

## Book Notes / Références Bibliographiques

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[Aller au sommaire du numéro](#)

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# BOOK NOTES/ RÉFÉRENCES BIBLIOGRAPHIQUES

Doug Owsam, *The Government Generation: Canadian Intellectuals and the State, 1900-1945* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1986).

LABOUR FIGURES surprisingly little in this account of social science, intellectuals, and the emergence of statism in the first half of the twentieth century. Those concerned with the working class, however, will find this a useful background study, against which the role of economic thought and reform agendas can be situated.

David J. Bercuson, ed., *Canadian Labour History: Selected Readings* (Toronto: Copp Clark Pitman 1987).

ONE OF THE BOOKS in the New Canadian Readings series, this collection is composed of a curious collection of articles that are organized into sections on the Era of Industrialization, World War I and its Aftermath, The Rise of Modern Unionism, and Overviews of the Historiography. The overviews — Kealey's and Bercuson's 1981 *Labour/Le Travail* articles — are surely now dated, and the collection suffers from inclusion of too many essays that focus narrowly on specific confrontations: the 1907 Bell strike; the 1916 Hamilton munitions confrontation; the Flin Flon conflict of 1934; and the 1943 Steel strike. In spite of Bercuson's qualified recognition of advances made in the social history of the working class, most pronounced in his view in terms of women's history and quantitative studies as opposed to Marxist examinations of class formation, it is clear that when the editor conceives of twentieth-century labour history his framework

remains that of episodic confrontation and institutional development.

Veronica Strong-Boag and Anita Clair Fellman, eds., *Rethinking Canada: The Promise of Women's History* (Toronto: Copp Clark Pitman 1986).

ALSO IN THE NEW Canadian Readings series, this collection gathers together some of the most widely read essays in women's history that have appeared over the course of the last decade. It reproduces the Sangster essay on the 1907 Bell Strike that is also to be found in the Bercuson collection. Other essays of interest to labour historians are the innovative and suggestive, if deeply flawed, piece by Trofimenkoff on industrial women in the 1880s; Lowe's account of office work in the 1900-1930 years; and Woywitka's brief discussion of pioneer labour crusader, Alberta's Teklia Cheban.

Carole Conde and Karl Beveridge, *First Contract: Women and the Fight to Organize* (Toronto: Between the Lines 1986).

THIS NICELY PRODUCED and well-illustrated book deals with women's first contract strikes in Ontario from 1978-1985. It presents a story drawn from interviews conducted with women a year after they formed a union and were forced to strike for a first contract.

*Vector Union Report*, "Will You Have a Union in 1995?" (Toronto 1986).

**AVAILABLE FROM** Vector Union Report, 711-133 Richmond Street West, Toronto, Ontario, M5H 3M8, this report is edited by Marc Zwelling. It presents a rather optimistic depiction of union growth, suggesting that by the 1990s unions will have organized 45 percent of the Canadian workforce. Unions, claim the report, are in no danger of dying. At \$48 for a 42-page mimeographed report this is optimism with a designer price-tag.

Roger Stonebanks, *The Guild at Forty: The Struggle Continues* (Parksville, British Columbia: Arrowmaker Graphics 1986).

**PRODUCED BY THE** Victoria Newspaper Guild, this account of their history covers the 1945-1985 years. It contains a number of reminiscences and would be of interest to anyone working on the twentieth-century printing industry and newspaper production.

Jacqueline S. Ismael, ed., *The Canadian Welfare State: Evolution and Transition* (Edmonton: University of Alberta Press 1987).

**WEAK ON HISTORICAL** development and strong on contemporary policy concerns, this collection is composed of 16 essays, many of which had their origins in a conference on welfare policy at the University of Calgary in 1985. Readers of this journal will find James Struthers's account of unemployment assistance from 1941-1956 and Patricia Evans and Eilene McIntyre on welfare and single mothers perhaps the most useful essays.

Allan Moscovitch and Jim Albert, eds., *The Benevolent State: The Growth of Welfare in Canada* (Toronto: Garamond 1987).

**FAR MORE ATTENTIVE** to the historical development of welfare than the above volume, this collection of essays devotes considerable space to the pre-1950 years and is notable for its attention to the nineteenth century. A lengthy essay by Moscovitch and Glenn Drover provides a useful introduction to the history of the Canadian welfare state.

Angus McLaren and Arlene Tigar McLaren, *The Bedroom and The State: The Changing Practices and Politics of Contraception and Abortion in Canada, 1880-1980* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart 1986).

**THE AUTHORS ORGANIZE** this overview of women's struggle to limit their fertility into an opening part on contraception and abortion in Canada, a middle section on promises of sexual and social emancipation, and a concluding account of population control and reproductive rights. The individual chapters introduce the problem, but understandably do not cover it in its entirety. They are highly selective and focus on aspects of the history of contraception and abortion. Those with an interest in the workers' movement will find the discussions of socialist feminism and maternal feminism and socialism versus Malthusianism of most direct relevance.

Gilbert A. Stelter and Alan F. J. Artibise, eds., *Power and Place: Canadian Urban Development in the North American Context* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press 1986).

**CONCERNED MAINLY WITH** development, elites, and local political power in urban settings, these essays will prove useful to those concerned with class relations in particular locales.

Samuel Bowles and Herbert Gintis, *Democracy & Capitalism: Property, Community, and the Contradictions of Modern Social Thought* (New York: Basic Books 1986).

