

BOOK REVIEWS

Rick Baldoz, Charles Koeber, and Philip Kraft. *The Critical Study of Work: Labor, Technology, and Global Production.* Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 2001. vii + 285 pp. \$79.50 cloth; \$27.50 paper.

I read Harry Braverman's seminal *Labor and Monopoly Capital* shortly after it came out in 1974. I eagerly absorbed his account of how capitalists used technology to strip skill from workers, in order to cheapen labor and heighten managerial control over the work process. I read with interest how proprietors took the deskilling model developed in a blue-collar setting and extended it to clerical and service jobs, increasingly wiping out distinctions in the workforce.

Not long afterward, I got a job as a file clerk in the medical records department of a large hospital. I held that job and a medical records job at another hospital for five years in total. In both jobs, I saw the early stages of computerization of medical records tracking. Computerization removed the least skilled tasks, printing out the tracking slips and solving routine tracking problems—leaving more complex problems requiring the knowledge of experienced clerks. My co-workers and I found any number of ways to resist management's attempts to control us: sneaking off while delivering or searching for records, pilfering office supplies, hiding stacks of lab results in the shelves instead of pasting them in the records. At the same time, management enlisted our stubborn craft pride in our medical records knowledge to motivate us. Especially at the second hospital I worked, disputes frequently erupted across ethnic and gender lines (especially between Filipinos, African Americans, and Chinese, the three largest groups). I fancied myself a keen observer of the workplace, but it did not occur to me until many years later that my own work experience bore little resemblance to Braverman's story of spreading management control, deskilling, and workforce homogenization.

In this book, Baldoz, Koeber, and Kraft bring together the work of a variety of scholars wrestling with Braverman's legacy—and with the broader set of inquiries about work that his book set in motion. Braverman's name does not appear until halfway through the introduction, but the book's pedigree is clear. It originated in a 1998 State University of New York-Binghamton conference looking at “Work, Difference and Social Change: Two Decades after Braverman's *Labor and Monopoly Capital.*” That conference in turn echoed a 1978 Binghamton conference on the labor process. Somewhat remarkably, authors of four of the twelve substantive book chapters presented at the 1978 conference as well.

For the most part, the papers address four critiques of Braverman's analysis—critiques that resonate with my own hospital work experience as well. First, Braverman anchored his analysis in the experience of white, male craft workers in the United States. Baldoz, Koeber, and Kraft have chosen papers that broad-

en the field of vision to take in varied jobs, diverse groups of workers, and differences between groups of workers. Contributors examine workplaces in Brazil, Canada, India, Ireland, South Africa, Taiwan, and the former Soviet Union, as well as the United States. Chapters on service workers (domestics, cosmetics salespeople, and cashiers) and professional/technical workers (limited to information technology) outnumber those devoted to blue-collar workers. Perhaps most importantly, a number of the authors scrutinize *differences* among workers: Michael Burawoy compares machinists under capitalism and socialism, Evelyn Nakano Glenn contrasts the experiences of white women and women of color in providing reproductive labor, Pei-Chia Lan counterposes male and female cosmetics salespeople.

A second critique of Braverman challenges his narrative in which capitalist coercion (direct or via the market) is the driving force in change at work. Burawoy (1979) and others enriched this account by observing the importance of hegemony and worker consent in many production settings. Other researchers highlighted the importance of varied forms of worker resistance. This volume picks up both threads. Fascinating articles detail the “individual, silent resistance” of supermarket cashiers, the forging of team spirit among software programmers, and the conflict resolution strategies of South African shop stewards, who seek to limit both management abuses and spontaneous worker militancy. Still, I would have liked to see more exploration of the subtleties of control and resistance. Particularly underexamined here is the ambivalent role of supervisors and middle managers—in theory capital’s front-line enforcers, but in practice often torn between conflicting loyalties to management and to their own workforce.

Another Braverman blind spot is the position of workers who are expected to produce meanings and symbolic values, not just material goods and services. Discussion of this type of labor dates back at least to C. Wright Mills (1951), well before Braverman wrote. But feminist and postmodernist scholars have focused renewed attention on service work as theatrical performance, and in this volume the notion surfaces in Pei-Chia Lan’s analysis of cosmetics sales and Angelo Soares’s study of cashiers. Both draw on the work of Michel Foucault, but I find Soares’s observations of how cashiers build resistance into emotional labor far more compelling than Lan’s sometimes tortured attempts to subsume all aspects of work into control of the salesperson’s body (she even refers to “the interior body, like emotions, feelings, and even values and beliefs” [96]).

Finally, many have criticized Braverman for his assertion of the inexorability of deskilling. Case studies have shown that capitalist restructuring of the work process is as likely to create higher-skilled jobs as to deskill, and aggregate studies show that on the whole skill levels and skill requirements have mounted, at least in the United States. Interestingly, Baldoz, Koeber, and Kraft’s volume pays little attention to this issue. The reason is that Braverman essentially lost this argument (posthumously) in the 1980s. Scholars working in Braverman’s tradition have largely abandoned the deskilling claim, and instead have focused—as this volume does—on issues of control over the work process.

The range and sweep of the articles in this book is admirable. Each chapter brings useful insight about a particular corner or dimension of the world of work. The main shortcoming, as with many edited volumes, is the absence of a coherent framework uniting the various contributions. Braverman's work—like Marx's for that matter—for all its limitations, boldly puts forward a general theory of work under contemporary capitalism. *The Critical Study of Work* offers little along these lines. Baldoz, Koeber, and Kraft, in their introduction, ably capture the scope of the volume, but do not attempt to identify regularities or key debates across the chapters. Attempts at comprehensiveness within the chapters themselves tend to have the feel of a proliferation of special cases. For instance, Burawoy seems to have found a new form of employer hegemony or despotism at every plant at which he worked; in her paper on printed circuit board manufacturing in Silicon Valley Jennifer Chun introduces yet another form of employer despotism, with two variants.

Still, a new general theory of the capitalist labor process is a tall order for a conference volume. The empirical findings, concepts, and analyses in these papers make crucial contributions toward such a general understanding, while shining spotlights onto workplaces, processes, and conflicts that have not been adequately studied. Based on this book, the critical study of work is alive and well.

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Gerassimos Moschonas, *In The Name of Social Democracy: The Great Transformation, 1945 to the Present*. London: Verso, 2002. 230 pp. \$70.00 cloth; \$22.00 paper.

This book is one of the most important contributions to the history of the post-war European left to be published in the last two dozen years. The French educated Greek political scientist furnishes a study that is truly groundbreaking. For, by analyzing the most recent major paradigm shift occurring within European social democracy, Moschonas provides an explanation for what many readers of *International Labor and Working Class History* (ILWCH) have felt and experienced for quite some time, i.e. the fact that “today’s social democracy has opted not simply for another strategy, but for another identity” (232). “Social democracy has ceased to be an effective force for even the moderate promotion of equality and working-class influence, particularly trade-union influence” (291). Or, more precisely yet: “Social democracy has (. . .) been transformed from a political force for the moderate promotion of equality within a socio-economic system that is by definition inegalitarian, into a force for the moderate promotion of inequality in the face of forces that are even more inegalitarian” (293). In sum, European social democracy has become part and parcel of the neoliberal “consensus.”

Many observers, of course, have promoted such a thesis in the recent past. But what makes this study stand head and shoulders above much of the rest is Moschonas' refusal once again merely to state the obvious. Instead, he presents a detailed, empirical, fact-filled, statistics-driven, penetrating analysis of the latest (and final?) mutation of European social democracy into an "institutional interest group, a 'service' organisation," (251) where "a 'managerial' culture— [Moschonas is] tempted to say: a managerial *pensée unique*—is solidly entrenched" (240). It is the painstaking accumulation of evidence, coupled with incisive analytical conclusions strewn throughout this hefty volume, which will leave few readers unaffected.

Moschonas consciously chooses to focus his attention on the northern tier of European states, the classic heartland of social democracy. Scandinavia, Austria, Germany and the Netherlands form the core group of countries that serve as his source base. But frequent excursions to the United Kingdom and France broaden his geographic scope, and indeed southern European social democracy is never far from his attention. In his view, Mediterranean socialism from Athens to Lisbon already anticipated the great transformation of the northern European states some time earlier. Given the centrality of northern European social democracy for an understanding of this phenomenon, however, Moschonas wisely chooses to let the northern transformation speak all for itself.

What are his key arguments? Only some of the most important strands of argumentation in this fact—and argument—filled study can be recapitulated in this review. But the reader may be forewarned that a detailed and close study of the entire densely packed text is well worth the effort. Though the slightly stilted style of political science is discernible throughout its many pages, the force of his argument as it unfolds in the text makes this book into an unusually enjoyable and sometimes downright gripping read.

Moschonas proceeds from the assumption that reformist social democracy in its Keynesian phase was an organization devoted to the attenuation of market inequalities, delivering concrete and tangible welfare-state benefits to its constituency, consisting largely of working class voters but with a sizeable and growing middle class support base. Throughout the 1950s and 1960s, Moschonas asserts, without its significant middle class electoral support, social democracy would have never obtained a governmental majority. But, significantly, without key working-class support, he argues, there would have been no social democracy: "Its electoral core consisted in the working class, the primary and primordial source of power and effectiveness for a social democracy that was increasingly inter-classist" (52). Crucially, in the era of the postwar boom, social democracy appeared to offer its voters and its members a qualitatively distinct strategy compared to that of its more conservative rivals. Furthermore, the author contends, it was precisely the showcasing of a distinct, reformist but progressive alternative, which enabled European social democracy to move to center stage in the electoral and governmental arenas: "Parties of a social-democratic type established themselves as central parties in European political systems only because they were able to penetrate the centre effectively; [but] they

were able to penetrate the centre effectively only because they were not centrist" (60). The importance of the content of the political message as a positive force, i.e. an independent variable, is a red thread running throughout his volume.

But, with the end of the Keynesian compromise, the tables began to turn, slowly at first and initially almost indistinguishable from the earlier phase, but ultimately affecting every single European social democratic party. From the mid-1970s onwards, social democracy's electoral grip over its "natural" working-class constituency weakened, and the middle class voting bloc became "the new epicentre" (101) of the social democratic electorate: "The social democracies are increasingly sustained by votes from the salaried middle classes, allowing them to limit the damage done by working-class disaffection and the fall in working-class numbers in the population" (100). This paradigm shift is impressively confirmed and reinforced by Moschonas's observations on the mutations of the social democratic party membership: "The trend towards social diversification is [even] more sharply pronounced among social-democratic members and activists than among voters" (120). The sociology of social democracy has indeed undergone a fundamental change.

But, in an important passage in his chapter on the transformation of the electorate, Moschonas underscores that "basic sociological factors ultimately play only a background role" (104) in this great transformation. The key variable indicating the depth and full extent of social democracy's identity shift must be located in the shifting nature and character of its politics and ideas. Moschonas reserves his most insightful criticisms for the increasingly neoliberal outlook of the objects of his study. He convincingly demonstrates the change of social democracy's strategic choice from reform-oriented market modification in its Keynesian phase to straightforward adaptation to the market and, eventually, the cheerful embracing of the market in social democracy's contemporary neoliberal phase. Social democrats today, the author avers, "seem resigned to choosing between different forms of inequality" (201).

To be sure, social democracy today, even its most market-hungry variant in New Labour, still performs a role distinct from that of its more conservative rivals. Though firm believers in neoliberal dogma, social democracy's role today is "to cushion the violence of neoliberal change" (173). But this largely philanthropic veneer no longer serves as a positive attraction for working class votes. As social democracy becomes less sensitive to working-class concerns, workers become correspondingly less susceptible to social democratic election calls. As social democratic parties increasingly become mere electoral instruments without a clearly definable political message, workers increasingly become volatile supporters of social democracy.

Worst of all, "for the first time since the Second World War social democrats do not possess a politically plausible social and economic strategy—that is, one both inspired by their own tradition and clearly distinct from that of their opponents" (202). Having "voluntarily destroyed many of its own instruments of economic intervention," (263) a hallmark of its earlier Keynesian phase, so-

cial democracy is thus left with seemingly little choice: “Rather than being an attenuated version of traditional social democracy, what the ‘social-liberalism’ of contemporary social democracy is, and what it proposes, is an attenuated version of liberalism,” (324) offering few substantive rewards to its formerly central working-class base. “This being so, today, perhaps for the first time since the beginning of the twentieth century, popular strata are deprived of a political representation,” (299) leaving the disinherited to fend for themselves. “The ‘subaltern’ classes are certainly still present in the organisation, but they are reduced to a species of second estate and subsidiary force” (147).

In several exceptionally powerful passages, Moschonas draws attention to a concomitant dangerous and growing trend, i.e. the growing attractiveness of the radical right for the disaffected members of a working class increasingly marginalized and rejected by its erstwhile traditional political arm: European social democracy. “Today,” Moschonas argues, “the economic and social policy of the social-democratic left no longer polarizes social groups sufficiently because it is no longer perceived as sufficiently distinct from its neoliberal opponents” (108). Instead, the programme of the radical right, by “attacking the ‘powerful’, the ‘establishment’ and the ‘coalition of elites’ in the name of ordinary people and the ‘small man’, in timorously adopting a more ‘social’ discourse, (. . .) [is] becoming the perverted expression of a certain anti-egalitarian egalitarianism” (107). “The breakthrough by the populist extreme right among the working class seems to confirm the thesis of the salience of political factors. Indeed, in some countries the extreme right increasingly begins to appear to a significant percentage of the popular electorate as a ‘natural’ political alternative” (106).

Moschonas’ clear-sighted and prescient observations may thus also be interpreted as a clarion call to reconstruct a viable and meaningful European Left. However, his own brief ruminations in this regard leave little room for any vision other than the image of impending doom. But it would perhaps be too much to expect the author to complement his political analysis of the most recent past with a strategic vision for positive change. Still, there is room for some critique of certain elements of this pathbreaking tome.

The author could, for instance, have streamlined his argumentation, which frequently repeats itself in different portions of his wide-ranging text. More importantly, there are certain contradictions present in the repeated elaborations of his major arguments. Thus, to mention but one, in some passages the author essentially suggests that the great transformation is a *fait accompli*; in other sections he emphasizes that social democracy is, to quote the title of one of his chapters, “on the verge of an identity crisis” (289). But to be on the edge of a nervous breakdown is not exactly the same thing as suffering from a nervous breakdown! Yet these are mostly editorial imprecisions that slightly detract from the overall force of his arguments. My closing comments, by contrast, address a more central (and potentially fatal) flaw in his argument.

Though largely impeccable in his political analysis as well as his sociological expertise, and despite his own repeated emphasis that politics is key, Moschonas, when interpreting his statistical data, tends to fall into a reduction-

ist trap. His use of class analysis is very limited and limiting indeed. First of all, he employs overarching categories, such as “working class” or “middle class,” without the necessary amount of nuance one would expect from a social scientist who is otherwise highly attentive to detail. Despite a brief discussion of the inner divisions demarcating the various sections and subsections of “the middle class,” Moschonas all-too-frequently renders it as a homogenous bloc. More ominously, in important passages of his text, he identifies “middle class” politics with neoliberal politics. And, in virtually all portions of his text, his notion of “the working class” includes solely and none other than traditional, blue-collar, industrial workers, lumping all the rest of the waged or “salaried” workforce into the catch-all “middle class.” It is as if one hundred years of some of the most important discussions within Marxist sociology have entirely bypassed the author of this text. As first suggested by Bernstein and somewhat later by De Man, the working class is constantly changing and should most fruitfully be defined as the class comprising most employees working for a wage and not just blue-collar industrial workers.

This “partial blindness” has important ramifications. Given the declining numbers of blue-collar workers in “post-industrial” states, did social democracy have any other option other than to turn towards increasing “middle class” support? Surely not, certainly not if it wanted to remain a governmental alternative. But, then, if “the middle class” is collectively condemned to be the organic expression and representative of “the world—and civilization—of enterprise,” (161) as Moschonas frequently suggests, then there truly can be no hope. It is thus only logical that, for Moschonas, “the elaborations of contemporary social democracy are merely the expression of a profound strategic pessimism. At the sophisticated level of partisan strategies, they register recognition of the significant social and political waning of the popular space” (308).

Are things really that bleak? When Moschonas does provide a slightly less reductionist analysis of “middle class” support for social democracy, he does underscore the centrality of the “salaried middle strata,” the “new middle classes,” as the key bastion of social democratic support. But, at other points and repeatedly so, Moschonas himself forcefully highlights that precisely these “salaried middle strata” are often the carriers of particularly progressive political ideas and left wing ideologies—within and outside of social democracy! Moschonas himself time and again draws attention to the fact that, where sizeable leftwing alternatives to neoliberal social democracy arose, frequently exactly these “new middle classes” provided the necessary support. In other words, not only is it incorrect and counterproductive to identify “the middle class” with neoliberal ideology, but some of the most committed and consistent opponents of neoliberalism (and capitalism *tout court*) can be found precisely within these “salaried middle strata.”

In closing, it is incumbent once more to return to Moschonas’ very own (though sometimes sadly neglected) thesis of the centrality of the political message. Advocacy of a clear and consistent oppositional line may serve as a powerful attraction for the popular vote. His trenchant analysis of the 1970s Union

of the Left campaign in France convincingly demonstrates that, certainly in this instance, radicalization, and not moderation, of the left brought workers, but not only workers, back into the social democratic fold. In other words, it is a fallacy to argue, as European social democracy is fond of doing for quite some time, that only constant moderation will increase its vote. Not only would radicalization provide a direly needed focus for a renewed and energized European left. Not only could such a turn to the left once again attract blue-collar workers and others who are defecting to the radical right as the sole visible qualitative alternative. But such a radical facelift would simultaneously provide the political glue which could weld together the individual components of such a revitalized European left: blue collar workers, certainly, but likewise the ever-increasing numbers of the “salaried middle strata,” which Moschonas, for no apparent reason, labels as the natural support base of neoliberal ideology and politics.

It is, of course, clear from Moschonas work that such a political recomposition of the European left will in all probability not occur within the structures of European social democracy. But, in the process of skillfully analyzing this indeed most profound great transformation in the history of social democracy, Moschonas inadvertently closes off all avenues of possible progressive change. May his trenchant obituary of European social democracy become a stimulus for the reconstruction of a European left which at one point, in Moschonas’ words, “was not simply a force for the representation of socioeconomic interests but also a force for civilisation, bearer of an ‘ethical’ project and universalist, egalitarian values” (108).

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Michel Beaud, *A History of Capitalism 1500–2000* (5th Edition). New York: Monthly Review Press, 2001. viii + 348 pp. \$55.00 cloth; \$24.95 paper.

The “highly-anticipated” fifth edition of Michel Beaud’s classic *A History of Capitalism* delivers what it promises. In the first place, there is the rich original text, already widely recognized as an important examination of economic, social, and political history organized around the dynamic evolution of capitalism, now supplemented with previously unavailable diagrams and flowcharts. There are also significant additions to the original text, first published in 1981, which both extend the examination up to the end of the twentieth century (and a new “technoscientific” stage of capitalism), as well as useful re-synthesizing of some of the original text with the benefit of hindsight. In short, the new edition of Beaud’s book offers a usefully updated and improved version of what is already established as an important contribution to economic, social, and political history.

Still, while sharing the “high anticipation” invoked by the book’s publishers, and acknowledging that the new edition fulfills its promises, I have to admit

a shadow of disappointment. In particular, I will touch on three sources of disappointment, moving from least to most important. This disappointment, however, is at least in part an ironic product of the book's great strengths—its raw ambition and the great interest of its subject. The book's basic conception raises high expectations.

