

BOOKS

Reviews

Theoretical perspectives on work and the employment relationship.

Edited by Bruce E. KAUFMAN. Champaign, IL, Industrial Relations Research Association, 2004. x + 374 pp. Figures, tables, references. ISBN 0-913447-88-9.

Ever since the end of the Second World War, leading thinkers in the field of industrial relations have sought to develop an integrative theory – or at least an overarching conceptual framework – that would tie the disparate branches of this field together and guide empirical work and policy debate. In his preface, Kaufman argues that “[t]he intrinsic interest of this project arises from the fact that theorizing gets to the core of what science is about, and few subjects are as important or interesting for theorizing in the social sciences as work and employment”. As he also points out, however, another important aspect of the challenge is to stem “the long-term decline in the academic fortunes of industrial relations” that can be observed in many countries of the world, including the United States.

Several of the chapters in this book do indeed reflect serious concern over the future of industrial relations as a distinct discipline among the social sciences. And reading on, the uninitiated may begin to wonder about causes and effects on this particular point when it turns out that many of the contributors actually focus on the (individual) employment relationship. Reassuringly, however, one of the two chapters authored by Kaufman (“The employment relations system: A guide to theorizing”) concludes quite categorically from historical evidence that “the central construct and object of study in industrial relations is the employment relationship. To more accurately convey this subject domain, a good case can be made that a better name for the field is *employment relations*”.¹

The sense of consensus on this point is strengthened, *inter alia*, in the contribution by David Marsden of the London School of Economics, on “Workplace HRM strategies and labor institutions”. He argues that “the focus of both industrial relations and human resource management needs to be refocused around central features of the employment relationship, notably, the conditions that need to be satisfied for both firms and workers to benefit from this flexible framework for cooperation. The empirical impetus for this exercise stems from

¹ See also Bruce E. Kaufman: *The global evolution of industrial relations: Events, ideas and the IIRA* (Geneva, ILO, 2004). This important volume will be featured in the “Books” section of the next issue of the *International Labour Review* (Vol. 144, No. 3).

two sources. The first is the decline and reshaping of the collective representational institutions in labor markets, even in countries where they have until recently been strong, such as Germany, but also Japan and a number of other E.U. countries. The second is the increasing evidence that, just as there is no universal model of Taylorist organization, so now there is no universal pattern of high-performance work system. Indeed, recent research on workplace 'strategic human resource management' ... indicated an enduring diversity".

Marsden's concluding remarks tie in with his now familiar argument about the central role of four types of "work rules" that balance the limitation of management authority against organizational flexibility and, in doing so, determine the nature of employment relationships.² The four basic types of work rules are "the foundation of the different types of work systems associated with different models of strategic human resource management. This is because delimiting management authority shapes the workplace managerial hierarchy, performance management, jobs, skill formation, and the nature of interdependency among workers ... An important question remaining is the degree of influence exercised by these work rules on the evolution of patterns of HRM and on labor institutions more generally. Clearly, there are important historical influences, and the law and other social institutions can embody other principles of social and economic organization. It is also clear that the open-ended employment relationship is itself a historically contingent framework for economic cooperation".

Another good study in this volume – and there are many – is the one on "Work, employment and the individual", by Kevin Kelloway, Daniel Gallagher and Julian Barling. Here, the focus of inquiry is motivation. The basic question seems straightforward enough: What is it that makes people do what they do? But to answer it is not easy. Proceeding from Adam Smith's conceptualization of "economic man" and economic self-interest, the authors go on to examine and contrast definitions of "work" and "employment". "Economic motives do not provide an explanation of work and provide a limited explanation of employment. Individuals work outside the context of employment, and some forms of work may be most appropriately seen as discretionary behavior within the context of employment." (So-called knowledge work, they suggest, may be "principally defined as a discretionary behavior".) The question is then whether there exists a conceptual, theoretical framework capable of accommodating behaviour that simple economic return cannot account for. "It is possible for individuals to hold multiple, and conflicting, work values, and it is in the interplay of these values that individual motivations to work and to engage in employment are formed." ("Work values" are a product of socialization from early childhood onwards.)

