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## Southern Struggles: The Southern Labor Movement and the Civil Rights Struggle

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exchange rate change is cyclical or trend. A cyclical appreciation increases job destruction, but not job creation, leading to net employment loss, while a trend appreciation increases both job creation and job destruction, not net employment change. In the second part of the book, the authors use what they refer to as case study analysis to examine the effect of NAFTA on three industries—textile and apparel, chemicals, and automobiles—in which there is strong international competition and a substantial reallocation of bilateral trade toward Mexico. Despite the expectation of substantial trade effects, they find little evidence of a strong impact on job reallocation.

The authors are much less compelling when they move away from data-driven analysis and toward policy recommendations that are not based on their empirical research. While they make a strong case that analysis should focus on job reallocation rather than net employment change, they unfortunately feel compelled to go further. In particular, although they find that changes in the real exchange rate can have substantial adjustment costs, they warn against both exchange rate management and industrial policy. Surprisingly, given the empirical nature of the book, this conclusion is not based on any evidence derived from their analysis, but rather on a review of the literature and economic principles. Similarly, their recommendations to invest in worker assistance programs—both because they may help workers, and because they may help generate political support for necessary trade-related adjustments—while intuitively appealing, are not empirically based. Indeed, the rationale relies on related work by Lori Kletzer in this Upjohn series of books (*Imports, Exports, and Jobs: What Does Trade Mean for Employment and Job Loss?*, 2002), which is based on data that are inappropriate for the analysis.

Assembling the right set of empirical evidence is a daunting task, and the authors have clearly put Herculean effort into creating a very detailed industry-level dataset on international trade and job reallocation. Yet, as always, the devil is in the details, and the reader is left with a number of disappointments. In particular, probably because of the compelling policy interest in the topic, the authors oversell their results by overstating their policy relevance, and this detracts from the solid quantitative analysis.

First, and most obviously, the empirical analysis covers data more than a decade old (the period ends in 1993), which reduces its policy

relevance. Second, the authors only examine the manufacturing sector, which accounts for less than 13% of employment. Since many of the gains from trade are likely to occur in the service sector—which is where the United States has a strong comparative advantage—the analysis is necessarily limited. Imagine a similar analysis of the effects of international trade that focused only on the U.S. agricultural sector over the past 100 years!

Finally, as noted above, the authors make a number of statements about the effects of job destruction on workers without adequate empirical support. Their establishment-based dataset's detailed information on establishment-level employment permits the calculation of job creation and destruction, but does not reveal the associated worker flows, so there simply is no information about what happens to workers who work for firms either adversely or positively affected by trade. Relying on the Kletzer work is similarly inappropriate, because that research is based on worker-based surveys providing information about workers but little information about the firms that employ them. Identifying the effects of international trade and job reallocation on workers requires linked employer-employee data, which are not used in the analysis (although, to be fair, the authors note the need for such data to further advance the literature).

Overall, however, the quality of the empirical work makes this book a useful read. It is well documented, well written, and obviously very timely. The Upjohn Institute has done both the policy community and the academic community a service by publishing it.

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## History

*Southern Struggles: The Southern Labor Movement and the Civil Rights Struggle.* By John A. Salmond. Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2004. xiv, 212 pp. ISBN 0-8130-2703-9, \$55.00 (cloth).

*Southern Struggles* wears its heart on its sleeve. It identifies with the courageous attempts of southern textile workers to organize unions in

the 1930s and with the brave efforts of freedom workers to achieve civil rights in the 1960s. Salmond has previously published monographs that examined separately these challenges to the southern ruling class. Now, in the twilight of his career, he considers them in tandem, trying to draw out the “grim continuity between the drive of white textile workers for economic justice and that of black southerners for racial equality” (p. xi). But *Southern Struggles* is more than a culmination, an effort to find a common thread in prior work that has ranged widely, from the Loray Mill strike in Gastonia in 1929 to the black freedom struggles of the 1960s. As the author acknowledges, it is more personal than that. The book is suffused with the lessons of the social gospel Salmond learned from his father, a Presbyterian minister. It is the story of bold, dignified, and committed textile and civil rights workers who, like Christ, defied the powers that be and suffered, sometimes paying with their lives, for economic and political justice.

Salmond argues that the struggles for textile unionism and civil rights in the South had much in common. First, they each had to face determined opposition from the southern ruling class. Large landowners, educated professionals, and local capitalists in the South fiercely resisted any challenge from below, whether this came from white textile workers or black sharecroppers. Second, the struggles for textile unionism and civil rights depended on the emergence of local leaders. Such leaders often displayed uncommon courage by taking activists into their homes, creating local networks of support, hosting meetings, and risking reprisals. For every Crystal Lee Jordan, a mill worker who helped successfully organize a plant in the viciously antiunion J.P. Stevens chain, there was a Fannie Lou Hamer, a poor sharecropper who became a civil rights activist.

Third, both movements were infused with Christianity, using “the message, the imagery, the rhetoric and the cadences of the scriptures ... in the advocacy of their causes” (p. 78). Both union and civil rights activists often referred to Biblical stories of deliverance in an effort to identify their movements with the Christian faith of their rank and file. While differences certainly existed—unionists were often denied use of local churches while such churches were frequently the physical center of civil rights activity—both movements sought inspiration in Christianity.

