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Books Reviewed

Lebowitz, Michael A. 2010. *The Socialist Alternative: Real Human Development.* New York: Monthly Review Press.

Reviewed By P. Khalil Saucier

Riddell, John, ed. 2012. *Towards the United Front: Proceedings of the Fourth Congress of the Communist International, 1922.* Boston: Brill Academic Publishers. Haymarket Books.

Reviewed By Paul Kellogg

Neigh, Scott. 2012. *Resisting the State: Canadian History Through the Stories of Activists.* Halifax & Winnipeg: Fernwood Publishing.

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Comack, Elizabeth. 2012. *Racialized Policing: Aboriginal People's Encounters With the Police.* Halifax & Winnipeg: Fernwood Publishing.

Reviewed By Ted McCoy

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Reviewed By P. Khalil Saucier
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"Marxism encloses man within history, so that it is unable to confront man with the external world and thus can only deal with historical, not existential, problems."

-- Milan Prucha[1]

Given the zeitgeist of global protest, Michael Lebowitz's book The Socialist Alternative: Real Human Development would seem to be an important touchstone for mapping the wills and wants of occupy protesters from Wall Street to the Brazilian rainforest.[2] Yet, many in the Occupy movement seek not an alternative to capitalism, but a form of capitalism that is more compassionate – capitalism with a human face. For these people, capitalism would create new ethical frameworks from which to work from. The intensification of work and the extraction of surplus labour would still exist only this time it would be done with a "fair" wage and ethical standpoints that are ecologically sensitive to the global scourge of past capitalist practices. Such an idea however is a scandal to say the least, a ruse that mystifies the true social relations under capitalism. To this end, the ideological deficiency of the global Occupy movement is one of its greatest weaknesses. For instance, we live in a moment where many progressives turn to aid agencies, among other things, in an attempt to eradicate poverty despite such aid agencies promoting the goals of empire.[3] As capitalism continues to creep amidst progressive liberal malaise and confusion, ideologically and pragmatically speaking, where do we go from here? To this question, The Socialist Alternative attempts an answer.

[1] Prucha, `Marxism and the Existential Problem,' 152.

[2] I do not wish to classify all current global protest as being inspired, influenced, or connected to the Occupy Movement. I simply see the Occupy Movement as a sub-stratum of global resistance against capital, resistance that might aptly be seen as part of the "multitude."

[3] Here I define empire as the hierarchical ordering of society, whereas a nation-state features a horizontal ordering of society.

As Lebowitz clearly states in the preface, the purpose of the book is 'to point to an alternative' (p. 7), an alternative that confronts and negates the eco-social distress that the capitalist project has facilitated. Aside from an alternative, The Socialist Alternative is also a reclamation project of sorts, for Lebowitz implicitly is attempting to clarify and recuperate the falsification of Marx's understanding of human development in particular and by extension socialist thought more generally. Put slightly differently, the book serves not only as a vision, a mapping of sorts, but also as a corrective to tendentious readings of Marx and the misuse and application of socialist concepts. According to Lebowitz, the socialist project is incoherently stumbling and staggering into the future. He attempts to renew interest in socialism, as well as redirect it, by distancing it from its historical past and by fleshing out the ambiguity and vagueness that so often revolves around its many lexical constellations. For Lebowitz, the word socialism and the material realities it designates are often weighed down by the substance of an epoch, particularly the trace of the Cold War. To this end, the socialist framework developed in the book is distinct from what Lebowitz calls "real" socialism – that is, the socialist projects of the USSR and Yugoslavia for instance. It is clear that Lebowitz's time in Venezuela, a place he has lived with his partner Martha Harnacker since 2004, has left a strong impression on his understanding and explication of socialism. However, The Socialist Alternative is by no means a book about the Chavez-led Bolivarian Revolution. Lebowitz stresses that socialism much like capitalism must be organic. Socialism must come from 'revolutionary practice', the self-activity of the masses wherever they may be located. Lebowitz does, however, advocate for a rigid system, what he calls 'socialist triangle', but understands that all good things have a basic structure and the nuance and 'particularity comes from the context and to this he emphasizes; that each country must invent its own path' (p. 128).

Socialism's basic structure is triangular. The three sides include: 'the wealth of people,' 'the production of people,' and 'the solidarian society.' To this end, the book is broken into two parts: the socialist triangle and building the socialist triangle. Again, real human development is at the center of Lebowitz's argument. Lebowitz begins to develop his socialist geometry in and around social ownership or 'the wealth of the people.' Social ownership 'implies a profound democracy from below rather than decisions by a state that stands over and above society' (my emphasis p. 41). Emphasis is not placed on the division of labour, that is, workers, bosses, and bureaucrats, but on 'the combination of labour– its character as social labour (p. 33).' It also implies a diachronic approach to understanding past social labour. In fact, the book itself is a product of social labour – part of the social brain of society, the result of past immaterial labour. Socialism reclaims what has been taken; it remedies the theft that started when private ownership of the means of production became de rigueur. It requires that the means of production be in association with past and present forms of social labour and social property, thusly, establishing a genealogical understanding of contemporary forms of sociality and human

interconnectedness. Social ownership, then, is necessary to satisfy the needs of all people, rather than just the needs of private owners. As many of us know, 'In capitalism, human beings are not the end; rather, they are means for the expansion of capital' (p. 44).

The second side of the triangle features 'the production of people.' In other words, social production organized by associated interdependent workers. Under capitalism, production is organized by capital which exploits workers and transmogrifies their creative potentiality. Here Lebowitz argues that:

> The implication is obvious – every aspect of production must be a site for the collective decision making and variety of activity that develops human capacities and builds solidarity among the particular associated producers. When workers act in workplaces and communities in conscious cooperation with others, they produce themselves as people conscious of their interdependence and of their own collective power (p. 60).

In other words, when workers organize production, they develop their human capabilities in solidarity and commune with others, which presupposes the third side of the triangle and is ultimately necessary for socialism.

The third part of the triangle is the elimination of material incentives, worker competition, exchange relations, and the market economy, in order to distribute goods according to communal needs. With communal production 'where the associated producers engage in productive activity for the needs of the community, there is the continuous process of development of the capabilities of producers' (p. 81). According to Lebowitz, in privileging communal needs over self-interest it 'guards against worker-managers viewing their labour power as property and as the basis of an exchange with society, and it checks a tendency to treat social property as group property' (p. 88). Without the goal of producing for communal needs, any attempt at socialism can lead back to capitalism. To this end, socialism means the overcoming of the separateness and antagonism between subject and object. The socialist triangle leads to a society which permits the actualization of the human; Marx's species-being. In other words, socialism is just as much an economic and material project as it is also an existential and ontological project. The relationship between social structure and consciousness is ultimately at the core of the socialist project. Socialism in this instance is not just about fulfilling the basic needs of society, such as food, shelter, and medical care, although these are the bedrock of the system. As Che reminds us:

> It is not a matter of how many kilograms of meat one has to eat, or how many times a year someone can go to beach, or how many pretty things from abroad you might be able to buy with present-day wages. It is a

> matter of making the individual feel more complete, with much more inner wealth and much more responsibility.[4]

It is about people enjoying the kind of freedom that is simply beyond the capability of the capitalist system to deliver. Lebowitz's project in many respects is more about organization and social empowerment than it is economics, that is, the forms of social empowerment and social development necessary for transcending capitalism.

But herein lays the fundamental problem with the book. In his attempt to unsettle the power and fortitude of capital, Lebowitz fails to extend his argument to all people. What about those outside of humanity? What about the supernumerary? In other words, can socialism speak for and represent those not recognized as human – that is the non-human? In many ways the book lays claim to a universal applicability. Lebowitz's assumptive logic is predicated upon the authority of whiteness. In other words, Lebowitz's subject, read human, is 'overrepresented as the generic, ostensibly supracultural human.'[5] As Wilderson has clearly illustrated, the black subject is the scandal within historical materialism: 'the black subject position in America is an antagonism, a demand that cannot be satisfied through a transfer of ownership/organization of existing rubrics.'[6] This illustrates the limitations of Lebowitz's socialist triangle. For instance, how would blacks fair under worker cooperatives? Does a solidarian society, based on worker cooperatives axiomatically become anti-'anti-black'? Does a syndicalist system restore humanity back to the black? The universal (hu)man is still European and western. It is from this commonsensical standpoint that Lebowitz elaborates and maps out the socialist alternative. What is crowded out, due to the perceived universal applicability is black particularity; the singularity of black suffering, not just black exploitation. Again, to quote Wilderson, 'Work is a white category.'[7] We could explain Lebowitz's general neglect of race and how it might confound his socialist triangle as simply 'misrecogniz[ing] the nature of racial slavery: as a brutal regime of labour exploitation.'[8] Lebowitz's only reference to race is featured in a footnote, where he observes that 'other inversions of human development such as patriarchy, caste society, and racism (p. 183)' need to be explicitly dealt with in order for real human development to occur. But to pair racism in its most general banal constitution with patriarchy and caste society again undermines the import of race; it makes such 'inversions of human development' seem similar when in fact they are not. Capitalism splits the body, but paired with white supremacy and antiblackness, the body becomes quartered.

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[4] Guevara, `Che Guevara on Global Justice,' p.43.

[5] Wynters, `Unsettling the Coloniality of Being/Power/Truth/Freedom,' p. 288.

[6] Wilderson, `Gramsci's Black Marx,' p. 231.

[7] Ibid, p. 238.

[8] Sexton, `Race, Nation, and Empire in a Blackened World,' p. 251.

