



## Book Reviews

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Hoeller, Keith, ed. *Equality for Contingent Faculty: Overcoming the Two-tier System*. Nashville, TN: Vanderbilt University Press, 2014. 256 pp. \$27.95 (paper), \$9.99 (e-book).

**Reviewed by:** Joe T. Berry, *Coalition of Contingent Academic Labor and New Faculty Majority*, Berkeley, CA, USA

Keith Hoeller's wonderful book, *Equality for Contingent Faculty*, examines the two-tier system of faculty employment in higher education. The first tier is traditional tenure and tenure-track jobs. The second tier, which currently includes over 70% of all faculty, is known as "contingent." Contingent faculty lack virtually all the working conditions that have produced our renowned system of teaching and research institutions: no job security, no academic freedom, no role in governance, no institutional support, and wages that are often beneath living wage standards.

*Equality for Contingent Faculty* was many years in the making and in fact had difficulties finding a publisher. It was worth the wait, however, since it is very likely the only book by "new majority" faculty activists to address the current working conditions and consequences of contingency and the strategies needed to change them.

The book is provocative and provides a real discussion of the relevant issues, as compared to a single perspective packaged to look like a diversity of views. It represents a discourse in a real living movement, with people who are trying to change this one corner of the working world—academia. There are three main sections: first, case studies of progressive change; then insightful and critical descriptions of the current situation, including what is happening with union representation for second-tier faculty; and finally a section about strategic ideas.

The quotes used in the book are almost too good for nonfiction. In the opening article, by Elizabeth Hoffman and John Hess, a full-time tenure-track faculty leader shouts in a union meeting, "Throw the lecturers out of the union!" The authors note the axiom that no contingent faculty member is "ever more than fifteen seconds away from total [professional] humiliation" (p. 9). Later, Mario Savio, Free Speech Movement hero and himself a lecturer at Sonoma State University, asks the California Faculty Association Lecturers' Council how many lecturers sit at the table during bargaining. "One," someone answers. Savio responds, "There always have to be at least two of you if anything is going to change" (p. 15).

Other chapters clarify issues about contingency in higher education that are often misunderstood. The chapter by Don Eron lays out the case for tenure, or job security for all teachers, as clearly as I have ever seen. Two Canadian contributions make clear that both the problems and the solutions are not just "made in the USA." The article by

Natalie Sharpe and Dougal MacDonald describes the deskilling of academic labor through online teaching. The second is Frank Cosco's spellbinding chapter on how full equality has been very nearly achieved through principled unionism at Vancouver Community College.

Two additional notable chapters are by editor Hoeller and by Jack Longmate, who make the case for separate unions and bargaining units for contingent faculty and, in so doing, lay out some practices that are all too common in institutions and in academic unionism. One does not have to agree with their conclusion to see deep problems in a situation where the person who hires and fires you is also your union representative. In the piece by Rich Moser, longtime AAUP staff rep and one of the few noncontingent authors, he makes the case for joint combined bargaining units without denying any of the contradictions. He also gives the most complete treatment of the corporatization of higher education and the crucial role of contingent faculty in resisting it. The volume is rounded out by Lantz Simpson's call for a "new abolition" movement to abolish contingency and Frank Donohue's question, "Do college teachers have to be scholars?"

The book would have profited from more judicious editing of some exaggerations, especially in Hoeller's own chapter, and from a discussion of a recent increase of organizing in the private sector, including the for-profit institutions.

Overall the book is a reminder for labor educators planted in higher education that we need to put down our bucket where we are.

Leondar-Wright, Betsy. *Missing Class: Strengthening Social Movement Groups by Seeing Class Cultures*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell ILR Press, 2014. 282 pp. \$21.95 (paper).

**Reviewed by:** Steve Early, author, former organizer for the Communications Workers of America, Richmond, CA, USA

As program director for Class Action ([www.classism.org](http://www.classism.org)), Betsy Leondar-Wright has helped that ten-year-old nonprofit group provide training and advice to many different social justice organizations grappling with "class differences" within their own ranks. Leondar-Wright and her fellow educators in this field believe that deeply ingrained cultural attitudes and beliefs, based on society's ranking of people according to their economic status, family background, education level, and occupation, can be problematic, even among those working to reduce inequality. Yet dealing with issues of class often remains a progressive movement taboo—even when manifestations of "classism" adversely affect relationships between organizational leaders, members, staff, or funders and hinder their achievement of common goals.