Fourth, both union and civil rights organizers were often accused of being outside agitators who came to foment trouble and inflict

humiliation upon a South they did not appreciate or understand. Union organizers from the North who were sent down to organize textile workers in the 1930s were the equivalent of Freedom Summer volunteers who went south to register black voters in the 1960s. Both were charged with being carpetbaggers who were unfamiliar with the region’s folkways, intending to exploit for their own selfish ends those they ostensibly came to help.

Fifth, the histories of textile unionism and civil rights conjoin in the savage reprisals each movement suffered at the hands of vigilantes and police. Local deputies and vigilantes kidnapped and beat textile union organizers with impunity in the 1930s, just like the thrashings endured by civil rights workers thirty years later. And both movements had their share of martyrs. In Honea Path, South Carolina, police killed seven striking textile workers in 1934. Thirty-four years later and 150 miles south, police in South Carolina again opened fire on an unarmed crowd, killing four black civil rights protesters in what came to be known as the Orangeburg Massacre. Intimidation could also take more subtle forms than murder and violence. Both trade union and civil rights supporters had to endure economic reprisals that included the destruction of black churches and union property, the withholding of credit and supplies, and the loss of jobs and customers. In addition, those genteel whites who betrayed their race and class to show support for trade unionism or civil rights were shunned until the social pressure became so great that many just left the region altogether.

Finally, both textile unionism and civil rights found partial and belated success once the federal government intervened. Federal law protected the right of textile workers to join a union just as it eventually came to protect the right of southern blacks to vote. Some progress on both fronts occurred, but not as much as advocates had hoped. Translating the law into practice was constrained by southern intransigence and federal indifference.

The parallels between the two struggles are evocative and nicely drawn by Salmond. But the book could have profited from tighter editing, as sometimes the same quotes and examples that appear in one chapter reappear in another. More important, Salmond is honest enough to acknowledge that an unpleasant irony hovers over the book. For all that the two movements had in common, southern textile workers and blacks “were enemies to each other, and this was the greatest tragedy of all” (p. 7). Southern

textile workers were adamant about keeping their industry lily-white, and in the 1960s their local unions often advocated massive resistance strategies to prevent blacks from asserting their civil rights. Given this central, uncomfortable fact, one is not sure how meaningful the similarities are that Salmond draws between the two movements. The problem is not that Salmond avoids this awkward circumstance but he never addresses it fully either.

Finally, there is another irony that haunts the book if one extends Salmond's time span. In each instance, success proved to be hollow or quite different from what the protagonists expected. In the case of textile unionism, the unions finally managed to get a toehold only when the industry began to contract and shed jobs. In the case of civil rights, black voter registration created a realignment that only reproduced the South's conservatism in the new, more powerful form of a resurgent Republican Party. The fruits of victory have been bittersweet for both movements.

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*Corruption and Reform in the Teamsters Union.* By David Witwer. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2003. 298 pp. ISBN 0-252-02825-2, \$39.95 (cloth).

Arguably no union in the second half of the twentieth century more completely captured the public imagination and shaped the way organized labor as a whole was perceived by Americans than the International Brotherhood of Teamsters. The testimony of Teamster leaders Dave Beck and Jimmy Hoffa before the McClellan committee hearings on union corruption captivated television viewers and crystallized anti-union sentiment in the 1950s. Hoffa's legendary battles with Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy provided front page copy for newspapers in the 1960s. The mystery surrounding Hoffa's probable murder at the hands of organized crime figures has engrossed Americans ever since his disappearance in 1975. And the struggle to reform the Teamsters, which saw reformer Ron Carey briefly rise to power within the union before the old guard reconsolidated its control behind Jimmy Hoffa's son, provided perhaps labor's most compelling drama in the 1990s.

Over the decades, the Teamsters became synonymous with labor corruption, and the union's public troubles energized a broad attack on organized labor, eroding its public approval ratings. Yet the headline-grabbing notoriety of the Teamsters consistently distorted perceptions of the union, fostering the notion that union corruption stemmed from the nefarious actions of criminally inclined union leaders and had little to do with the context that shaped labor-management relations in the trucking industry. Until now we have lacked a historical account that weighs all the factors that contributed to the Teamsters' long struggle with corruption—including not only the criminal bent of some key union leaders, but also the culture of collusion that pervaded the trucking industry, the structure of the Teamsters' union, and the role of the state. David Witwer, in this outstanding book, weighs these and other factors as he crafts a complex and compelling narrative history of Teamster corruption and reform efforts. The result is not only the definitive study of its subject, but one of the best volumes on any aspect of U.S. labor history to appear in recent years.

It is hard to decide which of the book's many strengths to single out for mention in a short review. Witwer's research, analysis, and writing all mesh smoothly to produce an unusually enlightening narrative. But three attributes of this book are especially worth noting.

The first is its broad historical perspective. Unlike previous explorations of Teamster scandals, this book does not confine itself to the exploits of Hoffa and Beck. Rather it traces the union's struggles with corruption to its formative years a century ago. It probes the nature of the teaming trade in the industrializing cities of that era, and contemplates both the problems and aspirations of teamsters and the competitive nature of the business they sought to organize. Witwer finds that as early as 1905 the Teamsters were under attack for corruption. But tellingly, he notes, employers initially deployed the term "corruption" to attack not organized crime's influence in the union but rather "the growing power of labor organizations" (22). Teaming trades employers were scarcely less corrupt than labor leaders in their industry—they regularly cut collusive deals with the union intended to undermine their competitors—but they feared the union's growing power, and they found that leveling public charges of corruption was an effective weapon against their labor adversary. Their attacks helped curb the Teamsters' use of sympathy strikes, which, thanks