Might I suggest, as Hardt has,

> to look… outside this alternative. Too often it appears as though our only choices are capitalism or socialism, the rule of private property or that of public property, such that the only cure for the ills of state control is to privatize and for the ills of capital to publicize – that is, to exert state regulation.[9]

The freedom to labour under different conditions, that is, exempt from exploitation is not true freedom, for the violent underside, featuring both terror and horror, still is present. There comes a point when it is no longer about capital exploitation at all, but also general global terror and violence. As Wilderson has observed, there comes a time when one needs to deal with the 'relations of terror as opposed to a relation of hegemony.'[10] This paradigmatic shift is often neglected and/or omitted, intentionally or unintentionally, because many on the Left continue to work within the 'tradition of unraced positionality.'[11] To think of the worker, whether exploited or working for him or herself, as unraced is absurd to say the least, for the 'we' is really a synonym for a canonized whiteness. The Socialist Alternative says nothing about race, particularly blackness as both an identity and structural positionality. As Charles Mills has observed, 'If the white workers have been alienated from their product, then people of color, especially black slaves, have been alienated from their personhood...'[12] If The Socialist Alternative is really about socialism proper, it must deal with anthropological, axiological, ontological and existential problems. It confronts the bourgeois problem, but neglects the racial and colonial problem.

Lebowitz fails to provide what Lewis Gordon has characterized as a 'conjunctive analysis,' that is, an analysis that is critically and not reductively engaged with racism, capitalism, and colonialism.[13] As a result, Lebowitz's suggestions for an alternative can only be stretched so far; they reach a sociogenic and ontogenic limit. Lebowitz is still in Europe. As Fanon observed, 'Let us decide not to imitate Europe; let us combine our muscles and our brains in a new direction. Let us try to create the whole man, whom Europe has been incapable of bringing to triumphant birth.'[14] To recapitulate, Lebowitz's text suffers from a universalist, canonized whiteness approach, thusly subsuming a type of particularity. Any development must be simultaneously particular and universal. To

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[9] Hardt, `The Common in Communism,' p. 346.
[10] Wilderson, p. 230.
[11] Ibid, p. 229.
[12] Mills, From Class to Race: Essays in White Marxism and Black Radicalism, p. xviii.
[13] Gordon, Her Majesty's Other Children: Sketches of Racism from a Neocolonial Age.
[14] Fanon, The Wretched of the Earth, p. 313.

echo Nahum Chandler, 'the black is a problem for socialist thought.'[15] In relation to Prucha's statement in the epigraph, even if one is enclosed in history, one must confront the existential and ontological, for it is the historical enclosure that sets the stage for existence or non-existence and, thus, inclusion or exclusion from projects for real human development. Lebowitz attempts to reinsert the (hu)man back into an alternative approach to human development. Yet, the main defect of Lebowitz's book is the presupposition that all sentient beings are (hu)man.

Nonetheless, at a time when protest is common, Michael Lebowitz's The Socialist Alternative can serve as a timely intervention for those wondering what to do next, how to envision or map a new future. This book not only provides an important philosophical and ideological framework, but also outlines ways of creating a new (hu)man and by extension new human relationships particularly from the register of political economy. In other words, Lebowitz not only provides a conceptual mapping of socialism to come, but a practical and concrete mapping that can contribute to making socialism a reality. Throughout the book socialism is explicated as a tool, a method, not a tenet weighed down by the dogmatism of yesteryear. Students of struggle should read The Socialist Alternative. However, they should do so with a critical eye, for his 'new human' is fraught with defects as previously mentioned. Put slightly differently, students of struggle should always remain critically maladaptive even to that which is understood to be socialist or socialist-orientated. To this end, socialism is not a panacea, for it often excludes any need to negate the negation of white supremacy and antiblackness, that is, black absences when thinking of possible futures. I am not calling for a complete rejection of Lebowitz's argument, again I am sympathetic and thinking in solidarity with it, but his archive and paradigm is limited, for it excludes motifs that illustrate the significance of race in its most general constitution, and more importantly antiblackness. To pair the methods found in the book with the best of the black radical tradition surely will point to a new human. As Steve Biko cogently observed many years ago, 'problems are not solved completely when you alter the economic pattern, to a socialist pattern. You still don't become what you ought to be.'[16]

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[15] Chandler, `Of Exorbitance: The Problem of the Negro as a Problem for Thought.'

[16] As quoted in Fatten, Black Consciousness in South Africa, p. 79.

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Reviewed By Paul Kellogg
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Finally, almost a century after the fact, the proceedings of the 1922 Fourth Congress of the Communist International are available in English, thanks to the diligent translation and careful scholarship of John Riddell. Toward the United Front: Proceedings of the Fourth Congress of the Communist International, 1922 – the latest in a multi-volume collection of documents from the years before, during and after the Russian Revolution of 1917 – was made available to a limited audience in its 2011 hardback edition, and as of November 2012 in a much more affordable paperback version published by Haymarket Books (2011a; 2012a).

Although only in print for a few months (at this writing), Toward the United Front has already served to re-animate an engaged discussion about the big experience which was the Russian Revolution of 1917. November 2011, the eighth annual Historical Materialism conference in London, U.K., marked the book's publication with a series of panels involving thirty-eight different presentations, which 'reflected vigorous activity in this field, while also pointing up some research challenges for historians of the workers' movement' (Riddell 2011b). At Historical Materialism in Toronto, Canada in May 2012, the book was again the centre of many of the discussions, providing the theme for 11 presentations on three different panels (Riddell 2012b).

Ian Birchall, an intellectual long associated with the Socialist Workers' Party (SWP) in Britain, has written one of the earliest extensive reviews of Toward the United Front. 'Grappling with the United Front' is a very welcome, thoughtful and useful article, an article that serves as a good entry point into the massive volume.

One issue raised early on by Birchall merits further consideration, and will provide the framework for this article. Birchall writes: 'Many years ago, when I was young, it was common to find orthodox Trotskyists who claimed they based their politics on "the first four congresses of the Comintern". (You can probably still find such people in the remoter reaches of the Trotskyist blogosphere.) A position that made some sense in the 1930s, when Trotskyists were insisting that there was a clear break between Lenin and Stalin, became less and less relevant as both capitalism and the working class went through enormous changes' (2012, 195). Birchall is making a point, underlined by Abigail Bakan at a 2012 Toronto symposium on the Fourth Congress, that the proceedings of this (and the other congresses) need to be approached not as textbooks but rather as history books (Riddell 2012b). A too uncritical reliance on the First Four Congresses, is inevitably accompanied by a 'too angular' understanding of the contrast between the 'experienced Russian' leadership of the Comintern, and the 'inexperienced, mistake-prone' leadership of the non-Russians.

Avoiding a too uncritical approach to this complex history has been made much easier with the publication of Toward the United Front and its companion volumes. They provide documentation of important discussions and political positions which are still relevant, many decades later. They also reveal key moments where the Comintern leadership, including its core Russian section, was quite wrong, sometimes

catastrophically so. It is, for instance, generally conceded that the Comintern leadership made a serious error in the March Action of 1921, and this will be briefly examined here. Less well-known is the Russian invasion, the previous year, of the oppressed nation of Poland, which – because less well-known – will be examined here in more detail. These two events taken together graphically (and tragically) illustrate Birchall's point. However, with this history in mind, it will become clear, that this is an important issue for more than just a handful in the 'Trotskyist blogosphere', as he maintains. Some veteran Marxist writers who helped frame this discussion in the 1980s and 1990s, veteran Marxists long associated with Birchall, need to be critically re-read with this approach in mind.

First, take a quick survey of the 1921 German débacle. What we now know as the 'March Action' of 1921 was an attempt by the German Communist Party (KPD), to 'force' the German workers into revolution, even though the party represented only a small minority of the working class. 'The essence of the March Action … was that "the party went into battle without concerning itself over who would follow it" … Rather than break off the contrived operation, the leadership increased the pressure on members and used all the means it could think of, including sabotage and faked bomb attacks on Communist property, to bring other workers out on strike' (Morgan 1975, 398–399).

The party paid an enormous price for this adventurism. It was, arguably, irreparably damaged. Thousands of party members were arrested, "400 sentenced to some 1,500 years hard labour, and 500 to 800 years in jail, eight to life imprisonment and four to death" (Broué 2006, 506). Tens of thousands left the party, many leaving politics altogether, with party membership plummeting from 450,000 to 180,443 (Angress 1963, 217n). Pierre Broué's 1971 study, available in English since 2006, documents the very accurate analyses of the Luxemburgist cadres Clara Zetkin and Paul Levi, who in March 1921 – before the fact – were absolutely clear that the German left was in no position to challenge for state power, and who were the first, Levi especially, to openly oppose the ultraleft politics which led to such a disaster (2006, 507–515). By contrast, the Comintern leaders – the members of the Executive Committee of the Communist International (ECCI) – pushed hard for the March Action, and were proven completely wrong. Lenin and Trotsky – after the fact – provided extremely clear critiques of the failures of the March Action. But hindsight is always 20/20, and in the decisive weeks in March, the ECCI's key representatives in Europe were aggressive advocates for this very costly failure. The lessons from this catastrophe are codified in the politics of the united front. There is a straightforward reason this term informs the title of the Fourth Congress proceedings. The united front concept, as Birchall indicates, was the central theme of the Fourth Congress (and the Third Congress) of the Communist International.

We know a little bit about the March Action. It is a classic example of the problem of substitutionism – bypassing the mass self-emancipation of the working class, and attempting to substitute for it the actions of a minority "radical" section of the class.

We know quite a bit less about an even more serious event, the 1920 Russian invasion of Poland. Here was a much more extreme case of substitutionism – the attempt to substitute the revolutionary class with the bayonets of the Red Army.

In the spring of 1920, a Polish army had occupied Kiev, the most important city in the Ukraine. The Russian counter-attack was quickly successful in pushing the Polish army back to the "ethnographic" border of Poland. Unfortunately, the Russian Army did not stop there, but instead launched a massive invasion of Polish territory.

