

escape the domination of the kidnapper. Not engaging with recent anarchist political theory, questions about the institutionalization of rules, the internalization of norms, and self-censorship are not just unresolved, they are sidestepped and the authors turn to history to bolster their position. It seems that there is no evidence that syndicalism was ever troubled with problems of dissent, coercion or internal oppression. “Abstract” thinkers like Voline who suggested otherwise were simply mistaken and anyway lacked a sense of social responsibility (p. 261).

A similar strategy is used in the discussion of feminism. Distancing themselves from “anarchist” and “anarcha-feminism”, Schmidt and Van der Walt resurrect the idea of class-gender priority which became the mainstay of socialist/Marxist feminism in the 1970s. The “struggle for women’s rights was part of the larger class struggle” (p. 298). In this frame, Proudhon’s misogyny is only another indication that he fell outside the broad tradition, and although there is no discussion of patriarchy or radical feminism and gender is treated in narrowly heterosexual terms, movement history indicates a consistent commitment to feminism.

Black Flame is an important book which brilliantly synthesizes the histories of a set of movements which are still largely neglected. The disappointment of the book is the rigidity of the claims it makes about those movements: the equally rich history of cultural experimentation, disobedience, and protest is unreasonably and unnecessarily marginalized. The book formalizes a boundary between anarchists and others which is troubling. At one point the authors consider the problems that Tolstoyans might pose for syndicalist organizations (!). To extend membership to these non-anarchists, they argue, would compromise and undermine the class struggle (p. 246). Perhaps. But this worry points to a peculiar idea of prefiguration or an overly optimistic view about social homogeneity and the unwillingness to regard anyone but fellow syndicalists as anarchist looks sectarian.

Schmidt and Van der Walt say there are not dismissive of non-syndicalist anti-authoritarian traditions and that their purpose is better to understand them (p. 19). Yet having first defined the outside, they end up recommending bone fide anarchist organizations to exclude and ignore it. There is seemingly no need to negotiate disagreements. This sets up a political problem which is unlikely to be resolved except by declarations of heresy and the use of force. Whilst the history of the movements that the authors outline is inspiring and empowering, their positioning creates a palpable sense of powerlessness for those who don’t tick the right definitional boxes. Schmidt and Van der Walt say that they want to encourage debate (p. 27), but this requires that the arguments of opponents are taken seriously and engaged with – not sidelined. In seeking to recover a forgotten history, they seem to have lost sight of this.

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The Encyclopedia of Strikes in American History. Ed by Aaron Brenner, Benjamin Day, and Immanuel Ness. M.E. Sharpe, Armonk, New York [etc.] 2009. xxxix, 750 pp. Ill. \$175.00; doi:10.1017/S0020859010000374

The Encyclopedia of Strikes in American History, edited by Aaron Brenner, Benjamin Day, and Immanuel Ness, is self-admittedly non-encyclopedic in that, “A comprehensive explanation of the hundreds of thousands of strikes in US history would be impossible”

(p. xxxiv). The editors' goal, rather, is to provide their readers with the "tools" requisite to analyze not only the strikes included in its pages, but those outside them. For those interested in the American labor movement, both professionals and hobbyists alike, a "multi-faceted tool" such as the *Encyclopedia* provides great analytical utility. *Caveat emptor*, however – "some assembly required".

The *Encyclopedia* includes sixty-five essays individually authored by a diverse array of historians, social scientists, philosophers, and past or current activists. The essays focus upon either a particular theme or industry and are arranged in five sections: (1) "Strikes: Theory and Practice"; (2) "Strikes and Working Class Culture"; (3) "Strike Waves"; (4) "Public Sector Strikes"; and (5) "Private Sector Strikes", which is further subdivided into "Manufacturing, Mining, and Agriculture Strikes", "Infrastructure Industry Strikes", and "Service Industry Strikes". The thematic essays – designed to "answer questions that can only be answered by looking at a variety of strikes across industries, groups of workers, and time" (p. xxxiv) – are concentrated within the first three sections. The industry-specific essays – designed to analyze strike activities within the specific social, political, and economic contexts within which they occurred – comprise the final two-thirds of the text. Space constraints prohibit a review of each individual chapter. Suffice it to say that the text reads well. Only rarely do any of the pieces degenerate into monotonous litanies of strike records. In fact, enough contextual material is often brought to bear upon the individual topics at hand to educate the reader not only in American strike history, but its political, industrial and cultural histories, as well.

