tional. It would thus appear that while Rutherford's conclusions can be applied to the very best ads, it remains arguable whether or not much of television advertising can be characterized as either "postmodern" or even as "art."

In addition, readers may find *The New Icons?* somewhat dismissive of the effects of television advertising. Although Rutherford's focus on the artistic merit of commercials is perfectly acceptable, he perhaps attributes too much sophistication to the average viewer. To cite one example, while the author can observe dispassionately the artistry evident in a spot for Nike Air Jordans, not everyone is as impervious to the "gospel of capitalism." Nike's award-winning ads undoubtedly play a role in compelling some young North Americans to extreme and even tragic measures to obtain the popular basketball shoes. Commercials are by no means the only cause of our society's fascination with material goods, but their role in promoting this fascination among viewers deserves greater recognition than Rutherford seems willing to acknowledge. All in all, the author provides an enjoyable account of the development of television advertising and highlights the often subtle artistic conventions evident in some of its most sophisticated ads. Unfortunately, he does so at the cost of downplaying its less benign intentions.

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Roger Magraw, *A History of the French Working Class,* Volume I & II (Oxford: Blackwell 1992).

Roger Magraw does not consider himself a Marxist-Leninist; rather, he claims to be a luddite, "an unreconstructed follower of Ned Ludd."(1: xi) He unfortunately never explains what he means by this. In fact, however, Magraw is quite evidently a Marxist humanist in the tradition of Edward Thompson. He wears his ideological heart boldly on his sleeve, and nowhere more ostensi-

bly than in his moving and poetic declaration, toward the end of this very long monograph, that "one must hope against hope that the horrors of the free-market society [in the West] might be checked by the emergence of a new left more sensitive than the old to ecological issues and to the specific problems of immigrants, women and the young." In an even more melancholy mood, Magraw also reflects that it may be "time to say farewell to the working class," whose disappearance, he fears, could well signal the death of "the basic concern for social justice and egalitarianism which the labour movement nurtured."(2: 314) Magraw is thus no dogmatist. He eschews crude economic determinism and discerns no linear progress that guarantees the inevitable triumph of the revolutionary proletariat. Magraw stresses instead both political circumstance and human agency in shaping historical events and in forging an unstable and transient working-class identity and consciousness.

In any case, Magraw's particular ideological tendencies in no way interfere with the purpose of this admirable monograph. Magraw has written a general survey of the history of the French working class from the fall of Napoleon I in 1815 to the outbreak of World War II in 1939. A twelve-page introductory segment presents the "artisan world" of 1760-1815; a fourteen-page postscript attempts to carry the story forward into the 1980s and reflects briefly on the national "peculiarities" of French labour. Alas! this ending is far too abrupt and it is regrettable that Magraw did not devote more space to following the labour movement through World War Two, the German Occupation and the "Trente Glorieuses" (the "thirty glorious years" of economic expansion that followed the war).

Magraw's narrative focuses primarily on labour protest, working-class organization and socialist politics, rather than on problems of class formation, living and working conditions or family structure (although he inevitably touches on these subjects). He deals at length with the forms taken by class consciousness in various historical periods, although he is skeptical of ever finding it in pure form. Indeed, at one point he describes "revolutionary

[class] consciousness" as "that Loch Ness monster for which labour historians search ceaselessly and in vain."(2: 318)

The book is refreshingly free of cant and abstruse theorizing, which infect too much recent work in the field of labour history. Readers will have to look elsewhere if they seek those dubious "postmodern" analyses, which, rather than basing theory on a close study of empirical evidence, pillage a few documents for selected passages to support a priori theoretical postulates. *Rethinking Labor History: Essays on Discourse and Class Analysis*[2] appeared after Magraw's book. Despite the general title, every single essay in the collection is in the field of French labour history and, with one or two exceptions, all of them dispense tedious and insubstantial theorizing. These essays stand at the opposite historiographical pole from Magraw's own meticulous empiricism. What a pity that they have not had to stand up to his scrutiny and evaluation! Of course, Magraw himself cannot entirely avoid invoking the postmodern holy trinity of class, race and gender. His two volumes are by definition about class; he deals well, albeit briefly, with the problem of male-female tensions within the work force and in the labour movement (due to the shortage of good studies of these topics); while his discussion of race is inevitably perfunctory (anti-Semitism and xenophobic reactions to Belgian and Italian workers), because he writes about the days before massive immigration into France from Africa, North Africa and Asia.