Leon Trotsky opposed this invasion. "Trotsky was convinced … that the entry into Polish territory by a Russian army, even under a red flag, would be felt like an invasion in the manner of Tsarism and would provoke a leap in Polish nationalism." Trotsky did not believe "in the export of the revolution at the point of bayonets" (Broué 1988, 269, author's translation). On the Russian side, nationalism also came to the fore – but not the nationalism of an oppressed nation, but the ugly patriotism of Great Russian chauvinism.

> Many Russians, including former Whites who had fought against the Bolsheviks in the Russian Civil War, opposed the reestablishment of Polish independence, and regarded the war as a traditional conflict between two opposing states. As a result, numerous former tsarist officers joined the ranks of the Red Army, including most famously, A.A. Brusilov, who wrote on 1 May 1920, that the, '… first measure [of the Soviet regime] must be agitation of national patriotism, without which an army cannot be strong and battleworthy' (Croll 2009, 19–20).

In Russia, the Bolsheviks were playing with a very dangerous fire – the fire of Great Russian chauvinism. Trotsky saw this, and argued against the invasion, but unfortunately stood almost alone against the vast majority of the Russian leadership, including against Lenin (Trotsky 1970, 457). Ignoring the advice of Trotsky meant ignoring the advice of the person who was, without question, the most experienced in these matters. In 1917, he had been head of the Military-Revolutionary Committee of the St. Petersburg Soviet, the committee which organized the October Revolution. From 1919 to 1925 he served as People's Commissar of army and navy affairs, and was the pre-eminent political and organizational leader of the Red Army which emerged victorious and saved that revolution from defeat by foreign invasion and internal civil war. But this experience was ignored, and against Trotsky's advice, the invasion of Poland proceeded, and proceeded with little sense of restraint or caution.

The 1920 Second Congress of the Communist International was in session while the invasion was under way (proceedings of which are available in Riddell 1991a; Riddell 1991b). "Delegates to the Communist International sitting in Moscow were in paroxysms of excitement as they watched the flags showing the positions of the Red armies move

forward every day on the huge map that hung on the wall. World revolution seemed within reach" (Zamoyski 2008, chap. 4). This reflected the view, held by virtually all of the senior Comintern leaders, that a military victory in Poland could be a spark for revolution in Germany. In the full flush of these illusions, Lenin gathered Comintern delegates from Germany around a map, asking them where in East Prussia there was likely to be an uprising to greet the victorious Red Army, after it had swept through Poland and reached the border with Germany. "The three Germans," one of whom was Paul Levi, "stared at him in amazement. East Prussia was known as one of the most conservative German regions". Expecting an uprising there to greet invading Russian troops correctly struck these delegates as absurd (Angress 1963, 67).

If it was absurd to expect conservative German peasants to rise up at the sight of Red Army bayonets, it was even more absurd to expect Polish peasants – long the victims of Great Russian chauvinism – to greet this army as their liberators. The Russian general leading the invasion – Mikhail Nikolaievich Tukhachevsky – had achieved extraordinary success in the Civil War in Russia. But that success was based not so much on his military "genius," but on the clear understanding, primarily shaped by Trotsky, of the class politics behind the Civil War. In Russia, the military campaigns coincided with a class struggle of peasants against landlords. This meant that Tukhachevsky could march his massive armies through land where the peasants would "provide them with supplies and make good his losses in men" (Zamoyski 2008, chap. 4). For the Russian peasants, the victory of the Red Army over the White Army meant a victory by the Russian peasants over the landlords who had kept them poor and oppressed for generations. This made Red Army victories in the Civil War in Russia, part of the revolutionary victory of the oppressed classes in Russia.

But Poland was not Russia. True, the Polish peasants were oppressed by a rich and corrupt landlord class, just as were the Russian peasants. But they were also oppressed by Russia, through a long history of invasions and occupations. The relation of Poland to Russia was analogous to that of Ireland to Great Britain, Quebec to English Canada, the Haudenosaunee (Iroquois) to the United States. The Polish people were an oppressed nation within the prison-house of nations that had been Tsarist Russia. An army of Russian peasants was not going to be greeted as a liberation army any more than would be a British army in Ireland, an English Canadian army in Quebec, or an 18th-century U.S. army in Haudenosaunee territory in what is today New York state.

There is another aspect to the invasion – an odious aspect – that has to be examined. Not only was the territory through which the Russian army was marching that of an oppressed Polish nation – it was territory with a very large Jewish population. The instrument with which the "liberation" of Poland was to be accomplished – the Red Army – was to say the least, ill-suited to the added task of liberating the Jews of Poland. Tukhachevsky might very well have been a brilliant general. He also had a background, as a young man, of being an anti-semite. In 1917, during World War One, he was a

prisoner-of-war in Bavaria, and there made the acquaintance of French journalist Remy Roure, "one of the most prominent journalists and newspapermen in France in his day, a founder of Le Monde and its political editor from 1945 to 1952" (Furr III 1986, 297 fn 11). In 1928 Roure published, in Paris, a biography of his now famous former cellmate. He records a conversation revealing the most vile anti-semitism. "The Jews … are a low race. I don't even speak of the dangers they create in my country" (Zamoyski 2008, chap. 3). Those who wish to read the whole excerpt can follow the footnote. This small portion of the full quotation reveals Tukhachevsky's anti-semitism very clearly. The year of this prison interview was the same year, a few months later when back in Russia, that he was to join the Bolshevik Party.

Anti-semitism was an issue not just for ex-aristocrats like Tukhachevsky, but for the very poor peasant class which formed the core of the Red Army. This millions-strong conscript army was a brilliant construction, crafted principally by Trotsky, but it was not well-suited to liberating an oppressed nation, let alone one with a large Jewish population. Three-quarters of the Red Army soldiers were peasants, and, according to Orlando Figes "… its [rank-and-file soldiers frequently became involved in violent looting, especially when passing through non-Russian (particularly Jewish) areas."

> The Red Army, it is important to bear in mind, was predominantly Russian in its ethnic composition. Even units conscripted in the Ukraine and other non-Russian regions (for example the Tatar Republic) were largely made up of Russians. Anti-Semitism was a powerful and growing force in the Red Army during the civil war, despite the fact that a Jew, Lev Davidovitch Trotsky (Bronstein), stood at its political head. Trotsky received hundreds of reports about his own soldier's violence and looting in Jewish-Ukrainian settlements, some of which he must have known from his youth (1990, 195–196).

This chronic problem became acute once the Red Army was defeated, and retreating in disarray back to Russia. "The men had begun deserting in large numbers, while those who remained took out their disappointment on the inhabitants of the villages and towns they passed through, particularly the Jews" (Zamoyski 2008, chap. 5). Political commissars, attached to this army, were horrified. When the retreat took the army, now reduced to a rabble, into the heavily Jewish city of Zhitomir in the Ukraine, a telegram, dripping with urgency, was sent to Lenin.

> In recent days Zhitomir has faced a new task. A new wave of pogroms has swept over the district. The exact number of those killed cannot be established, and the details cannot be established (because of the lack of communication), but certain facts can be established definitively.

> Retreating units of the First Cavalry Army (Fourth and Sixth Divisions) have been destroying the Jewish population in their path, looting and murdering … Emergency aid is vital. A large sum of money and food must be sent (Lenin 1996a, 117).

These Russian bayonets were not going to lead to liberation in Poland.

The invasion – the attempt to spark an uprising of the oppressed people of Poland through the use of the bayonets of a Russian army – was an unqualified disaster. Trotsky called it "the catastrophe before Warsaw". Because of the invasion, he argued, "the development of the Polish revolution received a crushing blow" (1970, 458–459). "[W]e have suffered an enormous defeat" said Lenin, "a colossal army of a hundred thousand is either prisoner of war or [interned] in Germany. In a word, a gigantic, unheard-of defeat" (1996b, 106). But in this speech, Lenin only partially confronts the scale and importance of this defeat. He did not, for instance, address the fact that it was a defeat preceded by a completely wrong perception of the likely response of the Polish nation, and a defeat resulting from a military operation carried out against the advice of Trotsky. In addition, Lenin was almost certainly underestimating the scale of the defeat. A contemporary military history puts Russian losses in excess of 200,000. Tukhachevsky "like his hero Napoleon in 1812 … had lost an army". In the days before finally signing a peace treaty, with conditions worse than had been on offer before the Russian invasion, "the road to Smolensk and Moscow lay open" (Zamoyski 2008, chap. 5). The defeat in Poland, then, did not only destroy prospects for revolution in Poland. It severely jeopardized the very existence of Soviet Russia.

With these two incidents in mind, read a selection from the 1985 history of the Comintern written by the late Duncan Hallas, a founder and for many years a central leader of the SWP in Britain. "[O]n the main issues, on the central thrust of its political line, the Comintern leadership was right and all its opponents, in their different ways, were wrong. That is precisely why the heritage of the first four congresses, in principles, in strategy and in tactics, is so indispensable to revolutionary socialists today" (1985, 164).

This perspective informs Hallas' entire approach. In the Introduction to his book, he quotes Trotsky, who wrote: "The International Left Opposition stands on the ground of the first four congresses of the Comintern." Hallas then argues that "[t]he Socialist Workers Party, in Britain, also stands on this ground – which is why the emphasis of this book is on the Comintern's revolutionary period, the period of the first four congresses and immediately after" (1985, 8–9). Two years after the publication of his book, Hallas went on a North American speaking tour to mark the 70th anniversary of the Russian Revolution of 1917. In an interview published at the time, he argued: "We take from Trotsky …the tradition which he contributed to making, of Bolshevism and of the Communist International in its early years after the Russian Revolution. …The whole

complex of both ideas and experiences that were developed during this period of socialist history are what guide us" (1987, 5).

