this book. It engages with theoretical debates about materialist versus post-materialist politics, old versus new social movements, and the like, but does not get bogged down in them, instead staying firmly rooted in the empirical materials at hand. It also very productively applies the resource mobilization theory of social movements to develop an original and potentially powerful analysis of coalitions.

Another strength of the book is that it moves beyond static analyses of workers' and environmentalists' interests, to look at the ways in which conceptions of interest vary over time and across industries. Both cooperation and conflict are structurally possible, Obach argues, so the important issue is the way in which particular sets of organizations define their interests at a particular juncture. The historical chapter is especially good in this regard, reminding us that labor-environmental cooperation is not so new—and that it often rests on a complex set of interests, goals, and compromises.

Obach also does a nice job of debunking strong cultural explanations that locate the difficulty of coalition work in conflicting class cultures. He shows that these explanations have garnered much of their power from a focus on the "timber wars" in the Pacific Northwest, while ignoring many of the idiosyncrasies of this industry. As an alternative, Obach convincingly argues that much of what appears to be cultural conflict is really rooted in differing organizational procedures, with the more hierarchical and rigid decision-making style of unions being rooted in their legal mandates.

The main weakness of the book is that the evidence and the key causal arguments are not always well connected. For instance, one of the main arguments is that organizations that define their scopes more widely are more likely to engage in coalition work. This makes sense descriptively, but as a causal argument it borders on tautology, especially since having a wide organizational range is defined as working on both environmental and social/workplace issues. We are left with only hints about why organizations define their goals more broadly or narrowly in the first place. The analysis of organizational learning is also weak when it comes to explaining *why* new conceptions of scope and interest sometimes get institutionalized (but usually do not) during the process of coalition work.

On a similar note, although the strategy of looking at coalitions across different states is appealing, the criteria for selecting the states are not well connected to the main arguments of the book, and the states do not end up providing much analytical leverage. A better comparative design could have strengthened the analysis. For instance, if the need to compete for members really imposes significant constraints on environmental groups' coalition efforts, then coalition politics should look different in states with high levels of movement competition than in states with less competition.

By focusing on leadership-driven coalitions formed at the state level, Obach has greatly increased our knowledge of one site of coalition work, but this of course leaves out a great deal of important coalition activity at the local level. There are always limits to what can be done in a single study, but I wondered if greater attention to the local level might produce an account of coalition formation (and dissolution) that is more dynamic, emotional, and bottom-up than the one emphasized here.

I would have preferred to get the full narrative for at least a few cases of coalition formation, rather than just the author's conclusions about the cases spread out over several chapters. A thorough narrative exposition could have provided a sounder basis for readers themselves to evaluate the arguments, and, given the richness of the data, could have also provided some very compelling stories about the promises and pitfalls of these tenuous but tremendously important alliances. As it is, the book is clearly written but somewhat repetitive and longer than it needs to be.

Despite these shortcomings, *Labor and the Environmental Movement* makes a major contribution to a crucial area of study. Anyone interested in understanding or building blue-green alliances or any kind of social movement coalition should definitely read this book. It may also be of interest to social movement theorists, organizational researchers, and those working on labor or environmental policy.

Tim Bartley

Assistant Professor of Sociology
Indiana University, Bloomington

Families That Work: Policies for Reconciling Parenthood and Employment. By Janet C. Gornick and Marcia K. Meyers. New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2003. 461 pp. ISBN 0-87154-356-7, $39.95 (cloth).

Freud said that people need love and work to be happy. One does not have to be a Freudian

to see how difficult it is to reconcile these aspects of life, particularly family love as a time-intensive activity, in the 24/7 economy of the early twenty-first century. I have taken some liberties in using Freud's claims, since the issue in this book is not love *per se* but time to enact it as a parent.

The aim of *Families that Work* is to derive a solution to the tensions between the demands (and rewards) of family and the demands (and rewards) of employment. That increasing numbers of mothers of young children are full-time participants in the labor market is not news, nor is the cost to women's paychecks, promotion, mobility, and career success of having children. Likewise well known are the costs for children and families of the increasing time demands of the contemporary workplace. What is new, and the focus of this book, is the insight that resolving these tensions is neither about shoring up women's labor market position nor about shoring up their ability to choose homemaking.

Rather, reconciling these tensions means departing from the "bread-winner-homemaker" model entirely and developing a new household based on what Gornick and Meyers call the "dual-earner–dual-carer" family. The ability to achieve this shift depends—and here is the thrust of their book—on a vastly expanded government role in, and commitment to, family well-being. Specifically, Gornick and Meyers are really calling for an enlarged and altered welfare state structure that helps maintain family incomes, provides publicly regulated and financed paid leaves, regulates work time, and extends public early education and child-care programs. As they argue, these changes depend on recognizing children as public goods, and work-family balance as a public issue rather than a private problem. It is the absence of those recognitions that leads to unnecessary levels of economic hardship, inadequate care, insufficient schooling, and ultimately compromised well-being for the nation's children. In a society that values family, these are high social costs indeed!