Doubtless, capitalism marks a powerful, widely employed, and widely disputed concept today, and the comprehensive overview of its historical development is certainly a major contribution to economic, social, and political thought. As Beaud puts it, capitalism seems to capture "some of the important realities of our time" (4-5), and consequently a clear understanding of it offers the considerable promise of an improved understanding of our times and ourselves. If the book ultimately does not *fully* accomplish this lofty goal, it remains among the most impressive attempts to illuminate this important subject, and the new edition significantly consolidates its strengths.

One minor source of disappointment is that Beaud did not choose to revise the later chapters of his original manuscript to link them tightly with the newly added section. The result is not only a noticeable disjunction in the flow of the text, but also some chapters which spend too much space discussing the likely future dynamics of capitalism under a continuing Cold War scenario, and extrapolating now trivial predictions of, for example, the increased use of computers and robotics.

A second, deeper source of disappointment arises out of a difficulty with the book's historiographical approach which Beaud himself suggests in a number of passages. At the beginning of one chapter, Beaud quotes Werner Sombart to the effect that "Capitalism rules the world and makes our statesmen dance like puppets on a string" (129). Later, however, Beaud acknowledges, "not everything can be reduced to capitalism, to its manifestations and jolts" (199-200). Yet, given the scope of the book—500 years of capitalism—and its diffuse focus—economic, social and political history—Beaud is repeatedly compelled to reduce the complex dynamics of historical change to shifts in the underlying mode of capitalism. The causal arrow points directly from economic substructure to social and political superstructure. Beaud offers no argument for why we should be content to approach human history through a materialist optic, and indeed recognizes the inherent limitations of this approach. Nonetheless, it is what he, of necessity perhaps, almost exclusively offers. The result is the underdevelopment of other influences on the trajectory of human history that coexist and interact with capitalism, and the neglect of the reverse causal influence of social and political developments on the dynamics of capitalism.

A final source of disappointment concerns the clarity of the concept of capitalism that orients the book. In short, while Beaud effectively illuminates some of the diverse modes that capitalism has historically exhibited, one finishes his book without a definitive understanding of what links these different modalities together and distinguishes them from other modes of accumulation.

Beaud offers a range of basic definitions of capitalism throughout the text. Firstly, he identifies a number of things which capitalism is not, despite some im-

portant claims to the contrary. It is not simply a “mode of production,” nor an “economic system” (309). It contrasts sharply with (Soviet) statism, and exhibits “contradictory relations with democracy” and “ambivalent relations with the market” (6–8).

Secondly, Beaud offers a number of constructive definitions of capitalism at various points in the text. He declares, for example, that capitalism is “The system which obliges the rich to make the poor work longer and harder” (61). Elsewhere he insists that it is defined by a change in the “rhythm” of production. Elsewhere it is connected with the extension of money and exchange relations, with the institutional development of the company and later the corporation, with the emergence of banking and finance, with economic rationalization and systematization, and with the modern state. In another chapter, he defines capitalism simply as the “blind obstinate logic of accumulation” in general, (129) while in other passages, he invokes Joseph Schumpeter’s more specific image of capitalism as defined by waves of “creative destruction” driven by “constant innovation” (309, 307). Finally, and perhaps most consistently, he asserts that “the specific character of capitalism lies in the fact that the surplus acquired through production and trade is applied to expanding the means of production and trade in order to extract an additional surplus” (308).

Now, all of these characterizations of capitalism may not be strictly incompatible, but they are nonetheless significantly different. The tensions between them, however, are somewhat obscured by the different modes and levels of capitalism that Beaud distinguishes. Capitalism emerged in a mercantile form in Europe around 1500, progressed through a manufacturing mode in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, through various forms of national industrial capitalism in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and finally to a technoscientific form emerging today. At the same time, capitalism exists simultaneously at a “national/regional/local scale” and on a “worldwide scale” (259). In order to reconcile these diverse facets, Beaud finally resorts to a series of paradoxes: capitalism is both “territorialized and worldwide” (309), both “a factor for unification, (. . .) standardization, and (. . .) for accentuating differences, disparities and inequalities” (259), both continuous and coherent and “in a state of constant change,” and “sometimes self-contradictory” (309, 264).

In a sense, the ambiguity of Beaud’s core understanding of capitalism contributes to the impressive scope of the book, allowing him to examine 500 years of economic history under the general heading of capitalism. At the same time, however, this diversity problematizes the distillation of the core features that define capitalism in general.

The additions to the new edition of Beaud’s book provide an opportunity for him to move towards a consolidation of the unifying features of capitalism, and indeed he does, laying primary emphasis on capitalism as characterized by reinvestment of surplus capital into the production through which it was acquired. If, however, this is to stand as capitalism’s defining quality, then how can he insist that “The history of capitalism begins in 1500” (8)? There was certainly extensive re-investment in successful production before 1500, and profit

is by no means always, or even generally, reinvested today. Finally, it does not seem clear why Soviet statism, for example, which certainly reinvested heavily in productive ventures, should contrast with capitalism.

In conclusion, I want to suggest that the considerable contemporary importance of Beaud's book is better understood as reflecting a timely and challenging invitation to historically informed examination of the enduringly important problem of capitalism, rather than as reflecting the discovery and elaboration of a definitive answer.

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Andrew R. Aisenberg, *Contagion: Disease, Government, and the "Social Question" in Nineteenth-Century France*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1999. vii + 238 pp. \$45.00 cloth.

The dramatic transformations wrought by industrialization and the accompanying demographic shifts made nineteenth-century European cities veritable factories of contagion and disease. Contaminated water supplies, inadequate sewer systems, overcrowded housing, and poorly ventilated workplaces ensured the spread of typhoid fever, diphtheria, tuberculosis, and cholera. Like their counterparts in other industrializing countries, French government officials recognized that the "social question," common parlance for the political and social problems caused by poverty and general working-class discontent, constituted their most formidable domestic political challenge. But according to Andrew R. Aisenberg, the French state, unlike its European counterparts, was faced with a unique predicament: How could a government rooted in a political tradition that established the family as the "inviolable site" of individualism and liberty, justify intervention in the home in the name of the public welfare? In other words, how could the state address the "social question" if the home—especially the working-class home, the very locus of poverty and its attendant problems—was politically off-limits?

The long tradition of close ties between political and scientific authority that stretched back to the seventeenth century further compounded the theoretical dilemma that Aisenberg claims faced nineteenth-century state officials. "How could science (and by, [sic] implication, the state)," Aisenberg asks, "which was itself regarded as an expression of the rationality that defined human beings as self-regulating and that took as its object the happiness of free individuals, pose the 'individual' as determined and thus an object of regulation?" (18). In simpler terms, if reason made humans self-regulating and free, then how could rational science and the state to which it was closely linked claim that humans were in fact shaped by external conditions that could—indeed should—be regulated?

In this dense, difficult, but nonetheless provocative book, Aisenberg pro-

poses that the concept of “contagion,” with its simultaneous social and scientific implications, provided officials with the necessary discursive tool to justify state intervention into the familial realm. As his title indicates, Aisenberg focuses on the understandings of “contagion” over the course of the nineteenth century. In particular, he aims to show that the shifting discourse of “contagion” exposes critical changes in the relationship between the state, the family, individuals, and liberty itself. Ultimately, he strives to reconcile the interventionist policies of the late nineteenth- and early twentieth century Third Republic with seventeenth- and early nineteenth-century liberal republican theory that posited the individual in the family as the “inviolable” unit of civil society. Early nineteenth century concepts of contagion, as seen most clearly in the work of René Villermé and P.J.G. Cabanis, focused on the living habits and conditions of the poor, particularly their “insalubrious” dwellings (a term favored by state-sponsored hygienists as well as Aisenberg himself). These early hygienists posited a direct relationship between disease, poverty, and immorality expressed in “the metaphor of contagion” (29). In this formulation, the apparent immorality that flourished in impoverished households was itself contagious in much the same way as were the diseases that disproportionately affected the poor. Hygienists’ focus on the domestic environment that fostered disease quickly led them “to advocate a [sic] government regulation of the working poor”(30) as a strategy for controlling disease.

Yet such formulations stopped short of claiming that social conditions actually caused disease. Aisenberg insists that this hesitation was not simply the expression of insufficient scientific knowledge in the pre-Pasteurian era, but also—and more importantly, in Aisenberg’s view—reflected “a political anxiety about how to reconcile commitment to individual liberty with the social determinism and advocacy of governmental intervention that were associated with the efforts to explain and regulate disease” (88). Like many works that rely heavily on the analysis of discourse, *Contagion* is marred by assertions like this that are at once plausible and unverifiable. Aisenberg assumes that his own discovery of a contradiction between republican ideology and advocacy of government intervention was salient to historical actors at the time. Early hygienists *may* have been troubled by the threat to individual liberty posed by government intervention, but Aisenberg offers no evidence that they were. In theoretical terms, showing that a discourse existed does not tell us anything about particular historical actors’ relationship to that discourse.

Aisenberg argues that officials of the Third Republic resolved this conflict between liberty and state regulation by marshalling the discursive power of Pasteurian science to authorize intervention. Like their predecessors in the early part of the century, state-sponsored hygienists of the Third Republic focused on the home, “the *foyer* as the basis for a new vision of society that depended upon the regulatory force of government, and not individual liberty” (128). Without government regulation, they maintained, the working-class home would rapidly degenerate into a cesspool of immorality and “insalubriousness” that would breed disease. Pasteurian science, which established the intimate connection be-

tween germs and the physical conditions that enabled them to spread, allowed the state to claim the working-class home as a potential public health hazard. "In proposing a new and extended regulation of disease (. . .) focused on the home," Aisenberg maintains, "hygienists sought nothing less than to redefine the very possibilities of a free social order. Henceforth, so they hoped, liberty would be premised upon a larger social interest" (131).

The end of the nineteenth century, Aisenberg observes, witnessed the resolution of the apparent tension between the state's imperative to safeguard the health of the population and the inviolability of the family that, in republican theory, was responsible for nurturing individual autonomy and responsibility. In blaming the spread of disease on the ignorance, carelessness, and immoral behavior of family members, scientific and political authorities paved the way for state legislation like the Public Health Law of 1902 that, in Aisenberg's view, was rooted in "the symbiosis between science and policing" (144). No longer did the individual, ensconced in the family, stand apart from the state as the constitutive unit of republican society. Rather, "the danger embodied in the *foyer* made the acceptance of social duties, articulated and presented by a regulatory authority, an integral part of what it means to be an individual in urban space" (174–5). Individualism had become "conditional upon the recognition of social interest" (174). The once "inviolable private space" of the home had been converted into a "social space full of dangers" (176) and government intervention, couched in the language of rational science, was no longer problematic.

In *Contagion*, Aisenberg offers a thought-provoking and methodologically innovative exploration of the emergence in the nineteenth century of the interventionist French State and, in particular, of the deployment of science as a political discourse in the development of public health policy. Unfortunately, his self-declared determination to produce "theoretically informed history writing" (vi) too often results in abstruse prose and clever-sounding but faulty argumentation, especially in the initial chapters. For example, in his introduction Aisenberg asserts that "if government justified its role in the making of a free social order by invoking the rational, and thus human, foundations of science, the definition and practice of scientific rationality (and thus the very definition of individualism and its relationship to social order) were always mediated by state interests and goals" (7). The logic of this sentence does not hold up. The fact that the state made use of scientific rationality does not mean that scientific rationality was necessarily always mediated by the state. Despite lapses like this, *Contagion* poses important questions and makes a partially successful case for the usefulness of discourse analysis for understanding political history. It should be of interest to specialists, but the writing style renders it largely inaccessible to students and most scholars outside nineteenth-century French history.

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Terry Martin, *The Affirmative Action Empire: Nations and Nationalism in the Soviet Union, 1923–1939*. Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2001. xiv + 496 pp. \$55.00 cloth; \$27.50 paper.

This massive volume, which brings together the latest research by Terry Martin with three earlier works of his, published in 1998 and 1999, is one of the major contemporary contributions to studies on the “nationalities question” in the former Soviet Union. It contains the most thorough and comprehensive analysis of interwar Soviet national policy.

One of the strongest points of this work is its rich research base. The author has studied a great many documents kept in the archives of the Russian Federation and Ukraine, first of all in the Russian State Archive of Social-Political History (the former Central Party Archive) and the State Archive of the Russian Federation, numerous newspapers, journals, and published documents. This gives Martin’s book a great advantage over works by many other Western researchers of Russian and/or Soviet history, who often lacked either the desire or opportunity to study primary Russian/Soviet sources. Martin has succeeded in systematizing all collected data and in building an elaborate conception of Soviet policy in the field of national state building.

Martin studies the policy of “indigenization” (*korenizatsiia*), which was launched in the early 1920s and was aimed at promotion of national identity and self-consciousness of non-Russian populations of the Soviet Union and at the development of their own political and cultural institutions. He divides this policy into three stages: the most active period of implementation of the indigenization policy (till the late 1920s), crisis of this policy (the early 1930s), and its gradual revision in the period between 1933 and 1938, which is often referred to as the period of the “Great Retreat.” Martin’s innovative analysis has managed to reveal that indigenization, along with real achievements, brought about some negative consequences and generated new conflicts (a point largely overlooked by other scholars): “The entire system pointed toward increased ethnic segregation. This reinforced the popular conception of a national territory as their own, and the tendency to view national minorities, especially at the local level, as foreign and often unwelcome guests” (74).

At the same time, attempts to create a broad stratum of national officials, technical workers, and intelligentsia often proved unsuccessful, especially in the Soviet East. Martin is right to observe that indigenization, while creating privileges for so-called titular nationalities of the union and autonomous republics, often put into a disadvantageous position representatives of other ethnicities, who resided in the same regions.

Resentment and resistance to its implementation, above all on the part of local Russians, largely caused the ensuing crisis of the indigenization policy. Some changes in foreign policy (abandonment of the so-called Piedmont Principle) also served to put the policy into question. The final stage marked a total revision of the Soviet nationalities policy, which manifested itself in, as Martin puts it, “reemergence of the Russians.” This involved Russification of the Rus-

sian Federation, elevation of the status and unifying role of Russian culture within the entire USSR, and integration of the newly central Russians into the pre-existing Soviet national constitution through the metaphor of the "Friendship of the Peoples" (394). This also entailed the establishment of double standards in the approach to national problems (concerning titular and non-titular nationalities) and outright ethnic cleansing. According to the author's observation, "by November 1938 the Great Terror had evolved into an ethnic terror" (341). The terror and acts of ethnic cleansing were directed first of all against so-called Diaspora nationalities (Germans, Poles, Finns, Estonians, Koreans etc.), or, according to the terminology of the political police (NKVD), "nationalities of foreign governments", since "the cross-border ethnic ties of the non-Russians became increasingly suspect" and "collectivization was resisted more fiercely and more violently in the Soviet Union's non-Russian regions" (271). Martin points out that abandonment of the indigenization policy was conditioned to a considerable extent by the trend towards greater centralization of the Soviet state. Central bodies functioned in the Russian language, and it also increased the perception of the center as Russian and the periphery as non-Russian. Accusing central officials of Russian chauvinism, then, could easily be interpreted as resisting legitimate centralization and expression of "localism" (259). By 1940 the Soviet Union had been divided into a Russian space, where institutional Russification had been almost entirely completed, and a non-Russian space, where national minority status continued to be recognized (411).

Martin is one of the first scholars to offer detailed research of the campaign of Latinization of national scripts in the Soviet Union, which involved changing the alphabet of a language from either Cyrillic or Arabic script to the Latin one and creating a new written language using the Latin script for previously exclusively oral languages. Martin depicts this campaign as a symbolic act, with the implicit meaning of overcoming the aftermath of Orthodox missionary activities and Russian colonialism in the national borderlands. Abandonment of this policy and script Russification in the 1930s also had symbolic meaning and was one of the main manifestations of the Great Retreat policy, when the Russian language was declared the unifying language for all Soviet nations and the main means of expression of the Soviet culture.

Unfortunately, Martin omits almost completely such an important point as the religious policy of the Soviet state, though the Soviet national policy in the interwar period is exemplified to a considerable extent by the attitude of the state bodies towards the church and religion. Until the late 1920s there had hardly been any oppression of non-Orthodox religious communities, to which many ethnic minorities belonged (with the sole exception of the campaign against Roman Catholics between 1921 and 1923). Revision of the nationalities policy in the 1930s was accompanied by fierce persecutions against religious institutions, clergy, and believers and first of all against non-Orthodox Christian confessions: by the end of the 1930s in the Soviet Union there remained not a single functioning non-Orthodox parish.

Some minor mistakes can be found in the book. For instance, Martin writes

about joint actions of Denikin's White Army and the Ukrainian nationalists, led by Simon Petliura, against the Bolsheviks in 1919 (78). In reality, relations between Petliura and the White Volunteer Army were no less hostile than between the latter and the Red Army. Moreover, in August 1919 negotiations between Petliura and the Bolsheviks aimed at the conclusion of an alliance against Denikin and the Poles took place, though they proved unsuccessful. According to Martin, about twelve thousand Finns who had fled from the Petrograd province to Finland in 1918-1919 took up the offer of amnesty and returned (316). However, by 1921 there were no more than eighty-three hundred Ingrian Finnish refugees in Finland, of which some 5000 returned to Russia by the mid-1920s. But these errors are not so significant as to reduce the value of this book. Terry Martin's research is one of the most innovative and interesting contemporary Western studies on Soviet history.

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Robert Levy, *Ana Pauker: The Rise and Fall of a Jewish Communist*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001. xii + 407 pp. \$35 cloth.

Ana Pauker was a Romanian Jewish communist who, by the early 1930s, became a well-known figure of the international movement and, after World War Two, one of the leading political personalities in her country. Nevertheless, in 1952, she was purged together with two other members of the Politburo as a result of backstage maneuvers orchestrated by the fourth member of that political organ. Jailed for a short period, she was released after Stalin's death and lived the rest of her life completely marginalized, forgotten by her former comrades who never once ceased to praise her. However, Pauker never rejected her communist allegiance nor did she engage in writing her memoirs.

Robert Levy's remarkably well-researched book reconstructs the life of this enigmatic figure at a level of detail that was achieved only in the case of cardinal figures of world communism, such as Lenin or Stalin. Born in a family of Orthodox Jews from a poor rural area, Pauker would have normally pursued her initial modest career as a Hebrew teacher had she not joined the communist movement. Her life changed not only because of political involvement, but also due to her marriage with the leftist intellectual Marcel Pauker, a wealthy assimilated Jew from Bucharest. Both Paukers were founding members of the Romanian Communist Party (RCP) in 1921. Nevertheless, as Levy shows, it was Ana's remarkable personality that helped her make a successful career in the Comintern, in spite of Marcel's execution during the Great Terror. By establishing good connections in the Soviet top hierarchy, she became involved in the movement at an international level, gradually rising to prominence. After a period of detention in Romania following a famous 1936 trial in which eighteen other communists were condemned to long-term imprisonment, Pauker re-

turned to the Soviet Union in 1940, benefiting from an exchange of prisoners. During the war, she was the uncontested leader of the Romanian communist refugees in Moscow. Consequently, in 1944, it was she who was sent to her native country to reestablish the links with the RCP, and take over its leadership. In Romania, however, Pauker found a party deeply divided between competing centers of power. Levy dedicates the largest part of his book to the power struggle that emerged after the communist takeover and to the purge that ended it, offering the most comprehensive account of the Romanian version of the great purges which marked the early years of communism in Eastern Europe.

From the very beginning, Pauker's most important rival proved to be Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej, a former railway worker of Romanian origin, the leader of the communists who had socialized together, for many years, in the adverse environment of interwar Romanian prisons. In the first years after World War Two, the RCP was dominated by a collective leadership. Besides Dej and Pauker, it included Vasile Luca, an ethnic Hungarian who had also spent the war years in the Soviet Union, and Teohari Georgescu, an ethnic Romanian who, although not part of the Muscovite team, joined it thinking that this was destined to be the winning faction. As already mentioned, when opportunity occurred, seven years after the communist seizure of power, Dej, assisted by his monolithic group from the prisons, ousted the other three. Combining archival material with extensive oral history interviews, the author skillfully reconstructs the external and internal political contexts that allowed a personality with Pauker's international status and high connections in Moscow to be purged by Dej, the only party leader in Eastern Europe who was not a refugee in the Soviet Union during the war.

