

Arnaud Theurillat-Cloutier

Printemps de force: Une histoire engagée du mouvement étudiant au Québec (1958–2013)

Montreal: Lux, 2017. 496 pp.

In this book Arnaud Theurillat-Cloutier tells the story of Quebec's vibrant student movement. His effort is comprehensive and well-documented, supported by a long list of archives, interviews, government and media reports, and elaborate footnotes. This work complements and goes beyond previous manuscripts about Quebec's student movement that were based on limited sources, such as Marc Simard, *Histoire du mouvement étudiant québécois 1956–2013* (2013), or were limited to shorter time periods, such as Benoît Lacoursière, *Le mouvement étudiant au Québec de 1983 à 2006* (2006).

The introduction starts with the words “Un spectre hante le Québec” — referring to the 2012 student strike and popular uprising that became known as the Maple Spring. Theurillat-Cloutier asks and answers questions about the source of the movement's strength. The author makes clear that this is an “engaged” history, which he hopes can elicit action and responsibility towards the present and future. I had therefore expected—in the feminist tradition of engaged scholarship—the author to explain his own involvement from 2005 to 2012 in the student movement. Instead, the introduction shows, the author's theoretical analysis is based on Jean-Marc Piotte's division between two types of labour syndicalism: participation with the state (which the author sometimes refers to as “concertationniste”) versus contestation (or combative syndicalism). The distinction and application to student activism is well nuanced by Theurillat-Cloutier, who might have more clearly credited others (e.g. Lacoursière) who have previously applied it to the student movement. This introduction also clarifies the author's focus on the importance of national (read provincial) student unions. However, he has still allowed a great variety of historical and socio-political considerations and actors, including individual students and smaller student associations, to have a voice in his book and to claim their fair share of the credit.

The book is divided into six chapters, with an introduction and epilogue as book-ends. Each chapter covers a decade and begins with a socio-political summary of that decade, followed by a much more in-depth account. While at times this creates a sense of repetition and a chronology that is not always easy to follow, Theurillat-Cloutier compensates for this with a short conclusion at the end of each chapter wrapping up the main historical events in a more coherent chronological manner, and with a visual graph at the beginning of each chapter. The author's prose and an impressive level of detail—including photographs and long quotes—also enable the reader to become immersed in the debates and storytelling.

A concise chapter 1 continues the introduction's work of highlighting unexpected linkages to the past by focusing on the 1950s in Quebec: the role of progressive Catholic youth and a first, albeit unsuccessful, student strike in 1958 alongside heated labour strikes. Chapter 2 then hurls the reader into the fervour of Quebec's

Quiet Revolution, and covers the years 1961 to 1973. Student unions were invigorated by the new government and influenced by their French counterparts who saw students as young intellectual workers with a collective duty. Theurillat-Cloutier does not present an idealized image of the Sixties, but rather depicts an ambiguous relationship between civil society and the state flirting between participation and, then, contestation once government started to reveal its limitations as an ally.

Already in the Sixties we witness the conflict within the student movement between its centralizing tendencies and affinity groups. This is what left the first national student union, the *Union générale des étudiants du Québec* (UGEQ), with an ambivalent role during a 1968 student strike, and led to its ultimate demise. Yet the author argues that in the ashes of 1968 lay the traces of direct democracy through general assemblies that would characterize later periods of the movement. Theurillat-Cloutier ends the chapter with the fervent context of the late 1960s and early 1970s that would spur students to engage with combative syndicalism once again.

Chapter 3 focuses on the creation of the *Association nationale des étudiants et étudiantes du Québec* (ANEEQ). While it would follow in UGEQ's footsteps, it showed signs of being more of a unifying force when local campus—particularly regional CÉGEP—associations initiated the 1974 and 1978 strikes. This is no idealized vision of a decade either, as Theurillat-Cloutier shows us the continuing inner battles within ANEEQ and reveals the post-1978 disillusionment.