To support their arguments and counter the inevitable nay-saying, Gornick and Meyers conduct a comparative analysis of relevant policies and policy outcomes in European and English-speaking countries. This comparative analysis is the empirical heart of their study and it is very effective. Using data from a wide variety of sources, they compare conditions across twelve countries: the United States, Canada, and ten European countries. Their choice of cases, they argue, allows them to compare countries that resemble one another along many dimensions (hence their exclusion of countries from the Pacific Rim and from former communist Eastern Europe) but differ in their welfare state regimes. Using groupings from the extant social welfare state–social policy literature, they divide the countries into three relatively homogeneous groups. The first are the Nordic countries that have well-documented welfare states characterized by variations around the theme of "cradle to grave security." Second are the Continental countries that rely on a combination of policy benefits linked to occupations and reflecting market distributions and the principle of "subsidiarity," which emphasizes the role of family and community in providing additional supports. Third are the English-speaking countries, the most "marketed" of welfare states and, in many ways, the stingiest, in which benefits are attached to need, narrowly defined, rather than to citizenship.

Gornick and Meyers are quite good about only making claims their data can support. At the same time, they do a masterful job of pulling together as many different strands of data as are needed to support their arguments. In the process, they identify a new form of American exceptionalism that is consistent with other forms. Like other comparative studies of welfare, this one concludes that the United States and (to a lesser degree) the other English-speaking nations have the least generous benefits, the least public commitment and involvement in care-giving, the greatest time-squeeze on parents, the highest wage gap between employed men and women, the highest poverty rates for families with young children, and so on. The tables are extremely useful summaries of the wealth of comparative data the authors present.

In addition to their explicit assessment of how parents and children in the United States are faring relative to their counterparts in the other country groups, the authors compare social policies (or, in some cases, the absence of policies), and their outcomes, including mortality rates, the prevalence of low birth weights, eighth-grade achievement scores, television viewing hours, teenage pregnancies, and other measures of children's well-being across the three country groups. They also compare data on the availability and generosity of family leave, the regulation of working time, and the availability and form of early childhood education care. The assessment of cross-national differences in school scheduling and early child-care programs is another strength of the analysis, since those

societal choices are clearly central to reconciling work-family demands and yet are seldom examined closely in the literature.

Like many researchers before them, Gornick and Meyers find that although no place is perfect, the Nordic countries have the most comprehensive programs, with strong and generous family and maternity paid leave, far more generous working-time policies than other countries (for example, limits on hours worked, and measures providing for good-quality part-time work), limitations on non-standard work, provision of paid vacation time, public, high-quality childcare, and so on. The English-speaking countries (the United States, Canada, and Great Britain) provide the least comprehensive support. Just knowing about some of the programs that other countries have successfully institutionalized helps inspire confidence that the work-family problems we face are soluble. For example, the success of other countries in supporting early, high-quality, publicly funded child-care programs for the majority of children is enlightening. Gornick and Meyers offer a variety of very practical policy suggestions for learning from our Scandinavian and European counterparts.

Obviously I am just providing a brief and necessarily simplified summary of a wealth of information, some of which suggests less perfect within–country group consistency than this review suggests. Canada, for instance, does far better than the other English-speaking nations in providing paid leave to mothers. Conversely, in the United States, which is notably progressive in supporting gender equality, fathers have their own leave rights to a greater extent than in some of the other countries. In addition to glossing over much of the detail Gornick and Meyer provide, I have not really discussed their consideration of gender, which is an important part of their argument. They do address, for instance, cross-country differences in the relative treatment of men and women, some factors that are linked to work-family conflict, and the potential effects of policy on gender inequality.

Families that Work might strike some readers as overly utopian, but that does not invalidate the wisdom of its arguments and proposals. In their last chapter, the authors take seriously the range of objections that might come from North American pundits, politicians, and policy-makers. I do not find all of the counter-arguments persuasive (or at least I do not think a less sympathetic reader would be persuaded), but they are an important beginning of a necessary dialogue. Still, one wonders what it would take to get a shift in political commitment and will dramatic enough to effect the changes the authors envision.

I have a few minor complaints. The book seems a bit repetitive at times, and the front-end theoretical apparatus, drawn from Gøsta Esping-Anderson's work, is neither sustained nor clearly necessary. Its primary value is in justifying the country groupings. Gornick and Meyers do not pit men and women against one another, and they recognize that men are indeed involved in care-giving—and may want to be even more so, which I view as a strength of their arguments. That said, the authors do not make a compelling case for expecting men to make the sacrifice of power, privilege, and control, both in the workplace and at home, that the creation of dual-earner–dual-carer families and workplaces would require.

These few criticisms notwithstanding, I find little to argue with, and much to admire, in this book. The treatment of the issues is balanced; no one is vilified, not men, not women, not managers, not policy-makers. Gornick and Meyers's reasonable tone should make the book palatable for the wide audience whom I would urge to read it. This audience includes upper-level classes in political economy, policy, and organizations, as well as policy-makers, managers, and anyone else seriously interested in what is likely to be the most contested terrain in twenty-first-century workplace and social policy.

Beth A. Rubin

Associate Professor
University of North Carolina-Charlotte
Department of Management

Economic and Social Security and Substandard Working Conditions

Sweatshop USA: The American Sweatshop in Historical and Global Perspective. Edited by Daniel E. Bender and Richard A. Greenwald. New York: Taylor & Francis (Routledge), 2003. xii, 300 pp. ISBN 0-415-93560-1, $85.00 (cloth); 0-415-93561-X, $24.95 (paper).

This volume presents the multiple perspectives on "sweatshop studies" of diverse scholars and activists. The editors, Daniel Bender and Richard Greenwald, who are both historians, argue that achieving social and economic change