

les communistes se voient confrontés à un vaste mouvement de rébellion qui s'articule autour de groupes d'intérêt et de pression fort variés : féministes, écologistes, pacifistes, syndicalistes (en Pologne avec le mouvement Solidarité, par exemple), groupes religieux, intellectuels dissidents, minorités ethniques et jeunes adeptes de la culture alternative (musique rock, nihilisme punk). L'essentiel de ce livre consiste en une description à la fois riche et détaillée des programmes et activités divers de ces protestataires, en quête d'une plus grande liberté et déterminés à construire une société parallèle (en opposition à la société officielle). L'arrivée au pouvoir de Gorbachëv en 1985 et sa décision de leur retirer tout support militaire scellent définitivement le sort de ces régimes communistes.

Ce livre ressemble davantage à une collection d'articles divers (d'où certaines répétitions inutiles), écrits dans un style fort simple mais clair, qu'à une réflexion profonde sur l'évolution des différentes sociétés d'Europe de l'Est dans les années 70 et 80. Plus important encore, il n'établit pas de façon convaincante une relation de cause à effet entre ces divers Courants Sociaux et la chute du communisme dans cette partie de l'Europe. Un cadre théorique plus élaboré aurait étayé davantage une telle hypothèse, intéressante en soi. La nature des sources utilisées par l'auteure — interviews, journaux et rapports du Foreign Broadcast Information Service, du Joint Publications Research Service et de la Radio Free Europe — explique largement un tel résultat.

J. Guy Lalande
St. Francis Xavier University

David Montgomery — *Citizen Worker: The Experience of Workers in the United States with Democracy and the Free Market During the Nineteenth Century*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993. Pp. x, 189.

Thirty some years ago, when I became active in the struggle for social justice, I believed in progress. I saw it happening in Mississippi with the civil rights movement; although I thought it was too little and too ineffectual, I appreciated that the war on poverty was addressing the conditions of the poor in America. The anti-war movement was growing. Native American rights were at least being talked about. Women were demanding more of a voice. The campaign of the Farm Workers and the growing activism of rank-and-filers within the labour movement suggested the possibility of a new regenerated trade unionism. American society seemed to be in the midst of a struggle for greater popular participatory democracy.

Then Richard Nixon took office. The Nixon years were not good — a setback to be sure — but they did not ultimately undermine my sense of progress. The Reagan-Bush years, the growing and incredible suffering of the developing world, the collapse of organized labour, the devastation of the environment and the accompanying attack on environmental protection, the contract on America, the attack on affirmative action, the growing acceptance and popularity of blatantly racist ideologies, and the weakness of the world socialist movement did not alter

my commitment to social justice, but they have finally put to rest my belief in the inevitable dialectical march of progress. In the midst of this depressing resignation came David Montgomery's most recent book, *Citizen Worker*. Montgomery's work certainly did not reassure me about progress, but it did put the present dark days in perspective. Montgomery shows us a familiar world: one in which workers' rights were constantly assaulted on all sides, yet in which workers continued to struggle to use the democratic rights they did possess to give them a space to exercise autonomy and dignity.

No one knows the world of the nineteenth- and early twentieth-century worker better than Montgomery. His articles and books, on topics ranging from early nineteenth-century textile workers to twentieth-century machinists, have framed the historical picture that others, many of them his students, have since laboured to fill out. In his last two books, Montgomery looked in detail at workers struggling to defend their dignity both on the job and through institutions of their creation. In this one he returns to a topic he introduced in his first book, *Beyond Equality*, the relationship between workers, ideology, and the state, but in doing so he expands his concern both conceptually and topically.

Here Montgomery looks at how workers used the revolution's heritage of citizenship rights of free association and the vote to defend their customs and to overturn traditional forms of subordination, most dramatically when slavery was defeated. Yet although workers exercised citizens' rights of access to government, Montgomery also finds that those who controlled the means of production limited the ability of workers to reform society into a place that reflected their sense of common welfare over the individual advantage. In the rapidly changing world of nineteenth-century industrial capitalism, new forms of economic and social control emerged particularly through the agency of vagrancy laws, poor relief, police actions, and military force that circumscribed workers' freedom and power. Workers continued to look to their rights as citizens to struggle against these new forms of restraint, but in the conflicts that emerged they often found the new restraints insulated from democratic control. As workers tried to augment the role of the state in the general welfare and exert power through collective action, the courts increasingly limited the state's role in protecting workers and the power of collective action by expanding the influence of contract doctrine and the powers corporations could exercise. At the same time courts instituted conspiracy charges against the collective action of workers. The new forms of domination confronting workers in the second half of the nineteenth century were cloaked in the rhetoric of the free market and were sanctioned by the courts as both natural and good. Workers found themselves pitting their ideal of a co-operative commonwealth against the court-sanctioned ideal of the primacy of the market and the sanctity of the private contract.

Montgomery gives us a vivid picture of the nineteenth century which is neither progressive nor regressive, but a constantly shifting terrain of conflict. As workers, using the resources of their communities and rights of citizenship, won battles for an expansion of their rights and overturned laws of subordination in one area, controllers of capital asserted new authority in others. Workers gained control over

public relief, for example, only to find relief increasingly privatized and unemployment criminalized. Workers' victory at the polls in order to end elite meddling in their personal lives was undermined by the professionalization of police and the removal of police from political control. Workers' expanded political sphere was constrained by an active judicial branch, which was more and more inclined to legislate through judicial decision. Workers' ability to use their political and collective power declined. The coercive power of the state to control labour grew as labour's authority to enhance the condition of the collective it exercised narrowed. Montgomery's story is not declensionist. It is a story of constant struggle, victories and defeats, and an ever-changing battlefield.

As in all his work, Montgomery provides a sweeping analysis of the changing conditions of workers' lives, with detailed nuances that capture daily situations. Significant analysis coupled with pithy examples enrich this book as they have his many others. Montgomery has tried to incorporate women into his story, but it is mostly a story about men. The male worker was the "citizen" worker of the nineteenth century, and he is the centre of Montgomery's book. With this caveat, let me also say that this book did speak to me.

If in some ways the struggles Montgomery describes in *Citizen Worker* seem familiar to today's, it is also important to remember that we are still in the struggle and that yesterday's losses are not forever. This may not be Montgomery's message, but it is the message I took from his book. Montgomery reminds us of our legacy. We cannot leave the battlefield at the end of each victory, nor can we surrender with each defeat. If not in victory, at least in continuing the struggle, we pay homage to those who came before.

John T. Cumber
University of Louisville

Normand Fortier — *Guide to Oral History Collections in Canada / Guide des fonds d'histoire orale au Canada*. Canadian Oral History Association / Société canadienne d'histoire orale, *Journal*, vol. 13, 1993, 402 p.

Prenant le relai d'un inventaire manuscrit réalisé en 1982 par Karen Haines sous le patronage des Archives nationales du Canada, le volumineux *Guide des fonds d'histoire orale au Canada* de Normand Fortier, paru en 1993 sous le patronage de la Société canadienne d'histoire orale, est le résultat d'une opération d'envergure et l'aboutissement d'un travail d'équipe. Ce projet envisagé depuis longtemps par la Société a été financé par le Conseil de recherche en sciences humaines dans le cadre du programme des Études canadiennes, suite à une demande de subvention préparée par Richard Lohead. Bénéficiant du support des archivistes et de l'expertise de plusieurs adeptes du domaine, le projet fut coordonné et réalisé principalement par Normand Fortier avec la contribution de plusieurs historiens et archivistes pour le repérage des fonds d'archives en provenance des diverses régions