Conventional wisdom, as developed by Western analysts, describes this chapter in the history of Romanian communism as a merciless power struggle between two Stalinist factions: one that was completely subordinated to Moscow, led by Pauker, and a second, no less Stalinist, but anti-Soviet, led by Dej. The unlikely victory of the latter opened the way not for a reform-oriented regime, but for a Moscow-independent Romanian-style Stalinist one, the most dogmatic and enduring in all Eastern Europe, except for Albania. In this respect, Levy has a decisive contribution in revealing that it was at the time when Pauker treated her breast cancer in the Soviet Union that Dej and his men, in complete disregard for her human sufferings, prepared the purge.

Apart from bringing new and revealing details, his interpretation of Pauker's biography challenges a powerful myth regarding the establishment of communist power in Romania, as well as in the other Eastern European countries. Simply put, this myth reads as follows: communism was brought by Jews who, against the will of a large majority of the population, ruthlessly imposed on the respective country a system that was alien to the local traditions. Against this, Levy demonstrates that it was not Dej, the ethnic Romanian, but Pauker, the Jewish woman and Moscow's emissary, who adopted a more pragmatic approach and attempted to adapt the Soviet experience to Romanian realities. With regard to agriculture, one can label her as a Bukharinist, since she wanted to al-

low peasants to accumulate in order to support the socialist industrialization. Also, conscious of the weak power base of communists in Romania, she allowed former low-rank members of the right-wing Iron Guard to join the party. In fact, as Levy argues, it was exactly Pauker's non-dogmatic approach that provided Dej and his proponents with arguments to accuse her of right-wing deviation in 1952.

Furthermore, the author shows that, although Pauker had earlier participated aside Dej and his acolytes, at least by tacit approval, in the killing of Stefan Fori, the leader of the underground faction during the war, later on she opposed the purge of a prominent figure of Romanian communism, the nationally oriented Lucreiu Petrescanu. By revealing this, Levy amends a view conveniently appropriated by many Romanians. According to this perspective, Pauker and her Muscovite faction, who blindly followed Stalin's orders, are the ones to be blamed for the harsh period of repression that followed the takeover of power, and not Dej and his men, who, although communists, were driven by patriotic feelings. Levy's account of Pauker's purge illustrates that Dej, more than Pauker, is responsible for dogmatically imposing the Soviet system on Romania without considering local particularities, as well as for skillfully using Stalinism's repressive methods. Moreover, comparing the documents related to the purge to the transcripts of a Party Plenum in 1961, Levy demonstrates that at the origin of this commonly accepted interpretation of Romanian communism is nobody else than Dej himself. Nine years later, when Pauker was already dead, Dej claimed—obscuring the accusations he had made in 1952—that the expelled faction was solely responsible for Romania's Sovietization and, therefore, by ousting them he initiated, in fact, a de-Stalinization *avant la lettre*. In short, by following subsequent references made to Pauker's purge, Levy wonderfully shows how the party's history was successively reinterpreted under communism.

Had it not been for her death in 1960, Pauker might have become a revisionist, the author implies. Nevertheless, she lived and died without rejecting, ever, her communist credo. Levy's vivid reconstruction of this true believer's sinuous life invites the reader to revisit a fascinating chapter of the intricate, as well as intriguing, history of Eastern European communism.

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Nigel J. Morgan and Annette Pritchard, *Power, Politics and the Seaside: The Development of Devon's Resorts in the Twentieth Century*. Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 1999. ix + 243 pp. \$80.00 cloth.

When living in Britain in the mid-1990s, I asked friends where I should go in the UK with my family for a week during a spring holiday. The advice among friends at Cambridge was to go to Devon. Morgan and Pritchard's book provides a partial explanation as to why I was given this advice. Since the late nineteenth cen-

tury, seaside towns in Devon have been among Britain's premier resorts, promoting themselves as the "English Riviera." This book examines the continuing success of resort promoters in maintaining the "social tone" of Devon's resorts and illuminates broader changes in the relationship of leisure and tourism to social stratification during the twentieth century.

The book opens with an extended discussion of theoretical issues surrounding the intersection of power and politics in leisure and tourism. The theoretical overview includes Foucauldian approaches to power and multidisciplinary perspectives on the extensive literature on leisure, work, class, social control, and tourism. A historiographical chapter reviews recent work on the British seaside in the twentieth century by John K. Walton and others. Morgan's and Pritchard's main themes are the struggle between the "holiday interests" such as hoteliers and the "residential interest" such as retirees in shaping local policies, the minimal role of the British state (especially in comparison to France or Spain), the relative absence of entrepreneurial investments by the private sector, and an all-too-brief discussion of broader cultural changes.

Morgan and Pritchard are centrally concerned with the strategy used by local elites to maintain a resort's "social tone" amid conflicts between residents and tourists. In particular, they focus on the role of local government in seaside development, resort marketing, and the building of infrastructure in three communities. More "select" resorts such as Sidmouth discouraged transportation improvements and the provision of "popular" entertainments associated with a working-class clientele, while Ilfracombe, on the north coast, adapted to the influx of a wider range of tourists from Wales. Torquay actively improved and promoted itself while maintaining a high "social tone."

While the theoretical and historiographical chapters revisit work that has appeared elsewhere, the most original section of the book examines efforts to maintain this social status through advertising and planning of resort facilities in these three intertwined case studies of Torquay, Sidmouth, and Ilfracombe. However, the theoretical apparatus disappears after the introductory chapters, and the concept of "social tone" is underdeveloped or circular ("The social tone of a resort was inextricably linked to its social exclusivity. High degrees of social exclusivity—resulting from the patronage of up-market visitors—conferred a high social tone" (89). Devon's exclusive status originally stemmed from its geographical isolation, "high aesthetic qualities," lack of heavy industry, and high levels of employment in domestic services and fishing which converted into tourism-related work. As early as the 1920s and 1930s, the influx of commuters and retirees who were also attracted by these characteristics had colonized parts of Devon in the "Costa Geriatricas."

The authors repeatedly emphasize continuity over change, peppering their prose with references to "durability," "throughout the twentieth century," "despite such change" and "essential continuity" (8, 28, 60–61, 78, 140). Despite this emphasis on continuity, the debates over "social tone" suggest a more fundamental transformation in the way social stratification is understood. If Sidmouth hosted aristocrats in the 1930s, and Torquay was said to rival Cannes into the

1950s, their reputations were never secure and do not appear to have fared as well since then. Debates about Sunday trading from the 1920s were coded with the languages of class as much as the 1935 admonition that “oil and water will not mix (. . .) despite democracy social ‘classes’ still exist; and so long as this is so they will have to be catered for in different ways” (97).

The discussion of “social tone” and class would be more subtle and substantial if these languages of class and status were discussed more thoroughly. In the 1940s, for example, some feared that Torquay would “become a town of fish and chips, orange peel, fruit machines, and more and more noise;” at the same time that Sidmouth became “the Mecca of the ‘right people’” by providing bowls, tennis, croquet, and putting greens (97, 149). According to the *Western Morning News* in 1956, “That elusive quality, ‘tone,’ is given to the seaward side of [Sidmouth] by the absence of ice-cream salesmen, photographers, and wheelstands on the front” (151).

While the authors report that Torquay had a “shabby air” by the 1970s—and they devote considerable space to the efforts of local authorities to reverse this trend with conference centers, marinas, and marketing campaigns—the transformation in the languages of social stratification is striking. In the 1990s, Morgan and Pritchard note, “references to ‘market segmentation’, ‘resort specialisation’ or ‘target audiences defined by lifestyle’ are often merely refinements of social tone divisions” (180). This recognizes the connection with an earlier pattern but underestimates the importance of the change. Likewise, tourism since the 1970s often evokes a wider set of discourses in resort communities. For example, “social tone” is being replaced by “quality of life.” The authors briefly mention a 1978 survey in Devon in which residents associated the following problems with tourism: noise and disturbance, high suicide and pregnancy rates, drugs, traffic and environmental pressures, and low occupancy rates in winter (88). The shift from “social tone” to “quality of life,” which the authors do not draw attention to, suggests wider changes influencing the discourses of social stratification that extend beyond tourism and deserve further attention.

Morgan and Pritchard emphasize continuity because their perspective is that of the promoters or opponents of the tourism industry in the seaside resorts. The perspectives and perceptions of tourists are absent. To the extent that a resort achieves a particular “social tone” is the result of choices made, and agency exercised, by “guests,” not just the consequence of the intentions of their “hosts.” It would also be useful to extend the frame of reference to Devon more broadly, to encompass its moors as well as its shores. On my visit to Devon, for example, we spent time on the coast, driving through the countryside, walking on hills, and visiting cities. The authors give a fleeting glimpse of efforts to promote such leisure patterns by the railways with brochures and even the release of a sound film, “Dawdling in Devon” in 1933 (121). Perhaps the relationship with its holiday hinterland is another distinguishing characteristic of Devon’s coastal resorts, as compared to other British seaside resorts that often receive more attention.

In its later chapters and conclusion, the tone of the book shifts again. The

conclusion recapitulates the earlier theoretical and historical arguments and attempts to provide concrete advice to the tourism industry: "British resorts must strive to offer a quality experience, to improve standards of beach hygiene, traffic and visitor management, and so effectively market the coastal product" (188). This book offers excellent case studies of three cities that will be of interest to historians and to practitioners of tourism marketing and promotion. It also raises important questions as it attempts to situate the history of resort "social tone" and image-making within power, politics, leisure, and tourism.

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Ralph Darlington and Dave Lyddon, *Glorious Summer: Class Struggle in Britain, 1972*. London: Bookmarks, 2001. xii + 304 pp. £13.99 paper.

Official statistics for 1972 (which certainly understated the total picture) recorded over twenty-five hundred strikes in Britain, a figure exceeded only once before (in 1970) and three times subsequently. The number of "days lost," almost twenty-four million, was the highest since 1926, the year of the General Strike; in only two subsequent years has the total been greater. To a generation that reached maturity in a dark period of trade union defeat and decline, the record of those years of (at least partial) victory and advance must seem like another world. In providing a chronicle of trade union activism in that year, Darlington and Lyddon perform a genuine service.

Nevertheless, I have problems in reviewing their book. I come from the same political tradition as the authors: a small but innovative and influential semi- (or ex-) Trotskyist group, the International Socialists (IS), which in the mid-1970s transformed itself into the Socialist Workers Party (SWP), at which point they and I parted company. What Darlington and Lyddon offer is a celebration of a moment when "there was the smell of workers' struggle in the air, punctuated by the taste of victory" (209). To some extent, they suggest, "our account of 1972 is a guidebook of militant working class struggle" (230). The purpose, evidently, is inspirational. But there is an unintentional irony in their very title. The opening lines of Shakespeare's *Richard III* (which the authors quote only in part) run: "Now is the winter of our discontent Made glorious summer by this sun of York." Let me not probe the identity of the "sun of York": perhaps Arthur Scargill, fiery leader of the Yorkshire miners, hero of their victory in 1972 and for some still heroic in the defeat of 1985? A more serious question is: why, in this case, did the winter of discontent *follow* the glorious summer? What went wrong? And what, in retrospect, does this tell us about the radical optimism which inspired so many of us on the left in those heady times? Those are important questions for any serious historians, particularly those wishing to derive guidelines for action today. Unfortunately, they are not addressed in this book.

This is not necessarily to denigrate the account provided. The scene is set with an outline of the policies of the Conservatives under Edward Heath, elected in 1970. In some respects there was continuity with Labour in 1964-1970, but there were significant differences. Both governments were anxious to remedy what they saw as the central “problems” of British industrial relations, with a fragmented pattern of adversarial bargaining that regularly erupted into disputes. Labour, with its close institutional links to the unions, attempted to achieve “reform” primarily through voluntary means; Heath’s main vehicle, by contrast, was the 1971 Industrial Relations Act, largely modeled on the US system. Both Labour and Conservatives sought to moderate pay increases. However, Labour instituted a comprehensive incomes policy regime with the aim of making the unions co-partners in wage restraints. The Conservatives by contrast concentrated on the public sector, adopting the so-called “n minus 1” formula: each successive settlement for the public services and nationalized industries should be one percent less than the one preceding. Both policies provided the flashpoints for the conflicts of 1972.

Five key disputes are chronicled in the book. In coal mining, despite a cautious national leadership, there had for years been very high levels of pit-level strikes, mainly related to piecework payments. However in the late 1960s a national flat-rate pay system was introduced; concomitantly there were growing efforts by left-wing activists to push their union towards more militant policies. They managed to win a decision to call a national strike in support of an ambitious pay demand, and the militants effectively took over the running of the dispute, organizing flying pickets, preventing safety cover in the pits, and blockading power stations. The government capitulated. The pay policy was again challenged on the railways, and though the action was more restrained, the outcome was another union victory. In engineering, a national claim for substantial increases and a shorter working week was pursued by a variety of tactics selected at the local level. In the Manchester area, over a period of several weeks workers occupied some thirty factories owned by key employers. However the pattern of action across the country was uneven, the official unions diluted their demands, and the settlement eventually agreed was relatively modest. Experience was somewhat similar in the construction industry, where left-wing pressure—spearheaded by Communist Party (CP) shop stewards—pushed a reluctant union leadership into action, and militants borrowed the miners’ tactics of flying pickets. Perhaps the most remarkable conflict was on the docks, where containerization was leading to a rapid loss of employment. Activists began picketing container depots with the demand that work there should be reserved for registered dockers; this brought a confrontation with the Industrial Relations Court established by the 1971 Act, which sent five dockers to Pentonville prison for contempt of court. The result was a mass picket of the prison, sympathy stoppages in a range of industries, and the threat of a general strike. A bizarre series of legal maneuvers resulted in the dockers’ release.

The story presented in this book is of heroes and villains. The heroes are the insurgent rank and file, and the small but determined band of IS activists who

offered support and at times strategic leadership. The villains are the union officials who sold out their valiant members and the CP leaders who—despite the more determined stance of many of their militants—were over-anxious to maintain good relations with “left-wing” union bureaucrats. This account, told with much hyperbole and cliché, often buttressed largely by reports from *Socialist Worker* and quotes from IS activists of the time, is not altogether wrong but is certainly inadequate. In their conclusions, the authors quote one of the leaders of the London dockers, an IS activist: “the lessons of Pentonville are essentially revolutionary” (229). Yet thirty years on there are surely grounds for skepticism. Across much of the world (though Darlington and Lyddon devote only one paragraph to this fact) there was extensive insurgency in the late 1960s and early 1970s; more often than not, the long-term effects were small. Typically there was a *contingent* accumulation of grievances, certainly some mutual learning in terms of demands and tactics, but little to justify a view of the events as revolutionary or even pre-revolutionary. Nor, indeed, is it always clear how far the conflicts can be interpreted as *class* struggle. In the British case, economic crisis led to challenges to pay and job security, provoking a militant response in key sectors of industry. Yet despite some impressive examples of solidarity, emphasized in this book, this pattern of militancy was fragmented; and where it was successful this was in large part because neither government nor employers were prepared to deploy all their strength to smash resistance. By the end of the 1970s this was no longer the case; and those union activists who tried to repeat the experience of 1972 received a hard lesson that times had changed. There is even less reason to believe that the successful methods of thirty years ago will work in the twenty-first century.

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Hagen Koo, *Korean Workers: The Culture and Politics of Class Formation*.

Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2001. xii + 240 pp. \$45.00 cloth; \$17.95 paper.

Soon-Won Park, *Colonial Industrialization and Labor in Korea: The Onoda Cement Factory*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 1999. xiv + 223 pp. \$44.95 cloth.

Hagen Koo’s recent book is the most comprehensive study on the Korean working class from the 1960s to the 1990s available in the English language. This study is a laudable attempt in the right direction towards balancing the overabundance of studies on economic development that focus on the role of the state generally to the detriment of the history of labor.

Koo is mainly concerned with the historical processes through which Korean workers came to define for themselves a collective identity. The process of identity formation was in his telling a constant struggle between the state/capi-

talists and the workers. His analysis is two-fold. First he points to structural elements that characterized Korean development. The pattern of industrial transformation set by the state in the 1960s triggered a rapid and full-scale process of proletarianization. This in turn created conditions that were highly conducive to working-class identity formation (44–45). Second, since class is not only structurally determined but also mediated by cultural and political articulations through the struggles against the dominant class, Koo pays close attention to culture and politics in the formation of the South Korean working-class.

To make his point, Koo points to Confucian cultural attitudes towards “menial labor” reflected in the negative connotation that the word “laborer” had and the state-propagated nationalist rhetoric about development as a war and workers as “industrial warriors,” “builders of industry,” and as “leading producers of exports” (140). In this regard, the laborers’ subsequent identification as *nodong-ja* or workers and even their appropriation of what were pejorative terms is a concrete manifestation of the growth of class consciousness on the part of the workers who were now able to “debunk state ideologies” and to “search for a language of their own” (141).

These changes did not occur in a vacuum. Koo points to the significance of social movement networks and the role of organic intellectuals from which the workers drew organizational resources and found logistical support for their struggle. Some church organizations and the student-worker alliance aided in making the labor movement visible and sustained it during the most oppressive years of military rule. Furthermore, they were actively engaged in the articulation of the political, economic, and social discontent in the language of justice embedded in Korean culture and eventually channeled it into the realm of political action. In the 1980s, the growth of the *minjung* movement or people’s movement based on the broad political alliance of the politically oppressed was a clear indication of the growth of an alternative vision (146).

Koo’s comparative approach turns out to be very productive. He maps out the distinct characteristics of the making of the Korean working class and compares them to known European cases. In so doing, he locates theories of class historically and suggests that the concept will become richer as it integrates various experiences.

Koo utilizes a great deal of government statistics that he balances by equitable use of materials produced by workers and labor activists. The extensive use of personal diaries, essays, poems, play scripts, and collective reports on workers’ protest actions provide a look into the lives, struggles, and feelings of workers as well as the gradual change in their political consciousness.

All in all, this book is a bonus for all labor history syllabi as it touches upon a wide range of issues giving each enough attention and space. The theoretical discussions that make this a lively reading are there to help the reader relate the particulars to debates in social science. Koo’s will certainly become the standard book on Korean labor history and a good reference for the students of social movements.

If Koo's book follows the more or less conventional periodization which locates the emergence of the modern Korean working class in the 1960s, Soon-Won Park's *Colonial Industrialization and Labor in Korea* views the period between the 1930s and 1960s as a "transition period" where structural changes in Korean society and economy took place (139). Park's book in this regard presents a fresh perspective in understanding the relationship between wage labor as a modern phenomenon and colonialism as a vehicle of modernity in Korean history.

Park's main argument is relatively simple and clear. Japanese imperial expansion brought about the industrialization of its colonies. Korea's status changed from being a granary and export market to that of a forward base by the mid-1930s with the rise of Japanese militarism and the subsequent Japanese expansion into Manchuria. This resulted in the building up of heavy industries and infrastructure in colonial Korea. This, in turn, led to the production of the first generation of wageworkers whose training in modern colonial factories made them "valuable human assets" in view of post-liberation industrial development (191).

Park's case study is very informative about the structure of the colonial labor market and the mechanisms of labor control based on nationality (114). Indeed, the difference in nationality seems to have structured every corner of a worker's daily experience: compared to their Japanese counterpart, Korean workers were paid less, were placed under the Japanese managers, were residentially segregated, and were not eligible for legal protection (124). Park does a good job illustrating the larger point by incorporating statistical analyses and the use of charts.

