For Gilmore, following the literary theorist Mikhail Bakhtin, carnival is a more complex enterprise than previous scholars have led us to believe. Indeed, Gilmore deploys abundant evidence that demonstrates that carnival is not simply negation, but is filled with rituals of both disapprobation and affirmation of political, cultural, social, economic, and gender norms. In fact, he believes that carnival is a much more *ambivalent* process than has heretofore been acknowledged. This assertion underscores the strength of *Carnival and Culture* and that is Gilmore's sensitive and far-reaching interpretation of the language and events of the February madness. Gilmore makes us aware of the very contested nature of the meaning of carnival, both to the observer and its participants. Its ambivalence is placed solidly in the foreground. Gilmore is clearly a master at combining elements of textual (the songs), visual (the event itself), and anecdotal (local interviews) evidence in support of his contentions about the meaning of carnival in Andalusia. He also strives, not unsuccessfully, to tease out intellectual connections between carnival and its meaning in Andalusia to Spain, Europe, and anywhere else in the world where carnival is common cultural practice. This is without doubt one of the better books in the field, especially so since Gilmore includes historical change as part of the narrative in each of *Carnival and Culture*'s 14 chapters.

Carnival and Culture is a superbly written book and, despite a couple of historical errors (158, 163), an interdisciplinary tome as well. Gilmore's methodology incorporates the best of anthropological sources in the field, but also weaves historical, psychological, and literary sources very effectively into his story. Rarely, if ever, will a reader see the triumvirate of Brandes, Freud, and Bakhtin incorporated fluidly in a text. *Carnival and Culture* is also, despite its use of complex intellectual theory, marvelously readable. Gilmore has written an appealing book that should attract career academics across disciplines, advanced graduate students, and the educated general reader. Hispanists in all fields should enjoy the Geertzian thick description of the February madness and the provocative interpretive conclusions Gilmore draws from it. I found it to be a continuously engaging and entertaining read and recommend it highly to all interested in the how and why behind our cultural rituals and the behaviors deriving from them. This book should remain a reference point in the literature on carnival for a long time to come.

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Eric Arnesen, Julia Greene, and Bruce Laurie, editors, *Labor Histories: Class, Politics, and the Working-Class Experience*. (The Working Class in American History.) (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1998).

In the field of labour history, few names are as recognizable or as notable as that of David Montgomery. Into the new century, Montgomery remains one of the leading scholars in labour history, a position he has held with distinction for nearly thirty years. His writings helped fuel the transformation of the field from the narrow institutional studies of the Wisconsin school to the broader, more inclusive areas of research that now characterize the "new labour history." Not surprisingly, Montgomery's recent "retirement" provoked an outpouring of praise from colleagues, former students, and friends, attesting to the intellectual influence he exerted on their careers. In many respects, *Labor Histories* follows in a similar vein. The book originated out of a conference held at the University of Pittsburgh at Greensburg in 1993 to honor Montgomery, and reflect on his influence on the field of labour history. Consisting of thirteen essays from former Montgomery students, *Labor Histories* represents a glowing tribute to an individual who has exerted such an intellectual influence on working-class history. Yet as the editors are quick to point out, *Labor Histories* is not intended to be a "traditional festschrift" but rather a survey of the diverse themes and interpretations that presently encompass the field of labour history.

Central to the focus of *Labor Histories* is the emphasis on class analysis. In a well developed introduction, Arnesen, Green and Laurie reject the "fashionable" trend emerging in academia, and in larger society, that dismisses class as a "dated, reductionist, or romantic construct" (4). Instead, they stress the pervasive nature of class in shaping the social, political, cultural, and economic experiences of workers, viewing it as a multi-dimensional process in which workers actively play a prominent role in fashioning their lives. According to the authors, "class has been and remains a central category of analysis, indispensable to the study of working people and the broad drama of the United States history itself" (3). In doing so, *Labor Histories* formulates three key themes that have emerged in recent scholarship that reaffirm the centrality of the class experience: politics and the state; class and culture; and labour activism and workers' organizations.