There follows a short but fascinating chronological overview of the various motivation theories on offer. From the crude assumptions of the early twentieth century – e.g. that wage increases were a sufficient motivator to increase productivity – to the emergence of "job characteristics theory" in the late-1970s and subsequent developments up to the 1990s. Job characteristics theory holds that improved performance depends on the fulfilment of three psychological

² See, in particular, David Marsden: *A theory of employment systems: Micro-foundations of societal diversity*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1999. This book was featured in the *International Labour Review* (Geneva), Vol. 139 (2000), No. 2, pp. 213-227.

states – feelings of personal responsibility, the experience of meaningfulness, and knowledge of the results of one's performance – which, in turn, result from intrinsic job features (or "core job dimensions"). "Arguably the most successful motivation theory to date is goal-setting theory as explicated by Locke ...^[3] Goal-setting theory again emphasizes the intentionality of human behavior and is based on three central propositions: (a) specific goals lead to higher performance than do vague or abstract goals; (b) assuming goal commitment, harder goals lead to higher performance than do easier goals; and (c) monetary incentives, feedback, and participation serve to build commitment to goals but do not affect performance directly". Yet another tempting possibility is that people "become what they do", in a sense that makes them value what is obtainable and devalue whatever is (seems?) unobtainable. "Thus individuals in routine, repetitive work that offers none of the intrinsic features associated with good work ... may come to value the only rewards that are obtainable: salary increases or work hour decreases." In concluding their study, the authors suggest – very convincingly given the extensive literature they survey – "that the process of theory development has been specifically impeded by the failure to distinguish between the question of 'why people work' and 'why people are employed'".

The book's 11 chapters fully live up to the title's promise of "perspectives": the authors are from Australia, Canada, Germany, the United Kingdom and the United States, with academic backgrounds that include management departments, business schools, industrial relations departments, economics departments, and law schools. Ranging from the micro or individual level to the macro or national level, the chapter topics draw on fields such as organizational behaviour, human resource management, economics, sociology, comparative politics, and history. Given the remarkable quality of the contributions, every single chapter would have deserved at a least a brief presentation. Unfortunately, this could not be done here. Suffice it to say that readers with a research interest in industrial relations are unlikely to be disappointed by this book – especially if their interest extends to the micro-level workings that underpin collective employment relationships. But the book is also strongly recommended for readers from other disciplines and policy-research backgrounds: it is a truly outstanding investigation of the (changing) nature of work and employment.

Mark Lansky
International Labour Review

Recent books

Does "trickle down" work? Economic development strategies and job chains in local labour markets. By Joseph PERSKY, Daniel FELSENSTEIN and Virginia CARLSON. Kalamazoo, MI, W.E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research, 2004. Tables, figures, appendices, bibliography, index. ISBN 0-88099-308-1.

³ Edwin A. Locke: "Towards a theory of task motivation and incentives", in *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes* (San Diego, CA), Vol. 3 (1968), pp.157-189.

Local economic development programmes offer the promise of new jobs. Yet those examining the employment outcomes of such programmes are often confronted with many questions. Who got the new jobs? Wouldn't many of those workers be employed anyway? What are the overall benefits to the community? Do gains "trickle down" to those most in need? Because of the difficulty of evaluating the effects of local economic incentives, such questions are often left unanswered.

In an attempt to remedy this problem, this book explores a new framework for evaluating local-level and broader economic development efforts: the "job-chains approach". This method, the authors argue, clarifies the potential justifications for economic development subsidies as well as the limitations of such incentives. This innovative approach addresses not only the number of job vacancies created as a result of a subsidized business investment or expansion, but also the extent to which gains are achieved by the unemployed and the underemployed, whether skilled or unskilled.

Application of the authors' job-chains model leads to novel insights into local economic development evaluation and strategy. First, whereas standard evaluations focus exclusively on horizontal employment multipliers – i.e. increasing demand for locally produced goods and services – the job-chains model identifies the existence of vertical multipliers, i.e. links that work through vacancies created by job changers. Second, the job-chains model allows the authors to develop a technique for assessing the welfare value of employment creation. The mechanics of job chains result in this value spreading more rapidly across the local population than the original new jobs that created the chains. And third, the job-chains perspective affords new insights into labour market dynamics by introducing individual preferences and behavioural probabilities into job choice.

