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Review of *The Revival of Labor Liberalism*. Andrew Battista. Reviewed by Larry Nackerud.

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the United Kingdom.

In Part III, Robert Chaskin extracts the lessons and key themes suggested by the six case studies and assess their overall contributions to theory and practice. The final chapter is written by both editors, and provides a framework for integrating future research, policy, and practice to more effectively fuse these often distinct “communities” with the purpose of facilitating action at both the organizational and systems levels. The editors reject the notion that the relationship between explanation (research) and change (action) is intrinsically dichotomous and instead argue that fostering a dialectical relationship among researchers, policymakers, managers, and practitioners can lead to inventive approaches to action and generate new questions and inquiry. While the editors acknowledge the complexities of cultivating interactions between diverse stakeholders with varying degrees of power, they view this as an opportunity to build relationships centered on shared core values such as the desire to improve the well-being of children and young people as illustrated in the six case studies.

The volume was ambitious in its scope and the case studies presented provide varying levels of usefulness for the intended audience of researchers, policymakers, practitioners, and advocates. The text is very relevant to child welfare researchers and policy students. The cross-cutting themes and lessons and the analysis of researcher roles, relationships, and engagement styles are valuable contributions to the research on cross-sectoral governance, which has up to this point largely ignored child welfare policy as a focus. The questions raised in the book’s introduction are also useful for guiding students in analyzing case studies generally, not only those included here.

Ann Reyes Robbins, University of Southern California

Andrew Battista, *The Revival of Labor Liberalism*. Champaign, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2008. \$45.00 hardcover.

In this book, Andrew Battista situates himself nicely in a long-standing academic dialogue. He makes four central claims in the book. One, the rise of unions and labor shaped the American political and social landscape. Second, the

labor-liberal alliance faded in the late 1960's and thereafter. Third, a slight resurgence of the labor-liberal alliance occurred in the last two decades. Fourth, he claims that an understanding of both the tension within the labor-liberal alliance in its modern structure and the tension between the labor-liberal alliance and the business-conservative alliance are essential for understanding present day American politics and society. The overarching argument put forth by Battista, and certainly one to engender further academic dialogue, is the belief that the ongoing decline of union density and fragmentation of liberalism must be abated if the labor-liberal coalition is ever to be fully restored.

Battista organizes his arguments within the three parts. In Part I, he deals with the rise and decline of the Labor-Liberal Coalition and includes a presentation of theoretical and historical background. In Part II, he provides case studies on the revival of the coalition and includes detailed case studies of the political organizations of the dissident unions such as the Progressive Alliance, Citizen Labor Energy Coalition and National Labor Committee). He also offers a careful analysis of the wings of the labor movement and dissident labor organizations such as the Democratic Agenda, the Economic Policy Institute and Jobs with Justice). Part III presents the conclusions and arguments about the central and interrelated uses of the book and speculates in future trends.

The book has several strengths. One major strength is the inclusion of a myriad of stated details, nuances, and future possibilities of the tension between the labor-liberal alliance and the business-conservative alliance. An additional strength is the author's historical understanding relayed to the reader of the political meanderings of the country since the decade of the 1960's. Another strength is the immediate applicability of the book and its contents to the policy and financial woes of the country in 2008. Battista convincingly discusses the relationship of the "regulatory state" with labor liberalism, but also fine-tunes the claim by describing fully the three traditions of liberalism and how they differ in their political strategies.

A weakness of the book is the assumed advanced expertise of the readers. The book is clearly not for the faint of heart. While Battista is digging deeply into an understanding of the

rise and fall of the labor—liberal coalition, he clearly anticipates an audience of readers with a solid foundation in political science, labor economics, and public policy. Academicians and advanced graduate students are the groups that come to mind. While I recommend the book—certainly anyone who lived through the last four or five decades and possesses a scholarly interest in American politics will find themselves informed—the aforementioned foundation of knowledge will be critical to partaking of the book and concluding that it was a “good read.”

Larry Nackerud, University of Georgia

Amilcar Moreira, *The Activation Dilemma: Reconciling the Fairness and Effectiveness of Minimum Income Schemes in Europe*. Bristol: Policy Press, 2008. \$110.00 hardcover.

Although the task of providing income support during times of hardship has traditionally been carried out by religious and charitable bodies, governments have become increasingly involved. The poor relief programs established by the municipal authorities in Northern Europe in the late medieval period were subsequently augmented by national programs such as the Elizabethan Poor Law in England. This statute formed the basis for many subsequent programs designed to provide a modicum of support to the poor and destitute. By the 20th century, these programs had become commonplace even though there were periods of retrenchment when benefits were restricted as well as periods of relative generosity when social assistance was more widely used.

The issues of equity and effectiveness have often been invoked by both the opponents and supporters of social assistance or “minimum income schemes” as the author of this interesting book, calls them. He points out that arguments about the alleged ineffectiveness of these programs and claims that they unfairly target benefits on indolent, undeserving claimants have been frequently invoked in recent years, and in some countries have legitimated the curtailment of these programs. On the other hand, social assistance has also been denounced