The first section of the book, "Politics and the State," emphasizes the dynamic relationship that existed between the working-class and the American political structure. While the state at times worked to the detriment of workers' struggles, the essays stress how workers often profoundly influenced politics. Reeve Huston's essay, "Land and Freedom," emphasizes the role New York tenant farmers played, through the Anti-Rent Movement, in defining a central principle to free labor ideology: commitment to petty land ownership. Bruce Laurie, in "The 'Fair Field' of the 'Middle Ground,'" aptly demonstrates how "middling" radicals constructed a popular anti-slavery movement in Massachusetts by mutually connecting the issues of labor reform and abolition. Julie Greene's "Dinner-Pail Politics" explores the National Association of Manufacturers' efforts to construct a conservative workers/employers political organization aligned with the Republican party in the early 1900s. Although the

primary emphasis of the essay is placed on the NAM, rather than workers, Greene convincingly connects the workers' resistance to the employers' movement with the persistence of partisan political issues among workers. According to Greene, "Group or class demands alienated voters accustomed to more traditional appeals to nation, duty, and party" (91). Shelton Stromquist, in the essay "Class Wars," examines the divergent ideological divisions existing among progressive reformers on the U.S. Commission on Industrial Relations (1913-1915). The essay, although written in a prose that is at times overburdened with quotations, shows how persistent class conflicts during the commission's investigation led Commission chair Frank Walsh to articulate a position dramatically opposed to the ideals of "class harmony" that many progressives expressed at the time. Finally, Cecilia Bucki's "The Workers' State" stresses how workers in Bridgeport, Connecticut, united at the polling place to resist efforts by the ruling elite to control and limit the city's social services in the early 1930s. Ultimately, the working class of the city turned to the Socialist party, embracing a more "expansive and inclusive idea of social welfare" (125).

The second section of *Labor Histories*, "Class and Culture," explores how workers forged a distinct working-class culture that informed their lives in and out of the workplace. Tara Hunter, in "Work That Body," develops an insightful essay demonstrating how female, African-American domestic workers in Atlanta during the 1870s-1910s embraced dancing as a means of escaping the drudgeries of work. In spite of efforts by white employers and middle-class African Americans to close the dance halls, women resisted the repeated incursions and instead embraced the culture of dance because it reaffirmed their racial heritage and created a "positive self-identity." Gunter Peck's essay, "Mobilizing Community," examines how Greek, Italian, and Mexican migrant workers in the West created "vibrant" working-class communities and ethnic networks despite the transient nature of their work lives. Far from being "culturally impoverished," immigrant workers successful organized resistance, and relied on mobility to retain control over their work lives. Kathryn Oberdeck in a provocative, yet turgid essay, "Popular Narrative and Working Class Identity," explores how Alexander Irvine's changing literary self-portraits reflected shifting perceptions of class, race, ethnicity and gender. In "Making a Church Home," Kimberly Phillips develops a succinct essay showing the vitality of religion among African American migrants in Cleveland between 1915 and 1950. Rather than view the proliferation of churches among Cleveland's black community as a sign of fragmentation, Phillips persuasively argues the migrants' efforts to form new churches and denominations stemmed from a desire to maintain southern traditions, escape control of the black middle-class, and become active participants in church life.

"Labor Activism and Workers' Organizations," the third section of *Labor Histories*, stresses the often fragile and conflicting nature of working-class solidarity, and how workers' organizations at times competed against one