This book reflects the usual high standards of research and publishing one has come to associate with material from the W.E. Upjohn Institute. It is likely to be of interest to a variety of readers from the economic development community, including practitioners needing to assess the opportunities and constraints of subsidizing job creation, policy-makers concerned with targeting and people-based strategies, and researchers seeking a model for the study of trickle-down effects.

M. A. L.

La mondialisation: Origines, développements et effets. Third edition. Edited by James D. THWAITES. Quebec, Les Presses de l'Université Laval, 2004. xxii + 918 pp. Tables, figures. ISBN 2-7637-8121-7.

That this collection of contributions on globalization is now in its third edition testifies to the enduring significance of the editor's selection of material.⁴ Unfortunately, the book is available only in French, though English readers can sample its contents from back issues of the *International Labour Review*. Indeed, nearly half of the 42 chapters are reprints of articles that first appeared in this journal in the mid- to late-1990s. The contributors of these chapters include Louis Emmerij, Eddy Lee, Ajit Singh, David Greenaway, Chris Milner, Nicolas

⁴ The first edition was presented in the *International Labour Review*, Vol. 139 (2000), No. 4, pp. 511-512.

Valticos and many more. This third edition is slightly expanded, notably by the inclusion of a new chapter by Joseph E. Stiglitz on “Employment, social justice and societal well-being”, which was originally published in the *Review* in 2002 (Vol. 141, No. 1-2, pp. 9-29).

M. A. L.

The economics of sustainable development. Edited by Sisay ASEFA. Kalamazoo, MI, W.E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research, 2005. vii + 191 pp. Tables, figures, index. ISBN 0-88099-320-0.

Sustainable development analysis differs from the standard economics of growth and development by incorporating natural resources as a form of “natural capital”, defined as the value of the existing stock of natural resources (e.g. forests, fisheries, water, mineral deposits and the general environment). In this book, selected dimensions of sustainability are explored on the understanding that such natural capital provides goods and services to people, just as do financial capital, manufactured capital and human capital (created by investment in education and health). And since the depletion of natural capital can be compensated for, in part, by investments in manufactured and human capital, an economy is understood to become unsustainable if it fails to reverse the depreciation of these three forms of capital. However, limited substitutability between natural and other forms of capital still makes it crucial to preserve the various forms of capital for future generations.

The environmental problems of developing countries are primarily driven by poverty, while those of wealthier countries are typically driven by affluence and overconsumption. Sustainability is thus a challenge that confronts all societies, albeit in different ways and for different reasons. Yet, as one of the contributors to this book points out, sustainable development is especially important for poor societies because they tend to be more heavily dependent upon natural resources. For example, an estimated 80 per cent of the trees that are felled in developing countries are cut down for use in cooking. Beyond such basic observations and patterns, however, one of the book’s main themes is that the challenge of promoting economic growth by maximizing its long-term net benefits to humankind while minimizing the net costs of environmental and natural resource degradation includes the challenge of correcting market failures and policy failures to that effect.

The six chapters that follow the editor’s introductory overview are based on papers originally presented at the fortieth annual Werner Sichel Economics Lecture-Seminar Series, organized by the Departments of Economics of Western Michigan University, with the sponsorship of the W.E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research. Specifically, the topics they take up are: neglected aspects of sustainability; inequality, conflict and war; scientific constraints on sustainable agriculture; the economics of population growth; property rights and environmental sustainability; and rural poverty and sustainable natural resource management. The overall result is a balanced demonstration that “while societies and economies face stiff challenges, the promotion of policies that enhance human liberty by investing in human capital, democratic institutions, and improved market performance can lift millions out of poverty to sustainable development”.

M. A. L.

Work behavior of the world's poor: Theory, evidence and policy.

By Mohammed SHARIF. Aldershot, Ashgate, 2003. xii + 180 pp.
Tables, figures, index. ISBN 0-7546-3066-8.