Further, she suggests that the fragmented identities of colonial subjects may provide the partial answer for the absence of large-scale strikes or labor disputes in the Onoda cement factory (189). The complex social reality blurred the distinction between the colonizer and the colonized. And the colonial subjects employed multiple strategies in order to better their lot. In doing so, they inevitably bought into their own oppression.

As for evidence, Park heavily relies on company documents such as annual reports, pamphlets, and official company histories. Her use of oral interviews with former workers could have been more systematic in ascertaining the way the workers understood their experience at the Onoda factory. Park is concerned with labor management and control, in itself a very legitimate subject of inquiry.

All in all, Park's argument is primarily directed against Korean nationalist historiography for which locating the origin of Korean capitalism in the colonial period was taboo. Her bold interpretation of colonial history renders problematic the conception of colonialism through the monolithic dichotomy of colonizer and colonized, aggressor and victim. Indeed, such schematic understanding has long obscured the historical complexities and heterogeneity of subjective responses. This line of questioning needs to be further explored in order to al-

low for a more nuanced understanding of the position of labor during the colonial period.

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Andrew Gordon, *The Wages of Affluence: Labor and Management in Postwar Japan*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998. xi + 296 pp. \$39.95 cloth; \$18.95 paper.

William M. Tsutsui, *Manufacturing Ideology: Scientific Management in Twentieth-Century Japan*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1998. xi + 296 pp. \$42.50 cloth; \$21.95 paper.

Complementary studies by Andrew Gordon and William M. Tsutsui of rationalization and control in the twentieth-century Japanese industrial workplace clarify the shifting stances of both workers and managers and demystify the origins and characteristics of “Japanese management.”

Andrew Gordon clearly spells out his major objective: he seeks to explain “the oppressive political and ideological processes that enabled the Japanese system of ‘cooperative’ labor-management relations to emerge and to endure” (1). Because the “Japanese system” took shape in the post-World War II period, his book amounts to a history of labor-management relations in postwar Japan, focusing on the steel industry.

What does he mean by “cooperative labor-management relations”?

The core ideas of the cooperative gospel ... were simple. The goal of unions was not to transform capitalism, but to improve it. Unions and workers should participate in the workplace not through activism that challenged management and assumed conflict of interest, but by working flexibly to accept new technology and offering suggestions for improvement through quality control [QC] programs. The result would be an expanding pie of production and profits. Unions existed to ensure that workers were not sacrificed on the altar of rationalization but received their fair share of the bounty of productivity gains in the form of higher pay or shorter hours. (132)

Although Gordon’s main goal is to explain the victory of such a system, he is also concerned to illuminate the alternative visions and directions that consumed the energies of large numbers of people for a time but did not prevail. That is, he shows that at least through the 1950s, Japanese unions were often militant and activist, successfully organizing the rank and file on the shop floor, agitating and striking effectively for changes in the level and structure of pay, promoting democratic and pacifist goals in the political arena, and contesting management’s hegemony of the workplace. Were it not for certain historical factors and processes that intervened, such militancy might have survived. Instead,

by the end of the turbulent 1950s, management had regained control of the industrial workplace and labor militancy in steel had become a thing of the past. Hence, not a single strike has occurred in the steel industry since 1960.

What were those historical factors and processes? Gordon mentions but does not elaborate here on several significant but amorphous tendencies at the macro-historical level: Japan's "late development" was conducive to factory-based unions and corporate training programs, which helped stabilize workers' loyalty; it also enhanced the role of the state in the economy and social management, and subjected workers to the self-sacrificial rigors of "catching up with the West." Similarly, the enforced solidarities of total-war mobilization and wartime devastation impressed upon workers as well as managers the need to promote national recovery and corporate competitiveness. Defeat brought deep American involvement in labor relations, initially to foster "free" anti-communist unions and later, via the Japan Productivity Center, to promote their subjection to corporate authority and an ideology of productivity.

Gordon's most extensive and enlightening discussions of historical processes that encouraged the development of cooperative labor relations concern micro-historical events in the steel industry itself. He focuses on the front-rank steel producer, NKK (Nippon Kokan, or Japan Steel Tube). Gordon describes how managers illegally encouraged the formation within the union of secret, right-wing groups that sought to deliver the workers into the hands of the company. In some cases, action by such informal groups even resulted in the formation of a "second union" that cooperated with management and eventually replaced the more militant organization. Gordon remarks, "Informal group members never accounted for a majority of employees or union members at NKK or any company. If Leninism is the strategy by which a politicized vanguard leads the masses to a socialist revolution, postwar Japan was home to a sort of Leninism-through-the-looking-glass. Informal Groups acted as a vanguard intent on leading the masses in the politically correct opposite direction" (135).

Gordon also describes the introduction and development of quality control, first as a statistical program imposed from the top down, and later as a company-wide program of Quality Control circles (groups of eight to ten workers who meet regularly to seek solutions to problems of workplace and product quality). According to Gordon, such groups eventually took the place of workplace activism as the site of worker participation. Although nominally voluntary, of course, "circle membership could only reach rates of 80 to 100 percent through a combination of attraction and coercion" (171).

Moreover, managers at NKK and other companies strove to rationalize not only the workplace but also their employees' families and daily lives. Via the New Life Movement, beginning in the late-1940s the company initially promoted birth control and then branched out to provide information and instruction on cooking, childcare, health and nutrition, household budgets, and a variety of other matters. By organizing wives into small groups, company "counselors" also powerfully reinforced separate gender roles, instilled loyalty to the compa-

ny, and disrupted union solidarity. Indeed, the remarkable similarity between New Life Movement circles and the quality control circles that dominated the workplace was hardly accidental.

If Gordon emphasizes unions and the workers' perspective on labor-management relations, Tsutsui focuses on the theory and practice of production management. His stated agenda is to demonstrate the prevalence and significance of Taylorite techniques and ideology in Japan from early in the twentieth century to the present. Along the way, he illuminates from a different angle much of the ground explored by Gordon and expands upon crucial aspects of the triumph in postwar Japan of rationalization and the cooperative ideology.

According to Tsutsui, Taylorism, or Scientific Management, was first introduced in Japan in 1911, the very year in which Frederick Winslow Taylor published his magnum opus, *The Principles of Scientific Management*. Scientific Management developed and spread rapidly, and by the end of the 1920s it had reached a level of influence comparable to that it enjoyed in the US and Europe. According to Tsutsui, it was modified and adapted over time to fit the Japanese context, but even the "revised Taylorism" that resulted remained quite similar to its American counterpart.

The role of Scientific Management in war mobilization and the fascist New Order that emerged in 1937 is especially fascinating. Despite the widespread assumption that Japan's wartime corporatism and state-centered planning was largely based on German models (if not "uniquely Japanese"), Tsutsui argues that especially in its emphasis on efficiency, rationalization, and the separation of management from ownership, the New Order system "was consistent with and, to a certain degree, derived from the logic of Scientific Management" (93). Thus, in some ways, Japanese fascism was as American as apple pie.

Tsutsui also points to direct lines of continuity from wartime into the postwar era, and here his analysis overlaps with and reinforces Gordon's. A postwar "ideology of productivity" that espoused "harmonious labor relations, a compliant working class, and a social consensus that legitimized a managerial, technocratic order" (136) reinforced the program of cooperative labor relations that Gordon analyzes, and Tsutsui shows that program's close connections to Scientific Management.

Ideologues of so-called "Japanese management" have often portrayed QC circles as a warm and democratic, indigenous alternative to the austere scientism associated with American Scientific Management, but Tsutsui argues convincingly that in fact QC reinforced and supported the "revised Taylorite" consensus on the need for scientific standards and control. Especially after the mid-1950s when QC was diffused throughout the firm as "total quality control," it fostered the internalization of management's work standards and instilled rigorous discipline and self-surveillance. This had little to do with workplace democratization. Indeed, what emerges clearly from both studies is the enormous effort Japanese managers have expended to carry out what Taylorites call the "mental revolution." Managers and their union collaborators have paid attention to approaches, such as industrial engineering, that seek to improve produc-

tivity by manipulating the machinery and sequences of the work process, but they prefer to achieve the same result by manipulating and transforming worker mentality. As a result, the hegemony of cooperative labor-management relations in Japan rests squarely on a regime of internalized discipline and self-management.

Gordon and Tsutsui skillfully demonstrate the power of meticulous historical analysis to cut through the veil of national myth and class ideology that in the past has obscured the realities of the Japanese factory. Their findings should also give pause to those who are tempted to weave new myths of Japanese industrial utopia, whether based on “post-Fordism,” “flexible production,” or the “Toyota paradigm.”

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Nancy R. Powers, *Grassroots Expectations of Democracy and Economy: Argentina in Comparative Perspective*. Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2001. xvi + 296 pp. \$19.95 paper.

Paula Alonso, *Between Revolution and the Ballot Box: The Origins of the Argentine Radical Party*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000. xiii + 242 pp. \$52.95 cloth.

The Argentine political system has provided a source of endless debate for scholars pondering the enigmas of this anguished nation. Thanks to media coverage of the current Argentine crisis, a concerned public around the world has become interested in understanding the roots of the country's recent troubles. Two new academic works provide excellent guides through the complexities of Argentine politics that will reward attention from specialists and a more general scholarly audience. Political scientist Nancy R. Powers explores popular reactions to Argentine democracy and neoliberal economics during the early 1990s. Focusing on events a century earlier, historian Paula Alonso investigates the rise of the Radical Party, an organization that became one of Argentina's two major parties in the twentieth century. Both authors offer rich accounts of political orders undergoing uneasy transitions.

Powers's book addresses a period of intense economic turbulence. In the late 1980s, the democratic government of Raúl Alfonsín buckled under the pressure of hyperinflation and social protests. The Peronist Party swept Alfonsín's Radical Party out of power in the 1989 presidential elections. The nation's new president, Carlos Menem, ran on a platform that promised salary increases and economic stability. While the Menem administration succeeded in vanquishing hyper-inflation and spurring growth, it pursued a brand of neoliberal economics that generated increased unemployment, poverty, and inequality. Despite these high social costs, Menem won reelection in 1995. In light of this seeming contradiction, Powers poses the fundamental question, “What considerations do cit-

izens use in judging their economic goals and the government's performance?" (2).

To answer this query, the author examines how an individual's perception of material interests shapes his or her political outlook. Powers argues that the existing scholarship on social movements, populism, and public opinion fail to explain adequately the relationship between the pocketbook and politics, especially in the case of "non-elites." As a corrective to these studies, *Grassroots Expectations* investigates how individuals experience deprivation and how these struggles affect their views on democratic politics. The book draws heavily from forty-one in-depth interviews with "non-elites" conducted in 1992 (with additional fieldwork and interviews in 1995). These subjects represent a cross-section of the less affluent from two Buenos Aires neighborhoods, including downwardly-mobile office employees, penniless retirees, service workers, and former factory laborers. Powers quotes extensively from these interviews, providing the reader with a vivid sense of these individuals' outlook on life, tactics for survival, and ironic political humor.

According to her findings, individuals who perceive themselves as "coping" with material challenges tend to fall into two groups: micro-focusers (those with little awareness or interest in how government might resolve their personal problems) and macro-focusers (those who see a role for government in addressing material need, but who resist connecting national politics to their quotidian conditions). By contrast, those who feel unable to cope often form a macro-micro link, holding the government responsible for solving their most pressing needs. The author, however, is careful to avoid oversimplifying these three categories of reactions, and she devotes Chapter Six to considering how different "filters" (pre-existing party loyalties, ideology, and historical experience, among others) color her subjects' views.

Powers formulates a number of important conclusions from this research. Many of her subjects expressed displeasure with aspects of *menemista* rule. But the coping mechanisms they pursued (such as seeking work in the informal sector) and contextual factors (for some, continued identification with the Peronist Party) mitigated against micro-macro linkages. Thus, the majority of the subjects sought their own solutions rather than expecting or demanding immediate government action. More generally, interviewees declared their support for democracy, a concept they defined in various ways, but most often in opposition to military government. Yet this defense of democracy co-existed with anger towards party leaders and disillusionment with politics-as-usual.

These conclusions are well-argued and supported by the evidence culled from the interviews. Nevertheless, there are a few areas that the reader wishes the author had probed in more depth. Quite predictably, it is worth asking how Powers's analysis would differ had she selected subjects from poorer suburbs of greater Buenos Aires or provincial communities, where opportunities for individual coping are much more limited than in the center city. Likewise, one learns much about coping techniques under Menem, but comparatively little about the specific ways the interviewees responded to the hyper-inflation of the late Al-

fonsín years. Most importantly, this study's temporal focus exerts a strong impact on its research findings. As Powers herself suggests in the closing pages, the hopeful tone of Menem's first term gave way after 1995 to a worsening economy and more vocal opposition. One wonders, of course, how Powers's subjects reacted to each passing year of double-digit unemployment, biting poverty, and public scandals. Did "non-elite" perceptions of their material and political interests—and of the viability of democratic rule—change over the broader time frame of the past decade? Rather than a criticism of her work, this last question points to the continued pertinence of the issues addressed in this thought-provoking study.

Looking back at the crises of a century earlier, Paula Alonso's *Between Revolution and the Ballot Box* reconsiders a formative period in Argentine political history. This thoroughly researched account traces the arc of the Unión Cívica Radical (UCR) or Radical Party from its roots in the political opposition of the late 1880s to its decline at the close of the 1890s. Alonso examines the institutional history of the UCR, in particular, its leadership and party organization. Yet this work is not a hermetic history of one party. Instead, the author situates the rise of the Radicals within the broader political context of the 1880-1916 period.

Between the Revolution and the Ballot Box paints a nuanced portrait of a "political arena" characterized by constant alliance making and breaking, vociferous sniping in the partisan press, and great factionalism. An earlier generation of scholarship emphasized oligarchical political control achieved through fraud and patronage directed by the Partido Autonomista Nacional (PAN). Revisionist studies of nineteenth-century politics—to which Alonso's work makes a major contribution—now argue that the thirty-six years of PAN rule were not simply an age of "easy, unchallenged, uniform domination," but also a time of political innovation and conflict (31). The PAN and its key leaders (above all, Julio A. Roca) come across as a less cohesive force than previously thought. Indeed, some of the book's most intriguing passages are about the UCR's arch-rivals, and the author skillfully portrays the PAN as a shadowy coalition of political bosses wrangling over public office and its spoils.

The view of the UCR that emerges from this work differs in significant respects from conventional accounts. Alonso argues convincingly against standard interpretations of the early Radicals as political "modernizers," harbingers of mass democracy, or representatives of an ascendant middle-class. The main significance of the Radical Party, from Alonso's perspective, resides in its challenge to the legitimacy of the PAN and its ideal of national progress. Rather than seek political accommodation, Radical leaders advocated armed opposition to the government and led unsuccessful revolutions in 1891 and 1893. By "revolution" UCR members by no means had in mind a social transformation along French, Soviet, or Mexican lines. Instead, Alonso describes the Radicals as conservative revolutionaries, who sought to restore civic life to the era of the 1853 Constitution, a supposed golden age before the corruption and frantic economic expansion that accompanied PAN rule. Her research also turns up new insights on pre-

viously underexamined issues, including the UCR's participation in electoral politics in Buenos Aires during the mid-1890s. Even as they shifted from revolutionary to electoral challenges after 1893, the Radicals' discourse of intransigent opposition remained their defining characteristic.

Alonso's discussion of the PAN, UCR, and other factions offers an appreciation for the period's political life without ignoring its limitations. As the author notes, less than two percent of the population in Buenos Aires city—the nation's most politically dynamic region—actually voted in 1896 (149). Despite the lack of property or literacy requirements, factors such as fraud, the disenfranchisement of women, and the city's high immigrant population, shrank the pool of potential voters. Yet for all these restrictions, the turn-of-the-century also witnessed the expansion of a vibrant civil society in Buenos Aires and other cities. Labor and immigration historians have shed new light on the formation of ethnic and religious associations, worker organizations, and leftist movements. At times one wishes that Alonso had broadened her analysis of “political context” to reference historical studies of these other forms of collective action and association. After all, the Radicals' conservative formulation of “revolution” contrasted sharply with the revolutionary dreams of their anarchist contemporaries, who burst onto the Argentine public scene in the early 1900s.

Alonso and Powers's books elucidate the contradictions of republican government at key junctures in Argentine history. *Between Revolution and the Ballot Box* concludes by emphasizing the lasting impact of the Radicals' confrontational style on twentieth-century mass politics. *Grassroots Expectations of Democracy and Economy* points to the continued faith of Argentines today in participatory democracy, but also their exasperation with political conflict and their desire for substantive social change.

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Stephanie Barrientos, Anna Bee, Ann Matear, and Isabel Vogel, *Women and Agribusiness: Working Miracles in the Chilean Fruit Export Sector*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999. xv + 231 pp. \$72.00 cloth.

Since the late 1970s, US and European consumers have enjoyed year-round availability of fresh grapes, pears, apples, and peaches in their local supermarkets—fruits that, in the winter months, come disproportionately from Chile. As the authors of *Women and Agribusiness: Working Miracles in the Chilean Fruit Export Sector* make crystal clear, this First World bounty is made possible through international agribusiness's hyper-exploitation of predominantly female labor in the Third World. Chile's highly profitable fruit-export industry was nurtured during Augusto Pinochet's military dictatorship (1973-1989), which promoted a radical liberalization of the economy and ruthlessly silenced a once powerful rural labor movement. Women comprise just over half of the estimat-

ed 300,000 *temporeros/as* (temporary workers) who labor for poverty wages under seasonal contracts in the industry's orchards, vineyards, and fruit-packaging plants. By the mid-1980s, the fruit industry's profits reached a half-billion dollars, making fresh fruit Chile's third most important source of foreign currency and prompting *The Wall Street Journal* to hail Chile's "economic miracle."

Women and Agribusiness joins the sizeable existing literature on women workers and globalization, but stands apart from the pack for its comprehensive scope and nuanced arguments. The book offers a lucid synthesis of the voluminous, Spanish-language scholarship on the fruit industry by Chileans as well as of numerous topic-specific studies by North Americans and Europeans. To this mix, the book adds each of the four authors' own original research in sociology, economics, and political science—drawing on government and business publications, interviews, and oral histories. The resulting product is a concise (200 page), well-navigated tour through the various layers and dynamics of this corner of the global economy. If one has time to read but a single book on Chile's fruit-export sector, this is the book.

Women and Agribusiness begins with a short history of the fruit industry, rightly noting (as few scholars do) that the foundations of the fruit-export economy were established by the democratically-elected and heavily state-managed economies of the Eduardo Frei and Salvador Allende governments that preceded military rule: authoritarianism and neoliberalism are not sole creators of dynamic economies or international trade. Nonetheless, the book goes on to detail the radical transformation of the countryside under dictatorship, including the re-privatization of lands expropriated under the Agrarian Reform of 1964-1973, massive peasant land dispossession, and the emergence of a class of entrepreneurs who actively looked to California as an agribusiness model. The authors carefully describe the complicated structure of the industry: While international export-houses such as Dole control a disproportional share of the Chilean market, Chilean-owned export firms such as David del Curto, are also big players and most fruit-production remains domestically owned. What most marks the industry is its centralization: some eight thousand producers funnel their products to three hundred exporters, only twenty of which control seventy-two percent of the market. Elsewhere, the authors discuss the links between export-houses in Chile and supermarkets and wholesale distributors in the US and Europe.

Within this wider structural picture, the authors devote the majority of their energies to discussing the importance of women workers and their varied experiences as laborers. Familiarly, they discuss the replication of household divisions of labor within the workplace—including the assignment of women to more "detailed" and "fine-motor skilled" tasks such as cleaning fruit and employers' assumption that women workers are more docile than men. *Las temporeras* include single and married women, teenagers and the middle-aged, students, housewives, and small-farmers. While a sizeable number come from peasant families that still work subsistence plots, a greater number are from landless peasant origins or come from the ranks of urban poor. Significant num-

bers of the women workers live in cities, from where they are bused out to the agricultural sector. Helpfully, the book offers two contrasting case-studies: the more peasant-based fruit-producing area of Chile's Norte Chico region, and the more proletarianized southern Central Valley.

