

opposition to the opening up of the American workplace, and more generally, to all equality movements. Meticulously she traces the emergence of neoconservatives and the growth of right wing movements, their deliberate attack on affirmative action and the insidious penetration of their ideas and values into most aspects of US life.

Her book offers a wealth of detail, about workplace struggles, legal cases, political campaigns, and debates about government policy. She follows debates about specific legislation or about particular policy implementations in great detail. This may be a useful resource for those interested in such specific information. At times, however, I lost track of her main argument and wanted her to summarise the details for me and to develop her main argument more succinctly. In contrast, while the Frager and Patrias book is lovely, full of lively accounts, and shocking examples, it is deeply flawed by its startling lack of citations. Page after page of examples, including direct quotations from, for example, an anonymous teacher (3), a union publication (117) and the Communist Party of Canada (143) are unreferenced! I wonder if this was imposed by a publisher concerned to shorten the text. If so, it was a poor decision.

Both books thoroughly discredit the prevailing beliefs of neoliberalism that individuals are responsible for their own situations. Despite the insistence of many that patterns of inequality reflect differences in individual ambition, interests, or talents, these authors offer compelling evidence of enduring systemic discrimination based on race, ethnicity, gender, and class. And those systemic inequalities are maintained and perpetrated by the elites who benefit from them. Their conclusions are sobering. Despite over a century of struggles, and despite some important gains, the labour markets in Canada and the US are largely controlled by employers and shareholders at the expense of workers and the state policies of the last thirty years are increasingly designed to maintain the power and privilege of the elites. Disparities are increasing and the struggle to change that trend will be long and hard. *Discounted Labour* and *Freedom is Not Enough* are valuable contributions. Separately and together they add to our collective knowledge and provoke further questions.

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Craig Heron and Steve Penfold, *The Worker's Festival: A History of Labour Day in Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005).

Labour Day was proclaimed as a statutory holiday in Canada in 1894, but according to *The Worker's Festival: A History of Labour Day in Canada*, its roots can be traced to earlier spectacles organized by the country's skilled workers in the 1880s-1890s. The book begins by outlining the respectable and burlesque processions with which the craftsmen would have been familiar. In their tightest chapter, "The Craftsmen's Spectacle," the authors analyze the performance of Labour Day

parades. According to Heron and Penfold, the craftsmen's costumes, banners, and 'allegorical cars' expressed their respectability, the inherent value of their labour, and their roles as 'producers' and 'citizens'. Women and racial minorities were not equal participants in these performances, however: "From St. John's to Victoria, early Labour Day parades were craftsmen's spectacles, celebrations of the respectable, male, white, skilled worker, and reflected both the expansiveness and the exclusiveness of his aspirations" (77).

The rest of this study traces the "ups and downs and twists and turns of the workers' festival" (xvii). Although labour leaders invented the tradition of Labour Day, they were "not successful at controlling the meaning of the festival in the wider community" (xvi). They soon found that they had to 'share' Labour Day with a multitude of bourgeois players: journalists, clergymen, merchants, and entrepreneurs. As craftsmen suffered the impact of mass production during the Second Industrial Revolution, Labour Day was reinvented by groups of workers "marching to different tunes": nationalists who objected to Canada's close relationship to the American labour movement; Quebec's Catholic unions, who feared "godless secularism"; and industrial unionists, socialists and Communists, who sponsored more radical expressions of working-class solidarity, most notably the commemoration of May Day. Labour Day experienced temporary revivals after World War One and in the mid-1940s, but by the postwar period, Labour Day had "lost some of its earnest, philosophical tone" (269), as parades became more commercial affairs and most workers "voted with their feet" (273), preferring to imbibe in more privatized leisure pursuits.

The Workers' Festival is more so a work of labour history than cultural history. Labour historian Nolan Reilly notes in his review of the book that its "location within the literature of the meaning of cultural celebrations and their significance is informative but rarely intrudes unnecessarily into the narrative" (H-NET Book Review, March 2006). It could be argued, however, that the authors do not take full advantage of the literature on cultural history. *The Workers' Festival* would benefit from an expanded introductory chapter which incorporates some of the analytical insights from the concluding chapter and also reviews recent publications on the nature and history of ceremonials and spectacles, as well as the literature on public memory, such as Alan Gordon's *Making the Public Past: The Contested Terrain of Montreal's Public Memories, 1891-1930*.

A significant portion of the book is devoted to examining the multitudinous transformations of traditional Labour Day demonstrations. It would be useful for this study to develop more explicitly the concept of polysemy, the embodiment of multiple meanings. Indeed, even the skilled workers themselves did not "always present a single, coherent social vision or political interpretation" of their Labour Day spectacles, instead reflecting the "different emphases and trajectories of particular crafts and local unions" (65). Moreover, bourgeoisie and working-class actors transformed the holiday in their own image. Heron and Penfold

repeatedly assert that the term 'labour' was "sufficiently flexible to open it to multiple voices and competing ideas" (110-11, 90, 105). Initially this was not a "random cacophony of voices" until the emergence of merchants and entrepreneurs who spoke a "different language": the language of commerce (112). By the early-twentieth century, Labour Day "moralists" had been usurped by "merchants of leisure" (111-12, 132).

