

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 liaisons' 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.

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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.