Despite their different origins and social situations, however, *temporeras* seem to have roughly similar, complex and contradictory, experiences of the workplace. Although women's earnings are rarely enough to lift them out of poverty, for many *temporeras*, employment in the fruit-industry offers them an unprecedented access to cash income that, in turn, allows them new control over household budget decisions and heightened bargaining power with husbands and/or parents. Similarly, a certain gender parity is encouraged by the fact that women earn roughly equal wages to (and sometimes higher wages than) men; but this, in itself, is a product of the steep decline in permanent, well-paid male employment, and the dramatically lower rural incomes that accompanied the end of the Agrarian Reform and turn to neoliberalism. While many women report that their new roles as workers have forced men to take on more responsibility for childcare and housework, just as many complain of double-burdens and male recalcitrance. Almost universally, *temporeras* view their work as a positive opportunity to escape the isolation of the home, socialize with other women, and make significant economic contributions to their families. Just as universally, they complain of long hours, lack of daycare, unsanitary work conditions, sexual harassment, employer negligence, and pesticide exposure.

Refreshingly, the authors of *Women and Agribusiness* are comfortable emphasizing the contradictions of women's insertion into the global economy, rather than having to judge it "good" or "bad." While many studies on women workers and globalization have stressed women's extensive suffering (or, to a much lesser extent, have praised women's work as "liberating"), this book takes the position that while certain forms of patriarchy are clearly eroded by women's work as *temporeras*, the fruit-industry just as clearly hyper-exploits women and perpetuates cycles of poverty for all of its workers (both male and female). Helpfully, this argument shies clear of pathologizing women in the "new" global workforce as ever vulnerable (a depiction common to much of the literature on globalization, which has unwittingly reinforced essentialist notions that men are somehow better fit for paid work). At the same time, the argument eschews a simple equation of the decline of some forms of male dominance with female emancipation.

The book closes with two provocative chapters on the prospects for progressive change. The authors note that, despite the fact that military rule ended in 1989, the new democratically elected government (a center-left coalition of socialist and Christian Democratic parties) has remained committed to the neoliberal economic program initiated by Pinochet. Reforms of the dictatorship's Labor Code have been minimal, making it difficult for temporary workers to form unions or collectively bargain and, as a rule, the government has showed little interest in meaningful grassroots organization. The government's main initiative for *temporeras* has been to promote gender equality in the workplace, but

its initiatives have tended to reinforce women's responsibility for childcare and the employer discrimination that this engenders.

The authors conclude that, ironically, *temporeras'* best prospects for improved livelihoods may rest with the international community, including pressure from multinational companies and international trade organizations such as the World Trade Organization (WTO). Perhaps too optimistically, the authors look to the examples of such companies as Nike and Levi-Strauss instituting "codes of labor conduct" in their overseas factories in response to consumer and NGO pressure. Such welfare-capitalism (or "ethical-trading" as the authors prefer to call it) no doubt brings real and important benefits to the workers it touches, but it leaves unanswered the problem of empowering workers to make demands on employers themselves and can reinforce the authority of multinational companies. Likewise, the authors' suggestion that the inclusion of "social clauses" mandating labor and environmental standards in international accords such as North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and the WTO might benefit Chilean *temporeras* seems premature. As the authors themselves frankly admit, none of the parties involved in such accords have showed any willingness to institute such clauses. The national political interests that prevent meaningful reforms at the domestic level are the same forces impeding change at the international level. A case in point is the 2003 finalization of a Free Trade Agreement between Chile and the US in which Chile's Socialist president Ricardo Lagos agreed with US Republican president George W. Bush that "the fine details of labor and environment" should be placed to the side in the interest of trade and progress. The authors mightily convince that the problems of globalized workers requires international solutions, but how to affect that remains a challenge for the future.

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Dale Hathaway, *Allies Across the Border: Mexico's "Authentic Labor Front" and Global Solidarity*. Cambridge, MA: South End Press, 2000. xx + 267 pp. \$19.00 paper.

Since the implementation of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) between Canada, the United States and Mexico, the productivity of industrial workers in each country has increased while their real wages have fallen. Focusing on Mexico and measuring the results of NAFTA, Dale Hathaway's *Allies Across the Border: Mexico's "Authentic Labor Front" and Global Solidarity* explores the social ramifications of neoliberalism, its impact on workers in industrial and underdeveloped nations, and its implications for democracy and national sovereignty in poorer countries that recruit multinational firms through cheap labor and lax environmental and worker protections. Using the experiences of the Frente Autentico del Trabajo (FAT), a grassroots labor union fac-

ing powerful domestic and international opposition as it seeks to improve working conditions in Mexico, Hathaway makes the case that worker solidarity across borders offers the most viable way to achieve a more broadly shared prosperity than is being created at present.

Establishing the larger context in which the Frente Autentico must operate, the author recounts how, since the early 1980s, Mexico has had trouble paying its staggering debts. The way the country became beholden to international creditors is sadly ironic and well known to students of Mexico, but the implications are worth revisiting. After discovering one of the largest reserves of oil in the western hemisphere, Mexico's leaders decided to use oil money to develop the nation and achieve greater economic independence. They borrowed heavily to build infrastructure, increase exploration, and develop drilling and refining capabilities, but then the price of oil collapsed in the early 1980s and the government turned to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) for money to meet its huge loan payments, and had to adopt austerity measures to get it. Another economic meltdown in the 1990s forced Mexico to seek a new loan from the United States government to pay off their old loans by offering future oil revenue as collateral. Hathaway explores the undemocratic influence of globalization and this is a good example, since the US government's loan to Mexico came, of course, from US taxpayers, went to the Mexican government, which then turned around and gave it to US banks. It therefore represents a significant redistribution of wealth from the American public to powerful private institutions, and it also demonstrates how international creditors gained control of one of Mexico's most vital natural resources and compromised Mexican sovereignty in the process. Instead of oil revenue going into education, health care, job creation, or other social services, it goes into the vaults of the world's largest lending institutions that demand that policy. The results have not been happy for the majority of Mexicans and Hathaway shows how the neoliberal model of growth pursued by Mexican leaders compounds the problem.

Today the largest private sector employer in Mexico is Delco, which makes auto-electric parts, followed by other foreign corporations like General Motors, General Electric, Phillips Petroleum, Ford, and Daimler-Chrysler. Operating in a country with high unemployment and a private sector unable to absorb the workforce of a growing and malnourished population, these multinationals wield substantial influence on the Mexican government, which recruits them and tries to make sure they do not leave for a more favorable business climate elsewhere. Mexico's government accommodates the desire of these firms for greater profits than they could achieve in places like the United States in a number of ways. The author shows how low wages are maintained by government control of the Mexican labor movement through co-opted official unions like the Confederacion de Trabajadores Mexicanos (CTM), that help employers discourage independent unions seeking higher wages, safer conditions and greater participation in decisionmaking on the shop floor.

The Frente Autentico is an independent union with a vision of the future that includes a worker-managed society and a democratic political and economic

system based on grassroots organizations like the factory, the cooperative, or the neighborhood, and as such resonates with longstanding Mexican desires for local autonomy in the pueblos and with early worker struggles. Multinational firms and the Mexican government have a different vision that seeks to control worker's groups from the top down. One example of many the author offers of how the government co-opts labor is the Pact of Economic Solidarity of 1987, when labor and business leaders met during an economic crisis and agreed to cap both wage and price increases. The accord meant that labor gave up any hope of regaining losses in real income suffered during that decade, but received greater amounts of subsidized food distributed through official union networks. The lesson is that independent unions in Mexico face outright opposition and intimidation from employers, as well as the insidious effects of the power of patronage.

The Frente Autentico began organizing in the early 1960s in the shoe industry in Leon, had some early success and expanded into other industries and locales, including Irapuato, where a large clothing industry was developing with predominately female workers. The example of the company Ropa Irapuato is important because after negotiating contracts the workers benefited and the company remained in business for decades, challenging business assertions that granting the Frente contracts meant death to any employer. The unions' success did not last though. Hathaway tells their history of having to confront a combination of tactics including bosses simply closing their businesses to bust the union, or firing all their employees like they did at the broom factory in Las Palomas, Chihuahua, or of government-sponsored unions like the CTM organizing in collusion with employers to defeat Frente Autentico-sponsored unions through rigged elections like the one at the Water Works that only allowed white-collar office workers to vote, avoiding the Frente's constituency of blue collar workers in the field. The combination of tactics succeeded in taking its toll on the Frente and other independent labor movement in Mexico.

The passage of NAFTA exacerbated problems for US workers as companies threaten to leave for Mexico, and it has failed to improve conditions for Mexican workers whose real wages fell despite increases in productivity and manufactured exports. Responding to the new situation, the Frente Autentico began to look for allies across the borders of North America. In the United States, the United Electrical Workers Union (UE) realized the only way to stop the downward pressure on US wages was to join independent non-government unions in other countries, especially those bargaining with the same employer. So, even though Mexican labor poses a threat to American labor because of its low wages, the UE decided that one important way to protect American workers was to elevate the salaries and conditions of Mexican workers.

The first transnational corporation that the Frente Autentico and UE took on was General Electric. They tried to organize a major plant in Ciudad Juarez, across the border from El Paso. Mexican workers there made one-tenth the wages of American workers for the same job. When GE discovered the plans to organize a union they fired 120 workers. The UE heard about the firings and sent

a team to investigate. When they got to Juarez the Americans saw the maquilas and the new industrial parks, with the small pleasant townhouses of Mexican middle management nearby, but then they took the bus to the shanty towns with dirt streets, makeshift houses made out of wooden pallets without toilets, running water or electricity, and they visited with a workforce that is two-thirds female, that tries to live on about three dollars a day. Unfortunately, despite their efforts, the alliance between the Frente Autentico and UE has done little to improve conditions for GE workers so far. Given the combined power of the transnationals, the massive debt inhibiting the independent action of the Mexican government, and its history of controlling worker militancy through a co-opted labor movement, a realistic assessment of the situation reveals that so far the bi or tri-national efforts have not achieved the goal of broadening prosperity and democracy. Hathaway, though, tells a history of the Frente Autentico that combines the larger issues of globalization with real life stories that reveal the tenacity and commitment of the men and women involved, and that is what provides hope that the potential the author sees in cross border alliances may eventually bear fruit. This book is clear and well written and should be read by anyone interested in globalization, NAFTA, Mexican labor history, and reshaping the future.

Paul Hart

Southwest Texas State University

Bill Weinberg, *Homage to Chiapas: The New Indigenous Struggles in Mexico.* New York: Verso, 2000. xxi + 456 pp. \$29.00 cloth.

Let us be clear: although the author's reporting on the Zapatista movement (EZLN) and his personal interviews with Subcomandante Marcos and other insurgent leaders are at the heart of this book, this is not a book about the Zapatista uprising, nor even primarily about Chiapas. Given its title, the book begins rather disorientingly with a diatribe against the US Postal Service, the Bell Atlantic telephone company, and the New York utilities provider Consolidated Edison. When on page two we find the author yelling "Down with Bell Atlantic," after paying his long overdue phone bill at a Bell Atlantic office on Manhattan's Lower East Side, the reader is set up to expect an off-kilter polemic against BIG BUSINESS.

The book is therefore a surprise. It is indeed a tract against globalization, neoliberalism, militarization, and corruption, but the author himself seems sane, as he thoughtfully and even-handedly investigates and analyzes their effects on poor, mostly rural, Mexicans. The vast core of the book is taken up with accounts of the ways in which Mexican peasants and Indians cope with, and organize against, the physical insecurity, poverty, and indignity that are rained on them from on high. It is about the continuous struggle of oppressed people to find a

voice, and about the conspiracies, corruption, and betrayals that prevent their voice from being heard.

Part of the argument of the book is that many of these struggles were inspired by the January 1994 indigenous uprising in the south of Mexico. After a couple of chapters of orientation, in which the author catalogues and analyzes the ill effects of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) on the Mexican people, which are vast, he turns his attention to the Zapatista movement, its charismatic leader, and its broad base of support, in Mexico and overseas. Although the EZLN has not been successful in many of the standard ways we measure revolutionary success (they did not take over the country, they did not force the ouster of President Zedillo, they did not seriously disrupt subsequent elections, they did not end NAFTA, and they did not even improve living conditions for their supporters or force government compliance with the San Andres Accords), Weinberg endorses the proposition that the uprising was the first postmodern revolution, and that the success of the EZLN has come in the fact that it helped to foster a Mexican civil society, to open the space for participation, and to inspire a wild-fire of other struggles. As he says in the last chapter of this section, the Zapatistas produced “a revolution to make another revolution possible.”

This part of the book is well written and researched, and Weinberg's own interview with Marcos is interesting, its circumstances amusing. But other than his interview, little in this section is new, and most will be familiar to anyone who has read a few of the dozens of books that have been written on the Zapatista uprising over the last decade. The author brings readers up to date on Zapatista initiatives undertaken after 1996 when the movement largely fell out of the public eye. The persistent misspelling of words like *cabecera* and *Soconusco* is jarring.

The other three major sections, which cover the last two hundred pages of the book, are really where the meat of the project lies. Here Weinberg looks at environmental struggles over oil and water in Tabasco, *campesino* struggles over land in Oaxaca, and a battle between communal landowners and real estate developers over a dwindling water supply and a proposed golf club in Morelos. The “little guy” is never really victorious in these struggles, but he is an actor, and a persistent thorn in the side of corporate villains in cahoots with fraudulent elected officials. Well-drawn characters advance the dramatic plot.

Weinberg's reporting is at its best, not surprisingly for a former editor of *High Times* magazine, in his coverage of the Mexican drug trade, the complicity of high level Mexican government officials, the relationship between the drug trade and NAFTA, and the effects of drug cultivation on Mexican farmers. Most of this is based on his own travels, reporting, and interviews, and other information is drawn from public sources like *The New York Times* and *La Jornada*. But Weinberg marshals this wealth of information to support a compelling argument that links the failure of the war on drugs in Mexico to the US government's greater commitment to NAFTA. Washington has halted Drug Enforce-

ment Agency (DEA) investigations that come too close to fingering top Mexican government officials, and Weinberg details the ties between the Salinas family, including former president Carlos and not just his oft-scapegoat brother Raul, and the Mexican drug cartels. The Mexican drug trade, which is of course aimed at the US market, leads the author to the issue of US counter-narcotics programs in Mexico and increasing US involvement in Mexican defense, including training, joint operations, and a dramatic upsurge in weapons sales. American helicopters donated to Mexico for counter-narcotics operations attacked and strafed villages in Chiapas in the days after the Zapatista uprising.

For Weinberg the connection is clear: free trade between Mexican and American conglomerates means a police state for the poor. NAFTA has forced many hundreds of thousands of Mexicans off their land and out of the labor pool. The number of Mexicans attempting to cross the border into the US has increased, as has the US commitment to keep them out. Walls across the border, searchlights, round the clock border patrols, helicopters, and US military deployment to the border mean essentially that more and more Mexicans die in the attempt to find work in the US. At the same time, the border is no less porous to drug transshipment, which relies on complicity with corrupt officials on both sides of the US-Mexico border.

This is not a happy book. Many people die, most violently and unjustly. Millions of others are hapless victims of forces and people far beyond their ken or control. But it is a riveting book. It is well written, meticulously researched, and carefully detailed. It presents an abundance of evidence to support the proposition that NAFTA in particular, and neoliberal globalization in general, benefits a few to the detriment of the vast majority. In the end, the book is perhaps less homage than a memorial to those who try to fight back.

Courtney Jung
New School University

Beth Bates, *The Pullman Porters and the Rise of Protest Politics in Black America, 1925–1945*. Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 2001. xvi + 275 pp. \$45.00 cloth; \$18.95 paper.

Eric Arnesen, *Brotherhoods of Color: Black Railroad Workers and the Struggle for Equality*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001. 332 pp. \$45.00 cloth; \$18.95 paper.

These two books add to a growing body of scholarship connecting the tactics and strategies of the modern civil rights movement to the black protest campaigns of the New Deal and Second World War. While historians such as Harvard Sitkoff and Cheryl Greenberg have demonstrated the influence of New-Deal policies on African-American protest politics, Bates and Arnesen explore the important role that black unionists played in shaping the civil rights agenda. Bates focuses on A. Philip Randolph and the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car

Porters (BSCP). Arnesen examines the struggles of several black railroad unions. Ultimately, both authors skillfully demonstrate black unionists' influence over the race's struggle for equality, drawing particular attention to early civil rights activists' insistence that economic and political democracy were inextricably linked. But while the authors share similar assessments of African American railroaders' political significance, Arnesen's focus on multiple unions presents a more complete picture of the complex forces shaping black politics.

Beth Bates offers a compelling analysis of the political implications of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters' struggle for recognition that both departs from the institutional focus of previous histories of the BSCP and complements Paula Pfeffer's 1990 study of A. Philip Randolph. For Bates, the porters union's significance lies as much in its impact on civil rights politics as its effectiveness as a vehicle for collective bargaining. Ultimately, she contends that the organizing techniques developed by the BSCP in Chicago, the home of the Pullman Company, would influence the character of black protest politics from the 1930s through the 1960s. The porters' union, therefore, represents one of the earliest architects of the civil rights movement.

Bates' thesis hinges on the tensions between Chicago's "old guard" black elites, who opposed the union in its first few years, and the "new crowd" leaders who helped organize it. Like other students of the BSCP, Bates attributes black elites' opposition to the fledgling union to a combination of the Pullman Company's influence and African American leaders' adherence to a kind of "petition politics." Consequently, the city's old guard tended to advocate alliances with employers, rather than trade unionism, as the key to uplift. According to Bates, the BSCP successfully counteracted both elite circumspection and antagonism by linking the porters' union's organizing drive to the general struggle for black equality. The union's leaders thus portrayed their efforts, and unionism generally, as essential to achieving manhood rights. Meshing ideologically and tactically with the New Negro movement of the 1920s, the BSCP's militant approach enabled it to secure support from prominent "new crowd" elites such as Ida B. Wells and other black clubwomen.

While historians have generally identified the period from 1928 to 1933 as the union's nadir, Bates contends that the new crowd networks nurtured by the BSCP in this period broadened the union's base of support, thereby laying the foundation for its success. By 1937, the porters' union would win both its struggle for better wages and working conditions as well as the support of old guard organizations such as the Chicago Urban League and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). For Bates, however, the BSCP's most important accomplishment would be its impact on civil rights politics. She argues that the union's new crowd networks were instrumental in organizing the National Negro Congress (NNC) and the March on Washington Movement, both of which were led by the BSCP's A. Philip Randolph. These two organizations successfully challenged the politics of civility championed by the NAACP and other old guard organizations. The NNC's popularity with African Americans prodded the NAACP to consider alliances with organized

labor. Randolph's March on Washington Movement, on the other hand, instructed old guard leaders as to the usefulness of combining pressure tactics with negotiation. These lessons, Bates asserts, would not only influence the relationship between mainstream civil rights groups and organized labor, but they would also shape the tactics and strategies of the modern civil rights movement.

Although Bates convincingly demonstrates the BSCP's importance as a pioneering civil rights institution, her focus on one union's struggle may lead her to occasionally overstate its significance. The sharp distinction Bates draws between old guard and new crowd organizations oversimplifies some of the issues shaping black civil rights and labor politics. For example, while Bates correctly characterizes the Chicago Urban League's (CUL) attitude towards organized labor as circumspect at best, tensions within the CUL and between it and the National Urban League, which basically supported the union movement, had as much to do with the evolution of the Chicago League's perception of the porters' union as the BSCP's networks. In general, Bates devotes insufficient attention to the complicated relationship between African Americans and the labor movement. Bates acknowledges that the racist practices of AFL (American Federation of Labor) locals accounts for some reluctance among black leaders to embrace unionism; however, her emphasis on the dichotomy in approach between new-crowd and old-guard tactics downplays the impact of racism within the union movement on the uplift vision of black leaders. For exploration of this complex issue, one must turn to Eric Arnesen.