Magraw's Thompsonianism is most evident in Volume One, which centers on craft radicalism: the much noted "French paradox" that the emergence in the 1830s of a socially and politically conscious class, calling itself "proletarian," occurred in France well before the development of modern mass industry and the appearance of a genuine industrial proletariat. It was the "radical artisan" — the skilled craftsman working in a small urban shop in

2 Lenard R. Berlanstein, ed., *expndtw Rethinking Labor History: Essays on Discourse and Class Analysis*expndtw (Urbana and Chicago 1993).

one of the traditional trades — who spearheaded the early French labour and socialist movements. Magraw avoids overly simplistic interpretations, however, most notably the reductionist thesis that sees all radicalism as deriving essentially from the resistance by proud artisans to deskilling and "proletarianization." Other variables, especially local and national politics, which shaped and channeled the underlying economic discontent of artisans, receive detailed consideration from Magraw. He stresses the degree to which participation in strikes and revolutionary politics encouraged the early development of class consciousness among artisans. Magraw is also keenly aware of differences among artisans: tensions between the sexes in certain crafts (like the needle trades), antagonisms within the workshop (masters against journeymen, journeymen against apprentices) and, above all, distinct regional cultures and traditions.

Volume Two treats a very different set of problems, because the decades after 1870 saw significant economic change in France: the accelerating decline of rural outwork and the artisanal workshop; the Second Industrial Revolution and the expansion of the industrial proletariat; the reshaping of France's "industrial geography," due to an increased pace of industrialization in the North and East and a concomitant (partial) deindustrialization of the West, Southwest and Center. Political change was no less important. The destruction of the Paris Commune in 1871 marked the end of that long series of urban insurrections that had punctuated French history between 1789 and 1871. The bourgeois elites that assumed power with the advent of the Third Republic strove to consolidate their authority by winning the peasants and workers over to their conservative regime. They promoted employer paternalism, economic protectionism (the Má,áline Tariff of 1891), imperial expansion and even social reform, which Magraw quite justifiably labels "patchy and inadequate."(2: 52)

Volume Two is consequently organized around the complex question of working-class loyalties in the Third Republic: did these lie primarily with class or with nation? Most (though by no means all) historians agree that, generally speaking, what was once

Europe's "most militant, volatile working class" in the nineteenth century gradually became absorbed into "a broad Republican consensus" by the early twentieth century. French workers not only embraced Nation and Republic (most clearly when they marched off to war in 1914-18), but also accepted the industrial capitalist system, willing to play by the "rules of the game" if that could win them a fairer share of national prosperity. (It didn't.) Magraw accepts the general lines of this argument, although not without some hesitancy: "A balanced judgment must, in the last resort, be one which portrays [the French working class] as poised uncertainly between alienation and incorporation."(4) He points out the conflicts that indicate serious cracks in the republican synthesis: the growth of Revolutionary Syndicalism, the surge of socialism and Marxism, and the State's use of the army to break strikes in the 1890s and early 1900s.

Magraw's survey is not based on any primary research of his own. Instead, the author draws extensively on the hundreds of monographs and articles published in the field by countless French, British and North-American scholars, as well as on several first-hand accounts written by workers themselves. The result is not a straight-forward narrative of French labour history, but rather a synthetic treatment of a vast historiography, arranged chronologically in seven historical blocks from "The Emergence of the French Labour Movement, 1815-1848" to "French Labour in the Inter-war Years, 1921-1939." Magraw sets out the principal historiographical debates for each historical period. He juxtaposes conflicting interpretations, evaluates the merits and shortcomings of each, and offers his own measured assessment.