In *Missing Class*, Leondar-Wright draws on extensive personal experience as a social movement trainer and consultant plus her academic research into the dynamics of social class. While a doctoral student at Boston College, the author was able to do field interviews with activists from twenty-five left-of-center groups in five states; her methods included taping and later analyzing the transcripts of nearly one hundred

organizational meetings. Her book is filled with telling scenes of awkward, sometimes dysfunctional, interaction between working-class people, at various income levels, and the products of “a professional-middle-class (PMC) background” (p. 1) or wealthier upbringing.

The social movement functioning examined in *Missing Class* is extremely varied and detailed. While the actual organizations studied by the author are cloaked in protective pseudonyms, she categorizes them by the broad and recognizable “traditions” reflected in groups that are community-based, professional advocates for the poor: “progressive and non-profit”; “militant, anti-imperialist”; “anarchist”; or part of “the labor movement” (p. 64). Most of the author’s illustrative real-life scenarios do not involve cross-class conflict or hostility so much as “class sub-groups operating from two different playbooks and thus accomplishing less” (p. 2). The challenge of getting more people into the room and on the same page is not unfamiliar to labor educators working with unions to expand their community ties.

Leondar-Wright’s book includes an instructive chapter, “Activating the Inactive,” an objective shared by all membership organizations trying to increase their strength and effectiveness. Leondar-Wright shows how bad group process and misguided notions of “leadership” can inhibit the performance of an ad hoc committee, a local union branch, or a multi-issue campaign. She skillfully dissects the common meeting behavior problem of a few people “talking long, talking often,” while others sit in silence (p. 184). She also describes how some internal communication difficulties may be attributable to class-based speech differences, including the use of “abstract generalizations” as opposed to “concrete vocabulary” (p. 152).

Based on her detailed observations, the author suggests ways that voluntary associations can become more hospitable to new recruits lacking self-confidence or political experience, narrowly defined, but who have other skills, abilities, and personal connections invaluable to real movement building. As the author argues, “The essence of movement mobilization is transforming people from passive to active, from being unwilling to speak up to being outspoken. Until that transformation process happens, newcomers and socially marginalized people, as well as simply shy people, can find activism intimidating; they may struggle to find their voice and their sense of inner power” (p. 122).

Leondar-Wright’s *Missing Class* is by far the best book available on the touchy subject of “classism” since her own previous work, *Class Matters: Cross-class Alliance Building for Middle Class Activists*, and Fred Rose’s incisive 1999 study, *Coalitions across the Class Divide: Lessons from the Labor, Peace, and Environmental Movements*, also published by Cornell. Like Rose before her, the author illustrates what bridges the class divide—and what doesn’t—within left-liberal groups and the broader, more diverse coalitions we need to alter power relationships in the United States. “No single movement tradition, and no one activist culture has all the elements needed for building a mass progressive movement,” she notes. Those that draw on “the best of each will have a better shot at building powerful cross-class movements in today’s daunting political environment” (p. 232).

Tyson, Amy M. *The Wages of History: Emotional Labor on Public History's Front Lines*. Boston: University of Massachusetts Press, 2013. 224 pp. \$26.95 (paper).

**Reviewed by:** Elizabeth A. Hoffmann, *Purdue University, West Lafayette, IN, USA*

Amy Tyson begins each chapter of *The Wages of History* with an anecdote about or a direct quote from an employee at the “living history” village, Minnesota Historic Fort Snelling. These workers and their complex emotional labor are the focus of this very readable book. Tyson’s choice to begin each chapter in this highly accessible way is just one example of how she makes this book accessible to those both inside and outside academia. It could be read on a beach or in the break room, as homework or leisure.

Tyson contributes scholarly insights and vivid descriptions, drawing heavily from past museum-studies research and sociological writings on emotional labor and the workplace. For example, she explains how Fort Snelling workers provide emotionally therapeutic situations for visitors who connect with the place (e.g., veterans reminiscing at a military fort) or with the specifics of a historic character (e.g., parents’ reaction to hearing the character of the fort commander’s wife speak of the death of their only child). The third chapter, “The Rewards and Costs of Emotional Investment,” explores how Fort Snelling employees worked to show high energy when they were tired, enthusiasm when they were frustrated, and patience when they were fatigued. She reveals how they used both “surface acting” and “deep acting” to stay in the time-bound characters they had been assigned to portray (pp. 98–99).

