

Clive Behagg — *Politics and Production in the Early Nineteenth Century*. London and New York: Routledge, 1990. Pp. x, 273.

William F. Hartford — *Working People of Holyoke. Class and Ethnicity in a Massachusetts Mill Town, 1850-1960*. New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1990. Pp. xi, 294.

S.J. Kleinberg — *The Shadow of the Mills. Working-Class Families in Pittsburgh, 1870-1907*. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1989. Pp. xxv, 414.

James C. Scott — *Domination and the Arts of Resistance. Hidden Transcripts*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990. Pp. xvii, 251.

This quartet of works present some other views to consider along with Joy Parr's award winning *The Gender of Breadwinners*. All are deserving of a wide readership among those interested in the social politics of work and community. The first is a theoretical examination of mechanisms of domination and subordinate resistance. The other three are case studies of three industrial towns, each from a different intellectual tradition.

James Scott, a political scientist at Yale, uses *Domination and the Arts of Resistance. Hidden Transcripts* to propose that most political resistance is almost silent and rarely takes place in the public arena, unless disguised. It deliberately covers its tracks and historians should use caution. In a clear style, he examines the language of power in the public exchange between the dominant and the weak. He takes seriously common statements such as "I should have said..." or, "I know what they said, but what are they really thinking" from plantation owners, prison staff, employers, aristocrats and government officials, on one hand, and on the other, slaves, inmates, employees, and peasants. Both groups make use of the public transcript and its rituals while nurturing a non-public "hidden transcript" of resistance.

Scott argues one reason revolutions are so surprisingly rapid is because these hidden transcripts provide the language to articulate widespread resistance. Even failed revolts feed into the hidden transcripts as folklore, and legend. He discusses the mechanisms of subversion of the public transcript and the use of social spaces for expressing transcript: the tavern, the theatre, the slaves "hush arbor", or that travelling vessel of the hidden transcript — the "anarchist", the preacher, the Digger, or the itinerant union organizer. Ranging widely over seven centuries, he draws on Barrington Moore, Michel Foucault, Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie and, to a lesser extent, on Christopher Hill and E.P. Thompson.

He argues, not very convincingly, that the complexity of gender-relations, especially within a family, creates difficulties that necessitate their exclusion. However, in several of his key examples, the member of the subordinate group who makes the hidden transcript public is a woman (150, 166 n.70, 209, 211). We learn a great deal about the rituals of subordination and the mechanisms of resistance, but less about the hidden transcripts of elites. Most examples come from slavery literature and the colonial era, rather than from industrial society. It was striking how applicable this theoretical approach could be to the experience of Native Peoples. Read this to sharpen your sensitivity to what constitutes evidence.

Clive Behagg's *Politics and Production in the Early Nineteenth Century* looks at small-scale industry in Birmingham, a centre for metal-working and hardware. Faced with escalating costs and steadily lowering prices, partly factory driven, the small producer and his artisans were economically pressured to lower wages and

mechanize. In the button trade, employers turned to women and children, whose participation increased by a third, to 57 percent of the metal button trade in one decade. Adult males participation declined (47-48), but Behagg fails to tell us whether the overall size of this workforce was changing. The crisis makes it clear the small workshop owner was pulled between a number of roles: part patriarch and shop steward facing the outside world; part sub-contractor/foreman facing into his shop on behalf of his buyers; a tension increasingly resolved by the role of a *petit-bourgeois* manufacturer.

As nineteenth-century factory production increasingly drew on Birmingham's products, we have an interesting historical laboratory for testing the concepts of Michael J. Piore and Charles F. Sabel's second chapter in *The Second Industrial Divide*. However, for now, Behagg's focus is on Asa Briggs's view that emphasis on small-scale units of production resulted in, to use an americanism, social consensus, rather than conflict. Behagg argues not so, focusing on Chartist ferment, the formation of fellowship societies, strikes and workplace disputes small and large.