Up to 60 per cent of the world's working population may be supplying labour in a way that goes against conventional economic wisdom. Instead of a reservation wage below which they work less or not at all, their behaviour is conditioned by a subsistence wage below which they have to work *more* if they and their families are to meet their basic needs. And as wages decline further, their labour supply expands until they reach the limit of their physical endurance, at which point "they ... quit the labor market and become paupers". In short, Sharif argues, standard economic theory is wrong when it comes to the working poor, hence the misguided references to their "perverse" behaviour in the literature.

Readers of the *International Labour Review* may recall Mohammed Sharif's theoretical contribution entitled "Inverted 'S' – The complete neoclassical labour-supply function", published in 2000 (Vol. 139, No. 4, pp. 409-435). This article, reproduced from the *Review*, is one of the key chapters of the book which deepens the theoretical and analytical foundations of Sharif's work and gives substantial empirical support to his earlier findings. Other chapters include a behavioural analysis of the subsistence standard of living, a microeconomic analysis of poverty and the forward-falling labour supply function, and an investigation of the latter's implications for wage rigidity and unemployment.

M. A. L.

Workers and narratives of survival in Europe: The management of precariousness at the end of the twentieth century. Edited by Angela PROCOLI. Albany, NY, State University of New York Press, 2004. vii + 223 pp. Index. ISBN 0-7914-6085-1.

As the blurb on the back cover rightly announces, this book explores the growing problem of job insecurity in Europe. It looks at how people manage professional precariousness against the backdrop of the far-reaching social, economic and political changes of recent decades, including instability of the traditional family, the emergence of new forms of parenthood, economic globalization, the pressure of cultural standardization, and the breakdown of borders with the former Communist countries. In a broader sense, however, this is a book about the *meaning* of work.

Most of the book's nine chapters are revised versions of papers presented at the fifth and sixth meetings of the European Association of Social Anthropologists, in 1998 and 2000. The general methodology and analytical frameworks underlying the contributions may seem a little "soft" to readers more attuned to a world of hard data and quantitative economic analysis. But this certainly detracts nothing from the intrinsic merits of the qualitative case-study approach used in social anthropology to investigate the human-level workings of what statistics and economics can only capture in depersonalized terms. Indeed, while most of the people featured in these studies probably could be squeezed into neat analytical categories – e.g. unemployment, inactivity, informal self-

employment, etc. – the point here is to find out how they cope with the real-life implications of being in or out of those categories and how they construct identities in relation both to their own experience of work and to (often idealized) notions of work.

The topics of the case studies selected here include social capital in southern Spain, vocational training in France, entrepreneurial morality in Naples, productivity and the individual in eastern Europe, work and identity in a Polish community, and Russian-German immigrants in the German labour market. Another is Sophie Day's investigation of sex workers in London. This is unusual in that it is based on a sample of highly successful and affluent women: "sex workers reproduced relationships in which men could 'buy' two or more homes and 'consume' endless sexual fantasies while women had to please and flatter their men in order to get by". But the study's main strength lies in Day's exploration of the psycho-social coping mechanisms that the women resort to in countering the widespread stigma attached to their profession, notably through an ambivalent separation of self from the business of selling sex – one that can ultimately resolve into the type of borderline relationship referred to above. "Women continually refashion their views and activities in relation to changing circumstances; this particular example indicates that apparent successes came to be questioned over time, and artifice was dropped through the sharing of secrets."

From a different world altogether comes Richard-Michael Diedrich's study of masculinities in a Welsh mining community. Here, physically arduous wage employment continues to be "a crucial moment of identification" despite the fact that it has either virtually disappeared (in the coal industry) or been transformed by insecure, temporary employment and odd jobs in the informal economy. "When the mining and other heavy industries declined ... [t]he persistence of hegemonic masculinity was largely due to the influence of informal groups of men that formed the centers of power in their communities ... For some unemployed men, these groups were the most important space for the negotiation and affirmation of their gendered identities. For those unemployed men who were already categorized as possessing a subordinate masculinity, these powerful groups could be the reason for their exclusion."