The following chapter discusses how the goal of authentic recreation could be used by workers both to assert their autonomy over their work situation and to exert power over coworkers. Tyson applies classic social science lenses, such as gender, class, and race, throughout the book to help the reader understand the larger forces that put this historic recreation labor in its full context.

Tyson’s work speaks to the growing literature on the customer service focus of employment. She explains that these workers were trained in two main areas: (1) how to realistically portray people from a past era with historic accuracy and (2) how to provide excellent customer service. While many of the workers at Fort Snelling were drawn to historic recreation work for reasons inherent in accessing history in a personal way, the management of Fort Snelling emphasized that they must go well beyond acting out their roles in historically accurate manners. They must also make connections with each visitor—connections that often result in an “ever-accelerating assembly line of emotional production” (p. 168) that leave workers physically and emotionally exhausted.

Through these “performances of service encounters” (p. 11), the employees at Fort Snelling have to move beyond simply demonstrating nineteenth-century skills (e.g., blacksmithing, performing musket drills, churning butter), portraying characters through bygone phrases, and wearing period costumes. In addition, they must interact with the visitors in ways that demand high sensitivity to their audience’s emotional needs and intellectual preferences.

For example, the worker with the pseudonym Maggie described how she tried to connect with compassion and sympathy to visitors when she was “stationed in the commanding officer’s house” and found herself “listening to men tell their stories about being in Europe in World War II, with tears streaming down their faces” (p. 100). In exploring the difficulty in assessing visitors’ intellectual preferences, Tyson presents statements of Fort Snelling workers that illustrate how they try to infer whether each visitor wants to interact with the historic characters through quiet one-on-one conversations, through loud and dramatic historic soliloquies, or through silently observing demonstrations of time-specific skills. Guessing incorrectly—such as initiating a conversation, and thereby bringing into the action, a visitor who wants to stand back and be entertained—can cause both distress for the visitor and feelings of disconnect and failure for the worker.

And this all must be done while self-censoring out any modern-day speech, maintaining high energy and cheerfulness, and welcoming visitors throughout the summer heat while wearing layers of past-era clothes.

This book would be useful for a labor studies class, particularly in generating discussions of the vast array of jobs that require some level of emotional labor. Each of the chapters can be read on its own, without requiring knowledge from earlier parts of the book to understand later portions.

Derickson, Alan. *Dangerously Sleepy: Overworked Americans and the Cult of Manly Wakefulness*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013. 224 pp. \$49.95 (hardcover).

**Reviewed by:** Yves Laberge, *Groupe de recherche EA 1796, ACE, Université de Rennes 2, France*

In his fourth book on public health, historian Alan Derickson, a professor at Pennsylvania State University, tells how sleep was valued, devalued, and reconsidered among U.S. male workers (and their bosses) during the twentieth century. He digs into critical topics like flexible schedules, night work, and irregular shifts, particularly among certain categories of workers scheduled for late hours, such as railroad workers and truck drivers.

While Derickson does not discuss health issues in this book, at least not in medical terms, he does show that there is a general agreement that good-quality sleep is indispensable and the constant lack of sleep can cause accidents at work. This has been proven by numerous reports and U.S. Supreme Court decisions, some of which took place a century ago.

Derickson focuses on two main dimensions: first, how sleep loss has always been a debated and contested issue in the United States, and second, how most men have wrongly considered their personal capacity to endure the lack of sleep a tangible sign of their masculinity (see chapter 1, titled “Sleep Is for Sissies”). The author explains how new research on sleep has changed in its approach and perspective: “wakefulness as a measure of masculinity is a facet of the history of gender in America that has received no attention at all” (p. x). However, the traditional perceptions related to sleep have to be questioned and reconsidered: “after all, American employers tend to treat

their employees' sleep problems as disciplinary, not medical, matters" (p. 146). Despite its main focus on males at work, this book includes as well various cases of women workers, reminding us that in many cases women workers have had the additional task of overseeing a family (p. 27).

