they were to access the majority of the films available, would have several years of viewing ahead of them, which is overwhelming. But I am sure that Zaniello's generous listing of films is meant to encourage disciplined selectivity in consumption. A guide is not something one consumes from beginning to end; one dips into it with specific purposes in mind.

GEORGE MELNYK  
University of Calgary

Irena R. Makaryk and Joseph G. Price, eds., *Shakespeare in the Worlds of Communism and Socialism* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 2006)

MARXISTS ARE natural taxonomists, and to impose order on its disparate materials the editors of this book use four more or less chronological sections covering the Soviet period from 1917 to the Second World War, the Second World War to the 1990s, the satellite states and China, and lastly a section that puts Cuba in with a pair of essays reflecting upon critical practice. Most of the essays are histories of theatre practitioners using Shakespeare productions to critique the prevailing regimes. When Socialist Realism was declared the only permissible form in 1934, Shakespeare was simultaneously affirmed as a model writer, having previously been rather a fought-over figure whom some dismissed as merely a lackey of the English aristocracy and others praised as an early humanist progressive. Even once that question was settled (Shakespeare was officially progressive), instructions from Moscow were attenuated by the vast distances of the new empire and tempered by local traditions. Shakespeare was most often adapted in the peripheral theatres and productions could at once affirm and subvert the official line. The theatre's essential unrepeatability, compared to celluloid's unchangeability, worried the Communist Party, for it undermined control. Despite this, in the 1930s more theatre productions of Shakespeare were mounted in the USSR than in Great Britain and America combined.

As Arkady Ostrovsky points out (56–83), putting Shakespeare to ideological purposes did not necessarily make for bad theatre, especially if the greatest Russian stage talents such as Konstantin Stanislavsky and Vsevolod Meyerhold were involved. Perhaps surprisingly, “the Soviet culture of the 1930s saw itself as

a direct heir of the Renaissance.” (61) But not all plays were equal. The ‘warm’ Mediterranean plays were preferred to the ‘cold’ northern ones, and tragedies of accident were preferred to conflicts of innate guiltiness. *Hamlet* and *Macbeth* were thus especially unsuited to the official optimism about the human spirit. *Romeo and Juliet* would be perfect if only (as was proposed for one production) the ending were changed to let the lovers survive. Whereas in the 1920s directors attempted to adjust the classics to the present situation, by the 1930s what mattered was faithfulness to the original. A director like Meyerhold stamping his identity on a production was suspect, and in Leningrad the director Sergei Radlov earned favour with the party by attacking Meyerhold's hubris.

For the Moscow State Jewish Theatre (GOSJET) Les Kurbas prepared to direct Solomon Mikhoels as Lear in 1933, and they agreed that he learns to feel what the suffering masses feel. Kurbas was arrested before the opening, and as his replacement Radlov imposed an interpretation in which Lear's great mistake was to neglect the driving forces of history. To Mikhoels this seemed shallow didacticism but Radlov got his interpretation written into the program: Lear “pitted himself against the objective principle of the development of society and the historically progressive unification of England.” (77) In performance, however, Mikhoels got his way and presented “a philosophical tragedy of mistaken thought,” (77) an attempt to abjure everything (crown and family ties) in an act of free will. Thus Lear flies into a rage at Cordelia not because he cannot tell the difference between sincerity and flattery, but because by not playing along with Lear's game, or experiment, of giving everything away for mere words, she was imposing her free will on the situation; in any other situation this father would have admired his daughter's independent spirit.

Laurence Senelick surveys Soviet responses to *The Taming of the Shrew* (84–103), which had become a staple of the nineteenth-century Russian stage. The aesthetic at the Second Studio of the Moscow Art Theatre of the 1920s was a proto-Brechtianism that highlighted the fact that the actors were playing roles, for which *Shrew* was especially suited because only the Sly induction is ‘real’: the rest of the play is avowedly a performance put on to entertain him. Petrucio’s traditional macho whipcracking was omitted to make this a battle of minds not bodies. Early 1920s productions of *Shrew* could emphasize the carnival, the collective, the joy of actors free from directorial control. Under Socialist Realism the triumph of heroes breaking away from old ways became a force of social transformation, so long as the production made clear the state of the class war in the play. Shakespeare’s comedic subject matter was thus amenable to the new doctrines, but Elizabethan performance practices were not: in place of its stylized conventions, realism was now demanded. In this new context, *Shrew* could be read as laying bare the hypocrisy and sexual bondage of conventional bourgeois marriage, which the emergent Soviet feminist movement was already challenging.