Hallas' book is an excellent introduction to the Comintern. It is very much a critical history. He highlights the great accomplishments of the Comintern, including a focus on the united front method. He documents clearly the degeneration after the first four congresses, when the Comintern became little more than an extension of the foreign policy of the then state-capitalist Soviet Union. And he has criticisms of aspects of its work in the earlier period. "The perspective of the Red International of Labour Unions was mistaken and, by 1921, this should have been recognized and the necessary conclusions drawn" (1985, 164). But his overall emphasis is on the key role of the first four congresses, and in those congresses the superiority of the Russian experience, the Russian political method and the Russian leadership, when contrasted with the inexperience and political confusion that existed outside of Russia. The March Action story does, of course, strain this orientation considerably. Hallas recognizes the terrible role of the Comintern leadership. But he dilutes this by deflecting the problem towards the German KPD, emphasizing that the ECCI enthusiasm for this adventure found a huge echo among leading members of the German party. That is true, but beside the point. There is no reason, with the evidence he presented, that a story could not be told of a quite far-seeing German cadre, trained by Rosa Luxemburg, who had a pretty good sense about what to do in Germany in the early 1920s, but who were muscled out of the way by a well-financed, well-staffed Comintern cadre, who had no sense about what to do in Germany in the early 1920s. We cannot schematically separate the "good judgement" of the experienced, well-trained ECCI from the "bad judgement" of the inexperienced, ill-trained German leadership. It is a frame which simply will not work.

Hallas qualifies his close identification with the Russian leadership and their political decisions during the first four congresses. "[W]e cannot simply apply these lessons mechanically without thought to different situations" (1987, 164). But an over-drawn portrait of the virtues of the Comintern and Russian party's leadership makes it difficult to identify and analyze the sometimes serious errors which they made. The Comintern leadership, in the period of the first four congresses, was not always right on the main issues. The invasion of Poland and the March Action in Germany were not small, tactical blunders – but mistakes which had historic, and tragic, consequences. Birchall is right: an angular perspective which uses the frame – "on the main issues … the Comintern leadership was right and all its opponents … were wrong" does open the door to difficulties. But the quote and the framework are from Hallas, a central theoretician of Birchall's party, not someone from the "Trotskyist blogosphere".

Birchall is aware of the limitations of Hallas' book. In another of his recent publications, Birchall argues that it and certain other Trotskyist histories "are valuable in that they defend what was best in the early years of the Comintern …while sharply contrasting that early period to the later Stalinist horrors. Yet they remain essentially

defensive." He contrasts that with the method of Hallas' co-thinker, Tony Cliff, who "drew on a different tradition, the work of Alfred Rosmer and Victor Serge, which combined a total commitment to the basic aims and ideals of the Comintern with a recognition of its limitations in practice" (2011, 400–401).

And in fact Cliff does provide sometimes very harsh criticisms of the actions of the Comintern leadership. On the March Action, he says that "unlike other defeats" it was "not brought about by misdeeds of the local national leadership, but by the adventurist policy imposed on the German party by the leadership of the Comintern." Worse, this mistake would only be partially confronted. The Comintern leaders responsible for the disaster – Zinoviev, Bukharin, Radek and Kun – would be barely reprimanded. Paul Levi – in Cliff's words, "the talented former leader of the KPD, who had been wronged by the central leadership of the Comintern" – would end up expelled and outside the party. With good reason, then, Cliff calls this chapter of his biography of Lenin, "The Great Cover-up" (1979, 110–111).

But remember, Cliff is dealing with this as an isolated exception to a general rule. The March Action was "unlike other defeats". In his four-volume biography of Lenin, the 1920 invasion of Poland – much more serious than the March Action, certainly in terms of lives lost, probably also in terms of its impact on the Russian state – is not even mentioned. He does deal with it in his biography of Trotsky, agreeing that "Lenin's policy turned out to be wrong and costly" (1990, 132). But this seriously understates the scale of the catastrophe. The overwhelming emphasis of the bulk of Cliff's many writings on the Russian Revolution, is on the superiority of the Russian leadership – in particular the superiority of Lenin – when compared with the leaders of the left outside of Russia. Cliff, quite in the spirit of Hallas, in general paints a picture of an experienced, wise Russian leadership, interacting with an inexperienced, sometimes foolish non-Russian left, a non-Russian left prone to errors and mistakes which needed to be corrected through a deep study of the Russian, Bolshevik history. Cliff makes this point very sharply in his biography of Trotsky. "The Congresses of the Comintern were schools of strategy and tactics, and at them Lenin and Trotsky played the part of teachers, while the leaders of the young Communist Parties were the pupils" (1990, 217).

This approach is not helpful. The error on the March Action was not a single moment in an otherwise unblemished record. The 1920 catastrophe in Poland was equally destructive to the revolutionary process, and equally the result of the "teachers" – in this case Lenin – making an error of enormous proportions. This error was not a minor, accidental one – but one which exposed crucial flaws in Lenin's and the Bolsheviks' very conception of revolution. In a secret speech in 1920, Lenin outlined the most serious of these flaws, when he explained to the audience that, while it was not put into a resolution or minutes of the Central Committee, "we said among ourselves that we must probe with bayonets whether the social revolution of the proletariat in Poland had ripened" (Lenin 1996b, 98). This is a shocking statement. The attempt to "export" the

revolution through military invasion is the antithesis of the notion of self-emancipation which underlies any meaningful Marxism, a self-emancipation which was the essence of the Soviet experience at the core of the Russian Revolution. It was not just an episodic mistake. On 23 July 1920, "Lenin wrote to Stalin raising the possibility of a thrust through Romania, Czechoslovakia and Hungary with the aim of staging a revolution in Italy. In his reply, Stalin agreed that 'it would be a sin' not to try" (Zamoyski 2008, chap. 4). This approach was taken up and codified by Tukhachevsky (1969) in a theory of the "revolutionary offensive war" – an explicit argument that socialism could be advanced through force of arms. Trotsky furiously combatted these deeply substitutionist notions of socialist transformation, this theme, according to Isaac Deutscher, running "like a red thread through his writings and speeches of this period" (1954, 473). In a critique of Tukhachevsky, Trotsky openly links the two episodes – the Russian invasion of Poland in 1920 with the German attempt at a revolution in Germany in 1921. "Since war is a continuation of politics by other means, must our policy be offensive? … This was a very great and criminal heresy, which cost the German proletariat needless bloodshed and which did not bring victory, and were this tactic to be followed in the future it would bring about the ruin of the revolutionary movement in Germany" (1981, 5:306).

The "teacher-student" binary does not work as a framework during two crucial moments, the 1920 war with Poland and the 1921 March Action in Germany. In fact, this framework is misleading as a way of understanding the very core of the Fourth Congress, and the key term in the title of the Fourth Congress proceedings, the "united front". As Birchall indicates, "[t]he united front was not spun out of the skulls of the Comintern's leaders. It was born of the experience of workers in Germany" (Birchall 2012, 199). Riddell, in his introduction – leaning on Broué's classic history – outlines this very clearly.

> The ongoing need for …a united front was posed by an assembly of Stuttgart's metalworkers in December 1920, acting on the initiative of local KPD activists who were strongly influenced by Zetkin. The metalworkers adopted a resolution calling on the leadership of their union, and of all unions, to launch a joint struggle for tangible improvements in workers' conditions. …Although the Social-Democratic leaders rejected this appeal, the Communist campaign in its favour won wide support from union councils. …A month later, in January 1921, the KPD as a whole made a more comprehensive appeal for united action to all workers' organisations, including the Social Democrats. This "Open Letter" reflected the views of party co-chair Paul Levi, working in collaboration with Radek (Riddell 2011a, 6).

It is very significant that it was workers in Stuttgart, Germany who were the first to arrive at the united front approach. As Riddell indicates, it is Stuttgart where Clara Zetkin had her base and where she had influence. This base had been built over years. In 1916 and 1917, Rosa Luxemburg's Spartacists (precursor to the KPD) had "put their advantage as the first outspoken opponents of the war to good use, building themselves strong positions in the party organizations in Stuttgart, Braunschweig, and parts of Berlin" (Morgan 1975, 45). The united front approach emerged out of the experience of the German workers themselves – out of the work, in particular, of the advanced workers influenced by Zetkin and the other Luxemburg-influenced members of the KPD. The united front approach was momentarily generalized into the German movement through the "Open Letter" initiative of another German leader, Paul Levi – but encountered almost universal opposition from the representatives of the Comintern working in Germany. The implementation of the united front approach was tragically derailed through the March Action catastrophe, outlined above. It is only after this catastrophe that the united front approach was generalized as a method, into the Communist International as a whole.

It is true that during both the Third and Fourth Congresses, Trotsky in particular, clearly outlined the key principles of the united front, and in this sense was the teacher, lecturing to pupils at a school of strategy and tactics. It is true that he articulated a clear opposition to Lenin in the run-up to the Polish invasion, and did his best to "teach" the Bolsheviks of their mistake in the months after. But it won't help to replace Lenin with Trotsky, and retain the frame of "teacher-student" to understand the dynamics of the Comintern. To paraphrase the young Karl Marx, circumstances are changed by human beings, and the educator must herself be educated (1976, 4). The emergence into consciousness of the need for the crucial united front orientation came from the experience of the German workers and was at first carried publicly by key German socialists such as Zetkin and Levi. It is the active, organizing experience on the ground, serious socialists interacting with advanced workers, where the educators became educated.

The outline presented here of this little-studied episode in the Russian Revolution poses many issues which can only be touched on here, and which will have to be investigated in greater detail on another occasion. What I want to suggest, is that the different perspectives on the invasion of Poland – best crystallized in the contrast between the vehement opposition to invasion articulated by Trotsky, and the retrospectively naieve and quite wrong support for the invasion by Tukachevsky and Lenin – reflect tensions at the very heart of the Bolsheviks' understanding of the nature of revolution.