Divided into five chapters, *Dangerously Sleepy: Overworked Americans and the Cult of Manly Wakefulness* begins with a review of various false discourses and misguided publications that have contested the need for eight hours of sleep, often celebrating some "great men of the past" who forged a reputation of (apparently) sleeping just a few hours per night (p. 17). The chapter that follows recounts many catastrophes in which sleep-deprived employees played a role (e.g., the "Three Mile Island incident" and the 1986 *Challenger* space shuttle explosion), all of which contributed to the creation of the National Commission on Sleep Disorders Research in 1988. Chapter 3 concentrates on the consequences of a standard twelve-hour shift for steelworkers, which is followed by a chapter discussing sleep denial in various forms. The final chapter investigates "the men engaged on long-haul trucking" who even today are still working mostly in deregulated conditions. Inevitably, sleep problems are sometimes mixed with the use of stimulants, amphetamines, or other drugs.

*Dangerously Sleepy: Overworked Americans and the Cult of Manly Wakefulness* is a significant milestone in work studies because it confirms the complexity of an old social problem that goes beyond basic health issues. Although Derickson's historical approach focuses on the first half of the twentieth century, both the good and bad patterns he identifies to explain political inaction (like the "common pattern of dynamics without change" among governments) could be applied to more recent periods and possibly transposed to other countries.

Recent theoretical frameworks such as men's studies allow academics to reconceptualize these overlooked issues related to "the human cost of lost sleep" (p. 146). Apart from university libraries, it would be most useful to find this book in public libraries, hoping some night worker or truck driver coping with somnolence will find the accurate words matching his or her symptoms.

Mantler, Gordon K. *Power to the Poor: Black-brown Coalition & the Fight for Economic Justice, 1960–1974*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2013. 376 pp. \$34.95 (hardcover).

**Reviewed by:** Stephanie Luce, *Murphy Institute, City University of New York, New York, NY, USA*

The 1960s are commonly remembered as the era of the civil rights and black power movements, dominated by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and Malcolm X. In *Power to the Poor*, Gordon Mantler tells a much more complex story of multiracial organizing and coalitions, thick with detail about strategy debates, tenuous alliances, and visionary movement building among civil rights, Chicano power, American Indian, antiwar groups, and welfare rights groups. As labor studies scholars know, movements are never about just one charismatic leader. We know about King and Cesar Chavez as figureheads for the black and Chicano freedom movements but also about hundreds of



other lesser-known activists and organizations that were instrumental in the efforts to build a broader movement.

Mantler challenges the common perception that King's Poor People's Campaign was the "Little Bighorn of the civil rights movement" (p. 5) because it failed to win its demands. He also rejects the view that multiracial class-based movements to fight poverty were undermined by emerging identity politics. While some historians saw the black power and Chicano rights movements of the late 1960s and early 1970s as opposition to the broader coalition against poverty that may have emerged out of the Poor People's campaign, Mantler argues the opposite: "identity politics did not represent an abandonment of coalitional politics but actually was a necessary element of coalition" (p. 4).

*Power to the Poor* takes a closer look at the campaigns including the Poor People's Campaign, the Chicago Rainbow Coalition, and the grape boycott in California to show how a range of activists worked together in uneven but visionary ways. Many groups engaged in identity politics and coalition building at the same time. They did not see it as a choice between the two.

While today's social movements focus heavily on raising the minimum wage, the coalitions of the 1960s and 1970s brought a broad understanding to the notion of poverty, including demands about access to land coming out of the American Indian and Mexican American movements, the right to a meaningful job at a living wage from the civil rights groups, and the need for a universal basic income for those who cannot find jobs from welfare rights groups. These came together in the list of demands put forward by the Poor People's Campaign, which included specific but diverse demands—from calling for investigations into police brutality on reservations to a reevaluation of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. Identity politics did not tear apart the campaign but instead strengthened and deepened it.

At the same time, activists faced serious challenges. Some complained about a hierarchy within the movement—both that certain black power groups held a privileged position within the coalitions and that certain organizations were top down and difficult to work with. Men dominated many groups, leaving women to carry the bulk of the grunt work. After King's assassination the Poor People's Campaign was inundated with volunteers and resources that they were not equipped to handle.