Eric Arnesen's *Brotherhoods of Color* is a comprehensive history of black railroad workers' quest for economic and political equality from Redemption through the civil rights movement. Arnesen focuses on the organizing endeavors of two broad categories of railroaders: service workers, such as porters and dining-car employees, and operating staff, including firemen and brakemen. Placing black railroad workers' struggle in the context of dynamic shifts in union politics and American political economy, Arnesen devotes particular attention to the impact of union and employer racism on the labor strategies blacks' developed. Like Bates, he argues that African American railroaders' marginal status forced them to pursue unique approaches to unionism that combined economic and civil rights goals. Blacks' vulnerability likewise led them to look favorably upon government assistance due partly to the gains afforded them by the mediation boards established during World War One and the New Deal.

While Arnesen agrees with Bates' assessment of the BSCP, his focus on several unions fleshes out the complex nature of the organizing efforts that arise from the infusion of civil rights and labor politics. Ultimately, Arnesen demonstrates that African American railroaders advanced multiple perspectives on the role of unions, which reflected both the rich mosaic of black politics and the tenuous position African Americans occupied vis-a-vis employers and white labor. In combining civil rights and labor goals, African American railroaders' labor politics mirrored the disparate tactics of racial uplift. While the BSCP, for example, advocated a militant assertiveness, unions such as Robert Mays' Railway Men's International Benevolent Industrial Association adopted accommoda-

tionist tactics that owed more to Booker T. Washington than to Eugene V. Debs or Frederick Douglass.

African American railroaders' strategies were likewise influenced by their relationship to white unionists and employers. This is made especially clear by Arnesen's description of the contrasting impact of New Deal policy on black service and operations employees. The 1934 amendment to the Railway Labor Act was a boon to the BSCP and the Joint Council of Dining Car Employees, as the establishment of a National Mediation Board afforded both unions legitimacy. As Arnesen demonstrates, however, the amendment's proscriptions against dual unionism disadvantaged black operating craft workers who were, of course, employed in the same general fields as whites. Since the amendment did not outlaw "lily-white" unionism, black brakemen and firemen remained, for all practical purposes, unrepresented. While blacks in these fields had long been subject to the predatory practices of racist American Federation of Labor (AFL) locals, their vulnerability combined with the expansion of federal authority to lead them to develop organizing tactics tailored to their particular situation. Thus, rather than pursuing AFL affiliation or direct action tactics as the BSCP had, black firemen and brakemen organized independent unions, such as the Association of Colored Railway Trainmen (ACRT) and the International Association of Railroad Employees, that eschewed confrontational strategies in favor of petitioning the courts and government officials.

Though Arnesen shares Bates' belief that the BSCP was a pioneering civil rights organization, he argues that the petition politics advanced by these black independent unions was equally important in shaping civil rights strategy. Threatened by the railroad brotherhoods, employers, and federal policy, black independent craft unions coordinated activities with the NAACP through the 1930s and 1940s to fight discrimination through the courts. The verdicts rendered in these cases were mixed, but nonetheless chipped away at the discriminatory practices of the major railroad brotherhoods. While Arnesen makes clear that black railroaders' greatest gains would be derived from Civil Rights legislation, he argues that, in the end, the efforts of individuals such as A. Philip Randolph and Thomas Redd of the ACRT, helped draw attention to the injustice of workplace discrimination to a generation of Americans. Thus for Arnesen, like Bates, the struggles of black railroaders advanced the cause of both workplace and political democracy.

Touré Reed
Illinois State University

Paul Le Blanc, *A Short History of the U.S. Working Class: From Colonial Times to the Twenty-First Century*. Amherst, NY: Humanity Books, 1999. 205 pp. \$49.99 cloth; \$22.00 paper.

Paul Le Blanc's, *A Short History of the U.S. Working Class: From Colonial Times to the Twenty-first Century* is, in the author's words, an attempt to show how "labor's militant minorities have sometimes contributed decisively to what has happened in our country." It is, as well, an attempt to provide a "succinct" volume, a brief, usable history of working-class America and its importance in American historical development. The result is this slim volume that reads less as a history of working people than as a history of those who led worker's movements from colonial times to the present. This is not surprising given that much of Le Blanc's previous work concerns revolutionary leaders (V.I. Lenin, Leon Trotsky, Rosa Luxemburg) and his active involvement in the labor struggle. But what this brief volume necessarily lacks in scope in its focus on leaders, it more than makes up for in its concise blend of economic, social, cultural and political history to form a readable narrative of US labor that is largely free of arcane jargon, and easily accessible to the non-academic reader.

In spite of the brevity of the work (the narrative text is a mere 114 pages), Le Blanc manages to include most of the major figures and events in US labor history. All of the big names are here, the heroes as well as the villains, the victories as well as the defeats. Crispus Attucks, Tom Paine, Eugene Debs, Caesar Chavez are all here, as are the Knights of Labor, the Wobblies, Andrew Carnegie, red-baiting, Haymarket, and George Meaney. But Le Blanc also manages to work in the not-so-famous and the more obscure but important events. Along with Gompers and Mother Jones, we also read about the radical journalist Louis Adamic, who in the 1930s and 1940s attempted to recast American mythology to include the story of "Finnish copper miners" and "sandhogs under the Hudson River." We also meet the likes of Ben Fletcher, an African-American Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) organizer on the docks of Philadelphia, and the radical minister A.J. Muste, who ran the New York Brookwood Labor College. Le Blanc charts the rise of the American Federation of Labor (AFL) and the demise of the IWW, but also pays heed to the Work People's College in Duluth, Minnesota and the Mon (Monongahela) Valley Unemployed Committee of Western Pennsylvania.

While the major players and events are recounted and some of the lesser lights restored to positions of prominence, there is little that is new or groundbreaking here. Le Blanc relies on the standard views of labor history, many of which have been challenged by recent scholarship. For example, he recounts the struggle between labor radicals and union conservatives in the 1920s and 1930s, a dichotomy that has recently been disputed by Howard Kimmeldorf. But it is obviously not the author's intention to produce a ground-breaking work here, and in spite of his obvious and clearly stated passion for the labor movement, he does not gloss over or ignore the glaring problems of racism, sectionalism, gender discrimination, and xenophobia that have plagued the movement since its

inception. Yet one does get the impression that, in spite of the enormous complexities involved in all labor organizing and collective action, if only the radicals had won the small wars, things would be different.

The book moves chronologically from the colonial era to the present, with chapter headings that guide the reader to the standard periodizations of American history: "Industrial Revolution," "Gilded Age," "Progressive Era," "Cold War and Social Compact." Again, due to the brevity of the work, complex events and themes are largely reduced to simplistic dichotomies. Thus incidents like Shay's Rebellion are reduced to simple battles between the "impoverished" and the "rich." Le Blanc concludes with the chapter titled "Where To, What Next," in which he makes a muted call for nothing less than a "third American Revolution," the development of a labor ideology that moves ordinary people beyond the bounds of consumer culture to an "expansive social unionism," and ends the power of corporations.

Despite a certain romanticization of labor, as in attributing ethnic and religious schisms to the "wondrous mystery of existence," and claiming that John Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath* and its imagery somehow "powerfully effect working class consciousness," Le Blanc does not gloss over the problems US labor movements struggled with in areas like race, ethnicity and gender. While the book amply describes these problems, it also covers those in the labor movement who attempted to transcend them, like Seth Luther, an early nineteenth century proponent of women workers' participation in labor struggles. But while Le Blanc does deal with these problems, he also never gets to the actual details of divisions over race, ethnicity and gender. For instance, while there is discussion of black/white divides, there is little here on levels of "whiteness" among the working classes. Indeed, his categorization of class may be troubling to some readers. Le Blanc includes in the working class all "employed people and their family members whose living is dependent upon selling labor power to employers for wages or salaries." There is little discussion of self-identification among working people, or how these identities shift and change over time. This is in keeping with the general top-down tone of the work.

While I found the lack of footnoting to be frustrating, Le Blanc makes up for it with what is the book's major contribution to the study of the working class: his extensive annotated bibliography, glossary of labor terms, timeline of US labor history and labor history chronology. He includes in the bibliography not only the major written works on US labor, but also a very useful and accessible list of films, videos, fiction, poetry, photography, and art that take US labor as their subject. In addition, he includes a valuable list of periodicals and web sites that will be very useful for those beginning their study of US labor. The glossary of terms and the timeline are equally useful and easy to work with. The text itself is enhanced by the illustrations provided by labor activist and muralist Mike Alewitz.

What Le Blanc has provided here is what he set out to; a concise, one-volume history of the major figures and events in US labor history. Those readers looking for a history of working people will not find it here. What they will find

is a useful overview of the leading figures of the US labor movement and a potentially valuable tool for students and general readers with an interest in the labor movement.

Joseph Varga
New School University

Chad Berry, *Southern Migrants, Northern Exiles*. Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2000. xxiii + 343 pp. \$39.95 cloth.

Between World War One and 1970, millions of whites left the southern United States to move north. Those who relocated to the five states of the Old Northwest Territory are the subjects of Chad Berry's book. At the time of publication Berry was an Assistant Professor of History at Maryville College in Tennessee. He tells us that his own family participated in one such journey northward.

Berry has done extensive research in archival collections and relies heavily on letters, oral interviews and the occasional journal or memoir. He states that his method is to let the migrants themselves speak, and he does allow them to do so. He mixes these oral accounts with some statistical analysis of the migrants and their experiences in their old and new homes.

Berry begins with a discussion of the "pioneers" of the 1914-1929 period. He notes that many rural southerners first left the farm for southern cities or coal camps. He also reminds us that, while many of these early migrants ended up in Flint, Michigan, or in Akron, Ohio, thousands worked as migrant farmhands in the North to which they emigrated.

The onset of the Great Depression set off several contradictory phenomena. On the one hand, especially during its early years, the economic crisis brought northern job losses and a reversal of migratory trends. On the other hand, during the Roosevelt recovery, hundreds of thousands more rural southerners were drawn to the reviving factories. Berry also notes the direct impact of New Deal programs. Primary to his discussion are direct aid to the states for transient relief and the role of the Federal Transient Service from 1933-35. He also analyzes the features of the "discovery" of white migrants by journalists and sociologists. For Berry, the most positive aspect was a heightened attention to the problems of the group, while the closely-linked negative aspect was the fact that the diverse migrant population was lumped together with its most impoverished members.

It is the period from 1940 to 1960 that was the heart of the northward movement. The Tennessee Valley Administration (TVA) region alone lost 1.3 million people in those two decades. Ohio was the single largest state of influx. The war needs of the early 1940s set off the increased outward movement, but the pace continued at the same record level during the 1950s. Most southern white migrants did not come directly from the farm, but had lived previously in a small

town, city or mining camp. Since economic ambitions were the main outward spur, it is less surprising than Barry believes that migrants out-earned their stay-at-home counterparts in the mid-1950s by over twenty-one percent. Some statistical evidence of the relative economic status of leavers and stayers at the moment of departure might show whether the lives of average migrants really improved by moving.

Barry provides an interesting and suggestive chapter on transplanted southern white culture in the north. There emerged no powerful national southern white political association. In the vacuum, cultural life clustered around two poles. One, common to almost all heavily male immigrant groups, in reality and even more in public perception, was the culture of fighting and drinking that centered around bars. The other pole was based on the churches that the southerners brought with them or created, notably congregations of the Southern Baptist Convention, which grew dramatically in the North after 1945. Barry also notes the major changes in the lives of immigrant housewives, particularly due to household appliances and the absence of the household production units of the South.

One of Barry's main concerns is the general success of these migrants in the North. Not only did their incomes outstrip those who remained in Dixie, but the gap in migrant earnings versus those of native northerners steadily contracted. During the 1960-80 period there was only a very slight difference. After 1929, white migrants jumped ahead of northern-born blacks and far outstripped Southern-born Blacks. Deindustrialization and the rise of the Sunbelt established reverse migration patterns after 1970 and brought the period covered in Barry's book to an end.

Barry does a very good job of discussing homesickness and the persistence of Southern identification by the migrants. Many moved back and forth a number of times before either returning South for good or settling in the North. For Barry, in contrast to the situation of most European migrants or of southern Blacks, the time in the North represented a period of exile from a longed-for homeland, rather than an exodus or flight from a hated place of extreme oppression.

There is much here that is useful and perceptive. The book is somewhat modest in its claims, but does shed a great deal of light on the mentalities of the immigrants and the general success, in their own terms, of their economic efforts. His discussion of the role of transportation networks, especially highways and later the interstates, is excellent. The book is, however, too reluctant to compare and contrast white southerners with other emigrant groups. For example, the importance of kinship networks in producing and making successful the emigrant journey is key, and not very different than the experience of other migrants. Similarly, he is reluctant to generalize about the political impact of the migrants in the 1940s and beyond. Yet race relations, unions, and the Democratic and Republican parties were all substantially modified due to this geographic mobility. The "southernization" of postwar America is one key component of

today's polity. This book, taken on its own terms, makes a contribution towards understanding that component.

Mark McColloch
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Clifford M. Kuhn, *Contesting the New South Order: The 1914–1915 Strike at Atlanta's Fulton Mills*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2001. 320 pp. \$49.95 cloth; \$19.95 paper.

Southern labor history is replete with stories of defeat. In factory after factory, the defeat of southern workers' solidarity at the hands of industrial employers is one of the most enduring themes of the discipline. In *Contesting the New South Order: The 1914–1915 Strike at Atlanta's Fulton Mills*, Clifford M. Kuhn examines the defeat of textile workers at Atlanta's largest industrial employer from a local perspective. Kuhn is not the first historian to examine the 1914–1915 strike at Fulton Bag and Cotton Mill. Gary Fink's 1993 pioneering study, *The Fulton Bag and Cotton Mills Strike of 1914–1915*, presented a detailed analysis of the historic strike. Focusing on industrial espionage and efficiency, Fink uncovered the many ways in which the owner of Fulton Bag sought to control the lives of his employees and ultimately defeated the workers. Kuhn explores the strike from a different angle. He draws the history of the strike and the community of workers at the mill into a larger portrait of working-class life in Atlanta, a premier New South town. As a result, the voices of the workers resonate loudly throughout Kuhn's analysis. Drawing upon the unusually comprehensive and multi-faceted records of the Fulton Bag and Cotton Mill, Kuhn presents a study that weaves a local story into the larger fabric of the region. The story of the Fulton Bag and Cotton Mill is unusual, not only for the strike itself, but for the fact that it offers a new urban environment in which to study the history of textile mills in the South. Kuhn's study traces the history of the company, its workers and the strike within a larger history of Atlanta and the New South.

Contesting the New South Order opens with a comprehensive analysis of the principal characters in the strike. Kuhn traces the early life of Jacob Elsas, owner of Fulton Bag and Cotton Mill, exploring along the way the development of his business acumen and penchant for knowing personal details about his employees. As Fink also uncovered, Elsas was a master of industrial efficiency, making his factory one of the most productive in the region. Drawing on rich personnel records, Kuhn uncovers the backgrounds of job applicants at the mill. By the time of the strike, many workers came directly from farm or millwork in rural Georgia. They joined a growing group of impoverished white workers near the bottom of the economic strata of Atlanta. Kuhn pays particular attention to the issues surrounding the housing of Fulton workers. Jacob Elsas frequently appealed for entire families to work. Kuhn notes that despite that appeal, Fulton Bag actually had a relatively low number of children employed especially when

compared to other textile mills in the South. Elsas was unable to meet the housing needs of all of his thirteen hundred workers and, as a result, workers often rejected company housing and services, an option that their contemporaries in rural mill villages would likely not have had. Subjected to intractable labor contracts that benefited only Elsas and not the workers who signed them, mill hands also suffered under an unpredictable system of fines that left workers unable to predict their wages from week to week and vulnerable to vengeful supervisors. Like Fink before him, Kuhn utilizes the remarkable collection of labor espionage reports from Fulton Bag. These reports help Kuhn paint a complex and nuanced portrait of the workers at Fulton Bag.

Throughout *Contesting the New South Order*, Kuhn pays particular attention to the confluence of race, gender, and class at the mill and in the city of Atlanta. As Atlanta grew, the city's demographics changed and the percentage of African Americans declined. It was in this environment that the mill expanded, drawing on the increased supply of white workers from rural areas just north of the city. In the city, the competition between poor whites and blacks for industrial jobs was constant. At the mill, already heightened racial tensions increased when the company hired African Americans to evict workers from company housing. Discussions of gender also appear frequently in some sections of *Contesting the New South Order*. Kuhn argues that women played a leading role in the initial stages of a late nineteenth-century strike at the mill and then further recognizes the ways in which union organizers played upon community sympathy for exploited women workers by photographing women with barefoot children and the eviction of women from company housing. Kuhn also correctly notes that Atlanta was an unusual southern city with respect to its relationship to organized labor. Indeed, a trade unionist served as mayor of Atlanta for four terms in the first fifteen years of the twentieth century. The relatively prolabor atmosphere helped to provide the striking workers with critical support during the yearlong strike.

Contesting the New South Order has many strengths, chief among them the twenty-two photographs reproduced throughout the text. Kuhn's book puts a human face on the Fulton strike not only through impressive photos, but also through an ever-present attention to the dynamic of the workers' community at Fulton Bag. Although Kuhn clearly sympathizes with the workers in the strike, he offers readers a frank assessment of the shortcomings of both union organizers and the workers themselves. Kuhn does not waiver in his sympathies with the truly exploited mill employees, but he also recognizes when they played an unfair or even bigoted strategy. For instance, Kuhn notes that the United Textile Workers (UTW) tried to keep the strike going by doctoring a photo of the union's tent colony to make it look as if there were more workers on strike. Kuhn gets inside the workers' community by analyzing personal advertisements in a local prolabor paper. He uses a wide variety of material culture and oral history sources, including photographs of company housing and evictions, workers' songs and interviews with workers and their children, as the foundation of much of his analysis. Another important strength of the book is its attention to con-

text. In this way, Kuhn brings the story that Gary Fink pioneered out into the larger milieu of southern labor history. *Contesting the New South Order* is, at once, a history of the working class, a history of Atlanta, and a history of business in the New South and Progressive Eras.

Through close analysis of the course of the strike and the actions of its leaders, Kuhn concludes that worker resistance at Fulton Bag was “ (. . .) personal and individualistic, generally spontaneous and unorganized” (88). As Fink argued earlier, Kuhn finds that the UTW’s mismanagement of the strike and its inability to manage relief for the striking workers resulted in the failure of the strike and the downfall of the union in many people’s eyes. Although the story of the strike is ultimately one of defeat in the sense that the striking workers were never rehired, Kuhn argues that the strike forced lasting changes at the mill thus revealing the strength of the workers and the community that supported them. But looking at the strike with another lens, it seems that the outcome also proved that Elsas’ penchant for labor espionage paid off. Indeed, the anti-labor strategies pioneered during the 1914-1915 strike continued at Fulton Bag and throughout the South for years to come.

Michelle Haberland
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Stephen A. Vincent, *Southern Seed, Northern Soil: African-American Farm Communities in the Midwest, 1765–1900*. Bloomington and Indianapolis, IN: Indiana University Press, 1999. xvii + 224pp. \$35.00 cloth; \$19.95 paper.