Despite the fact that "the editors have not sought to impose any unifying theoretical or political approach to the topics covered" (p. xxxv), the text is remarkably consistent in tone and tenor. The selection of the individual authors, who for the most part were sympathetic to the strikers, no doubt helped. But beyond that, if there were common themes inherent to American strike history then one might have expected (or at least hoped) for them to emerge over the course of sixty-five strategically selected topical essays. As it stands, the *Encyclopedia* is self-policing and mutually reinforcing. The compilation is structured such that the material flows from the general thematic essays to their industry-specific counterparts. As such, the relevance and accuracy of the thematic essays are indicated by their recurrence within the industry-specific pieces, and vice versa.

This is certainly true of the second and third collections of thematic essays regarding the heterogeneity of American strike participants and the occurrence and impact of various strike waves on American soil, respectively. Carry-over themes developed in the former included the intersection of class, racial, ethnic, gender, and even religious issues; the intersection of the labor, civil rights, and women's movements; radical versus conservative approaches to organizing; the impact of existent enmity among the disparate groups on strike success/failure; and also the efforts by employers to utilize, if not exacerbate, intra-class tensions by pitting groups against one another either on the job or as strike-breakers. Similarly successful arguments regarding the contemporaneous and long-term significance of strike waves upon American industry and labor relations as developed in section III are also made – especially those of 1877, World War I, the New-Deal Era, and 1945–1946 – as these dates achieve prominence in chapter after chapter.

Where such symmetry does not emerge, however, the problems do. First and foremost, treatment of the government's relationship to and role within strikes is unsatisfactory – an editorial oversight, perhaps, in that the significance of the state is lost on few individual authors. In his thematic contribution, "Strikes: Theory and Practice" for instance, Gerald

Friedman concludes that, "Thus the study of strike outcomes returns the discussion of strikes to politics and to the history behind any political regime," (p. 27). The material regarding strike waves frequently cites the direct government repression of broad-based insurgency, the influence of the legal code on strikes and vice versa, and the decisive roles often played by key political actors – themes carried forward into virtually every industry-specific essay.

Perhaps the editors assumed that a decentralized approach to the issue would be adequate. It certainly makes sense in terms of industry-specific legislation such as the Erdman Act among railroaders, the Motor Carriers' Act among teamsters, or the Lea Act among musicians. But the piecemeal approach to major enactments such as Wagner and Taft–Hartley prompt confusion and oversights. The judicial regime commonly referred to as "government by injunction", for instance, receives nary a mention throughout the text. Perhaps the authors were concerned that the inclusion of a thematic essay directly addressing the state's legislative, judicial, and oftentimes martial impact would smack of political bias. Nevertheless, the better parts of two essays are dedicated to the private use of spies and mercenaries in the employers' private war against strikers. Why not then one further essay dedicated to the very entity which structured the legal environment wherein such practices were allowed? Scattered references to key pieces of legislation and court rulings within the work's "Timeline" and "Additional Bibliography" are no substitute for an essay specifically dedicated to explaining what was legal, when, and why.

The problems regarding coverage of the decline of strike activity over the past several decades, on the other hand, are more subtle. Key issues, including the repressive effect of the Taft–Hartley Act of 1947, the increasingly conservative political climate punctuated by the Reagan Era and deregulation, the bureaucratization of organized labor and/or its tactical errors, technological change, globalization and capital flight and mobility are not raised either in Jeremy Brecher's thematic, "The Decline of Strikes", or in many of the other myriad essays throughout the text. Within the context of the essays regarding manufacturing in particular, however, where the decline has been especially pronounced, key issues regarding the impact of global competition and capital flight are advanced uncritically. Rather than accept the inevitability of such phenomena, readers would do well to recall Barry Bluestone and Bennett Harrison's thesis that deindustrialization has been at least in part a conscious corporate decision on the part of employers to abandon the postwar "social contract" with labor, i.e. failure was not inevitable.