Despite the advances in coalition building, the period did not result in a strong, cohesive movement to deepen and expand the "War on Poverty" or build electoral power. Certain organizations and coalitions emerged and sustained into the 1980s, but overall, the challenges proved too much to build and grow a national multiracial movement focused on poverty.

Yet, Mantler argues, the small successes must be highlighted, as they disprove the notion that identity-based organizing undermined multiracial class coalitions—a view that is harmful in several ways. In particular, dismissing black power or Chicano power movements as "identity politics" suggests that white people did not engage in their own form of identity politics throughout history. It takes whiteness as the status quo, as the normal (much like certain kinds of restaurants are labeled "ethnic" while others are considered "American"). The critique of identity politics also tends to

assume that these politics are inherently conflictual and denigrating to others. Mantler's examples show that it was possible to assert "black is beautiful" without shutting down space for other voices. In fact, some of the experiments Mantler writes about appealed to poor whites as much as other groups.

Most importantly, Mantler argues that coalitions are not possible without an awareness of distinct identities. Poverty and class are experienced through a sense of self, which includes race and gender. Rather than eschew identity politics, activists looking to build multiracial antipoverty coalitions should embrace it since it is impossible to ignore differences and distinct histories when defining poverty and developing strategies to combat it.

This is a valuable lesson for today's movements, including labor unions, which often seem eager to avoid difficult conversations about race and ethnicity in the hope of avoiding potential conflict or focusing only on least-common-denominator politics. *Power to the Poor* suggests that our movements could be much deeper, inclusionary, and visionary by allowing those differences to come to the fore.

Corley, Kevin. *Sixteen Tons*. Brooklyn, NY: Hardball Press, 2014. 383 pp. \$15.00 (paper).

**Reviewed by:** Bruce Nissen, *Florida International University, Miami, Florida, USA*

*Sixteen Tons* is a historical novel about U.S. coal miners in the first half of the twentieth century and the "miners' wars" between workers determined to have a union and the various company thugs, police, crooked politicians, and national guardsmen they faced. It follows the fate of Antonio and Angeline Vacca, a family of Italian immigrants, as the century unfolds. The story focuses on coal miners in Illinois, but some of the characters move around the country to other mining areas, so we get to witness the great coal mine wars in Matewan, West Virginia, and the Ludlow Massacre in Colorado as well.

This novel is remarkably well written. The historical sweep of the narrative is impressive, and the author manages to weave credible and fascinating personal stories of the characters' lives into the history so that the reader feels as if he or she were actually there. Tragedies from mine cave-ins, romances, intense friendships, divisions (even within a family) between "company men" and "union men," and racial and ethnic animosities all animate this story beautifully.

Hard-knuckled class struggle is evident throughout. Although the bulk of violence is against the miners, they do not hesitate to pick up arms to defend themselves, their communities, and their means of livelihood. Family patriarch Antonio Vacca becomes a union leader, while his best friend Joe Harrison becomes a company man, rising through the ranks to become director of the local mine. A wealthy local resident with socialist views becomes friends of both men, further complicating and enriching the class dynamics of a story that always remains true to a realistic depiction of every character's flaws as well as his or her admirable qualities. The feisty Irishwoman, "Mother Jones," makes her appearance at times of intense conflict; her unflinching courage and dedication to the miner's cause is well depicted. She wasn't called the "Mineworker's Angel" for nothing.



The novel even manages to include what is perhaps the biggest blemish on the historical record of organized labor regarding brutish violence: the 1922 Herrin, Illinois, massacre, where dozens of company men and their armed accomplices were murdered in cold blood after surrendering in a battle. The carnage from Herrin can't rival that of the infamous Ludlow Massacre in Colorado some years earlier, where women and children were mass murdered by Rockefeller-paid national guardsmen. But it was a totally indefensible crime of blood lust; never before or since have union forces been guilty of a crime of equally enormous magnitude. In the novel, the leader of that massacre is shown to be a petty gangster who later switches sides and becomes a leader of company goons trying to provoke union violence in later strikes.

The bulk of the novel, however, concerns the everyday lives and concerns of coal miners and their families. The Vacca family suffers multiple tragedies; accidents and illnesses and violence take many lives before the novel's end. While most miners and their families are treated sympathetically, none are flattened out into cardboard characters without flaws. All in all, this book is a fine work of art.