Stephen A. Vincent’s *Southern Seed, Northern Soil* challenges some of the cornerstone views of African-American migration to the North. By examining the migration of African Americans to the rural North in the nineteenth century, Vincent highlights the fact that African-American northern migration did not solely take place in the twentieth century, particularly after the start of World War One, and that all migrants did not move to northern cities. Vincent’s welcome book focuses on the migration of free blacks from North Carolina and Virginia to two communities in Indiana in the 1830s—the Beech and Roberts settlements located in Rush and Hamilton counties. Vincent charts the southern precursors to this migration, the building of the Beech and Roberts settlements in Indiana, the success of these communities in the 1850s and 1860s, and then their decline that began in the wake of the Civil War and continued throughout the rest of the nineteenth century. By the turn of the twentieth century, almost all African Americans had left the Beech and Roberts settlements. Concurrently, these two communities began a new form of existence in the living memory of former residents as annual homecoming festivities were begun to celebrate “the neighborhoods’ exceptional character and history.” These events, which continued throughout the twentieth century, became the “second phase in the communities’ histories,” a phase that Vincent’s book is certainly a part (151).

The settlers of the Roberts and Beech settlements principally left three counties in northeastern North Carolina (Halifax and Northampton) and southeastern Virginia (Greensville) starting in the 1830s. The migrants were free people of color, with many having white, African-American, and Native-American ancestry. Despite the fact that most of the migrant families had been free since the late eighteenth century, with some even owning or renting slaves, their position was on the decline in the 1820s and 1830s. Southern whites increasingly sought to eliminate all distinctions among African Americans and to insure that all blacks, no matter how light their skin, were slaves. To escape such an environment, many free people of color from these three counties sought a better life in the Old Northwest.

The Beech and Roberts settlements offered migrants many advantages over their prior homes; potentially the most useful was their relative isolation. Contact with whites, whether in the South or the North, was rarely rewarding for African Americans. Isolation prevented such interaction, which often minimized conflict. An additional benefit of these settlements' location was the fact that many whites who lived nearby were members of the Society of Friends (Quakers), a group with a long history of support for abolitionism and the advancement of African-American rights. In short, the initial settlers of the Beech and Roberts communities picked an especially conducive environment for African Americans.

Once a small number of families had arrived in the Beech and Roberts settlements, the residents quickly began the process of establishing community institutions, particularly schools and churches. These provided a needed independence and the backbone of a concrete community identity. In contrast to life in the South, the isolation of the Indiana frontier allowed members of these communities a proverbial blank slate to carve as they wished. The many organizations and institutions that came out of this process highlighted the efforts made by residents to establish vibrant and independent communities shaped by hard work and cooperation.

As the roughest edges of frontier life began to fade in the late 1840s, these two communities entered the period that would be their peak—the 1850s and 1860s. During these decades land prices were good and many families were able to live off the proceeds of their own farms. In the years after 1870, however, life at the Beech and Roberts settlements became more difficult. As land prices stagnated or fell, so too did farm prices. Like many farm families in the late nineteenth century, blacks in these two Indiana communities were having a hard time keeping previously viable farms in operation, let alone earning a decent livelihood from the proceeds of their labor on the land. As life in rural Indiana became more difficult in the 1870s, the younger generations began to leave for better opportunities in expanding urban areas throughout the Midwest.

Even as these two communities faded in the late nineteenth century, Vincent stresses the relative advantages that life in the Beech and Roberts settlements brought to African Americans, even for those who left for towns and cities hundreds of miles removed. Vincent emphasizes that the core beliefs of these

communities, particularly those we now associate with a middle-class identity such as hard work, thrift, and discipline, served residents no matter where they ended up.

While there are many reasons to accept Vincent's contentions regarding the values of these communities, the method he uses to demonstrate the successes of Beech and Roberts residents is ultimately unconvincing. The cornerstone of Vincent's analysis of the economic success of current and former residents of these communities in the late nineteenth century is a database he created that links individuals from one census to the next. Those individuals living at the Beech or Roberts settlements in 1870 were linked to the census in 1880, no matter where they lived. The same procedure was applied to those living in the communities in 1880; only they were linked to the 1900 census manuscripts because fire destroyed the 1890 records. Such longitudinal databases are labor intensive and have enormous potential. They can also contain a good deal of systematic bias, particularly because it is nearly impossible to link more than half of the people one starts with. Those individuals who are located in the second census are most often atypical of the whole. The ability to read and write, for example, means that people's names are far less likely to be misspelled and hence they are less likely to be missed in the linking process. Individuals who stayed put were more likely to be successful and because they did not move, they were more likely to be included in the dataset. These are just two of the most frequent forms of bias in longitudinal databases. Such bias is a common problem to this type of data and it need not preclude sound analysis. Scholars using such data must, however, examine and explain how they have addressed its inherent problems. On this point, Vincent does not offer sufficient clarification. This book contains no information on how those who were linked differed from those who were not linked. As such, it remains unclear if Vincent's findings regarding the economic success of Beech and Roberts residents in the late nineteenth century—a critical argument of this book—were the product of a genuine historical reality or an artifact of his research method. Given all that is convincingly presented in earlier chapters, Vincent's argument seems quite plausible. His method of demonstrating it for the late nineteenth century, however, falls short.

This critique aside, *Southern Seed, Northern Soil* is an important book. The migration of free blacks to the North in the antebellum era is a topic worthy of much more scholarship, and Vincent charts new territory, much like the migrants he studies. We can hope that this work inspires scholars to more fully examine other aspects of African-American migration in the nineteenth century; a topic that this fine book makes clear is worthy of far more attention.

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Brian Kelly, *Race, Class, and Power in the Alabama Coalfields, 1908–1921*. Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2001. ix + 264 pp. \$49.96 cloth; \$19.95 paper.

For some years now the efforts of labor organizers to establish interracial unions in the Jim Crow South—in longshore, in steel, and in numerous other industries—has been the subject of vigorous historical debate. Who took the initiative in such organizing efforts, white or African-American workers? What were their hopes and intentions? How did both white and black workers cope with the enormous social and political pressures that were exerted to keep the two races apart? Among others, Eric Arnesen in his book on New Orleans longshoremen and Michael Honey, writing about workers in Memphis, have provided extensive evidence of such racial cooperation.

Nowhere was this issue more critical than in the bleak, isolated, coal towns that surrounded Birmingham, Alabama, for years the South's leading industrial city. By 1910, eighteen thousand miners worked there, more than fifty percent of them black. As in the North, Alabama's colliers had to confront a repressive system of company control—company housing, and company towns, as well as state-sanctioned violence. But to build an interracial union they also had to cope with the convict lease system, an impoverished rural labor force for whom working in the mines meant economic promotion, and a deeply rooted system of southern paternalism, deployed in this case by the powerful Tennessee Coal, Iron, and Railroad Company (TCI). Despite all of this, building on a tradition of interracial cooperation that went back to the Greenback Labor Party of 1878, United Mine Workers (UMW) District 20 managed to develop a powerful union that at one time included more than fifteen thousand miners, as well as some East European immigrants, in its ranks. Courageous organizers such as Van Bitner, aware that the UMW could only succeed if it organized both white and African-American miners, validated the UMW's claim to be a pioneer in interracial organizing.

In explaining this phenomenon, Brian Kelly rightly rejects the oversimplifications inherent in Herbert Gutman's early optimism about race relations among the miners, as well as Herbert Hill's dogmatic insistence on the inherent racism of the white elements in the labor force. He also points out that however boldly African-American and white union organizers appealed to the common "material interests" (8) of both groups, they avoided raising the specter of "social equality" (24) between the races. Fear of illicit social intercourse between black colliers and miners' wives in a tent colony during the course of a 1908 strike created such a storm of protest that it led to the colliers' defeat. Such threats to southern segregationism shocked black, Republican, church leaders in the coal towns just as much as they did the white supremacist readers of the *Birmingham Age-Herald*. Although they shared governance of the union by apportioning offices out between them, black and white miners' leaders made clear that, while they were engaged in an industrial struggle, they would not challenge the South's broader racial mores. Nevertheless, the author also sensibly recog-

nizes the contingent nature of racial prejudice, instead of viewing it as an immutable fact of life. This is one of the strengths of his very well-written book.

But Kelly's major point is to reemphasize the decisive role of the white coal operators in shaping labor relations in the Birmingham pits. Among other things, the political power of the operators severely limited District 20's ability to secure legislative relief on such matters as safety from the Alabama state legislature, as well as other "reforms from above." In Chapter Three the author describes in convincing detail how the TCI made use of carefully trained foremen, the convict lease system, and threats of violence to keep union organizers in check, and how it managed to persuade Birmingham's black elite of the sincerity of its efforts to educate and "uplift" the African-American colliers by keeping them under its tutelage.

All of these points are made with great skill and lucidity, and supported by ample evidence. But it must be said that none of them are truly original. As far back as 1931, Spero and Harris noted that TCI's welfare policies "gave the company a working force in which trade unionism made little headway" (247), a point reiterated by Ronald Lewis in 1987. It is going a bit far to suggest that Kelly has "brought the employers back in," to the historiographical debate—they never really left it. Moreover, despite his emphasis on the "material interests" which black and white miners shared in common, Kelly tells us very little about working conditions, racially differentiated pay scales, or the division of labor either above or below ground. For example, despite a chronic shortage of skilled miners, we are not told how many black colliers became skilled pick miners, or were able to choose their own work rooms—a crucial matter when it came to daily earnings and output—as opposed to working at poorly paid jobs such as pit pony drivers or mine laborers. In an otherwise admirable chapter on the numerous wildcats and official strikes the UMW conducted in Alabama during and after the First World War, Kelly states that the black miners, "buoyed up by the heady optimism born of a newly invigorated racial militancy (. . .) displayed a fierce determination to secure economic and racial justice" (163–164). But he tells us little about what resulted from that determination, as far as African-Americans were concerned. To what extent, for example, did they prevail upon District 20 officials to upgrade the position of African-Americans during the course of the war, when the federal government controlled the industry? Until someone answers questions such as these, it will remain difficult to gauge the practical success or failure of interracial trade unionism in the Alabama coalmines, or elsewhere in the South.

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Heather Cox Richardson, *The Death of Reconstruction: Race, Labor, and Politics in the Post-Civil War North, 1865–1901*. Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press, 2001. xvi + 312 pp. \$39.95 cloth.

One of the principal advances of the past generation of scholarship constructed around black workers' self-activity in the Age of Emancipation is renewed attention to the ways in which, for both master and slave, the race and labor questions were inextricably bound. Heather Cox Richardson's new study underlines the significance of that insight: faced with the disintegration of the free labor ideal in the cauldron of class conflict that was the post-war North, she argues, Republican misgivings over freed peoples' labor militancy, rather than an all-out retreat from the ideal of racial equality, best explains the capitulation of Radical Republicans and the collapse of Reconstruction.

The Republican free-labor ideal provided a powerful critique of Southern slavery, but its foundations in northern reality were being undermined from the outset in a society moving rapidly into the industrial age; a sharp rise in labor conflict from 1866 onward exposed the fraying edges of an outlook based on a "harmony of interests" between employer and employed. In the South, the discrepancy was even more glaring. There the free labor ideal found itself caught between the resentment of defeated masters and the as yet unbounded aspirations of an aroused laboring class. Planters had "absolutely no conception of what free labor is," reported Lincoln's emissary Carl Schurz (19), while freed people, seizing the initiative to carve out new lives for themselves, seemed unlikely to take up the roles expected of them by moderate Republicans and delay deliverance until patience, thrift and dutiful submission to their employers earned them a place in the sun.

The Republican project attempted to balance a commitment to civil equality for freedmen with a rising fear of the "labor interest" and "class legislation." For a time, "[c]oncentrating on rebuilding an agricultural South peopled by upwardly mobile field hands permitted [Republicans] to ignore (. . .) growing tensions in Northern life" (24), but concern over developing confrontation in the North shaped profoundly the party's approach to Reconstruction. Although freed people provided Republicans with their only reliable constituency in the region, from the outset moderates at the party's core "directed their attention to aiding planters and energetic Southern men in the reorganization of Southern labor, industry, and production" (27). Anxious to disabuse northern labor of any notion that the state might provide a lever with which to confront propertied interests, Republicans upheld limited government in the South, spurning demands for confiscation and reasserting the free labor formula for progress.

Initially, Republicans seemed convinced that their blueprint for the South could be realized. Some of this relied upon outright self-delusion. Freed people had shown themselves, according to one typical account, "humble but self-reliant; teachable, and yet firm; anxious to learn, but not driven about by every wind of doctrine (. . .). They reject the idea of accepting the lands of their former masters, taken from them by confiscation; and their ambition is to buy, with

their own hard-earned dollars, a little piece of land that they might call their own" (34). The ex-slaves seemed, in this rendering, the very embodiment of the free labor model, but by 1867 the Republican project was coming unraveled under two very different pressures. Recalcitrant Southern whites were determined to block the turn to free labor while an expectant ex-slave population, mobilized under the banner of the Union Leagues, seemed increasingly unwilling to restrict themselves to civic equality: their words and actions evoked the fear among Republican moderates that the labor unrest prevalent at the North would cross the sectional (and perhaps racial) Rubicon.

In this situation, Republicans were compelled to respond to renewed white aggression, but they were determined to do so without giving encouragement to the incipient militancy evident among freed people. For Richardson, this explains the salient characteristic of Reconstruction era legislation: "designed by moderates to balance radicals' recognition of [black] workers' need for protection with the conservative abhorrence of a powerful government" (31), the Republican package "would help to transform the South (. . .) without launching America into dangerous new experiments in political economy" (47). Getting this balance right seemed even more critical after 1867, when a wave of black workers' struggles broke out across the South. Dockworkers' strikes shook Mobile and Charleston; agricultural workers throughout the South organized in the Union Leagues, transformed from the staid electoral machines intended by Republican bosses into semi-revolutionary labor and self-defense organizations; Southern newspapers reported strikes by washerwomen demanding "exorbitant" rates. Against a backdrop of rising, later insurrectionary, tensions in the North, such portentous developments naturally led "conservative and moderate Republicans (. . .) to equate Southern ex-slaves with labor radicals" (48) threatening the foundations of the free labor North, propelling them on the road toward desertion of their unruly black constituency.

Perhaps the most significant contribution of *The Death of Reconstruction* is Richardson's bold assertion that in their attempt to constrain black militancy, Republicans had the support of a substantial element of the emerging black middle class. A small number of African-Americans sided with Southern white conservatives and Democrats from the very beginning of Reconstruction, but they were pilloried in the black community and never exerted more than marginal influence. The key rift that opened up among black Southerners divided a small, relatively prosperous middle class committed to the Republican ideal from the mass of "former field hands [whose] first experience of free labor was devastating." While "the majority of Southern freed people viewed the world not as (. . .) economically harmonious (. . .) but as a struggle between the haves and have-nots" (53), a small minority castigated the have-nots themselves for their failure to advance. All the elements of Booker T. Washington's accommodationism were present in embryonic form in the late 1860s. Black laborers appreciated advances toward civil equality won by Republicans, but unlike party leaders or black elites, they regarded these as instruments with which to advance a broader emancipatory project rather than stand-alone victories.

The rise of black conservatism allowed Republicans to continue to uphold the free labor ideal long after it had been superseded by freed peoples' activity on the ground, easing the way for conservative restoration in the South. Conservatives opposed the Reconstruction governments "not only out of racism but because they believed that [they were] controlled by the lower class" (92), and South Carolina's "proletariat Parliament" provided a focus for conservative efforts to put the "bottom rail" back on the bottom. There the elite-led Taxpayers' convention took "its cue from Republican fears of disaffected workers [,] and instead of harping on race (. . .) emphasized property issues" (93). From here it was but a short step to rapprochement between men of property north and south—initially in the Liberal Republicans, but eventually throughout the political establishment. "Impartial," that is, ostensibly race-blind, property- or education-based—suffrage, appealed to white conservatives and to black elites anxious to differentiate themselves from black laborers. Both Democrats and Republicans distinguished between "worthy Negroes" who fit the free-labor ideal and the "un-American Negro" who, together, with the northern labor radical, was "primed to take over America" (202).

The Death of Reconstruction powerfully reinforces the argument, manifest in much of the best scholarship of recent decades, that the overthrow of Reconstruction can no longer be understood merely as a crusade to restore white supremacy, nor as an exclusively Southern campaign. The threat of a challenge from below united former enemies among Northern and Southern elites in a determined effort to uphold their prerogatives against those for whom the limitations of the free labor ideal were becoming obvious.

There are several minor deficiencies with the study. Richardson doesn't engage the considerable related historiography, dated at least to the publication of Vann Woodward's *Reunion and Reaction* a half century ago. Her discussion of Populism seems cursory for a study of elite reaction to plebeian and working-class disaffection. Most problematically, the author's exoneration of Booker T. Washington for his Atlanta speech, described as a "radical and effective statement in favor of African-American power" rather than an "attempt to curry white favor by sacrificing the ambition of African-Americans" (5) seems to contradict everything she has argued about freed peoples' ambivalence toward the free labor ideal, manifest more than two decades before the Atlanta speech and well before the consequences of Redemption had tumbled in on black aspirations. Despite these flaws, however, *The Death of Reconstruction* makes an important contribution to Reconstruction historiography, of considerable value to labor historians.

Brian Kelly

Queen's University, Belfast

Donna J. Rilling, *Making Houses, Crafting Capitalism: Builders in Philadelphia, 1790–1850*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001. xii + 261 pp. \$45.00 cloth.

Making Houses, Crafting Capitalism examines the home construction industry in antebellum Philadelphia and the men who sought to transform themselves from carpenters into what the author calls “master builders,” entrepreneurs who rose up from the artisanal ranks. Donna J. Rilling contributes to our collective body of knowledge about the fascinating, albeit little known, world of Philadelphia carpenters who doubled as entrepreneurs. She also has written a book with a narrow scope that fits uncomfortably with other works of antebellum America. In short, she has written an academic monograph, in the best and worst senses of the term.

Rilling’s main goal is simple: to walk the reader through the process of building a house in antebellum Philadelphia. Accordingly, she explains how houses were financed, building materials acquired, master builders hired workers, houses were built, and houses were rented or sold. Rilling explains the mysterious process of constructing a nineteenth century house to twenty-first century readers, no easy task given how far removed most of us are from the actual process of house building. Her argument is that these master builders were central to Philadelphia’s home construction industry, an eminently reasonable thesis. Yet, she also limits her work’s applicability by contending that Philadelphia’s housing industry was unique in antebellum America. Therefore, this “Philadelphia story” is interesting but, unfortunately, irrelevant if you are interested in New York or Boston (the only two other cities she ever mentions, but presumably we could add Baltimore, Charleston, Cincinnati, and others). Did other cities have similarly complex and unique histories of home construction? I do not know, for Rilling rarely engages in what would seem to be a rewarding comparative approach.

Rilling charts the different paths that carpenters traveled in their quests to transform themselves from artisanal craftsmen into “master builders.” These men were carpenters by trade but some became entrepreneurs who took on the myriad roles involved in developing properties into houses and, by the late antebellum period, entire subdivisions. Rilling focuses on carpenters “on the make,” engaged simultaneously in numerous interrelated pursuits: buying or leasing property, subcontracting, selling their skills to other builders in slack times, hiring apprentices and journeymen, starting other businesses to finance their houses (or to survive while their houses were being built and/or sold), speculating in real estate, and so forth. Interestingly, more carpenters could become master builders in Philadelphia than other antebellum American cities due to its peculiar, almost medieval, system of house financing called ground-rent (I will spare readers of this review the complexities) that allowed carpenters with limited capital to build houses without having to own the actual land. Also noteworthy is that the construction of endless miles of two- and three-story row houses has resulted in both a monotonous cityscape that still dominates Phila-

delphia and that most American of dreams—more working- and middle-class Philadelphians could afford houses than other urban counterparts. Hence, the nickname, “City of Homes.”