Much of the book is a dense thicket of class analysis of working-class consciousness, although questioning the traditional focus on male trade union politics. Behagg and William Hartford both lean towards historians like Geoffrey Crossick and Behagg uses arrest records to show increasing inter-occupational support (140); he has not yet shaken off the trade union approach to move towards a kin groups and residential patterns approach. To this outsider, the density of the British literature does not seem as useful as Robert Sean Willentz's *Chants Democratic* or Paul E. Johnson's *A Shopkeeper's Millennium*. However, the focus on small-scale production is worth considering. It fits with the studies of Sao Paulo by Warren Dean, Nathaniel Leff and Stanley Stein, or Mexico City, Shanghai, and definitely Meiji Japan. Perhaps, it is time that the much modified theories exported from Britain in the 1950s be returned to infuse the British debates.

Crossing the Atlantic to the Massachusetts mill town of Holyoke, William Hartford's *Working People of Holyoke. Class and Ethnicity in a Massachusetts Mill Town, 1850-1960* focuses on class through the politics of ethnicity. In Holyoke, the Irish predominate in the high wage paper industry, with their foil, the French Canadians, being prominent in the lower waged textile industry. Using John Bodnar's concept of ethnic enclaves, Hartford argues the Irish Catholic Church and middle class, together with the twin pillars of the St. Jerome Temperance Society and the Central Labor Union, built a Catholic-Trade Union respectability as a paternalistic counter to working-class saloon culture. Eventually, they created a version of working-class Democratic Party unionism personified by "Tip" O'Neal. At the municipal level, the 75 percent Irish ethnicity of the police force created a climate supportive of Irish enclave union activities until class divisions appeared in the 1890s. It is hinted that some of this conflict is inter-Irish, but we are given no sense of the rate and regional origins of Irish migration, and a census table would have been helpful.

Like the larger community of Fall River, Holyoke's textile mills were the beneficiary of French-Canadian out-migration. Beginning in 1853, Lyman Mills sought French Canadians as "docile" replacements for Scottish mill workers (42) and so began steady migration. Their docility had an economic logic. Back in Quebec, men could earn board and a dollar a day in isolated lumber shanties, away from their families. Holyoke offered the chance to work with their families, pay expenses and,

in theory, still save \$75 a month (140). Using a wage driven version of the family economy, they moved readily into openings in the textile factories as the Irish left for jobs in paper. They were unreceptive to anglophone unionism, in part because of their ability to place members of their enclave in shop floor management and hiring positions. Kinship and language were their own union, frustrating outsiders like anglophone union organizers.

The French Canadians, accused by one source of being the “Chinese of the Eastern State” (139), although Pierre Vallières had another word for it, kept to their own. Their voter participation rate was 35 percent below that of the Irish community (150). Hartford does close the book commenting on the fate of older French-Canadian workers under deindustrialization. Yet his analysis does not take the comparative plunge illustrated in his choice of a mill worker’s remarks regarding how they had been asked to come down to, first, a “southern level”, then, a “Puerto Rican level” and, now, a “coolie level” (207). He makes no use of the *Revue d’histoire de l’Amérique française*, Bruno Ramirez’s work on migration, ethnicity, and working-class history, or Donald Akenson’s on myths of Irish historiography, all puzzling omissions. Lastly, Hartford does not extend his ethnic analysis into the politics of the Roman Catholic Church, that pivotal institution, bridging, as it did in Holyoke, dual ethnic communities, each with its own language, industry, and class position.

That said, overall, it is a fine book. There is a good discussion of the constitutional amendment battle between the Church supporting the freedom of child labour under the family economy versus trade unionism’s espousal of the family living wage — higher wages for father and exclusionary children labour laws (144). Through incident after incident, we also see traditional patriarchal trade unionism’s neglect of women workers, as they independently initiate strikes, shaming union officials into supporting them (104, 111-112, 133). The book closes with a NAFTA must read chapter on trade unionism, regional wage differentials and deindustrialization as capital and factories migrated south.