The book should be of interest to anyone who likes a good historical novel. It should also appeal to anyone who has an interest in twentieth-century coal mining history. I highly recommend it and hope it finds a wide audience of general readers. University-based labor educators could adopt it for use as an auxiliary text in a U.S. labor history course or in any course on fiction concerning workers and/or the U.S. labor movement. The affordable price of only \$15 is an extra bonus. May it find a wide readership!

Lloyd, Anthony. *Labour Markets and Identity on the Post-industrial Assembly Line*. Surrey, UK: Ashgate, 2013. 196 pp. \$109.95 (hardcover), \$76.99 (e-book).

**Reviewed by:** Hans Rollmann, York University, Toronto, Canada

Call centers have been a complicated thorn in the side of organized labor for decades. Loci of precarious, low-paid labor, they have proven determinedly tough to organize—for those unions that make the decision to even try, which itself is often contentious.

Hence there is a burgeoning body of literature on call centers. Anthony Lloyd's new book, *Labour Markets and Identity on the Post-industrial Assembly Line*, tackles the call center from the perspective of an ethnographer, probing identity construction from an unabashedly Marxist theoretical position.

Clear, engaging, and intellectually provocative, *Labour Markets* offers much for the labor educator. A multifaceted work, it lends itself to use in a range of contexts. The beginning and conclusion of the book present an excellent critique of modern capitalism both from an economic and historical perspective (grounded in the British town where Lloyd conducted his fieldwork) and from a broader theoretical angle. It is this latter that is particularly interesting: Lloyd rehabilitates Marx and applies his theories to neoliberal globalization in the service industry and, in particular, to the work-space of modern call centers.

Unlike the plethora of contemporary works applying Marxist theory to neoliberal global capitalism, Lloyd crafts the main body of the book as an ethnography of the workplace. His methodological approach is a rich one and offers considerable opportunity for debate in the methodology classroom: for sociology, human resources, labor studies, and related fields. He engages in “covert ethnography”—not deliberately misleading anyone but merely not disclosing to his employer (or coworkers) that he was also collecting data for his PhD. He went through the hiring process like any other employee, facing the discipline and pains of the job like all of his coworkers (several of whom he subsequently interviewed).

If methodological choices reveal anything about the researcher’s commitment to the area of study, Lloyd deserves commendation. His “covert” method paid off bountifully insofar as the scope, quality, and depth of his data are concerned, rendering the ethnographic portion of the book remarkably vivid and clear.

Lloyd’s methodology also allows for a degree of personal reflection that serves well to reinforce his theoretical analysis. Reflecting on his own reaction to the experience of working at the call center for months, Lloyd is able to integrate his own affective response into an analysis grounded in Bourdieu’s notion of “habitus.” In his actual dissertation, Lloyd expresses concern that some readers might criticize this approach for wandering into the field of “autoethnography”; I would disagree, however, and argue instead that it allows for a clarity and perceptivity that is disappointingly rare in much modern ethnography.

“Habitus” is of central importance in Lloyd’s analysis; it helps us understand the shifts in class identity and behavior that manifest themselves in call centers, even in traditional working-class towns. Old working-class habitus has broken down, Lloyd argues, and has been replaced by one that resonates more closely with the ethos of neoliberal globalization: individualism, self-interest, and material consumption. This is, in Lloyd’s view, not an improvement. However much the technologies of consumption and materialist spectacle might have evolved since the 1950s, work for those at the call center remains tough and brutish; a barbaric assembly line devoid now even of the working-class habitus that offered previous generations some solace and solidarity.

The verdict—and conclusion—is grim: call centers (and, perhaps, neoliberal workplaces more generally) are “totally divorced from human morality, blindly following its own self-interest without any consideration for the human costs. . . . Employees no longer remain long term assets for a company, instead they are regarded as sacrificial offerings to be freely given up on the altar of efficiency, productivity and capital accumulation” (p. 165).

The analysis is thorough and the conclusions depressing. Lloyd gives us hope by suggesting that understanding the processes at work—especially the habitus experienced by low-wage workers in the neoliberal economy—is a vital prerequisite to building class solidarity. This is a compelling argument, reinforced by a thoroughly informative read.