One of the book’s strongest chapters explores building materials. Perhaps a discussion of lumber, marble, brick, and lime sounds boring; however, in Rilling’s hands these subjects come to life. In this chapter—and only in this one—Rilling connects the world of Philadelphia construction to regional, national, and occasionally Atlantic economies. She vividly describes how and where Philadelphia builders acquired construction materials, discusses the types of work involved, environmental effects in the city and hinterlands, as well as a few of the participants.

Another strength lies in its research in primary sources. Rilling employs a variety of sources that have been almost untouched entirely by scholars. Only through her inventive research would she be able to reconstruct the business lives of artisans cum master builders. She also includes a number of very helpful illustrations and maps. However, as with many revised dissertations, where *Making Houses* is strong in primaries, it is weak in secondaries. This flaw speaks to a much larger issue: by including only a smattering of references to the literatures in building, labor, business, antebellum Philadelphia, and urban history, she misses a great many opportunities to prove the importance of her own work because she fails to make connections.

Rilling attempts an interesting combination of business, labor, and social history—most definitely, she wishes to prove that these ordinary people had agency. Philadelphia’s carpenters did not simply witness the construction industry being reordered by some invisible hand from above. No, these master builders were quite active in shaping their own lives as well as their industry. Yet, in her desire to empower these master builders, the large landholders, wealthy capitalists, local politicians—that is, the many other people who, no doubt, also shaped the local housing market—remain unexamined.

More seriously, Rilling ignores one of social history’s main lessons in that her master builders seem only to work. Though she provides case studies, we get little sense of these people. There is almost no discussion of ethnicity, race, gender, religion, family, or other of carpenters’ identities. Wives are entirely absent. Certainly, these carpenters introduced their sons into the business but they, too, are missing. When she mentions the actual lives of her subjects, the book is more engaging; she traces the life of one man who taps into the dense religious, familial, and ethnic networks that existed in early nineteenth century Philadelphia. By and large, though, Rilling ignores (or, possibly, could not find; the reader is never told) the non-work lives of her subjects. Most surprisingly, we do not see these carpenters interacting at the Carpenters’ Company or similar associations that these proud artisans established. Rilling claims that these groups were very important; she frequently taps such sources (e.g. the Carpenters’ Company “book” establishing prices for different tasks). Still, she seems so intent on avoiding any discussion of class issues that she ends up ignoring the vital subject of “craft culture.”

It might shock readers that Rilling is silent on a fundamental aspect of Philadelphia building: its labor history. Rather, she wishes to focus upon the master carpenters who aspired to (and occasionally achieved) the status of master builder. However, these same men were, once, apprentices and journeymen. Further, Rilling says nothing about how master builders treated their workers or thought about attempts by journeymen to organize unions and workingmen's political parties. It seems impossible that the master builders themselves did not consider such issues important; and, I am certain that at least some of them were the proud inheritors of an artisanal tradition that resisted the very changes that Rilling explores: the industrial capitalization of house construction. Rilling's almost hostile assessment of labor historians in the introduction—apparently, they exclusively study strikes and unions—results in her ignoring the historiography of American workers that could complement her own work quite nicely. Thus, Rilling misses an opportunity to connect to larger discussions on workers in antebellum America. Simultaneously, as she admits in her acknowledgements, business historians she has encountered “have been at a bit of a loss to know what to do with me” (259). No surprise there, as she is focusing on what must have been a tiny number of Philadelphia carpenters (we are never told how many exist) who acted in entrepreneurial ways.

Peter Cole
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Laurie Mercier, *Anaconda: Labor, Community and Culture in Montana's Smelter City*. Champaign, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2001. xi + 300 pp. \$49.95 cloth; \$24.95 paper.

This is an extremely rich and compelling study. Laurie Mercier adeptly explores the class, labor, and socio-cultural relations of Anaconda, Montana, the smelter town of the more famous Butte. Mercier's work insightfully underscores the importance of gender—in particular, the male breadwinner ideology—in the making and remaking of Anaconda's working-class world. During the early decades of the twentieth century, those prerogatives facilitated the creation of an overt public culture that celebrated and supported Anaconda's working-class community, in particular its male copper mill and smelter workers. Mercier shows how women in the community both challenged and preserved this order. Ultimately this study shows how that ideology weakened working-class communitarianism. That is, the strategy of male privilege shifted from being an asset to a deficit in the changing world of labor, class, and politics in the twentieth century.

Mercier does an excellent job looking at the interface of national politics and the local scene. One of the most important chapters is “Cold War City,” which portrays shifts within Anaconda's working-class community as it addressed pressures from without and within. From without were both the coercive Cold War understandings of “Americanism” that promoted a conservative

national identity and individualism and the company's positioning itself as the arbiter of patriotism and anticommunism. From within were community tensions around transforming ethnic loyalties, gender roles, leisure activities, and community bounds. In the political malaise of the Cold War, the ethnic and communitarian bonds that had been sources of strength in the first three decades of the century became marked as suspect and even un-American. Mercier details how parochial and public schools responded to local and national pressures by promoting themselves, albeit in different tones, as the repositories of Americanism. The Catholic Church reemphasized conservative gender ideologies by laying at women's feet all responsibilities for keeping a marriage going and a family intact. Women in the community, according to Mercier, did not fully accept those rigid roles and operated within a growing desire for equity while always cognizant of the economic and social realities. While that discussion is fascinating, a clearer sense of relations between Protestants and Catholics and how religion shaped adults' lives and interactions would have been helpful.

Anaconda's ethnic and fraternal associations shifted in the face of Cold War pressures. They embraced patriotic activities and causes while also defining the same in broad terms that included working-class community agendas, such as struggles for economic democracy. Correcting the abuses of capitalism would make the US resilient to communism. The fact that these older organizations survived at all—in sharp contrast to the national pattern of rapid demise—speaks to their importance to the local community. Meanwhile, new organizations based on conservative and individualistic Americanism, patriotism, and male military service challenged the older ethnic and class based identity of the community. The change in burial culture—from ethnic lodges and Catholic cemeteries to military associations and military graveyards—is a striking example of the shifts within working-class Anacondans' identities.

Whiteness—as a central category of identification—comes out of the closet rather late in Mercier's story. The protracted struggle for control of the Anaconda local between United Steel Workers of America (USWA) and the International Union of Mine, Mill, and Smelter Workers (IUMMSW) reveals the intersection of local-national tensions and race during the Cold War. Mercier shows how those who sided early with the USWA embraced both anti-communism and whiteness: "Patriotic unionism, the anticommunists believed, meant not only returning to mainstream labor goals and honoring their nation's foreign policy agenda but also affirming whiteness" (151). These men objected to the broad social policies of the more racially diverse IUMMSW and grew disenchanted because of outspoken African Americans and Mexican Americans at IUMMSW national conventions. The importance of race—not to be confused with ethnicity—in the lives of working-class Anacondans needs more illumination than Mercier has given it. For instance, she includes a picture of African American country-western singer Charley Pride who grew up nearby; there is no discussion of the Black community in the area or of racial identity and politics in Anaconda. I want to know when and how whiteness had become an important part of community self-definition. How did white Anacondans' politics

shift in the Cold War period and in the Civil Rights era? Were they receptive to the New Right message of Nixon and Reagan?

In their struggle for control of Local #117, both the USWA and the IUMM-SW appealed to women for help, underscoring the importance of women in the economic and social survival of the community. At the same time, restrictive gender ideology limited the success of these appeals as male mill and smelter workers expressed wavering commitment and declining support of its women's auxiliary. Meanwhile women resisted being used as "helpers" which largely entailed extending their food preparation activities from the home into their social and leisure time. Male workers did not embrace women's more direct and active participation in union politics and culture; already facing changes in gender roles at home, they preferred to keep the union hall a last bastion of male dominance.

Mercier continues her examination of this community through the decline and eventual shutdown of the works and through the reconfiguration of community in a post-industrial era. Faced with internal squabbings within labor's ranks, a changing mining economy, and globalization, Anacondans' struggles shifted from trying to maintain an alternative working-class culture to making ends meet. Work hours at the mills declined, young adults left town in order to find jobs, and more married women worked for wages. A small number of women entered the works, supported largely by the women's movement and equal protection laws and with mixed support from the community. Meanwhile, the community's social and cultural worlds experienced crises—e.g., rise in domestic abuse, poverty, and divorce. The 1980 shut down threw the entire town into economic crisis. Women's ability to get jobs in local restaurants, hospitals, and stores were key to many families' survival. Even though many of these service workers were unionized, the earlier communitarianism was gone. Subsequent attempts to reshape the town's image in order to attract new enterprise—e.g., trying to sell the once smelter town as a tourist Mecca—promoted an image of Anaconda void of a vibrant working-class culture or history. Mercier avoids positioning this time as paradise lost; instead she emphasizes the multiple strategies working-class Anacondans utilized to enhance themselves and their community over the course of the twentieth century. Although this is not the central argument of her book, ultimately Mercier's study demonstrates the decline of class and the rise of gender in the public arena from the early to late twentieth century. Family (within a conservative model) transforms from a bulwark against corporate intrusions to becoming a source of tension for the white working-class male ideal.

Mercier's book rests on extensive archival research and amazing oral interviews with Anacondans. The latter add rich texture to the story and lie at the core of Mercier's discussions regarding memory and shifting self-definitions of the Anaconda working-class community. Oral historians regularly address their role in the interview process; I would like to know more regarding Mercier's relationship to her interviewees—how she came to interview these particular people and how does she think her presence and the particulars of that (e.g., gen-

der, race, ethnicity, age, educational background, community standing) shaped the interviews. The richness of her interviews is a call to graduate students and others to go out and record mid-to-late twentieth century history. Scholars and teachers of US labor, US West, and post-World War Two history need to read this excellent book.

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Heather Ann Thompson, *Whose Detroit?: Politics, Labor and Race in a Modern American City*. Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2001. viii + 295 pp. \$35.00 cloth.

Recently, several books and movies have brought Motown out of the shadows as Detroit and its history are scrutinized from a variety of angles. Prominent among the scholarly works is Thomas Sugrue's award-winning *The Origins of the Urban Crisis: Race and Inequality in Postwar Detroit*, which explores the question, how did a city—that was in the 1940s a shining boomtown—turn into a symbol of the tarnished American Dream within a few decades? While Sugrue's book is a major contribution for sorting out the forces that contributed to the transformation of postwar Detroit and moved the discussion of urban decay beyond ahistoric bromides attributing urban crisis to a culture of poverty, his scholarly treatment does not pretend to exhaustively cover all the social, political, and economic bases that influenced change in Detroit since 1945.

Heather Ann Thompson continues the conversation opened up by Sugrue, builds on his work, and widens the angle of vision further in her provocative work which questions assumptions about the fate of liberalism and the labor movement in postwar America. Thompson focuses on what she calls an "urban and labor war at home" (3) between 1967 and 1973 to chronicle the aspirations and anxieties of four major groups who struggled to attain their vision in postwar Detroit: white racial conservatives, black militants, the black middle class, and progressive whites. Although Thompson's primary interest is in understanding the various perspectives represented by those who drew blueprints for the future city and its workplaces and then fought to carry out their plans, (3) her broader aim is to challenge "our received wisdom" about postwar American cities, liberal politics, and the labor movement (4).

Thompson highlights the intersection of struggles for civil rights in city hall and on the shop floor, paying special attention to coalition building during the 1960s and 1970s. Her approach encourages us to review the politics of postwar Detroit before the die was cast. She hopes to show that "America's urban centers did not merely waste away by the 1980s; political tensions among radicals, conservatives and liberals after the Second World War shaped America as surely as did racial clashes; and finally the United States labor movement always had

more power over its destiny than its leaders imagined" (8). That she largely succeeds on all three counts and makes an important historiographic contribution is connected to the fact that she brings black politics to the fore.

Rather than treating the African-American experience as peripheral to the question of liberalism, Thompson questions equating white flight with the collapse of liberalism. Although scores of white urbanites did abandon liberalism, Thompson reminds us that the 1970s witnessed "the most dramatic rise of black liberal political power that has occurred in the entire twentieth century" and argues that liberal principles were "embraced, championed, and even expanded on in numerous major US cities that came under African American political control" during that decade (5). Similarly, she takes seriously the efforts of black and white workers to gain a measure of control over the power of abusive foreman and unsafe conditions in the auto plants, suggesting alternatives that executives of the United Automobile Workers (UAW) could have pursued but did not. Thompson examines key choices union leaders themselves made to suggest that union officials have been "too easily absolved" of the "very real responsibility for their own plight" (6). Her approach enriches our understanding of the complexity of urban Detroit even as it suggests the contingency of its outcome by reconstructing the hopes, visions, and alternatives several major groups imagined for themselves as they jockeyed for position in postwar Detroit.

Revealing a 1950s that was as "politically fragmented as it was racially divided," we are introduced to whites who not only sympathized with African-American efforts to "achieve equal opportunities in both the city and its workplaces" but also actively promoted them (20). Even as relations in the civic arena between police and the black community deteriorated over the issue of police brutality in the mid-1960s, whites remained divided. When Jerome Cavanaugh, a liberal mayor, proposed reforming the police department, white racial conservatives called for greater police protection to guard against "alleged black criminality" (41). That, in turn, generated attacks on the liberal agenda, especially War on Poverty initiatives (42). Though Cavanaugh's reforms were too meek for the majority of the black community, black middle-class leaders stuck by the mayor and their white liberal friends even as they held their breath watching black discontent grow at the grassroots. Left, right, and liberal staked their claims on the contested terrain as the city and plants became virtual war zones between 1967 and 1973.

Just as the issue of police brutality mobilized the community, so did the power wielded by (largely white) foremen galvanize dissident forces within the auto plants. In addition, line speed was inhumane, "safety conditions (. . .) abominable, and workers saw little evidence that the union's (. . .) efforts to take management on more aggressively had paid off" (67). UAW officials are portrayed as too-proud liberal Democrats who, having delivered the goods in the form of high wages and good benefits and marched on the front lines for civil rights, were, nevertheless, out of step with the realities workers faced on the line in Detroit plants. Moreover, UAW officials did not cope well with any level of dissent from within.

Thompson convincingly shows how labor liberals missed an opportunity in the aftermath of 1967 rebellion to dampen the militancy that was merging actions on the shop floor with those in the streets. She weaves dissent from forces organized by the League of Revolutionary Black Workers effectively into the narrative. Although that part of the story is well known, Thompson invites a fresh look at the intransigence of the UAW leaders by including the perspective of the United National Caucus (UNC). The UNC, a caucus within the UAW, active in the late sixties and early seventies, advocated a more politically moderate agenda than the League. UAW leaders, blinded by the fury unleashed by the League, “opted to block dissent at every turn” (180). The demise of the League inspired the growth of the UNC and its various offshoots in plants around Detroit, so that by the early seventies shop-floor dissent was politically broad-based *and* biracial. “After 1971, Detroit’s autoworkers could see their shared class interests on the shop floor in ways that they still could not in their neighborhoods” (184). UAW leaders responded by turning a deaf ear toward the voice of biracial dissent on the shop floor.

Battles for city control also took place in criminal and civil courts where the Detroit Left won a series of dramatic victories for black defendants. When the Left, led by Kenneth Cockrel, a lawyer, a Marxist, and a member of the League’s executive board, pushed the legal system to its most progressive limits, city liberals applauded the efforts. White racial conservatives, horrified by the success of the Left in the judicial system, believed that “radicals were taking over Detroit and (. . .) liberals (. . .) catering to black criminals in their own courtrooms” had changed the liberal agenda (155). Black Detroiters thought the trials represented victory for the black community over the police, which helped restore their faith in liberalism and change through the ballot box. Thus, Thompson suggests, with the election in 1973 of Coleman Young, Detroit’s first black mayor, liberals co-opted the momentum generated by the Left’s successes in the courts, used it to march into City Hall, and effectively stole the Left’s thunder.

Or did they? Thompson’s bold thesis succeeds in bringing African Americans into the larger conversation about liberal politics and dramatically lays to rest rumors of Detroit’s demise. But the strength of her approach is linked to her ability to keep her ear to the ground as she guides us through battles in the courts, the civic arena, and the plants. Unfortunately, in the end, her political paradigm—with its conservative, liberal, and Left labels—may be too narrow to contain the full range of voices speaking during these hotly contested times. The result is an unsatisfactory answer to the question the book raised: Whose Detroit?

Black liberals, we are told, kept liberalism alive in Detroit while the majority of white racial conservatives and white progressives left the city and the black Left went into decline. But did the trials really restore faith in change through the ballot box, as Thompson claims, or did black Detroiters, like so many African Americans during this period, decide to seize power wherever and however possible? It was “Nation Time” in black America and much of what was going on would be difficult to file under traditional categories as black po-

litical power expressed itself in multiple ways within the black community, a site that demands further excavation. Conservative efforts designed to block a liberal agenda receive more attention than radical critiques from the grassroots. What influence did voices situated outside established institutions have over the negotiation process that brought Young to power in Detroit in 1973? Although Kenneth Cockrel's goal was to use the court system to educate the community about the contradictions of capitalism, he retains his radical stripes while under oath in the courtroom. Yet, Young is squeezed into a liberal box despite his militant heritage dating back to the 1930s. When Young got out the vote within the black community in 1973 did he represent the liberal agenda of the Great Society or did many of his constituents see Young as a champion of black power, using the very system that had oppressed black Detroiters to overthrow discriminatory institutions?

Thompson maintains that Young did not "waiver from (. . .) sixties-style liberal views" and "knew that voters had elected him precisely because he had long supported many key liberal initiatives" (203). But the key issue that Thompson correctly suggests put Young in the Mayor's office was police brutality, along with Young's unflinching resolve to create "a people's police department" (197). Young's major opponent was John F. Nichols, police commissioner and architect of Detroit's most repressive, undercover police unit, widely regarded throughout the black community as an "all-white (. . .) vigilante organization" (82). Moreover, it was Young's approach—considered polarizing—that apparently led "powerful liberal institutions, such as the Detroit AFL-CIO, the Detroit Association of Fire Fighters, and American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees Council 77" to choose a white liberal over Young in the primary (197). After the primary, Young won the support of mainstream black and white liberals, black radicals, black and white rank and file from local 600 of the UAW, and progressives. Voters were energized at least as much because of Young's militant past as they were because he was a liberal, however they may have understood the term. We need to know more about choices people thought they had and how players understood the alternatives before them. Only then can we assess decisions they made and suggest who and what was won and lost.

Finally, the strength of Thomson's otherwise compelling portrayal of UAW labor liberals is weakened when she says that because the labor leadership did not endorse Young, "any blame or credit for Young's victory could not be laid at the doorstep of the UAW" (199). Rather than discussing shop floor and civic insurgency in relation to one another and to liberalism, we are left wondering how these two arenas overlapped during the summer of 1973 when union officials actually "mobilized to keep a plant open," honoring the interests of the company over those of its members (203).

Perhaps the absence of support from labor liberals helped Young at the polls. Young's history as a troublemaker and advocate for worker's democracy was the stuff of folklore on the shop floor. Black and white members of UAW local 600 who actively threw support for Young against the wishes of officials may not have been the only UAW autoworkers who thought electing Young was

a way to make a statement about their disappointment with labor liberals. All of which raises, again, the question, who won? Might the Left have appropriated the liberal agenda? Without a clearer understanding of who black liberals were and what competing conceptions of liberalism and black power may have been current we do not know for sure why white liberals who had voted for Young abandoned Detroit in the years after the 1973 election. What had they discovered about the politics of Young's liberalism that made them want to leave?

To suggest that Thompson's political construct may be too fragile to carry the full weight of the rich history she has unearthed is not to imply that her goals were not largely achieved. She succeeds in compelling us to reconsider liberal politics and the labor movement in postwar urban America, and by breathing life into this contested period; she rescues not just liberalism but also Detroit from the dustbin. The weaknesses raised above merely suggest that in order to keep African-American politics central to the conversation she has initiated, we need to delve even deeper into the roots of this past to appreciate whose Detroit it was.

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