Commemoration, according to Alan Gordon, often reflects an "ongoing contest for hegemony." This contest can take the form of reaffirmation or subversion, as Heron and Penfold assert in their conclusion (271). In *The Workers' Festival* there is a tension between the reaffirmation of the craftsmen's parade and its subversion by various players and performers. Heron and Penfold wax eloquent about the potentiality of subversion: "If the festival is less tightly controlled from the top ... [i]t can become a time for escaping the normal and trying out the imagined - an opportunity to behave outrageously, to play unusual social roles, to act out new possibilities, to assert different priorities, to dream and fantasize, or, at the very least, to retreat from the constraints of daily social relations" (271). The authors have an opportunity here to examine the creative complexity of subversion. Most studies focus on the carnivalesque subversion of bourgeois ceremonials by the 'lower orders'; this study, on the other hand, is fascinating in that it centres on a festival invented by the working class (albeit the aristocracy of labour), but recast and reinvented by other workers and bourgeoisie alike.

Given the interpretive potential of subversion, one wonders why Heron and Penfold chose to focus on continuous reaffirmation, on the 'ups and downs' of the traditional Labour Day demonstration, rather than adopting the concept of polysemy as the study's organizing principle. This is undoubtedly due, in part, to logistics, and the need to define the parameters of one's research. This focus is understandable but limiting: it defines alternative spectacles as 'other' and thus as reinventions rather than as rich ceremonials in their own right. Indeed, Heron and Penfold assert that the short-term postwar revival of Labour Day demonstrations were "partial, uneven, and ultimately unsuccessful" (268). Furthermore, according to the authors, the ambiguity and openness of Labour Day was both a "strength" and a "weakness," a "source of its cultural power" and a "cause of its dilution" (111). Were Labour Day holidays 'unsuccessful' and 'diluted' because they moved away from the format of the skilled workers' festival? It would be interesting to see chapters devoted to alternative expressions of labour, in addition to the craftsmen's spectacle—May Day, Davis Day, strike parades, and International Women's Day events—rather than explaining them away in relation to the decline of the former. This focus on multiple workers' festivals (instead of a workers' festival) would allow the authors to more fully explore the complex richness of reaffirmation, subversion, and polysemy.

The authors try to avoid judgment on the decline of traditional craftsmen's spectacles: "These processes seem to invite metaphors of decline and decay.

But this would be misleading and too simple...the pattern was not one of linear decline but rather of periodical revival...” (273, 276). Indeed, they point out that traditional Labour Day parades were “not pristine cultural creations”, but rather expressions of the “possibilities and limitations of Victorian respectability” (276). They also admit that the transmogrification of Labour Day into a largely privatized holiday brought it back to one of the original goals of its founders: the opportunity for workers to relax and enjoy a day away from work (115, 269). Nonetheless, in the concluding sentences of the book, there is a hint of nostalgia for the politicized demonstrations of yesteryear. After lamenting that there were “fewer of these events than in the past” and that they “caught the local imagination much less than their turn-of-the-century predecessors,” they conclude: “But they revealed how important it has been to many Canadian workers to remind their fellow citizens that this was *not* just another day off work. They still have a message to deliver” (278).

Lastly, it would be interesting to see Heron and Penfold reflect more explicitly on the reflective and instrumental nature of such festivities. Heron and Penfold cast their study in the context of broad social changes: they certainly illustrate how festivities reflected the social forces around them. But they also hint at the transformative power of festivities, particularly in their analysis of May Day. Here we see how May Day organizers challenged the established social order, which led to subsequent harassment and repression (166-88).

This book obviously generates many questions of interpretation and approach, which is the hallmark of an important contribution to scholarship. As Joy Parr has reminded us in her seminal analysis of gender history: “Scholarship is to open rather than extinguish questions, to discomfit rather than enshrine both settled certainties and the collective practices they sustain.” (*Canadian Historical Review*, 73, no. 3, 1995: 354) Not only will this study appeal to the academic community, but also to students and the general public. The monograph works especially well as an assigned text in an undergraduate history classroom. One further strength that must be noted is the rich collection of photographs, sketches, and advertisements in this work, which are not merely illustrative, but contribute in an important way to the authors’ interpretations and conclusions. In this sense, Heron and Penfold remind us that there is more to visual sources ‘than meets the eye’.

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Hyun Ok Park, *Two Dreams in One Bed: Empire, Social Life and the Origins of the North Korean Revolution in Manchuria* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2005).

In 1948, what legitimated the People’s Revolutionary Army’s rise to power in North Korea was the participation of many of its leaders and soldiers in anti-Japanese struggles in Manchuria during the Pacific War (1931-1945). In a 1958