In telling this vast history, ironies abound. While left-wing Shakespearians in the West looked to radical theatrical forms and mocked liberal claims about Shakespeare’s humanism and realism, in socialist countries – and especially in China, as Xiao Yang Zhang shows (270–282) – these liberal qualities were officially Shakespeare’s chief virtues and experiments with form were mocked as bourgeois decadence. Hollywood learned from Broadway the realistic acting practices of Stanislavsky (via the Actors’ Studio and Lee Strasberg) just when the state-controlled Soviet and Chinese the-

atres were insisting on them too. In some ways, though, the official communist line was genuinely progressive. Although Shuhua Weng (283–302) dismisses it as an illusion, the Chinese Marxist critics who condemned the sexism in Shakespeare’s writing do seem to have been ahead of the Western feminists.

Necessarily selective even at 450 pages, the essayists repeatedly apologize for having to condense the history of, say, Shakespeare in Latvia (38–55), or *Hamlet* on the East German stage (177–204). Inevitably, the collapse of 1989–91 looms over the collection. Robert Weimann (328–48) describes his input to a 1977 production of *Hamlet* in which the famous advice to the players was conveyed as an elitist prig lecturing to real actors about their craft. This challenged the valorizing of the classical script and the Stanislavskian methods which, in Weimann’s diagnosis, were symptoms of the post-war East German theatre’s desperation to forget its own experiments in form before the war. Once the Western post-structuralist critics (he names John Drakakis, Graham Holderness, Jean Howard, and others) hit the East German Shakespeare conference circuit in the mid-1980s, everything started to change and these facts could be acknowledged.

The final essay is Sharon O’Dair’s account of Marxist thinking in North American criticism since 1980 (349–73). O’Dair rejects the argument of Jean Howard and Scott Cutler Shershow (*Marxist Shakespeares*, 2001) that Marx’s prediction of increasing proletarian immiseration as the bourgeoisie became fewer and richer failed to materialize only because organized labour wrested concessions from the bourgeoisie. O’Dair objects that organized labour is inherently anti-Marxist because workers identifying with others of their own trade (and even with their trade’s bosses) cannot see the

big economic picture. Unions, moreover, have tended to be deeply sexist and racist, which is hardly compatible with emancipatory politics. O'Dair might have considered, if only to dismiss, the grim possibility that the predicted immiseration has occurred, but largely out of sight in the southern hemisphere.

GABRIEL EGAN

Loughborough University

**David Harvey, *Spaces of Global Capitalism: Towards A Theory of Uneven Geographical Development*** (London: Verso 2006)

DAVID HARVEY IS, arguably, the geographer who has done the most to spatialize Marx over the past four decades, showing how the way in which economic landscapes are made under capitalism is not something which is contingent to the accumulation process but is, rather, central to it. There is, he argues, a dialectic between capitalism's geography and its social organization: how capitalism functions as a social system shapes the economic landscapes produced under it, whilst the form which landscapes take shapes the possibility for accumulation. Accumulation can only occur, for example, if capitalists can access raw materials, labour, and markets, all of which requires a certain spatial configuration of the economic landscape (what Harvey has called a "spatial fix"). *Spaces of Global Capitalism*, then, represents a brief overview of several key arguments along this line of thinking and emerged out of an invitation to Harvey to give the Eighth Hettner Lecture at the University of Heidelberg in 2004. The book itself is in three main sections, following a brief introduction by two members of the invitation committee. The first two chapters are written versions of public lectures Harvey gave

at Heidelberg, whilst the third emerges from a seminar conducted with graduate students from Heidelberg and several other European and US universities.

The first chapter – "Neo-liberalism and the restoration of class power" – focuses on the contemporary period and explores what the neo-liberal turn means for how the planet's economic geographies are being remade. Beginning with an analysis of US foreign policy towards Iraq, which US neo-cons view as a massive laboratory for trying out all sorts of new policy initiatives (like the much-vaunted "flat tax," of which they are much enamoured), together with a recounting of how other countries in the Global South were used for similar such experimentation (witness Chile after 1973, with the Chicago Boys' tinkering), Harvey proceeds to explore how neo-liberalism has served to transfer massive amounts of wealth from the Global South to the Global North, especially the US. For instance, he shows how the debt crisis which began with Mexico defaulting on its loans in 1982 has allowed the International Monetary Fund (whose voting structure is such that the US has virtual veto power over Fund actions) to impose structural adjustment programs across the Global South which transfer wealth (in the form of interest payments) geographically from South to North. Although there are certainly contradictions here – many US neo-cons have decried the growth of "illegal" migration from Mexico in the past twenty years, even as they have pushed the financial policies which have exacerbated it – Harvey shows how the various strands of economic policy furthered in the US and UK in the 1980s had emerged as a fairly well-coordinated "Washington Consensus" by the mid-1990s. Although he concludes that, as a strategy for resolving problems of low accumulation rates globally and stimulating economic growth in the past

