women that is described in the work of Mary Hawkesworth and other scholars. While many Western leaders promoted equal rights, other women outside the West did not accept such a platform, saying that they did not want equality with their oppressed and subjugated men folk. Goals clashed and differences abounded. More than that, there is ample testimony that at international meetings Western women were shocked at the honed political skills and solidarity displayed by non-Western delegations. Some of these histories, woven into Garner's story, would have given this book a more nuanced, fuller picture of NGO activism on global issues.

All this said, mini-biographies of interesting American and British characters – such as the American activist for disarmament in the 1920s and 1930s Laura Puffer Morgan, who learned about weaponry and military budgets – help make this an important work. Morgan disliked women's sentimentalism when it came to war and herself preferred facts and information. Both pro- and anti-war politicians admired her, and general staffs were said to read her reports on weapons and military spending. Other characters described by Garner toward the end of her story include Mildred Persinger and Elizabeth Palmer, whom she credits with supposedly making non-Western activists acceptable and effective. These tantalizing few sentences about individual Western activists suggest an unexplored world waiting for scholars in women's history, especially the great potential for more studies to create the truly global history of individuals and projects that women's activism deserves.

A social history of knowledge, volume II: from the *Encyclopédie* to Wikipedia

By Peter Burke. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2012. Pp. vii+359. Hardback £55.00, ISBN 978-0-745-65042-5; paperback £17.99, ISBN 978-0-745-65043-2.

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This is the second half of a project begun in 1998, when the early modern cultural historian Peter Burke agreed to deliver the first series of Vonhoff Lectures at the University of Groningen. The two volumes that emerged over the next dozen years cover the social history of 'knowledge production' in a relatively strict materialist sense of that phrase, from the invention of the printing press to the globalization of the Internet. The *de facto* object of inquiry in *A social history of knowledge* is the set of vehicles through which institutionalized knowledge is embodied, ranging from disciplined people to circulating artefacts. Burke's sense of 'institution' is relatively liberal. While he does not include the unrecorded dimensions of everyday life, he does include newspapers, catalogues, intelligence, propaganda, and anything that finds its way to the Internet. These are treated in a rather Foucauldian way as providing the conditions for the possibility of thought at various times and places. But Burke proceeds more as a genealogist than an archaeologist: his knowledge vehicles are associated with specific practices that themselves evolve in use.

Unsurprisingly, then, both volumes are organized on the basis of gerunds. In the first volume, which covered Gutenberg to Diderot, knowledge was subject to professing, establishing, locating, classifying, controlling, selling, acquiring, and (dis)trusting. In the second volume, which brings the story up to date, we find knowledge this time being subject to gathering, analysing, disseminating, employing, losing, and dividing. With its stress on gerunds, the logic of Burke's inquiry may be usefully compared with that of a work of similar scope and vintage: Lewis Pyenson and Susan Sheets-Pyenson's *Servants of nature: a history of scientific institutions, enterprises, and sensibilities* (1999). The Pyensons' gerunds have a more overtly philosophical and specifically Marxist flavour, so as to include participating, appropriating, believing, progressing, proclaiming, and relativizing. This points to a deeper difference in the conceptualization of the respective projects: the Pyensons are mainly interested in the materiality of knowledge as an ideological conduit, whereas Burke appears to take more seriously Marshall McLuhan's dictum that 'the medium is the message'. Thus, while the Pyensons conclude on the worry that the often violent modes of domination through which science advances is breeding an ideological backlash that may soon undermine the enterprise, Burke is much more sanguine, pointing to the rise of Wikipedia, its flaws notwithstanding, as marking a new, technologically driven era in the democratization of knowledge production.

In the first volume, Burke rather curiously justified the need for a 'social history of knowledge' in terms of the sheer growth of knowledge in recent

times having given the topic a visibility that it had previously lacked. The relevant analogues come from economic history: price history flourished with unprecedented levels of inflation in the 1920s, and demographic history with unprecedented levels of population growth in the 1960s. We should not forget that as early as the 1960s the mathematician-turned-science historian Derek de Solla Price had justified the need for 'scientometrics' on precisely those grounds, in the context of which he popularized the idea of 'Big science'. But Burke draws much less on this explicitly demographic precedent, with its image of 'massified' knowledge, than on the more fashionable notion of knowledge as being in constant circulation. While Foucault is the immediate source, Burke notes that Foucault's own source is the rash of '*recherches*' ('researches') that emerged around 1800, most notably the contrapuntal natural histories of Lamarck and Cuvier. In this context, 'research' means the gathering together of naturally centrifugal items – ideas, artefacts, specimens – into a unified whole all in one place: a book, an archive, a museum. Etymologically, 'research' is to 'to search again', suggesting that intellectual coherence results from identifying an overarching pattern, which is not the same as finding a universal law after the manner of Newtonian mechanics. In the former, the individual items of knowledge remain interesting in their own right by virtue of their role in some larger account of, say, evolutionary history; in the latter, the items matter simply as instances of an abstract principle, the truth of which is of ultimate concern.

Of course, encyclopaedias and libraries existed before modern times, but not in juxtaposition to the abstract conception of truth exemplified by mathematical physics, which until very recently has served as the gold standard of knowledge in virtually all fields of inquiry. Against the backdrop of this tension, many mediating practices arose in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, especially techniques for testing knowledge claims and authenticating items of knowledge, not to mention validating personal expertise. One must be true not only to one's place or self but also to principles to which everyone might be held accountable. Surprisingly, Burke does not avail himself of Theodore Porter's *Trust in numbers* (1996), which explores the relevance of this point to the legitimation of democratic institutions. Instead he focuses on the dialectic spawned by the tension with which we continue to struggle: on the one hand, improved transport has made it increasingly difficult to ignore the fact that people's knowledge bases overlap only partially; on the other, the quest for epistemic unity demands that people organize knowledge in roughly similar, or at least compatible, ways. The result has been an unprecedented increase in research and educational institutions alongside an equally unprecedented increase in the movement of people between them.

In keeping with his McLuhanesque subtext, however, Burke sees the triumph of computer-based information and communication technologies in the second half of the twentieth century as compelling a more efficient organization and management of this dialectic, one that in the long term may displace the global institutional authority of academia. As noted earlier, he appears sanguine at this prospect, much more impressed by the sheer scale of involvement and interactivity in Wikipedia than by the unrepresentativeness of its contributors vis-à-vis the run of humanity, let alone the run of experts. A telling detail is that when Burke points to the emergence of a 'fifth estate' in his conclusion, he means William Dutton's name for web-based knowledge providers rather than Sheila Jasanoff's name for scientists as policymakers. It is certainly refreshing to find someone as wise and learned as Peter Burke sharing an enthusiasm for the democratic potential for knowledge-based technologies that have only begun to alter the landscape of human relations. Only time will tell whether it proves predictive.

Black flame: the revolutionary class politics of anarchism and syndicalism. Counter-power volume 1

By Michael Schmidt and Lucien Van der Walt. Edinburgh and Oakland, CA: AK Press, 2009. Pp. 500. Paperback £18.00/US$22.50, ISBN 978-1-9048-5916-1.

Anarchism and syndicalism in the colonial and postcolonial world, 1870–1940: the praxis of national liberation, internationalism, and social revolution

By Steven Hirsch and Lucien van der Walt. Amsterdam: Brill Press, 2010. Pp. lxxiv+434. Hardback €109/ US$155, ISBN 978-9004188495.

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In 1919 Tom Barker landed on the Valparaiso waterfront after being deported from Australia for