The location of essays regarding the service sector within the final subsection of the text is thus well served. Many of the preceding essays are notably pessimistic if not defeatist regarding the prospects for renewed militancy. Yet among the service-sector essays, a sense of hope pervades, buoyed by the dynamism of their still-emergent industries, albeit tempered by many of the same concerns of their old-economy counterparts. They emphasize not only the failed opportunities but the opportunities *through* labor militancy that still remain. It is thus perhaps fitting that the *Encyclopedia* includes no summary chapter, no final statement. If the end has not yet come, then how can it be written?

Given the scope, length, and structure of the work, there may well be a tendency for some to approach *The Encyclopedia of Strikes in American History* as a reference book, dipping into and among the chapters as seems necessary. That would be unfortunate. Yes, the individual essays are in and of themselves informative and references are provided at the end of each chapter and additionally in the epilogue, providing, perhaps, the starting point for further research. However, the true strength and value of the *Encyclopedia* is captured less

within its individual parts than in its sum total, wherein the recurrent themes, far from appearing redundant, develop a rhythm which serves to reinforce within the determined reader that the triumphs and travails of restive laborers were not isolated among miners, longshoremen, construction workers, teamsters, steelworkers or any other group of laborers commonly associated with American labor history. But, rather, otherwise disparate workers such as newsboys, telegraphers, waitresses, plumbers, and office workers, as well as millions of other strikers, have shared a commonality of cause despite their apparent diversity.

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SHULMAN, ELENA. *Stalinism on the Frontier of Empire: Women and State Formation in the Soviet Far East* Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2008; doi:10.1017/S002085901000043X

Studies of the frontier as a separate and gendered space have proliferated in recent decades, with women being portrayed as agents of civilization and colonization, as well as having a role in nation-building. However, although present at every phase of Russian empire-building, Russian women have seldom been the subject of research, or even mentioned as active agents of colonization in either Soviet/Russian or Western historiographies. Shulman's book fills this gap by presenting a valuable contribution to the field of gender studies, to the history of Stalinism, and to the history of Soviet women in the process of state-formation and empire-building in a very complex and challenging region of the Far East. Taking the Khetagurovite campaign of 1937 as an example of Stalinist policies of recruitment, Shulman re-evaluates the whole concept of women's roles, contribution, and participation in the processes of empire-building.

This book focuses on the life stories of women recruited in the Khetagurovite campaign to settle in the Far East in 1937. It is through their experiences that the Soviet empire-building process is reflected and analysed, enabling the reader to see how the lives of ordinary women interacted with the powerful movement towards state-formation. These stories are recovered from archival letters, party documents, memoirs, press reports, and films of that era and constitute quite a rich source base, allowing multifaceted analyses of women's participation in the colonization of the Far East and their contribution to what in the historiography is called "Stalinism" (pp. 23–24). Shulman defines her subject matter in clear terms and provides quite an extensive theoretical framework for her study, summarizing historiographical discussions on such subjects as the "frontier", "Stalinism", and "Soviet women's status" (pp. 9–23).

The book is divided into six chapters dealing with both frontier fantasies and women's real experiences in the Far East. Shulman starts with a general description of the position of women under the Soviets in the 1920s and 1930s, providing a background to the personal stories of the women who ended up going to build the Far East in 1937. Chapter 1 argues that in the context of the Great Terror, packed labour camps, and the deportation of Soviet Koreans and Chinese migrant workers finally appeared as obligatory keystones in Stalinist state-building and national security at the frontier.

Chapter 2 continues to sketch the background to the Khetagurovite campaign by illustrating the history of the colonization of the Far East. In Shulman's opinion, as a region the Far East was underpopulated and underdeveloped, and represented essentially a masculine space as all the settlers were men who left their families behind in seeking a