

“Harry” and “Mike” for anywhere between \$20 and \$75 per hour. What they buy, according to Trimbur’s incisive analysis, involves a type of racialized consumerism wherein these white-collar businessmen buy black masculinity to compensate for or perhaps assuage their nagging fear of feminization and growing softness. As Trimbur writes: “The assumption of white-collar boxing is that proximity to the masculinity of the racial Other can help clients construct an identity” (p. 138). Trimbur comes close to betraying a near-visible sneer as she writes about these men and their place in the culture of the gym.

Trimbur has written a wonderful book about the world of boxing, specifically that place and space dedicated to boxing known as Gleason’s Gym. Anyone who wants to understand boxing as practiced in 21st-century Brooklyn should read the sociological gift bestowed upon us called *Come Out Swinging*.

*Unfinished Business: Paid Family Leave in California and the Future of U.S. Work-Family Policy.* By Ruth Milkman and Eileen Appelbaum. Ithaca, N.Y.: ILR Press, 2013. Pp. xiv + 151. \$69.96 (cloth); \$19.95 (paper).

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In 2002, California became the first state in the United States to create a paid family-leave program. Administered through the existing state disability insurance and funded by an employee tax, paid family leave (PFL) makes six weeks of partially paid leave available to most private-sector employees who seek to bond with a new child or to care for a seriously ill family member. In *Unfinished Business*, Ruth Milkman and Eileen Appelbaum tell the story of the political struggle that led to the advent of PFL and explore the effects and limitations of the program in the first several years following its implementation. The modest length of this book is deceptive, as the authors manage to convey the past, present, and future of this policy with great depth and the support of several fascinating data sources.

The authors begin by making the case for paid family leave, highlighting not only to the caregiving needs of children and the ill and disabled but drawing special attention to the inequalities by gender and class that shape the division of caring labor and the access to paid leave time by employees prior to PFL. These inequalities by gender and class prior to PFL are an important context for looking at the effects of PFL later in the book, where the authors find that the policy appears to have mitigated inequalities in leave taking by gender but not by class.

One of the most striking arguments in the book relates to the politics of family leave policy. Despite high popular support for paid family leave across gender, class, and political party affiliation, family-leave policies (even the unpaid leave provided by the national Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993) face extraordinary obstacles to passage due to business opposition. Even after compromises that reduced business costs (the PFL bill, e.g.,

initially provided a 12-week leave funded by an employee and employer tax), business interests continued to lobby against the bill, touting it as a potential “job killer.” According to Milkman and Appelbaum, the successful passage of PFL came as a result of coalition building among interest groups (especially labor organizations) and political opportunities provided by Democratic majorities and a governor facing reelection. Catering to business groups with compromises and carve outs and publicizing the business case for leave, they argue, were largely futile efforts to change deeply rooted ideological opposition to the bill.

Using data that they collected after the passage of PFL, the authors find that the policy is having a positive impact on those who use it. The number of men taking “baby-bonding” leave has gone up, with some evidence that the length of those leaves has increased, and the policy has increased access to wage replacement for low-income workers who take leave. Furthermore, the wrongheadedness of business concerns about family leave is exposed by the authors using data from employers about the impact of the Family and Medical Leave Act in 2004 and PFL in 2010. In both quantitative and qualitative research on employers, the vast majority report no impact or a positive impact from leave policies and few experiences of fraud or abuse by employees.

The authors also point to the primary weaknesses of PFL in the years since its passage. Awareness levels remain shockingly low (approximately 43% of registered voters reported knowing about the program in 2010), and awareness levels are significantly lower among those workers who are mostly likely to benefit from the program (e.g., those with low income and less education, younger workers, Latinos, immigrants). The most common source of information is employers, and as the authors note, employers with high-status workers (who likely already provide paid time off) have an incentive to inform workers, since their employees can then draw on PFL instead of employer benefits. These differences in awareness and the lack of job protection provided by PFL reinforce, rather than mitigate, the class gap in leave taking among workers.

Since state-level policies are often used as testing ground for changes to federal policy, this book is necessary reading for advocates of national paid family leave in the United States. While the book’s subtitle hints at a wider view of work-family policy, this book does remain narrowly focused on family leave when it might have made ties to the larger context. In addition, there are many lessons revealed about this policy that may be applicable to other policy areas, but these connections are unexplored in this book. For example, the intransigence of business interests, the struggle to increase public awareness, and the difficulty in coordinating PFL benefits with other policies mirror some of the issues experienced with the implementation of the Affordable Care Act. Still, this book stands an invaluable resource to scholars and advocates interested in family-leave policy.