**IF YOU THINK** the discussion about democracy and domination can be enriched by an eclectic coming together of theories and sensitivities drawn from the social movements of the 1960s, liberal social science, and a reading of Marxism compatible with these traditions then this is a book for you. It seems to depend on a willingness to bring together Adam Smith, Karl Marx, and John Stuart Mill and, again, if that seems possible to you, this is your text. It is a bit like arguing that Gorbachev

represents the coming together of Stalin and Trotsky, but then for some anything is possible. The authors contribute most in their discussion of property, least in their rather sentimental reading of the potential inherent in 'community,' which draws uncritically on the 'discourse' theorists of language and populist struggle.

Stuart Bruce Kaufman, *A Vision of Unity: History of the Bakery & Confectionery Workers International Union* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press 1987).

Stuart Bruce Kaufman, *Challenge & Change: History of the Tobacco Workers International Union* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press 1987).

THESE TWO INSTITUTIONAL histories present the development of two unions against the background of economic, political, technological, and cultural change from the late nineteenth century to the present.

Melvyn Dubofsky and Warren Van Tine., eds., *Labor Leaders in America* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press 1987).

THE FIFTEEN ESSAYS in this volume present valuable snapshots of American labour leaders and the critical themes that they found themselves addressing. From William H. Sylvius and the search for working-class citizenship to Cesar Chavez and the unionization of the dispossessed farmworker, these essays take the reader through the major features of labour history from the 1860s to the present. Among the authors are represented some of the best historians of labour in the United States including Montgomery (Sylvius), Salvatore (Debs), Kessler-Harris (Rose Schneiderman), Dubofsky (Lewis), and Lichtenstein (Reuther).

Michael Hanagan and Charles Stephenson, eds., *Confrontation, Class Consciousness, and the Labor Process: Studies in Proletarian Class Formation* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood 1986).

A BIT OF A GRAB BAG, this volume is composed of eight essays that range from the United States to China, with stops in Europe and Africa and a momentary detour to Latin America, which is touched on in one wide-ranging essay on workers' control. Class consciousness is addressed only peripherally in the essays as a whole and while there is much to chew on in the individual pieces, the book as a meal is a little difficult to digest.

Martin Adeney and John Lloyd, *The Miners' Strike: Loss Without Limit* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul 1986).

WRITTEN BY A JOURNALIST with the BBC and an editor of *New Statesman*, this lively account of the miners' battle against Thatcher and the Coal Board is propaganda of the sophisticated type. Scargill is depicted as a Marxist determined to go down to noble defeat. Seldom has history been written by so turning the Great Man into its opposite, with Scargill alone responsible for the havoc and suffering of 1984-1985.

Barbara Hanawalt, ed., *Women and Work in Preindustrial Europe* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press 1986).

THIS VOLUME WILL PROVE useful to those interested in women's place in the transition from feudalism to capitalism. It contains essays on peasant women's work and marriage, slaves and domestics, wet nurses and midwives, and urban women in trades and commerce, closing with essays that address the economic position of women in the sixteenth century.

Christopher Hill, *Collected Essays: Volume One — Writing and Revolution in 17th Century England; Volume Two — Religion and Politics in 17th Century England; Volume Three — People and Ideas in 17th Century England* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press 1986).

DRAWING 43 PREVIOUSLY published essays, lectures, and reviews together these three

volumes are a reminder of the richness, diversity, and humane intelligence of Hill's long-standing reflections on the seventeenth century. To read these volumes is to recognize Hill's remarkable contribution to seventeenth century studies, Marxist thought, and historiographic debate. Hill-bashing is much in vogue now, usually by authorities who have contributed a fraction of what Hill has. They might better get on with their own work which is obviously what Hill himself did.

Egen Weber, *France: Fin de Siecle* (Cambridge: Belknap Press 1986).

WEBER PRESENTS A *tour de France* at the end of the century. Workers do not figure prominently here, but they come in for the odd mention and in discussions of the culture and everyday life of French men and women there are insights and controversial suggestions that the historian of the working class will want to take up. But in as much as Weber is dealing with *dominant* ideas, it is the ruling order and the stamp that it put on a national culture and an epoch that is central.

Ian Birchall, *Bailing Out the System: Reformist Socialism in Western Europe—1944-1985* (London: Bookmarks 1986).

EUROPEAN REFORMISM IS THE focus of this polemic, and Birchall draws on the experience of a range of countries — Britain, Greece, Spain, Sweden, and more — to make his case

that the social democratic and labour parties of the post-war world have developed, along with the Stalinist Communist parties, to derail revolution, saving the capitalist order from crisis and catastrophe, and defusing working-class struggle whenever it threatened to break out of the boundaries of respectability. The argument, from a certain perspective, is compelling, even if the research — proclaimed on the book's back to be copious — is rather thin and routine.

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J.R.C. Perkin and James B. Snelson, *Morning in his Heart: The Life and Writings of Watson Kirkconnell* (Wolfville, N.S.: Published for the Acadia University Library by Lancelot Press 1986).

IN THE AFTERMATH OF the Deschenes Royal Commission, a consideration of the politics of Canadian ethnic anti-communism is not out of place. The Canadian state's overt co-operation with fascism can no longer be ignored. While this volume includes only a hagiographic sketch, the bibliography of some 1,800 items includes all Kirkconnell's contributions to Canadian McCarthyism, as well as the interesting information that he was the author of the scurrilous 1948 Canadian Chamber of Commerce pamphlet, *The Communist Threat to Canada* (item 28).

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