another, just as at times they sought to build a unified movement. Ileen DeVault's "To Sit Among Men," in exploring cross-gender labour strikes at the end of the nineteenth century, demonstrates how AFL unions came to develop a masculine definition of skill, leading to the eventual exclusion of female skilled workers from the union movement. The ramifications, according to DeVault, meant that " The craft – and its cousin, the skill – became simultaneously the source of the AFL unions' economic power and the source of their greatest weakness" (279). Eric Arnesen's essay, "Charting an Independent Course," explores how issues of race and class were intertwined in the labor activism of African-American railroad workers in the World War I era. Black porters, brakemen, and switchmen repeatedly, and successfully organized to pursue economic objectives. Yet, as Arnesen points out, they also relied on independent organization to counteract the hostility of white labor and maintain their economic security. "Boring From Within and Without," by James Barrett, attempts to reconcile the often conflicting views of the American Communist party that either see it as an external tool of Soviet intrigue, or an indigenous form of American radicalism. In exploring the CP in the 1920s through the experiences of William Z. Foster and the Trade Union Educational League, Barrett weaves an argument that convincingly determines that while Foster and the TUEL represented an indigenous form of radicalism, internal factionalism, more than Soviet influence, limited the long-term effectiveness of the CP in America. "If Foster's story represents a tragedy," Barrett concludes, "it is a tragedy made as much at home as in Moscow, one that that resides at the center of the American labor movement's story" (333). In the final essay, "The Dynamics of Americanization," Peter Rachleff's examination of the Croatian Fraternal Union adds to the growing literature that shows the dual nature of the Americanization process in the 1920s and 1930s, displaying how internal and external factors shaped the formation of a Croatian-American identity.

On the whole, *Labor Histories* represents an anthology that explores the diverse social and political issues that presently define the study of labour history. Although the essays collectively offer little new in terms of scholarship or methodology, they do add nicely to the existing literature that addresses the relationship of class to issues of race, gender, ethnicity and politics. Furthermore, several essays add insight into what should be significant future studies in their own right (i.e. Arnesen, Barrett, Greene, Peck, and Phillips). Still, several of the essays in *Labor Histories* are not without problems. Huston's "Land and Freedom," while arguing for the agrarian influence in shaping the free labour ideology, never convincingly gives any true indication as to the extent and influence of the Anti-Rent Movement in New York. Instead, the reader must take for granted that this was a significant and pervasive movement. Moreover, his attempts at the end of the essay to project the events in New York onto a larger, national picture are at best weak and undeveloped. In reading "The Workers' State," one cannot help but question whether the election of the Socialist party

in Bridgeport was truly a validation of an "alternative" political vision, as Bucki contends, or merely a backlash over drastic attempts by business leader to exert "corporate hegemony" over city fiscal affairs. While the persistence of the Socialists after 1933 seems to suggest otherwise, the continued influence of business leaders in controlling the financial affairs of the city also suggests that the Socialist party's lasting influence may be part of a larger struggle over the working-class's loss of political power rather than acceptance of an alternative political agenda. In "Class Wars," although Stromquist does an adequate job of demonstrating the class partisanship that divided the progressive reform movement, he fails to show the broad implications of this division beyond the U.S. Commission on Industrial Relations. The same narrow focus holds true for Oberdeck's essay on Alexander Irvine's literary self-portraits. While Oberdeck shows the intellectual growth of perceptions of class, no effort is made to move beyond the world of Irvine. Instead, the reader is left with a narrowly conceived study of an intellect, offering little insight or relationship to the lives of the working class.

Still, in spite of minor shortcomings, *Labor Histories*, offers readers a strong foundation to understanding the broad scope of labour history. Furthermore, it stands as a testimony to the intellectual influence David Montgomery has exerted on the field of working-class history – an influence that will undoubtedly continue to be felt into the future.

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Jeffrey M. Ayres, *Defying Conventional Wisdom: Political Movements and Popular Contention against North American Free Trade* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998).

Ayres's book on the movement against North American free trade offers a compelling account of the dynamics of contentious politics that we would do well to revisit in the context of the burgeoning movement against globalization, as witnessed recently in Seattle, Quebec City and Genoa. Given some of the cynicism about progressive activism and attempts to dismiss activists as members of the "lunatic fringe," Ayres's book is testament to the radical potential of a broad-based, coalition of concerned groups and citizens in the face of sweeping economic and political change.

From the perspective of social movement theory, specifically the political-process approach employed by the author, the book goes a long way toward bringing this important approach to bear on a Canadian discussion of "contentious politics." In that, this is a rare book, as much of social movement scholarship seems unjustly centered on the U.S. and Europe. Some Canadian