two decades, neo-liberalism has been a dismal failure, it has had two important outcomes: first, it has made geographically uneven development much more volatile, thereby permitting a small number of territories to grow spectacularly (at least for a short time) even as others have lagged; second, it has been a huge success for the upper classes, allowing them to restore some of the class power they lost under the Fordist compromise of the mid-20th century. Neo-liberalism, in other words, has resulted in both a social redistribution of power and wealth (from workers to capitalists) and a geographical one (from the Global South to the Global North and from working-class neighbourhoods to centres of corporate power and conspicuous consumption).

Having tangentially introduced the theme of geographical restructuring associated with neo-liberalism, in the second chapter – “Notes towards a theory of uneven geographical development” – Harvey outlines in greater detail the argument that the process of accumulation and the producing of capitalism’s unevenly developed geography are intimately interconnected. Specifically, he argues that space must be seen not simply as a container nor as a stage for social action but as an active moment within any social process. Thus, at a most basic level, space is something to be crossed, such that the friction of distance plays a forceful role in shaping how labour markets operate and whether producers can get goods like perishable fruit or flowers to market. More fundamentally the way in which the economic landscape is spatially constituted can both enable and constrain the accumulation process – an inability to access labour spatially means capitalists cannot secure surplus value, no matter how exploitable (and hence potentially profit-making) such labour may be, whereas the construction of new highways “opens up,” both metaphori-

cally and literally, new arenas for capitalist exploitation. In particular, Harvey is keen to show that because we are all spatially embedded in our everyday lives, we must view capitalism through a historical-geographical materialist lens. This means that the accumulation process cannot be seen as somehow separate from what Habermas and others have termed “the lifeworld,” for even when not directly generating surplus value, workers are embroiled in myriad capitalistic relationships which are themselves shaped by the planet’s unevenly developed economic geography. Hence workers consume the products of far-off commodity production yet must live sufficiently close to their place of employment to be able to access it on a daily basis, meaning they are geographically connected to their workplaces even as they are locationally separate from them.

The book’s third chapter – “Space as a key word” – plays off Raymond Williams’ famous book *Keywords*, with Harvey exploring the meanings of the word Space in the kinds of detail which Williams devoted to words like Nature (as Harvey notes, Space is not a keyword which Williams addresses, a fact that perhaps testifies to the lack of attention historically paid it by social theorists). To begin with, Harvey explores how different traditions have conceptualized space, from space as an absolute “thing” which can exist separately from matter (i.e., space as “container” of social objects – think Newton) to space as relative (i.e., the standpoint of the observer plays an important role in shaping one’s view of the world – think Einstein) to space as relational (i.e., processes and objects do not occur/ exist in space but define their own spatial frames through their relationships with one another – think Leibniz). Harvey then provides an overview whereby these different perspectives can be seen to intersect, giving us a more



nuanced understanding of capitalism's geography – a piece of private property is defined in absolute terms by its legally-inscribed boundaries, it may be seen as being close or far (depending upon the location of a particular individual), with all the attendant social consequences thereof (should that individual purchase it or not?), and its value will be partially determined by what lies around it (golf course or garbage dump?). Each of these elements, in turn, has significant implications for the circulation of value through the landscape – a piece of property's absolute size will shape what can be done on it, while its relative distance will shape how much space must be crossed to access it (thereby involving variable transportation costs) and its price will shape its use.

For those who are familiar with Harvey's large opus of work, the book does not cover too much new ground, though it does serve as a good and highly readable overview of theorizing the imbrication of space and society, even if it tends to focus upon capital's role in shaping economic landscapes to the exclusion of how workers do so (a tendency critiqued by labour geographers in the past decade or so). For those who have never before pondered matters such as the "socio-spatial dialectic" or the differences between absolute, relative, and relational space, however, this book will provide a ready means to get up to speed fairly easily. It will also challenge them to think seriously about how a-spatial theorizing is simply insufficient to understand the ever-changing world around us.

ANDREW HEROD  
University of Georgia