

considerably on the figure of the *mulatta* as a site of homo-social transnational exchange. And yet Luis-Brown ignores the foundational work of Vera Kuzinski's *Sugar's Secrets*, a text which would have added depth and historical specificity to his analysis. He does attend to the work of Mary Louise Pratt, albeit briefly, to justify and establish his arguments.

To be fair, he is quite thorough in his use of essential theoretical texts, applying the dense material of authors like Michel Foucault, Antonio Gramsci, Frederic Jameson, Raymond Williams, and others to simultaneously clarify and complicate questions in a genuinely productive manner. Indeed, he applies these abstract models in a way that is deeply relevant to current material global conditions. As the author points out, Du Bois's Pan African dream of an egalitarian world governed by beauty, racial equality and full universal citizenship seems all the more urgent and poignant in the context of our own post 9/11 neo-colonial imperialist wars. Rather than fully free universal citizens, the world now seems peopled by transnational demi-citizens-refugees without rest, "enemy combatants" deemed categorical tortured non-persons. At the same time, Luis-Brown focuses on current resistance movements, such as the Zapatistas, whose struggle is especially pressing throughout the text. The author reminds us of figures such as Subcomandante Marcos, a Gramscian "organic" intellectual who "leads by obeying," as Teresa Urrea did. In doing so, he points toward a new wave of decolonization—a universalist struggle for human rights, freedom from want, oppression, racism, and the malevolence of empire.

María del Carmen Martínez

University of Wisconsin at Parkside

AVIVA CHOMSKY: *Linked Labor Histories: New England, Colombia, and the Making of a Global Working Class*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2008.

Like most studies of globalization, *Linked Labor Histories* is about mobility in the modern world: the mobility of people, capital, organizations, and ideas. But unlike many treatments of globalization, Aviva Chomsky's book carefully traces the connections and contradictions behind the movements, allowing us to see how seemingly random, apolitical, "economic" processes are not only profoundly interrelated and political but produce inequality on a global scale.

Globalization, as Chomsky points out, is frequently understood—by college undergrads as well as economists at the World Bank and the IMF—as something new, something inevitable, and something that is generally benign and positive over the long term. The benefits of industrialization and increasing integration among the world's economies will eventually extend to everyone. The only

problem is that some countries are not yet prepared to benefit from globalization. They need more globalization, deeper integration into the world economy. Once this happens, these countries will become “developed.”

Mainstream critiques of globalization are often equally unsophisticated. Protectionists suggest that not everyone can consume like Western-developed countries and thus it is probably better not to extend “development” to the rest of the world. Others take a more xenophobic approach, arguing that globalization-as-immigration is undermining the high paying nature of “our” jobs while cheap imports are destroying US industries.

Chomsky takes a different approach, suggesting first that “economic integration among regions is in fact the *cause* of the regional inequalities that characterize the world today” (3). By its very nature, this approach is a historical one that explores how processes of industrialization create regional inequalities to allow capitalists and their allies to strengthen control over labor. “Producers have used two basic methods to do this: bringing workers from poor regions to the site of production, and moving the site of production to where poorer workers are available. That is, immigration and capital flight” (3).

Put another way, globalization is less about nations, cultural flows, information technologies, and the internet than it is about capital’s search for cheap labor and workers’ attempts to forge democratic movements that “challenge the ability of capitalism to foster the social inequality it thrives on.” It is the nature and outcomes of these struggles that drive globalization and are the focus of *Linked Labor Histories*.

The book itself is structured around three themes (migration, labor-management collaboration, and global economic restructuring) and two case studies, with the first part exploring the New England textile industry and the latter half looking at labor and violence in Colombia. At first, the juxtaposition of New England and Colombia may seem odd, but Chomsky connects them both conceptually and in concrete ways. New England represents the birthplace of globalization. The region’s textile industry was among the first to face the challenges we now associate with late twentieth-century globalization, namely capital’s search for cheaper conditions of production that would eventually see the textile industry move to the American South and then outside the US altogether. Immigrant workers in this industry struggled to organize under the constant threat of capital flight long before the word globalization put a name to the process. By contrast, Colombia, represents perhaps the worst that globalization has to offer as workers struggle against disinvestment, job loss, and paramilitary terror. “In both cases, control of labor forged a favorable climate that made these regions magnets for investment, and workers struggled to preserve their jobs while imagining that another world is possible” (6). More concretely, as Chomsky shows throughout

the book, the two regions are connected by the flow of products, ideas, people, and organizations.

The first chapter explores the fascinating history of the Draper Loom Corporation, the largest supplier of textile machinery for the global textile industry. The company's history provides a wonderful window into global capitalism. It was a major force in driving European immigration into New England; in creating the southern US textile industry and Latin America's textile industry; in dramatically increasing the productive capacities of the industry while de-skilling and reducing the hours of work; and in devising strategies for controlling labor.

Chapter two focuses on a textile factory, one of the largest in New England, and turns more explicitly to the rise of labor militancy among a largely immigrant labor force in the context of the first major wave of deindustrialization in the United States. It is an amazingly rich history that demonstrates how workers can successfully organize even under the threat of capital flight. Chapters three and four then deepen the discussion of how regional inequalities are produced and used to control labor forces.

Part II turns to Colombia and the flip side of globalization. New England was ultimately about deindustrialization and the departure of capital from a region that had once been an industrial center. Colombia, by contrast, is the place where capital goes; or rather, where domestic elites try to attract capital by creating a neo-liberal dream: "an ample supply of very poor migrant workers, virtually no government regulations or taxes; and ready access to military force to crush any kind of protest." Chapters five through seven show us how a "favorable investment climate" is created (and what this means for workers) by looking at the banana and coal industries as well as the broader roles of the US government, US companies, and even the AFL-CIO.

By looking at globalization from the perspective of labor history, and labor history through the lens of globalization, Aviva Chomsky transforms our understanding of both. The result is not only a wonderfully rich and detailed look at particular times and places, but a path-breaking study that forces us to rethink how we understand the Americas as a whole. Students, scholars, labor leaders, and activists should all read this compelling book.

Steve Striffler

University of New Orleans