

Finally, Jack Lewis embodied the family man who went to war. Through his letters, he constructed multiple identities — as a soldier, father, husband and son. His story reflects the ways in which mobilization was varied, uneven and unpredictable. He wrote lengthy letters once a week which were composed in a range of places and sites. Lewis used storytelling to make sense of his war and, like Bob Wilson, it was the domestic and home front for which he longed. The small details of the everyday life back home crossed time and distance in ways which gave him comfort in conditions of hardship.

The finest work in a field answers as well as raises significant issues. There are some further questions that the wonderful material and lively discussion in this book presents to us. The writing on emotions makes for a page-turning read, but love itself *as an emotion* — either as maternal love or matrimonial love — could have been further examined. The nature of the type of love letters written about here could have been conceptualized more fully and a distinction made between the different types of wartime love which is written about, lost or retrieved. The wider place of the expression of emotions in this society might have given a further context to understanding the separation of home and battlefield. Finally, what happens to love in the face of death? The type of death in war and the lack of a returned body effected patterns of love and loss, a point which may have been touched on to illuminate the specific nature of wartime emotions.

This book is a delight to read. It is beautifully illustrated with striking and carefully selected photographs. The stories are compelling. Through an astute and erudite reading, Montgomerie argues with flair for the ways in which letters consolidated relationships across distance. In doing so, she significantly contributes to our appreciation of the precarious survival of intimacy, love and emotional life during a time of death and destruction.

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*'Rats and Revolutionaries' The Labour Movement in Australia and New Zealand 1890–1940.* By James Bennett. University of Otago Press, Dunedin, 2004. 216 pp. NZ price: \$39.95. ISBN 1-877276-49-9.

IN THIS AMBITIOUS AND INNOVATIVE STUDY, James Bennett explores the rich vein of contact between the Australian and New Zealand labour movements in the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century. Bennett tells a little known but important story. Australian activists helped form New Zealand's seamen's and shearers' unions. Australian unionists assisted the early West Coast miners' unions. Before the 1890 Maritime Strike, trans-Tasman links between unions developed in several industries and trades. There was substantial trans-Tasman migration, particularly in the mass seasonal occupations — seafaring and waterfront work, shearing, meat slaughtering and mining. Compulsory arbitration, introduced by New Zealand's Liberal government in 1894, became the model for later Australian Acts.

Towards the end of the first decade of the twentieth century, reformism and arbitration were losing their shine in New Zealand. Militants and socialists began to question the capitalist order. In John A. Lee's colourful phrase, 'In those pre-1914 days, at every smoko, at every few minutes of idleness at the pit mouth . . . a grim dungareed orator mounted the soapbox to bless the coming socialist dawn'. Chances were this orator was Australian.

Australian agitators became prominent in the New Zealand labour movement. The miners Bob Semple, Bill Parry and Paddy Webb were leaders of the syndicalist 'Red' Federation of Labor. Webb's friend and fellow Victorian Michael Joseph Savage was the

Auckland chairman of the 'Red Feds' and secretary of the city's Socialist Party branch. Three gifted Australian propagandists — Henry Scott Bennett, Harry Holland and Bob Ross — helped spread the socialist message. Holland became leader of New Zealand's Parliamentary Labour Party in 1919, succeeding another Australian, Alfred Hindmarsh. When Labour finally won power in 1935, Savage became Prime Minister. Five of the 13-member cabinet were Australians — Savage, Semple, Parry, Webb and another miner, Mark Fagan.

The traffic was not all one way. J.C. Watson, who spent part of his early years in New Zealand, became Australia's first Federal Labor Prime Minister in 1904. Pat Hickey, another prominent 'Red Fed' leader, was an activist in both countries. Bob Heffron, a socialist miner who took part in the 1912 Waihi Strike, was ringbolted across the Tasman to evade conscription during World War II. He later became a Labor politician and Premier of New South Wales.

The orthodox view is that the trans-Tasman world of the nineteenth century ended in 1901 when the Australian federation was formed. Bennett shows this was not the case. There was much contact between the two labour movements before 1914 and links of moral and financial solidarity continued in several industries after the war.

Bennett quotes the Australian historian Judith Brett's observation that Australia and New Zealand have fixed their gaze firmly to the north 'with scarcely a sideways glance'. He relates his book to the wider comparative study 'Anzac Neighbours' being carried out by Philippa Mein Smith, Peter Hempenstall and Shaun Goldfinch. However, Bennett's theoretical tools are transnational rather than comparative. Between 1880 and 1914 socialist and radical ideas spread quickly around the world. Bennett shows that the influence of English Fabianism, North American Syndicalism and Soviet Communism in New Zealand was often mediated by Australian institutions and individuals.