This was not the first moment where Trotsky and Lenin found themselves on opposite sides of an argument. Ian Thatcher has characterized the relationship between Trotsky and Lenin during the war years immediately preceding the 1917 revolutions, as "a story of almost continuous opposition" (1994, 114). This opposition was not softened

with anything resembling diplomacy. “Trotsky,” Lenin wrote in 1914, “has never had any ‘physiognomy’ at all; the only thing he does have is a habit of changing sides, of skipping from the liberals to the Marxists and back again, of mouthing scraps of catchwords and bombastic parrot phrases” (1964, 160). The year previous, Trotsky wrote about Lenin, saying “the entire edifice of Leninism at the present time is built on lies and falsification and carries within itself the poisonous inception of its own dissolution” (cited in Service 2009, 129). We can reject the simplistic explanation for this history of antagonism offered by Stalinist historians, an explanation whose purpose is to portray an unbroken line of Trotskyist “crimes” in order to discredit his political legacy. What this antagonism does represent, I would suggest, are some quite different emphases on the key aspects of the class struggle in Russia and Europe on which Trotsky and Lenin built their perspectives.

Trotsky, in the manner of Luxemburg and Gramsci, understood the profoundly democratic, self-emancipatory core of the working class, urban, European workers' movement. It was not for nothing that in both 1905 and 1917 he was elected chair of the soviet in St. Petersburg. On several occasions before 1917, Trotsky expressed the opinion that Lenin did not always clearly grasp this urban, democratic, proletarian core of the coming European revolution. Trotsky in 1915 “characterized Lenin as a thinker in whom ‘revolutionary democratism and socialist dogma live side by side without having been amalgamated into a living Marxist whole’” (Thatcher 1994, 105). This echoes the young Trotsky, who in the wake of the famous 1903 split in Russian social democracy, agued that Lenin was too much the Jacobin, and not enough a social democrat (a phrase which at the time meant “revolutionary socialist”) (1979). Jacobinism was the revolutionary form appropriate to revolutions against feudalism, such as the French Revolution. The leading section of those revolutions was a relatively small section of the urban petty bourgeoisie, relying in the city on the periodic intervention of the urban masses, relying in the countryside on the periodic mass actions of the rural peasantry. There then typically evolved a highly centralized urban core, with a big emphasis on militarization, which operated with a certain suspicion of the urban and rural mass. The mass action in the cities, in particular, could become a problem, as that action tended to push beyond the bounds of the anti-feudal revolution and test the territory of an anti-capitalist revolution, something the Jacobins were not prepared to countenance.

The Russian Revolutions of 1905 and 1917 involved a combination of this kind of Jacobin anti-feudal revolution: a democratic revolution against semi-feudal, Czarist conditions – and something completely new and which demanded very different strategies and tactics: a workers' revolution against capitalism. Neither revolution could win without the victory of the other. Lenin and the Bolsheviks navigated the difficult project of combining both revolutions, and Lenin openly embraced incorporating Jacobinism into the workers' movement. “A Jacobin who wholly identities himself with the organisation of the proletariat — a proletariat conscious of its class interests— is a

revolutionary Social-Democrat" (Lenin 1961, 381). This incorporation, however, was not an easy task. The tactics appropriate to the anti-feudal revolution are not easily imported into the anti-capitalist revolution. Within the latter – at its core urban, working class and democratic – forward progress is only possible through mass self-activity. There is a high degree of democracy built-into this experience – taking its highest form in institutions such as the soviet. Upheavals against feudalism are different. All upheavals against feudalism do, of course, involve furious mass action by the rural peasantry. But they also always necessitate a highly centralized, militarized struggle – the Roundheads of Cromwell's era or the Jacobins of the French Revolution. The insistence on the invasion of Poland represented an over-emphasis on the military aspect of the struggle. The push for an insurrection during the March Action even though the KPD represented a small minority of the working class, represented an attempt to sidestep the self-activity of the urban working class. Both reflected the extent to which, throughout the Bolshevik cadre, there was a misunderstanding of the extent to which the European class struggle had evolved away from the tactics of an earlier era and towards the tactics of mass, democratic, self-emancipation appropriate to the class struggle in contemporary capitalism.

This limitation of the Bolshevik experience does not invalidate a more general point. "On many issues that have proven central to world social struggles, such as racism, colonialism, women's emancipation, and the struggles of small farmers, the [Fourth] Congress mapped out the road that the workers' movement followed during the subsequent century" (Riddell 2011a, 54). The publication of Toward the United Front makes easier a rounded assessment of the work of these Congresses, and of the entire era of the Russian Revolution, an assessment which embraces both the successes and the failures – the helpful and constructive positions taken, as well as the catastrophic and destructive. It is, as Birchall indicates, "an invaluable work of reference" (2012, 196). One of the really striking aspects emerging from this work of reference, is the light it sheds on the deep humanity of the participants. The political "lines" developed at these Congresses did not come from edict or prescription, but were rather the result of sometimes harsh debates between serious activists from different countries, most of them intensely engaged with the social movements of the day. "These delegates were tough women and men who had lived through an exceptionally demanding decade" (Birchall 2012, 197). Reading the proceedings of this and the other early Congresses, will enhance the reputation of some of these militants (Clara Zetkin and Paul Levi for instance), and diminish that of others (Grigory Zinoviev and Béla Kun to name two). That is all to the good. To properly assess the lessons of the past, we need all the information from that past, and on the basis of that information, draw our own conclusions about how best to use this history in our own work in the 21st century.

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Reviewed By Ted McCoy
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What is the value of dissent and resistance in Canadian history? In Resisting the State, Scott Neigh answers this question by suggesting that the history of activism and social movements can provide an alternative to conventional history that lionizes consent and consensus. Along with a companion book on gender and sexuality, the book offers stories of resistance constructed from the viewpoint of activists. Neigh suggests that these

stories speak about Canadian history with dissenting voices – viewpoints not represented in Heritage Minutes and government-published citizenship guides. He asks how history might be read if approached from the standpoint of the oppressed and powerless. While these questions will not be new to historians of the left, Neigh makes a valuable contribution by revealing aspects of the social history of Canadian activism and social movements that are personal and, at times, extremely moving.

Neigh's work is striking because it shows the deep personal connections between activists and their causes. The book is based upon oral-history interviews that Neigh conducted with fifty people drawn from a diverse group of long-time social activists. Each chapter explores the experiences of a key individuals in social movements. These include anti-war pacifism, anti-racist and anti-colonialist movements, community and labour organizing, the anti-psychiatry movement, and anti-poverty human rights struggles. From this diverse list, Neigh makes interesting choices that will offer new insights to scholars in multiple fields. For example, Chapter 3 details indigenous resistance in Toronto and Winnipeg in the 1970s and 1980s, revealing a dimension of urban anti-colonial activism that is seldom considered alongside the history of government-Aboriginal relations in the twentieth century. Another fascinating chapter explores the anti-psychiatry movement in Toronto in the 1970s. This is interesting not only for what it uncovers about the sometimes mutually oppressive powers of medical science and the state, but also because resistance to psychiatry was a movement that dissipated and fractured after a decade of struggle. There are lessons here, and possibly lingering questions too. The harrowing experiences of the interview subjects incarcerated and treated against their will explains the rise of the anti-psychiatry movement and the need to investigate how the state is complicit in the abuses of medical power. We might also question why the movement faded and what this might say about how medicine, or any other professional or juridical power can supplant resistance and attain uncontested (or unearned) legitimacy.

My criticisms of the book are minor and relate to intent and scope. The book does not necessarily deliver what Neigh intends in the way of an alternative Canadian history. In reaching for this goal, however, Neigh is correct that Canadian history should include voices of dissent in moments other than the Riel Rebellion, Winnipeg in 1919 or Québec in 1970. The interviews he draws on reveal a more continuous social history of activism than those flashpoints illustrate alone. And although the book may overreach on its stated goal, it is perhaps too subtle about what it accomplishes on questions of resistance and the scope of individual struggle. Neigh focuses on how particular activists relate to the state, suggesting that these stories are materially connected through this common touchstone of power, oppression, and even banal bureaucracy. But as many of his subjects and Neigh himself argue throughout the book, there are other material connections at play that were also targets of resistance in the form of capitalism, racism, and gender inequality. This is the history of resistance to something more than the state,

a struggle for equality that reaches for something greater than what the state can possibly deliver.

The book is successful at demonstrating the value of resistance not just as a social relationship or an element of Canadian history, but as something that shapes an individual life. Neigh's work details the deeply personal reasons that people are drawn to activism and social protest. The interviews at the heart of this book personalize activism, and in the larger sense, the national history that envelops (and sometimes overcomes) activists. Neigh recovers these voices – and this is in itself a valuable activist project – and turns them to the larger task of speaking to Canadian history. In the process, the book also provides a varied vocabulary for how we talk about activism and what it means to be politicized. At times Neigh is self-conscious about the differences between his connection to activism compared to the role that struggle played in the lives of his subjects. Lynn Jones of Nova Scotia distilled this divide while reflecting on a lifetime of anti-racist organizing in Nova Scotia: 'you call it activism; I call it surviving' (107). Ultimately Neigh brings each set of interviews around to answering a bigger question – why people struggle as they do. The different answers emphasize the value of the activist history in Resisting the State.

Comack, Elizabeth. 2012. *Racialized Policing: Aboriginal People's Encounters With the Police.* Halifax & Winnipeg: Fernwood Publishing. ISBN 978-1-55266-475-9. Paperback: 22.95 CAD. Pages: 254.