In concluding this brief presentation, it would be a pity not to convey at least some flavour of the book's brilliant opening chapter – "The hazards of overemployment: What do chief executives and housewives have in common" – by Sandra Wallman: "The optimistic view is that full employment will come back when industry 'recovers', and all will be well when it does. This view neglects the fact that the massive economic growth that sustained full employment is more likely to have been an aberration of a couple of decades than the beginning of an endlessly progressive upward curve; it patronizes the many people whose experience of employment has been neither normal nor delightful; and it ignores the increase in popular criticism, even the rejection, of formal employment ... [S]ome among the registered unemployed are economically very active. A minority may be double-dealing to cheat the system, but most do not register their work as employment because it matches neither their own nor the bureaucrats' definition of what employment should be ... Inevitably, women figure importantly in this category. It is instructive that the justification for being registered while working is substantially the same as the reason for not being

registered when not working: in both cases the realities of economy and identity are outside the official system. The official categories are narrower than experience because the implications of 'employed' or 'unemployed' status depend on other things happening in people's lives."

Wallman suggests an interesting typology of profiles based on how an individual's time and identity are distributed between three spheres of personal involvement – namely, home/family, community, and formal employment.⁵ And a balance between the three, she argues, is the key not only to well-being but also to less hardship in the event of job loss. This, incidentally, is where "isolated housewives" (focused exclusively on the home/family sphere) are found to have quite a lot in common with "workaholic executives" (focused exclusively on the employment sphere) because of their loss of control over time and identity. The question of the huge difference in the social/economic valuation of these extreme behaviours is not addressed, however. In industrial welfare states, Wallman concludes, "the well-being of individuals or communities is limited more importantly by access to information and the control of time and identity than by any poverty of the industrial system".

M. A. L.

New ILO Publications

A global alliance against forced labour. Global Report under the Follow-up to the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work. Report of the Director-General. International Labour Conference, 93rd Session, 2005, Report I (B). Geneva, 2005. vi + 87 pp. Tables, figures, boxes. 35 Swiss francs. ISBN 92-2-115360-6.

This ground-breaking report is the most comprehensive account of forced labour to date. It provides the first global and regional estimates by an international organization of forced labour in the world today, including the overall number of people affected, the number of victims of trafficking and the profits made by the criminals exploiting trafficked workers. Based on these data, the report sheds new light on the gravity of the problem of forced labour. A dynamic picture emerges of three major categories of forced labour, namely: forced labour imposed by the State for economic, political or other purposes; forced labour linked to poverty and discrimination; and forced labour that arises from migration and trafficking of workers across the world, which is often associated with globalization.

The report provides clear evidence that the abolition of forced labour represents a challenge for virtually every country in the world – industrialized, transition and developing countries alike. It assesses national-level experience at taking up this challenge, with particular emphasis on the importance of sound laws and policies and their rigorous enforcement, as well as effective prevention

⁵ Conceptually, this brings to mind a very basic version of the "human capabilities approach" (see Martha Nussbaum: *Women and human development: The capabilities approach*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2000).

strategies. The report also reviews the actions against forced labour taken over the past four years by the ILO and its tripartite partners – governments, employers and workers. It calls for a new global alliance to relegate forced labour to history.

Promotional framework for occupational safety and health. International Labour Conference, 93rd Session, 2005, Report IV (2). Geneva, 2005. vii + 108 pp. 20 Swiss francs. ISBN 92-2-115367-3. ISSN 0074-6681.

At its 91st Session (2003), the International Labour Conference held a general discussion on an integrated approach to ILO standards and related activities in the area of occupational safety and health and the need for a global strategy. The Conference adopted conclusions providing for a new instrument which would establish a promotional framework in this area. In preparation for the first discussion of this question, scheduled for the 93rd Session of the Conference (2005), the Office drew up a preliminary report that was communicated to the governments of member States along with a questionnaire covering the issues discussed in the report.

The present volume, Report IV (2), was drawn up on the basis of the replies received. Following a short introductory section, the replies are consolidated into two categories, namely: general observations and replies to questions. The next section of the report contains the Office commentary on the replies received, and a closing section offers “proposed conclusions” on the possible structure and contents of a prospective Convention supplemented by a Recommendation. Indeed, the replies from governments and organizations of employers and workers indicate overwhelming support for the development and adoption of a new instrument in the area of occupational safety and health.

Reconciling work and family responsibilities: Practical ideas from global experience. By Catherine HEIN. Geneva, 2005. xv + 207 pp. Tables, figures, boxes, bibliography, annex, index. 35 Swiss francs. ISBN 92-2-115352-5.

