cites—grassroots organizing, genuine community coalitions, multiple forms of collective action, and the framing of issues in broader social justice terms—and yet operate in an undemocratic, top-down fashion, with minimal worker participation in decision-making and goal formation for the local union.

Second, even accepting the specified definition of social movement unionism, some of the facts Lopez presents seem to indicate that during certain campaigns social movement unionism was not present. For example, in the second campaign discussed in Part I, the union did not build coalitions with external organizations to win the organizing campaign. Likewise, in the contract negotiations campaign, the union was unsuccessful at building and using coalitions within the community.

While the SEIU locals and campaigns in question may or may not be social movements, what Lopez does illustrate is that some unions are in a period of transition, and this transition is littered with surmountable obstacles. While being honest about the relatively small number of unions that are in this transition phase, he leaves the reader with a sense of optimism that unions will be able to adapt or transform themselves. An additional contribution of the book lies in the detailed information Lopez provides concerning the internal and external obstacles local unions face, which could provide the basis for new typologies and theory formation to better explain current events and aid the labor movement in moving forward.

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Industrial Relations, Politics, and Government

Unions in the Time of Revolution: Government Restructuring in Alberta and Ontario. By Yonatan Reshef and Sandra Rastin. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2003. xviii, 279 pp. ISBN 0-8020-8753-1, $60.00 (cloth).

The writing of this review closely coincided with the funeral of former U.S. President Ronald Reagan. One frequently mentioned event in his political career is his destruction of the air traffic controllers' union in 1981. Some believe this action ushered in a new era in U.S. labor-management relations. Former Secretary of Labor George Shultz later stated that Reagan's actions gained him considerable respect among foreign leaders, who concluded that Reagan's amiable demeanor concealed strong views and character. Whatever one's interpretation of this event, the American labor movement did not or could not defend the rights of the striking controllers in any substantial way. The dilemma facing U.S. unions when dealing with a determined and popular right-wing government was not unique. The authors of this book analyze the strategies, tactics, and options of Canadian labor movements confronted by hostile governments.

Canada is a nation of regions, so provinces administer most aspects of labor relations. Individual provinces have distinct political cultures. Alberta is the most conservative province politically, and lacks an effective liberal opposition. Ontario, Canada's industrial heartland, was governed for decades by moderate conservatives, always challenged by reformist Liberals and labor-oriented New Democrats. In the 1990s, both provinces elected neo-conservative governments. Victorious premiers called their programs "revolutions," an ironic term for a package of policies consisting principally of tax cuts, reduced public expenditures, and privatization of government services. Premier Ralph Klein of Alberta, taking office in 1993, pledged to eliminate the provincial deficit quickly and the provincial debt eventually, a program that became known as "the Klein Revolution." Two years later, Ontario Premier Mike Harris swept into office on the basis of the "Common Sense Revolution," a more ambitious program that included cutting the power of public sector unions, especially the teachers. Both governments had strong majorities, meaning that no parliamentary opposition could stop them. They accurately gauged the probabilities of labor collective action based on previous experience with the labor movement.

Both of the "revolutions" threatened the status of unions in provincial public services, health care, and education. Unions in these sectors, with limited support from other labor organizations, formulated responses to government actions. Electoral politics had failed. The narrow scope of collective bargaining offered little hope of success. The authors analyze labor's responses through the lens of social movement theory, which examines the actions of less powerful groups to advance their interests through

"noninstitutionalized" means. A cost-benefit analysis for labor and the government is central to the theory. The authors examine the possibilities for union collective action in terms of available resources and constraints as well as governments' options to respond.

The bulk of the book is devoted to historical accounts of some strategies by labor leaders in Alberta (who essentially accepted the impact of the Klein Revolution without strong response) and a number of collective actions undertaken by unions in Ontario. Enlivening these histories are many illuminating quotes from participants. The authors' general conclusion, briefly stated, is that neither provincial labor movement was able to change government policy.

The account of these protests and of labor's strategic planning for a response to government policies contains a number of valuable lessons for unions, especially with respect to the role of their leaders. First, the objective of collective actions, demonstrations, lobbying, work stoppages, and so on must be clear. When Ontario government legislation seriously worsened teachers' working conditions and cut education funding, teachers responded by refusing to perform extra-curricular duties and by initiating a province-wide strike. Despite their effort, teachers and their leaders were unclear about the objective of their actions. Were they trying to force the government to rescind legislation? This was highly unlikely for a government holding a large legislative majority. Was the goal to forestall future incursions into teacher bargaining? After ten days, teachers basically told their leaders to end the strike. In contrast, in Alberta, a 2001 teachers' strike over salary cuts and increased class size was ended by legislation acceding to the teachers' core demands. The legislators' task was relatively easy because the teachers' union submitted a detailed, feasible plan to reduce costs in some non-essential administrative departments and use the savings to reduce class size and maintain teacher salary levels.

Ontario unions staged "Days of Action" in 1995–98. These were one-day protests organized in individual communities. Many unionized workplaces closed, and union members staged protests. Again, the ultimate goal of the Days of Action was not stated. Union leaders later rationalized them on the grounds that they engendered feelings of solidarity among participants. However, most private-sector unions opposed this tactic. Organizers who gained broad participation by non-labor groups were unable to maintain a focused message. In 1999 the Harris government was re-elected easily.