Reviewed By Ted McCoy
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Elizabeth Comack's Racialized Policing arrives at a moment of heightened concern and awareness over the troubling relationship between Aboriginal people and police forces across Canada. The issue reached a crisis point in early 2013 with international pressure from Human Rights Watch over RCMP abuse of Aboriginal women. These demands proliferate amidst ongoing calls for a national inquiry into missing or murdered women from Aboriginal communities across Canada. These issues also are being folded into the growing Idle No More movement which presents a timely opportunity to focus anti-colonial protest on problems of race in policing and criminal justice. Comack's research serves as a valuable primer for this project. The book convincingly argues that policing in Canada is inherently racialized – understood as the manner in which racism infiltrates policing, and in turn, racializes First Nations people.

Moreover, Comack points to larger systemic structures of racism that are reproduced by policing in Canada. In this sense, Racialized Policing provides a broader context and historical overview for understanding the current flashpoints in the relationship between Aboriginal people and the police.

The book explores the relationship between First Nations people and police in multiple jurisdictions. An excellent chapter on racial profiling in Ontario expands the scope of the material on Aboriginal people to include Black communities. Comack explores the controversy ignited in Toronto and Kingston and the telling denials of both police and the public that racial profiling happens in Canada. In the face of anecdotal evidence that is routinely refuted, Comack points to the larger systemic basis of racism and how it is manifested in the practice of policing.

After drawing on the historical record of Aboriginal-police relations, Comack offers detailed examinations of three contemporary cases – the shooting of J.J. Harper by Winnipeg police in 1988, the freezing deaths of Aboriginal men in Saskatoon after being left in isolated areas outside of the city, and the shooting of Matthew Dumas in Winnipeg in 2005. Juxtaposed in this way, Comack illustrates a pattern of abuse and a framework by which these incidents can be understood as a reflection of systemic racism. As she admits, these arguments are bound to be unpopular, particularly in a political climate in which the police are represented as unquestioned guardians of public safety. However, the evidence Comack assembles is too overwhelming to ignore. The arguments she advances about racism require little in the way of academic theorizing, although Comack provides thoughtful analysis throughout the book. These examples are devastating because they reveal a brutality that would be senseless if not for the overwhelming implications about race and racism in Canadian society.

A striking commonality between the examples assembled by Comack is consistent unwillingness by police to acknowledge that systemic racism exists. This manifests itself in multiple ways, from the everyday attitudes that presume criminality, poverty and dependence, to systemic practices that have resulted in tragic or deadly outcomes. This "discourse of denial" often shifted blame to Aboriginal people for their own victimization and suggests that the disconnect between racialized policing and how police view themselves continues to contribute to this problem. The way Comack lays out this recent history might also provide context to current calls for a national commission into missing and murdered Aboriginal women. The book suggests that we have traveled this road before. Each of its case studies resulted in official inquiries of various stripes, and yet the systemic nature of racialized policing prevails. Even in criminal trials where police are indicted and convicted, police forces offer staunch resistance to the implications of racism.

The city of Winnipeg is at the centre of much of the racialized policing Comack investigates. In Chapter 6 she draws on the findings of interviews with 78 individuals from Winnipeg's inner-city. These interviews acknowledge the growing reality of urban

poverty, crime, and violence in the lives of First Nations people. This reorients our attention away from reserves and rural settings and illustrates a different manifestation of colonialism in urban Canadian society. This shine a light on not only the problematic relationships between Winnipeg police and Aboriginal residents, but also the larger process by which urban spaces become racialized. Comack connects these trends to larger structural developments. Growing economic inequality across Canada and the neoliberal dismantling of the social welfare state are not abstract phenomena in Comack's account – they contribute directly to how Aboriginal people experience poverty and the criminal justice system. The larger argument made by Comack is that the police are heavily implicated in reproducing these outcomes. The experiences of the subjects in this chapter make this connection explicit and this material is among the most obvious strengths of Comack's investigation.

The contemporary examples chosen by Comack are effective, but as she points out, they also reflect a long history in which police have maintained an upper hand in a very unequal relationship with Aboriginal people. Comack suggests that one way forward would be reframing the central issue facing Aboriginal people as a problem of inequality that results in impoverished social and economic conditions. This too is at the core of what Idle No More might accomplish with sustained pressure. Comack's book is a timely suggestion that the structures of criminal justice should be called into question and subject to demands for a new path forward.

Luxton, Meg and Mary Jane Mossman, eds. 2012. *Reconsidering Knowledge: Feminism and the Academy.* Halifax and Winnipeg: Fernwood Publishing. ISBN 978-1-55266-476-6. Paperback: 29.95 CAD. Pages: 168.

Reviewed By Dayna Nadine Scott
Osgoode Hall Law School

The book, and the lecture series at York University that spawned it, were conceived as an opportunity to look back on the themes and ideas put forward in a publication called Knowledge Reconsidered: A Feminist Overview, that was produced by the Canadian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women (CRIAW) in 1984. As Mary Jane Mossman (my colleague at Osgoode Hall) and Meg Luxton explain in the Introduction, the CRIAW publication, and others like it, came in the context of a developing understanding in Canada and the United States that feminist knowledge had 'perspective transforming' elements and therefore, instead of being simply 'tacked on to

the curriculum', it should instead transform it from within. It would do so, according to the authors in this collection, in part by completely destabilizing the notions of an 'objective' or 'normative' perspective on truth (14-15).

In looking back over the decades since the publication of Knowledge Reconsidered, the Luxton and Mossman volume covers topics such as the emergence of women's studies programs (and their re-casting in the 2000s as gender studies or women's, gender and sexuality studies programs, up to their contemporary dismantling in some universities); the interdependence of theoretical and empirical advances in fostering transformative teaching and learning; the (re)definition of the university's role in a 'new knowledge economy', including the trends towards clientism and a customer-service mentality that have pervaded not just teaching, but now also research climates in most universities; the possibilities for a transnational feminism that is 'location specific but not necessarily location-bound'; and the importance of historical studies of women's resistance and feminist empiricism.

The feminist agitations over the 1970s and 80s that fundamentally changed the landscapes of universities are celebrated, and yet the editors allow questioning of the depth of this transformation. Overall, their claim is that the production of feminist knowledge is not a project that should be confined to the university; it must be a common project of connection and collaboration between feminist academics and community activists and organizers. But this, in our present climate, is a tall order.

In her chapter, 'The University on the Ground', Janice Newson puts her finger on a dynamic those of us working in universities over the past decade intuitively 'know': that economic and political influences once shut out of academic program development are now routinely infiltrating – at the same time as universities enthusiastically seek to reach their tentacles outwards into new domains of 'community', enterprise and governance. This is not all negative, of course, as initiatives to get universities to engage in meaningful ways with the communities they are located in, or are mandated to 'serve', can be transformative. But the slick talk of engaged scholarship has an oily element, a slippery surface on which it can be impossible to get traction. For example, as M. Jacqui Alexander and Chandra Talpade Mohanty argue in their chapter, 'Cartographies of Knowledge and Power: Transnational Feminism as Radical Praxis', the energetic pursuit of 'academic-community' partnerships and 'offices of community relations' can reinforce the academy/community divide ('at the same time masking the creation of the divide') and 'normalize the spatial location of the academy as the epitome of knowledge production' (46). In this context, it is difficult for those of us who do want to maintain connection with activist communities, and genuinely engage in a collective project of research and action that transcends the university's hallowed halls, to determine how to react to the official university's now ubiquitous, but shallow, endorsement of that goal. How can we begin to cultivate circumstances through which activists and scholars can collaborate to define 'imperatives that do not rely on the academy for self-definition even

as the academy summons them, and reifies them in that summoning…'(47), in the midst of all of this glossy talk of 'partnering'?

The 'communities' the official university has in mind of course, may not be the ones that come immediately to mind to scholars who consider themselves 'engaged'. Instead, they include often, as Margaret Thornton shows in her chapter 'Universities Upside Down', private sector corporations or industry associations. 'It is somewhat paradoxical', she argues, 'that the resources of public universities are now being used for the private good of corporations…' (84). This dynamic is also sharply gendered, as the volume makes clear, because the techno-preneur, who can easily be slotted into a role producing useful knowledge with a commercial purpose, squeezes out those of us toiling mainly in critique, an aim 'currently depicted as feminized and dispensable' (87).

The deliberate underfunding of post-secondary education by neoliberal governments, according to Thornton, forced universities to enter the market, justified fee hikes and prompted the 'questionable liasons' with industry. All of us caught up in this system, meanwhile, are expected to 'defer to those above, …tak[e] responsibility for those below, [and]…disciplin[e] the self in terms of the new norms' (89). In this respect Lorraine Code's comment made in the context of her analysis of the challenge to epistemological orthodoxy inherent in Rachel Carson's Silent Spring (1962) can be applied to the dilemma facing all of us teaching in universities today: 'it is implausible and indeed careless to assume without question that knowledge transcends the circumstances of its making' (21).

The authors, collectively, call for renewed commitments to the creation of feminist knowledge and 'continuing resistance to efforts to negate its radical critique, both within and outside the academy' (20). The collection is an important resource for feminist academics, and the space it opens up for theorizing engaged scholarship and critically assessing its possibilities and potential pitfalls, is welcome.

Peters, John ed. 2012. *Boom, Bust and Crisis: Labour, Corporate Power and Politics in Canada.* Halifax: Fernwood Publishing, ISBN: 9781552665183/ Paperback: 29.95 CAD. Pages: 208.

Reviewed By Bradley Walchuk
Brock University

The second publication in Fernwood Publishing's 'Labour in Canada' series, an impressive collection of critical essays edited by John Peters, examines the declining job

prospects for the vast majority of Canadians, a continuation of neoliberal public policy, and the resulting polarization of wealth and income between the broader working-class and a select few, which Peters (p. 10) identifies as 'the richest 10 percent'. Despite suggestions from the federal government and neoliberal economists that Canada managed to avoid the worst of the recession, that Canada's regulatory scheme has saved it from the perils facing many western countries, and that employment opportunities are on the rise, this text succinctly argues that 'the reality ...has proved far different from the rhetoric' (p. 16).