However, Magraw does more than simply report on what others have had to say. He does not shy away from criticizing fellow historians, nor from stating his own opinions and prejudices. For example, he disparages "the brand of neo-Taineite counter-revolution peddled so lucratively by Simon Schama;"(1: 291) takes Peter Stearns to task for his "neo-Perlmanite assumption" that ideology shaped the actions of labour leaders in the early 1900s, but that rank-and-file workers were economically pragmatic(2: 104-5); and

labels Michel Perrot a "child of 1968" — a year of idealistic but impractical revolutionary agitation in France — because she advances the "questionable" thesis that labour unions after 1890 turned bureaucratic and reformist.(2: 108) But Magraw does more than proffer such sardonic and dismissive comments. To cite only two (of many) instances of critical analysis: in the first volume, he methodically demolishes sociologist Mark Traugott's argument that class origins did not determine workers' political actions in June of 1848(1: 144-8) and in the second he carefully reveals the flaws in Annie Kriegel's thesis that French labour was profoundly reformist by World War One and that only a chance concordance of external circumstances gave revolutionary communism the fleeting opportunity to take hold in France in 1919-20.(2: 191-201)

Magraw set for himself an ambitious task and for the most part has acquitted himself brilliantly. This, then, is the book's main value: it combines a sweeping overview of French labour history with a detailed presentation of existing work in the field. Indeed, Magraw's text can be too detailed and the blurry-eyed reader sometimes reels as Magraw races through the historiography. bombarding him/her with yet more facts, figures and interpretations. Graduate students and professional historians, who lack the time to read so massive a body of historical literature, will find this monograph a very useful crib. Specialists in French labour history will discover in it a wealth of material to inspire further reflection and future research.

But no one will find anything startlingly new in this book, however helpful Magraw's judicious and trenchant assessments may be. Magraw is an extraordinarily knowledgeable guide along paths blazed by others, but he does not open any trails of his own. And — to switch metaphors — Magraw is not entirely successful in constructing a solid and uniform edifice out of other people's bricks. However excellent its individual parts, Magraw's study as a whole lacks an overall coherence. Moreover, he summarizes and assesses the historiography without ever going beyond it. Many readers will wish that Magraw would raise new historical problems, give fresh answers to old ones or provide new material to fill

some of the yawning gaps in our existing knowledge of French labour. Nor is Magraw's account entirely exempt from error and omission. Every specialist will undoubtedly note various minor mistakes in his/her own domain. This reviewer found Magraw's brief account of reactions to the important Le Chapelier Law (June 1791), which banned trade associations, inaccurate and highly misleading. (Parisian workers did not strike in protest and bourgeois radicals never opposed the law.) And he was disappointed by Magraw's brief analysis of Parisian labour unrest in 1830-33 — the single most crucial period in the forging of nineteenth-century artisanal militancy — which is confused and superficial.

The publishers apparently embrace their author's luddism: they fail to avail themselves of modern technological wonders such as a "spell check" program (but even good old-fashioned copy editing would have sufficed). Erratic punctuation and bizarre typographical errors abound in the text, especially in the spelling of names: for example, Theodore Zeldin is transformed into Zeddin,(1: 50) Annie Kriegel becomes Kriegal (2:118), Simon Schama is alternately Scharma or Shama (300), and poor Fá,álicitá,á de Lamennais turns up as Lemennais, Lammenais, and Lammennais!(1: 74, 82, 298) This is irritating and quite unacceptable in so excellent and interesting a book.

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The Chilly Collective, eds., *Breaking Anonymity: The Chilly Climate for Women Faculty* (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press 1995).

It is heartening to see the publication of *Breaking Anonymity: The Chilly Climate for Women Faculty* in the same year that our federal government dismantled the Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women and our provincial government jettisoned Bill 79, The Employment Equity Act. The message conveyed by the con-