This book presents concrete examples of what is being done in countries, communities and enterprises around the world in order to help workers to be better able to reconcile work and family responsibilities, such as caring for children and the elderly. The examples provide useful ideas for action by governments, employers’ and workers’ organizations, and civil society organizations.

Looking at evidence from a variety of countries, Hein first considers the social and economic reasons why intervention to reduce work–family conflict is in the interest of governments and the social partners. She then goes on to consider the wide range of national and community-level policies that can be adopted to that end, highlighting the role of government in setting the legislative and policy framework and in stimulating dialogue. A separate chapter is devoted to policies and practices for a family-friendly workplace.

Extensive information is provided on different kinds of care arrangements that have been used to help those with responsibility for children, the elderly, the sick and the handicapped to combine work with their caring responsibilities. Family-friendly working conditions are also considered, including various types

of leave entitlements – such as maternity leave, paternity leave and “carer’s leave” – and arrangements relating to working time and place of work, such as flexible scheduling, part-time work and teleworking.

Work in the fishing sector. International Labour Conference, 93rd Session, 2005, Report V (2A). Geneva, 2005. vi + 169 pp. List of abbreviations, appendices. 15 Swiss francs. ISBN 92-2-115371-1.

The preparation of a new ILO standard on work in the fishing sector was first discussed at the 92nd Session of the International Labour Conference (2004). Following that discussion, the International Labour Office prepared and communicated to the governments of member States a report containing a proposed Convention and a proposed Recommendation, based on the conclusions adopted by the Conference (for an outline of that report, see Vol. 143, No. 3, p. 288 of the *International Labour Review*). Governments were invited to send any amendments or comments they might wish to make by 15 November 2004 or indicate whether the proposed texts constituted a satisfactory basis for discussion by the Conference at its 93rd Session (2005).

The present volume, Report V (2A), which consolidates the replies received from governments, and employers’ and workers’ organizations, is divided into four sections. The first comprises general observations on the proposed texts. The second and third sections contain specific observations of the proposed Convention and proposed Recommendation. The fourth section contains the Office commentary on those observations and the views expressed at the Tripartite Meeting of Experts on the Fishing Sector in December 2004 whose report is reproduced in an appendix.

Youth: Pathways to decent work. Promoting youth employment – Tackling the challenge. International Labour Conference, 93rd Session, 2005, Report VI. Geneva, 2005. v + 98 pp. Boxes. 20 Swiss francs. ISBN 92-2-115373-8. ISSN 0074-6681.

The difference between the youth employment challenge and the general employment challenge is that helping young people to get the right start helps to ensure that they follow a pathway to decent work. The longer it takes them to get on that path – or if no such pathway exists – the more difficult the challenge becomes. Policies for youth must therefore focus on whatever it takes to support young women and men in effecting a successful transition from childhood and education to adulthood and work, from a solid education to real opportunities for decent jobs.

The ILO is playing a leading international role in this field within the framework of the United Nations’ Youth Employment Network and the 2002 General Assembly Resolution on “Promoting youth employment”. It is also committed to the Millennium Development Goals and, in particular, Goal 8 which targets the development and implementation of strategies for decent and productive work for youth, in collaboration with developing countries. In preparation for a general discussion on youth employment at the International Labour Conference in 2005, the Governing Body of the ILO also approved the holding of a Tripartite Meeting on Youth Employment: The Way Forward in

October 2004. This Meeting reviewed national policies and programmes aimed at encouraging the creation of quality jobs for young men and women. It also endeavoured to identify initial areas of agreement on the political, social and economic dimensions of this issue in order to provide “a framework for a more complete discussion of this issue at the International Labour Conference in June 2005, where more comprehensive conclusions will be decided”.

Accordingly, the present Conference report begins with a global overview of youth employment and the socio-economic factors that help or hinder young people seeking decent jobs. It discusses national-level initiatives, identifying key lessons for the formulation of successful policies and programmes. The report also illustrates ILO support to constituents in promoting decent work for young people, highlighting approaches and tools that have been or could be useful to constituents. Its closing chapter ends with a recapitulation of points for discussion at the Conference.