The book is conveniently divided into three sections: the first analyzes uneven impacts of resource development (especially oil) in Canada and the unequal distribution of wealth that results from it; the second examines the role that public policy - firmly entrenched in neoliberal ideology - has facilitated this inequality; while the final section considers the weaknesses of Canada's labour movement in organizing new workers and altering existing workplace laws.

In the book's first chapter, Peters outlines two fundamental points which inform much of the remainder of the text. The first is that 'since the late 1990s the power structure of Canada's society has fundamentally shifted to favour the affluent and the corporate elite' (p. 17). Much support for this assertion is found in the first section of the text. In his analysis of Newfoundland and Labrador's oil 'boom', Sean T. Cadigan identifies the limited economic spinoff of the 'boom,' and finds that those living outside of St. John – and particular women – are still faced with low wages and job insecurity. Likewise, Diana Gibson and Regan Boychuk's discussion of tar sand development in Alberta finds that this 'business-driven social experiment' has channeled considerable amounts of wealth in the private sector, while simultaneously gutting the public sector, in what they call 'governing for the few' (p. 55). Likewise, Stephen Arnold identifies the potentially bleak future for Hamilton in light of the decline of Canada's domestic steel industry, largely the result of government policy, in this case the absence of a national industrial strategy.

The second section of the book, which emphasizes provincial labour market policy, continues this line of argument, and finds further evidence of the shifting power structure of public policy and its adverse effects on the working-class. Two cases studies, one on British Columbia and the other on Québec, provide concrete examples of the ways in which neoliberal governments have altered the power structure between labour and capital and redistributed income to benefit the wealthiest. David Fairey, Tom Sandborn, and John Peters trace the B.C Liberals reign in power, which was characterized by generous tax cuts and write-offs for corporations (especially in the burgeoning resource sector), a systematic deregulation of the provincial Employment Standards Act, and an overhaul of the Labour Relations Code. Likewise, Peter Graefe examines the unravelling of the once highly-touted 'Québec model' (high union density, progressive industrial relations laws, and leading social programs) as 'just one example among others of the

neoliberal transformation of provincial economies' (p. 125). In fact, a similar analysis could have been provided for Canada's other provinces.

The second fundamental point outlined by Peters highlights 'the decline of organized labour and its waning influence on business, government and policy' (p. 18). Building off Graefe's analysis in chapter 6, the increasingly weak and ineffective nature of organized labour is examined more fully in the book's final section through the use of two case-studies: the lack of success in organizing workers at First Nations' casinos and labour's inability to 'make even minor changes to health and safety policies' affecting precarious workers in Ontario (p. 13). In chapter 7, Yale D. Belanger examines various hostile, and often unsuccessful, organizing drives at First Nations' casinos. While these casinos are 'potent symbols of First Nations territorial sovereignty battles', they are increasingly symbols of a battle between organized labour and capital, and more specifically First Nations' capital (p. 160). Belanger is optimistic about the growing relationship between organized labour and progressive First Nations activists as a potential means for increased collective bargaining. That said, an analysis of organizing efforts at various state-run casinos (such as those in Niagara Falls, Ontario) would further highlight the limitations of the organizing capabilities of many unions. Similarly, Lewchuk, Clarke and de Wolff's analysis of the changing nature of Ontario's health and safety regulations since the late 1990s relies on quantitative data to illustrate not only the limitations of the province's current regulatory scheme (which they describe on p. 167 as 'increasingly unworkable'), but also the specific ways in which already vulnerable precarious workers are made even more vulnerable in the current climate.

Overall, this edited collection effectively builds upon an important body of literature that focuses on the adverse impacts of neoliberal public policy and the growing polarization of power, wealth and income in the post-2008 recession. This book offers new and insightful analysis on the provincial effects of these policies and the resulting polarization, while convincingly implicating the state's neoliberal agenda in helping to create this polarization. While the neoliberal agenda has certainly eroded the power and influence of organized labour through legislative change, the book also forces those within the labour movement to reflect critically upon their own weaknesses and limitations (independently of the state). This honest reflection is of considerable merit, especially in light of the unlikelihood of the state reversing its policy direction at any point in the near future. If labour wishes to regain its influence and strength, it will need to re-develop its own capabilities and facilitate the growth of its rank-and-file activists. The book does not, admittedly, prescribe solutions to the problems facing organized labour in a stand-alone chapter, though the concluding remarks of each chapter offer some suggestions for workers and their unions to best overcome the current challenges they face.

McAlevy, Jane with Bob Ostertag. 2012. *Raising Expectations (and Raising Hell): My Decade Fighting for the Labour Movement.* New York and London: Verso Books, ISBN: 1844678857. Hardback: 25.95 US. Pages: 318.

Reviewed By Joel Harden
Activist and Independent Researcher

Given today's dismal realities for unions, both in Canada and around the world, it is best not to mince words about Jane McAlevy's recent book. Raising Expectations is, quite simply, the best thing on organizing I've read in a decade. Maybe that is because I have worked for organized labour, and seen first-hand its potential in winning the victories workers deserve. I do not think unions are tired relics of postwar history. But even if that is your view, this book might convince you otherwise.

If you want a progressive strategy that can win in tough times, this book is for you. If you are looking to inspire participation in your union, this book is for you. If you are sick of being pummeled by bosses, this book is for you. McAlevy will spur head-nodding and a range of emotions. Her story is inspiring, sad, and instructive. Above all, Raising Expectations is a reminder of workers' power, and the role unions can play in organizing that power. It affirms that workers want organizing victories, and that victory creates its own momentum. It is also honest about union failures, and the way defeat, all too often, gets snatched from the jaws of victory.

McAlevy's work experience does not fit the usual script. She held top union organizing jobs in the US (first at the AFL-CIO and later with Service Employees International Union) after a decade of work in student politics, Latin America, popular education, progressive foundations, and grass-roots environmental movements. Because she has worked in a variety of places, and participated in organizing at an activist and leadership level, she offers unique insights about strategy and tactics.

McAlevy is highly critical of (what she calls) 'shallow mobilizing', where union leaders, staff, and consultants design campaigns while activists get talking points. At the same time, she is also harsh with local union activists who build narrow fiefdoms, and alienate union members or community allies in the process. Instead, McAlevy supports a 'deep organizing' approach that builds on the experience of union members. Raising Expectations chronicles efforts, in challenging circumstances, to identify workplace leaders, recruit them to union work, and develop their capacities as skillful organizers. That training is informed by a 'power structure analysis' of the workplace and community in question, an analysis produced after hundreds of interviews with union members.

Importantly, this work is not done by third parties (e.g. pollsters or consultants), but by union staff and worker activists themselves.

With this analysis in hand, McAlevy thinks unions gain a sophisticated sense of the workplace, and the links between union members, community charities, local politicians, clergy, and even business leaders. She describes this as 'whole worker organizing' which appreciates a worker's entire life, both on and off the job. As such, no artificial divisions are made between "union" and "community". Instead, the organizer looks for the relationship between union and community concerns. They soon realize union members care about community issues like decent housing, well-funded schools, religious values, affordable child care, or clean air and water.

These issues are then championed by the union, and new relationships with community allies are built in the process. All the while, organizers track success by "charting" workplace and community power dynamics, and this helps the union understand its aims and goals. In the end, what gets produced is an organizing strategy that grasps the potential of union power. Also unearthed are the obstacles the union faces as it struggles to build influence. On several occasions, for example, McAlevy talks about the impact of racism which distances workplace leaders from the union. On one occasion, during an organizing stint in Stamford, Connecticut, she encounters local white union leaders who have alienated potential allies in African American churches. This example (and there are more) illustrate why a commitment to equality must guide union organizing, for doing otherwise ignores dangerous weapons in the boss's toolkit.

But how successful, you might ask, has "deep organizing" been? The proof is in the practice. As unions suffer diminishing returns, McAlevy documents a string of organizing successes, even in right-to-work states like Nevada or Missouri. Her strategy transformed once-dormant locals into fighting organizations, capable of winning industry-leading contracts and fielding successful candidates for local elections. There is no sensible reason why similar results cannot happen elsewhere. Of course, this assumes union organizing is informed by "common sense". Common sense would dictate unions embrace organizing that builds power, mobilizes members, and wins victories. But all too often, as McAlevy experienced first-hand, many union leaders place a far higher emphasis on organizing efforts they can control. Loyal officials or consultants are tapped for advice, who then offer leaders "message tested" campaigns or organizing strategies. These points are then handed to activists, who are expected to repeat them with minimal training. Members, if consulted at all, are an afterthought, and do not look to their union for answers. Unions then fade into the furniture of mainstream politics, their irrelevance once again reassured.

McAlevy knows her opinions are not popular – but that is because most unions, in her view, are not serious about organizing at all. In a recent interview, she claimed the majority are surfing off gains made in the postwar years, and content to muddle through losing battles with employers. Her hope lies with progressive union leaders, staff, and

activists willing to take risks. That was the engine for her success with 'deep organizing', and her source of hope for campaigns to come.

Raising Expectations is a welcome tonic to the worrying direction in which unions are headed. Its embrace of bottom-up organizing has the potential to renew the labour movement, something I experienced first-hand when similar strategies were used during the CLC's recent pension campaign. Without question, "deep organizing" requires work. It requires resources, is far more time-intensive, and harder than letting consultants do the heavy lifting. But rather like junk food, nothing substantial gets produced from such shallow efforts. It is time unions rolled up their sleeves, mobilized their members, and tapped the potential of workers' power. Our unions, our communities, and our children deserve nothing less.

