

unable to find employment appropriate to their qualifications and the division of the labour market into well-paying secure jobs and low-paying, time-limited jobs without benefits, are factors generating explosive social forces. Alongside the political revival of neo-liberalism and the power of global forces there is also working beneath them both a renewed stirring of discontent and dissatisfaction with the present state of class relations. These forces of discontent as the empirical evidence of the thirties and forties showed, may prove in the long run stronger and more powerful than O'Neill's continuity of Life covenant. If an argument cannot be settled philosophically, it seems more useful to let evidence speak instead of engaging in misplaced biological transcendence. It would have been convincing.

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**Pamela Sugiman**, *Labour's Dilemma: The Gender Politics of Auto Workers in Canada, 1937-1979*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994, 293pp. \$50.00 (hardcover), \$19.95 (paperback).

Reviewed by Cathy Murphy  
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The topic of *Labour Dilemma; The Gender Politics of Auto Workers in Canada, 1937-1979* is an in-depth analysis of the process by which unequal value of women's work and status is accepted and reinforced in the workplace and the union. It analyses the ways society's values were incorporated into hiring and firing systems, including the most basic of union systems—that of seniority.

The author, Pamela Sugiman, started the book as part of a doctoral dissertation seven years before its publication. She started the project with a question "Why has the auto manufacturing industry remained sex-segregated for a period spanning more than seventy years?" Her book succeeds in answering this question.

In Canada, the United Auto Worker's Union (UAW) started in the late 1930s. Ms. Sugiman described the history of this union as one of the most socially active, democratic and progressive of the large industrial unions in North America. Yet sex segregation in the auto plants did not begin to break down until 1970. She describes the contradiction of being an agent for social and economic change and, at the same time, a supporter and reinforcer of the status quo as labour's dilemma.

Central to labour's dilemma was the issue of seniority, fought for by men and women on the basis that seniority offered a system of fairness in

hiring, promoting and firing. Yet when applied for women, it applied only in relation to a narrow range of jobs labelled "female".

Ms. Sugiman conducts her research based on a concept of *gendered strategy*; a strategy that incorporates "reasoned decisions and emotional responses". It views workers as both victims and agents of power who, while reflecting the values of society in building workplace structures, also exercise choice in how those values are incorporated.

The book focuses on an analysis of social change through tracing the working lives of a small group of women workers who were employed in the male-dominated auto manufacturing industry in Southern Ontario. It focuses on the changes these women underwent as the values of society changed. It discusses the manner in which men have set the agenda of the auto industry and how requested changes to those entrenched privileges met with strong resistance. Long before the auto industry was unionized, auto manufacturers allocated labour on the basis of sex and race. Unionization respected these traditions and set up systems that reenforced these values.

The book is laid out in a manner that facilitates reading and analysis. Chapter 1 provides a general framework of the early auto industry. It discusses why unionization was so passionately embraced and how the gender values of the industry were maintained in spite of unionization. Chapter 2 provides an analysis of the gender politics of men in the UAW (1937-1945). It analyses the process by which the belief that women are inferior to men and secondary wage earners became incorporated into union practices and contract language. In Chapter 3, Ms. Sugiman takes an objective look at "Femininity and Friendship on the Shop Floor (1937-1949)." Women saw their stay in the workplace as short term. Their energy was taken up with fighting for rights to dress comfortably, to work without dominance, intimidation, over-supervision, to build good working relations and to protect each other against rules and government intervention that said married women must quit their jobs.

In chapter 4, women returned to the auto industry after being largely forced out following the second world war. This influx of women saw themselves as permanent wage earners; however, they were again relegated to "female jobs" with segregated seniority rights. After becoming union wise in Chapter 4, the walls start coming down in Chapter 5. Some women argued that their brothers were right and that it was wrong for other women to want to have transfer rights to higher pay and easier working conditions in "male jobs." Those that argued for and against gladly bid on better jobs when the opportunity finally came to do so, regardless of their view prior to the removal of the barriers.

Chapters 5 and 6 explore how women's active union involvement has impacted on the workplace and the union. Change was strongly resisted, but

due to women's revaluing of their status and rights in society, change was irresistible and undeniable. Women first changed the workplace and union by challenging the rights of managers and their male co-workers to control how they worked. In recent decades, women have changed the workplace by challenging where women work, and the pay received for that work. Women have taken stronger participation and leadership roles in the union. This contributed to making change happen.

This book is strongly recommended reading for students of labour relations, people working in the area of labour relations and for those who want to understand the process of change in society and its impact in the workplace and unions.

This is a story of one union's and one industry's struggle with gender politics. The story is well told and, though historical in nature, told in a manner that is lively and interesting. Information provided in the book is based on solid research and sensitive analysis. Ms. Sugiman's point of view and approach are original and daring. A thorough analysis is provided through tracing a group of women's lives. This approach is fresh and adds flavour and personality to the analysis.

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**Bonnie Burstow**, *Radical Feminist Therapy: Working in the Context of Violence*. Newbury Park: Sage Publications, 1993, 301pp. US\$24.95 (paperback).

Reviewed by Carolyn Campbell  
*Maritime School of Social Work*  
*Dalhousie University*

In the introduction to her book, writer, activist, therapist and teacher Bonnie Burstow states: "Violence against women is central to our existence as women and as such is an issue that we can no longer afford to marginalize" (p. xiv). *Radical Feminist Therapy: Working in the Context of Violence*, offers an in-depth exploration of the implications of this thesis as it relates to therapy with women. In the first four chapters of the text, Burstow offers an explanation of the theoretical perspectives that "combine to shape the understanding and guidance offered" (p. xv) throughout the text. The remaining ten chapters illustrate the implication of these perspectives in relation a wide range of therapy situations.

Motivated by a unique analysis of the problems and shortcomings of much of current feminist therapy, especially as it relates to psychiatric theory and intervention, Burstow grounds her work in the broad perspective of structuralism. The tenets of radical feminism, radical therapy and