This is not the first study of Australian and New Zealand labour issues. Eric Fry edited a book of essays, *Common Cause*, in 1986 and *Labour History* published a special issue on women and work in 1991. However, *Rats and Revolutionaries* is much more of a genuinely comparative work. While Bennett covers some well-trodden paths, his study contains a number of fresh insights. Particularly valuable for me were his chapters on compulsory arbitration, the militant upsurge before the First World War, the 'White Australia' and 'White New Zealand' policies and the debates about the 'Money Power' during the Great Depression.

Bennett says that because he is most concerned with transnational connections he has stressed the importance of understanding the dissident wing of the labour movement because it demonstrated an 'internationalist' dimension to its thinking. I understand his argument, but one of my criticisms is that he falls into a mistake common among labour historians of ignoring the moderate majority. In the nineteenth century, there were plenty of trans-Tasman connections between craft unions, too. These unions recognized each other's membership tickets and provided refuges for blacklisted activists from the other country. They supported each other's strikes financially and helped workers outside their own occupations. I was disappointed that Bennett relegated the Australian-born printer Tom Paul to a footnote. Paul was a leading moderate who played a key part in uniting New Zealand Labour's factions into a viable political party. He was also one of New Zealand's first labour historians.

Bennett's chapter on the conscription debates during the First World War ignores the impact of these debates on the formation of the New Zealand Labour Party. He also fails to point out that there was a well-organized system of sending young New Zealand men who opposed conscription to Australia. Bob Heffron is another curious omission from this book.

There are some errors in the book that should not have survived the editing process. Bennett says Jim Roberts was president of the New Zealand Labour Party from 1937 to

1958. However, his term ended in 1950. He says Rex Mason was excluded from the first Labour cabinet. In fact Mason was a senior minister in both the first and second Labour governments. He says Labour had only a one-seat majority after 1946. However, it held 42 seats to National's 38. Bennett claims that Savage's origins in Australia have been all but forgotten and cites the fruitless search by New Zealand historians for a memorial in Savage's Victorian birthplace, Benalla. However, Savage is now remembered in Benalla's Pioneer Museum and the Albury-Wodonga campus of La Trobe University hosts an annual lecture in Savage's honour. These criticisms aside, James Bennett's book is an excellent piece of scholarship. It deserves to be widely read.

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*Living in Utopia: New Zealand's Intentional Communities.* By Lucy Sargisson and Lyman Tower Sargent. Ashgate, Aldershot, Hants., 2004. 211 pp. UK price: £45.00. ISBN 0-7546-4224-0.

I CAN REMEMBER WALKING down Wanganui's Victoria Avenue with my mother 30-odd years ago and seeing a scruffy group of people standing outside a shop: women with long hair and flowery dresses that almost swept the ground; men with hair just as long, with beards, jeans and bare feet. I was wide-eyed; Mum was unimpressed. She muttered something like 'James K. Baxter and his bloody hippies from up the river', and dragged me across the road. I knew they were a bad lot: everyone said the Baxters were the worst family in our street. Years later I realized who Baxter and these people were. And I knew that he had nothing to do with the meanest kids on the block.

Communities such as those that formed around Baxter are the subjects of *Living in Utopia*. Lucy Sargisson and Lyman Tower Sargent have studied 'intentional communities' in New Zealand since the mid-1990s, including visiting and talking with people who have lived or still live in such places. There is a healthy literature on communities, and the authors lead us through various labels before settling on a 'simple and inclusive' working definition: 'intentional communities are groups of people who have chosen to live (and sometimes work) together for some common purpose . . . . Their *raison d'être* goes beyond tradition, personal relationships or family ties' (p.6.).

People form and join these communities to realize a desire for a better way of life — a utopia. That may be spiritual — the Centrepoin community (1978–2000) — or religious — the Bodhinyanarama Buddhist Monastery (1985–). It may be for environmental reasons, such as at Otamatea Ecovillage (1997–) or the communal organic farm of Gricklegrass (1973–). Other communities want a cooperative lifestyle: the separatist lesbian feminist community of Earthspirit (1985–); the Earthsong co-housing project (1995–). These three broad types of community form the core chapters, which outline their general elements and then give case studies: who founded the communities and when, how they operate, their aims.

Whatever their basis, these communities are, the authors argue, a search for utopia. New Zealand has more than its fair share of these 'concrete utopias'. Sargisson and Sargent believe that there are more intentional communities per capita here than elsewhere, including a high number that have survived for several decades. As well as discussing around 50 of New Zealand's intentional communities, the authors' aim is to explore the reasons why utopianism plays a 'central role' in New Zealand history.

Broad chronological chapters set the scene. Several special settlements were mooted or established in the nineteenth century, some of which had strong religious themes, including the Scots settlement at Waipu, and the Brethren 'Rootsites', based at Halcombe