Chapter 4 documents how the market orientation of even the *Parti Québécois* government in the 1980s was accompanied by the creation of two new national concertationniste student associations, the *Rassemblement des associations universitaires étudiantes* (RAEU) and the *Fédération des associations collégiales du Québec* (FAECQ), organizations which ended up dissolving after they failed to participate in the successful 1986 strike to freeze tuition led by the ANEEQ. Nonetheless, the author notes, RAEU and FAECQ's lobbying led to legal changes (Law 32) that granted accredited student associations the collection of obligatory membership fees alongside guaranteed space on campus.

By chapter 5, we learn that in the neoliberal 1990s, the *Fédération étudiante universitaire du Québec* (FEUQ) and the *Fédération étudiante collégiale du Québec* (FECQ) took up where the previous concertationniste organizations left off. The ANEEQ dissolved after an unsuccessful strike against tuition increases, and was soon replaced by the *Mouvement pour le droit à l'éducation* (MDE). The latter spearheaded the 1996 student strike that froze tuition, yet FECQ and FEUQ's meetings with the government counteracted that gain as they would again in 2005, and the MDE's existence was short-lived.

Chapter 6 explains the anti-globalization and local political contexts that set the scene for the formation of the national student union in 2001, the *Association pour une solidarité syndicale étudiante* (ASSÉ), which emulated the basic structure of the ANEEQ. The author describes the ASSÉ's mobilization for the 2005 and 2007 strikes, filling a general gap in the literature around these strikes. The remainder (and bulk) of the chapter is dedicated to the lead-up and description of the 2012 Maple Spring, and the essential role therein of ASSÉ's pragmatic, combative syndicalism.

Here the author's reference to the ASSÉ as a feminist organization seems simplistic considering the feminist critiques of ASSÉ's structure and 'boys club' culture that he describes. In light of the author's in-depth attention to internal debates throughout the book, and a page dedicated to the 1969 Sir George Williams Affair, it is further disappointing that anti-racist and anti-colonial critiques, raised by ASSÉ's Social Struggles Committee, are here relegated to a footnote.

If in the epilogue the author underlines concerns that the post-2012 critiques of the ASSÉ are leading to the demise of an organization so central to the movement, his monograph inadvertently seems to reveal a slightly different thesis: that the complex critiques and tendencies within Quebec's combative syndicalist tradition have rendered it both fragile and strong.

Despite its inevitable omissions, including the lack of substantive explanation (beyond a footnote) of the functionalities of the financial aid system and of the general unlimited strikes referred to throughout, after reading this monograph one gains a deep understanding of the student movement and Quebec. A translation, should someone complete one, might need to clarify certain unexplained references to Quebec history. Within Quebec, the book provides an indispensable tool to student activists, and accomplishes its author's goal of inciting the reader to want to see, and even act upon, where this complex and fluctuating heritage will take us in the future.

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Kristina R. Llewellyn and Nicholas Ng-A-Fook, eds.

Oral History and Education: Theories, Dilemmas, and Practices

New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2017. 388 pp.

Oral History and Education is a comprehensive collection of articles outlining foundational concepts, emerging approaches, and ongoing debates about the uses of oral history in teaching and learning environments. Llewellyn and Ng-A-Fook's introduction grounds the importance of oral history in expanding and complicating teaching methodologies and creating accessible learning approaches in the twenty-first century. The editors situate oral history as a tool for transformation and one that must consider global contexts. They argue that oral history not only assists in the development of technical skills such as writing and research, but it can also challenge traditional pedagogical approaches and curriculum models. *Oral History and Education* ultimately seeks to uncover "the rich, democratizing potential of oral history for education" through critical exploration (5).

Divided into three thematic sections, the collection provides a vast array of content highlighting methodologies and new approaches for using oral history. Connecting foundational theoretical debates with newer digital technologies, the chapters in this collection situate both local and international contexts to include learning techniques