S.J. Kleinberg’s *The Shadow of the Mills. Working-Class Families in Pittsburgh, 1870-1907* talks about themes not normally found in studies of heavy industry. In a synthesis of current approaches, Kleinberg mixes ethnicity, class, and the family economy with an emphasis on the physical and ideological lives of women, children, and the elderly in a steeltown. Male culture is discussed with insight and sensitivity. The book, fifty or a hundred pages too long, is pulled between being organized by a discussion of ethnicity and class, or its primary structure, life cycle.

Kleinberg surveys how the massive shift in scale from an iron to a steel industry quadrupled Pittsburgh’s work force. Steel deskilled through changing technology, making labour a raw material. Periods of continuous production flow and twelve hour shifts, broken by unpredictable layoffs, accentuated a culture of asymmetric families, two halves working in different worlds, waged and un-waged (197). The economic nature of this heavy industry exaggerated the separate spheres of responsibility in the family economy, mediated by ethnic culture.

For some, especially Slavic, Eastern and Southern European families, ethnic status remained their class status. For women, limited opportunities for wage work were further gated by retail employers racial, ethnic, and class preferences for well-dressed white, educated, English-speaking women. Similarly, the industry used few juveniles, and lacked an apprenticeship system, limiting father/son relations.

Working seven-day weeks, twelve-hour shifts forced father into an equally constrained gender role, remote breadwinner to mother's role as primary nurturer.

It is clear that Pittsburgh was no melting pot, although the mill wards were very fluid, not fixed, ethnic enclaves. Home changed constantly as workers moved from mill to mill. We get a good spatial sense of old Pittsburgh's crowded boarding houses, clustered in the shadow of various scattered mills. Kleinberg also presents a detailed examination of death under a class-divided municipal infra-structure. Mill wards had dramatic rates of diphtheria, typhoid, and inanition, childrens' deaths due to lack of food or water, compared to middle-class suburbs. Death certificates are used to trace comparative mobility patterns of men and women, oddly stressing the limitations of the source for out-migration (54). We are given a too brief glimpse of immigrant women isolated by linguistic and cultural barriers (229) and a scattering of ethnic cultural mechanisms, immigrant beneficial societies, cultural centres, and the alderman's court (278-279). Hartford's ethnic dualism would have been helpful here.

Unlike Holyoke, Pittsburgh was based around the family living wage. Kleinberg shows how women's non-wage work was an essential component of the functioning of Pittsburgh's mills despite being less than one percent of the iron and steel workers, compared to 25 percent in Birmingham's metal-trades in Birmingham (5). This focus on women's relationship to an industry that did not employ them directly makes an interesting contrast with Behagg's study of a town where women were directly employed. His book does not even index the word women, but he did note the existence of "Female lodges" where women went to drink (127). Like Scott, Kleinberg's book suggests historians should spend more time looking at where there is silence, instead of the sounds of conflict.

In all, an interesting group of approaches to consider when beginning work on a life of work in an industrial town.

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Donna Bohanan — *Old and New Nobility in Aix-en-Provence, 1600-1695: Portrait of an Urban Elite*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1992. Pp. x, 168.

In her valuable study of the Aixois nobility, Donna Bohanan provides new ammunition for the revisionist assault on the traditional thesis of aristocratic "crisis" in the late-sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Bohanan points out that the standard interpretation rested on a set of interlocking assumptions: that the sixteenth-century warrior nobility proved unwilling or unable to adapt in an age of rising prices and religious wars; that a new and dynamic *noblesse de robe* — wealthier, better educated, and devoted to the civil professions — consequently stole power and influence from the decadent nobility of the "sword"; that the sword nobles, their strength sapped in part by the contest with their *robin* rivals, found it increasingly difficult to resist the growing power and size of the monarchy whose expansion they naturally opposed.

Bohanan systematically undermines these assumptions by focusing her spotlight on the unique case of Aix-en-Provence. The nobles of Aix exhibited many of the