James, Carl E. 2012. *Life at the Intersection: Community, Class and Schooling.* Halifax: Fernwood Publishing, ISBN 978-1-55266-470-4. Paperback: 18.95 CAD. Pages: 136.

Reviewed By Kimalee Phillip
Independent Researcher and Educator

Despite many communities in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) experiencing ongoing socio-economic problems, somehow, the community of Jane and Finch stands out in the minds of Torontonians and the broader Canadian public. By centering his book on what has been labeled as one of Toronto's most 'troubled neighbourhoods' — Jane and Finch – Carl James does an extraordinary job of applying a critical race and class analysis to the realities faced by those living within that neighbourhood, confronting and complicating the ways in which that community and its members have been constructed by mainstream Canadian media and the general public, as different from Canadian values, morality and lawfulness. James uses these realities and stereotypes to illustrate to the reader that communities such as Jane and Finch can and do rise above the racist, classist and monolithic boxes to which they are typically confined.

James divides this short book into six main chapters where he touches on issues such as the labeling and stigmatization of the Jane and Finch community to the significance and meaning behind physical space and how that affects ideologies and shared perceptions and goals. He also focuses on the use of educational programs within the community; the importance placed on education by members of the community; the media's portrayals of violence that further concretize the pathologies associated with

communities such as Jane and Finch and concludes with a discussion around the need for a community-centred approach to creating and providing educational programs.

It is important to note that although I refer to the Jane and Finch community in the singular, throughout the book James reminds us of the ongoing intricacies and pluralities of identities present beyond the traffic intersection, reminding us that though the media has branded Jane and Finch as a 'black community', that there in fact exists a diverse set of people from various ethnic backgrounds who call Jane and Finch their home.

One of the things that should be appreciated about his approach is its consistent engagement with self-reflective methods that call into question his socio-political location and his choice – even responsibility – to tell these stories. This engagement, for instance asking community members questions such as 'am I the person to write this book?', should be a critical part of the writing and research process of any scholar-activist who truly acknowledges accountability and responsibility to the community that they are writing about. Acknowledging that this story is not about him, James also endeavours to include the stories of people who lived or continue to live in Jane and Finch while reminding the reader that even those who identify as being 'from the community' can contribute to the stereotypes and stigmas that negatively label the community and its members.

The media, as James has illustrated, has consistently labeled Jane and Finch a community to 'get out of' and not necessarily a community where one can aspire to live, grow up and raise a family. By filtering the types of stories and histories that exit and are used to identify the community, it becomes easier to recognize the exemplary students and others who makes it out of the community while simultaneously demonizing the community that produced them. This individualizes issues and mitigates attention placed on the systemic barriers and structures of oppression that contribute to the root causes of the inequities faced by the community such as racism, poverty, under-funded education, limited community resources and low-wage, precarious jobs.

One of the common and most persistent themes within the book is the attention placed on education as a social equalizer of sorts. It is true that many immigrant families whose members originate from the Global South identified higher education as an unquestionable priority but many of the young people, even when they acted as though education was not important, acknowledged the significance of post-secondary schooling. However, according to James, the current educational system is based on Western, Euro-centric standards that fail to validate the cultural, economic, political and social realities of the students who identify as anything other than white, middle to upper class, and who speak English as a first language. To illustrate the limitations of the current educational system and the general public's resistance to anything that poses as an alternative, James relies on testimonials from students and educators. These testimonials identify power imbalances experienced within the classroom, the disassociated relationship between

curriculum taught and the realities faced by students beyond the school. The testimonials also show that race is not the sole factor behind whether a student feels supported and identifies with a teacher.

Life at the Intersection calls for an urgent intervention of critical pedagogical tools; equitable curriculum that reinvents the standards used and is unafraid of shifting the curriculum based on students' individual needs; as well as a community-centred approach to education that faces head-on issues of social class, poverty, politics and the material realities that contribute to ongoing inequitable distribution of resources and wealth in students' lives and communities. An issue that James touches on briefly but that perhaps needs further exploration is the anger and frustration faced by students. These concerns must be addressed without further delegitimizing students' feelings. These feelings, typically characterized as 'scary' and undesirable emotions such as anger and pain, need to be validated and dealt with in productive ways that contribute to material improvements for those feeling oppressed? This needs to be part of the critical pedagogical methods that James calls on us to engage with.

Dayan, Colin. 2011. *The Law is a White Dog: How Legal Rituals Make and Unmake Persons.* New Jersey: Princeton University Press, ISBN 9780691070919. Hardcover: 29.95 CAD. Pages: 343.

Reviewed by Darren Pacione
Carleton University

The primary intellectual-political project of Colin Dayan's The Law is a White Dog: How Legal Rituals Make and Unmake Persons challenges how law constitutes identity, particularly the permeability of notions of legal personhood. Using Haitian lore of law and dogs, and American common law legal histories of persons, slaves, zombies, and apparitions, Dayan, an American Studies and Humanities professor provides a language through which the permeability of life, death, and civil disability may be (re)understood and reframed. Such discussion urges the consideration of the legal thresholds between what is inside and outside of the person (mind and body), the community (society and exile), and the law (norm and exception). Thus, in the context of the Anglo-American legal system, the modern boundaries of civil, political and legal life and death are troubled to expose historical lineages of systemic abuses and normative practices stemming from the antebellum to the modern period.

Chapter by chapter—driven by questions of legal rituals and architectures of state and legal power that make and unmake the legal subject—this text prompts illustrative conversations about how legal histories of slavery, imprisonment, punishment, and colonialism construct and relegate legal subjects through penological technologies (e.g. chain gangs, forced labour, prolonged isolation, etc.) to effectively civilly disable and make them less than human within the law. In such a state of 'civic death', explains Dayan, the subject is 'drained of self-identity, forever anomalous, condemned as extraneous to civil society, excluded from belonging' (32). In a word: abandoned.

In the presented histories of slaves and prisoners, law, or more precisely, the rule of law is emphatically stripped from the (il)legal subject through a grammar of exceptionalism. The Agambenian formulation of this notion is expressed not as an exclusion (i.e. the subject is excluded through law), but as an abandonment—an abandonment by law. In effect, as Dayan puts it, the human subject is 'in a negative relation to law' (78). While the narrative of American exceptionalism is neither an explicit nor a dominant theme of the author's critiques, the examples of the 'war on terror' detainment apparatus and modern penal technologies are rich with its marks. As the second chapter expounds a complicated legal history of civil injury in antebellum period case law, the slave is described as dead in civil law — lacking civic status and personhood. However, if in breach of criminal law, the slave is temporarily constructed as criminal and ascribed elements of moral agency and intent. The slave, thus, is interpellated by criminal law and temporarily humanized for the purpose of trial, only to be banished once more through punishment.

The prisoner or detainee, just as the slave in its historical context, exists at the liminal cusp of its own legal identity. In chapter three, however, the legal status of the modern banished subject is contested through a language of legal and human rights. In the dissenting opinion of O'Lone v. Shabazz (1987), a case concerning a constitutional accommodation for an inmate's right to communal prayer, Justice Brennan writes that prisoners exist 'in a shadow world', but come to light when they make a constitutional claim, and 'they ask us to acknowledge that power exercised in the shadows must be restrained at least as diligently as power that acts in the sunlight' (100). What Dayan urges us to remember about the power of law is that in contexts of criminality and legal liminality of, for example, the prisoner or detainee, judges and prison officials are quick to rephrase 'punitive detention' to administrative segregation. Poignantly, Dayan observes, '[this] linguistic sleight of hand made the illegal legal' (79).

In an effort to express this relation to law, Dayan, in later chapters, suggests and expands on the terminology of 'negative personhood', that is one who exists in a negative relation to law, or in other words one who is disabled by law. For example, the slave, a 'hyperlegal' construction considered unfree, was also considered as 'dead in law' (139). Other examples of liminal beings accounted for by Dayan—that is those banned or expelled from their person, the community, and the law—include: criminals; security

threats; terrorists; enemy aliens; illegal immigrants; migrant contaminants (and workers); unlawful enemy alien combatants; and ghost detainees. While the author succeeds in making stirring connections between the violence of law in the antebellum period and its twentieth century continuities, including mass incarceration, supermax prisons, and the 'war on terror', what remains untroubled and unaccounted for by Dayan's theoretical gaze and otherwise scrupulous analytical framework is the colonial history and legal subjectivities of the Indigenous subject, the American and Canadian Indian, and its relation to law, property, land, and non-Indian society.

It is at this point that I must distinguish this work, and in effect this list, from other similar conversations about personhood, liminal subjects, and the law. In Impersonations: Troubling the Person in Law and Culture (2009), Sheryl Hamilton argues for the recognition of the 'fragility' and limits of person and personhood by exposing the personifications of 'liminal beings' (women, corporations, computers, celebrities, and clones) as the incompletely 'made' personae. However, what Dayan grapples with are notions of personhood, but more specifically, ones that explore the power of law and attentively focus on the violence of law as it manifests through legal subjects including inmates, slaves, and security detainees.

The Law is a White Dog is a vivid exploration of literature, history, and law. It asks hard yet stimulating questions about the systemically entrenched racial, colonial, and ideological inequalities of the Anglo-American legal system. As a text concerned with the role of law in the (un)making of legal identity, this book makes a very valuable contribution to the field of socio-legal studies as it forces one to think about the violence of law and to trouble the assumptions made about the rule of law in modern liberal democratic societies. It is of interest to note the author's sole treatment of the notion of the rule of law: 'This world is singularly cruel. Its discriminations overturn logic, infect and befoul behaviour. And they reside in the rule of law' (137). As a present-day political project, this effort identifies the everyday consequences of remaining silent to systemic injustices.