In Alberta, union members were generally unwilling to engage in collective action against the government, especially illegal action, even when government policies worsened their working conditions. Unions concentrated instead on collective bargaining, including arbitrations and labor relations board complaints. These procedures were too narrow and technical to attract broad public support.

Unions enjoyed their greatest success in mobilizing their members when the government threatened the basic institutions of industrial relations. The Harris government deliberately weakened the legal protections for unionism and collective bargaining. Labor was able to mobilize around this cause. Klein concentrated on cutting costs of government services, a goal many union members shared. He had no interest in changing industrial practices in Alberta, perhaps because he knew that organized labor posed no political or even economic threat to his government and its supporters.

A final lesson for unions from this book is one that would not surprise any experienced political leader: seasoned "troops" are more deployable than green ones. Reshef and Rastin find that union members who had previously experienced mobilization in the form of a strike were more readily enlisted in collective action than those who lacked such a background.

This book is a significant contribution to the literature on public sector industrial relations and its links to politics in Canada. However, it is of value to a broader audience. It illustrates the possibilities and limitations of mass political action by dissident groups. Sections that summarize lessons learned for each example of collective action can be fruitfully read by scholars and activists alike from other countries. It also opens a new avenue for discussion in this area. Collective actions led by labor, even in communities with strong labor movements, did not change government policy in any discernible way. What can labor do? An alternative strategy to collective action might be active engagement in political affairs. Conservative governments seldom consult with labor. However, employers, many of whom value their amicable relations with labor, may often be willing to parley with government officials to defend the autonomy of their relations with labor. Local governments may be more approachable than their provincial counterparts. Electoral politics are always an option. Client

groups may support unions' goals. If collective action is the end of a process of political action, rather than the beginning, labor's prospects may be improved.

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Economic and Social Security and Substandard Working Conditions

Means-Tested Transfer Programs in the United States. Edited by Robert A. Moffitt. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003. ix, 644 pp. ISBN 0-226-53356-5, $99.00 (cloth).

About 25% of Americans, and 38% of children under age 18, live in households that receive benefits from at least one means-tested transfer program. For poor Americans, the corresponding statistics are 67% and 85% (U.S. Census Bureau. http://ferret.bls.census.gov/macro/032003/pov/new26_001_01.htm and http://ferret.bls.census.gov/macro/032003/pov/new26_002_01.htm, accessed August 18, 2004; figures are for 2002). Such programs currently cost about $1,600 per capita (p. 3). Their expense, their critical importance to the economic well-being of low-income Americans, and persistent concerns that they provide incentives for socially undesirable behaviors ensure that means-tested programs perennially remain of intense policy and research interest.

Since the early 1990s many means-tested programs have changed significantly, and research on them has grown in sophistication and continued to expand. This NBER conference volume is intended to help scholars and policy analysts keep up with the programs' changes and with developments in research. Robert Moffitt and the 11 other authors, all highly regarded experts on the programs they discuss, satisfy this intention extremely well.

The book's nine chapters examine the major means-tested programs in the United States. Those programs (and the chapter authors) are Medicaid (Jonathan Gruber), Supplemental Security Income (Mary C. Daly and Richard V. Burkhauser), the earned income tax credit (V. Joseph Hotz and John Karl Scholz), food and nutrition programs (Janet Currie), Temporary Assistance to Needy Families and its predecessor, Aid to Families with Dependent Children (Robert A. Moffitt), low-income housing programs (Edgar O. Olsen), child care subsidies (David M. Blau), employment and training programs (Robert J. LaLonde), and the child support enforcement system (Robert I. Lerman and Elaine Sorensen).

All chapters follow the same template: a summary of the history and current rules and administrative arrangements of the program (or programs), descriptive information on the current caseload, expenditures, and recipient characteristics, and a review of theoretical and empirical analyses of the program's effects on efficiency and equity. The chapters on Supplemental Security Income, housing, child care, employment and training, and child support enforcement also discuss the economic rationale for public provision of these programs. Almost every chapter analyzes current policy issues and reform options in light of existing research and points out fruitful areas for future research.

Several chapters provide concise discussions of key methodological issues. The chapters on Medicaid, the earned income tax credit, and food and nutrition programs address identification issues when reviewing research on the programs' behavioral effects. The chapter on employment and training programs summarizes experimental and nonexperimental methods of program evaluation.

The broad scope, extensive detail, and high quality of each chapter are impressive. Each could stand on its own as a review article. The value added by having them published together is that readers can readily make cross-program comparisons of background information, analytic approaches, and findings on efficiency and equity effects common to most programs such as program participation, labor supply, demographic behavior, and effects on poverty and other indicators of economic well-being. Inevitably, the descriptive information will become outdated as time passes and policies change. The analytic frameworks will have enduring usefulness, however, and the reviews of empirical findings will remain good jumping-off points for future studies and literature reviews on the same issues.

The book will be essential reading for any economist or graduate student in economics who wants to come quickly up to speed before starting research on means-tested programs. Graduate students in fields such as public policy will also find the book helpful if they have good preparation in microeconomics and regression analysis. Specialists in one program will appre-