

REVIEWS

Bamber, G.J. and Lansbury, R.D. (eds) *International and comparative industrial relations* Allen and Unwin, 1987. Price not stated.

Given that there are almost as many books on comparative industrial relations as there are on golf, dieting and flyfishing, the appearance of yet another of this type will be received in some quarters with cries of anguish. Despite this the collection under review is not without a certain pedigree. It is the latest in a burgeoning and generally impressive series of books produced by members and associates of the University of New South Wales Industrial Relations Research Centre, and most of its contributors are well known members of the International Industrial Relations Association.

Following an introductory chapter by the editors which deals with the study of international and comparative industrial relations, the book is divided into three parts which focus upon English-speaking countries (Britain, USA, Canada, Australia), Continental European countries (Italy, France, West Germany, Sweden), and, of course, given a universal obsession with its supposedly harmonious, but increasingly fragile system of industrial relations, Japan. Each chapter follows a similar format, indeed four chapters begin with essentially the same sentence. It begins with a very brief outline of the structure and development of the country under discussion. This is followed by a more detailed consideration of the parties involved in industrial relations - unions, employers and governments, the key processes and bargaining relationships which have evolved, and issues of current importance. The appendix comprises some basic comparative economic and labour force data.

Undoubtedly the book has a number of merits. For those with limited time and prior knowledge there is just about enough information on the individual countries to enable the reader to gain a basic idea of how that country's system works, what it involves, and where it came from. Equally the individual chapters go some way towards demonstrating the tremendous variety of industrial relations practices and processes, and the inclusion of contextual material ought to act as sufficient warning to those who are looking overseas for easy solutions to complex domestic problems. Having said this the emphasis in the book is very definitely upon parties and processes. In some cases the contextual material is barely adequate and is unlikely to deter those whose business is one of raising false hopes and expectations through the pages of pop management journals, magazines and newspapers.

The main problem with the book, and the main criterion against which works of this type tend to be judged, is the approach which is taken to integrate and make sense of the separate contributions. One should not underestimate the difficulty of this task. Nevertheless it is hard to see how an introductory chapter on the study of comparative and international industrial relations and a limited amount of cross-referencing between the chapters will be sufficient to achieve these ends. The introductory chapter is both interesting and useful in itself. This is particularly true of the first few pages on international industrial relations, and doubtless will appeal to newcomers to the field. On the other hand the link between Chapter 1 and the rest of the book is rather tenuous to say

the least. Having introduced a number of theoretical approaches to the field of comparative industrial relations, it is not unreasonable to expect that the individual chapters will contain, at least, some theoretically informed discussion of industrial relations in the different countries. For some reason, however, the individual authors have chosen to ignore the framework set and questions raised in the first chapter. Instead, they have attempted to convey an understanding of the processes, institutions, and current issues in their own countries simply through description and the occasional cross-reference. In most cases this has been done quite well. Nevertheless, one can see many readers wondering why they were given an introductory chapter in the first place, and, more to the point, having some difficulty in drawing meaningful conclusions on the questions which this chapter raises.

Of course given the pace at which industrial relations structures and processes continue to change, there will always be a need for updates of this type. As a quick source of information for those with little prior knowledge, limited time, and who lack the inclination to analyse the international and comparative industrial relations scene in any real depth, Bamber and Lansbury's latest offering will be most useful.

J. Brocklesby
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Martin, John E. *Tatau Tatau - one big union altogether* New Zealand Worker's Union, 1987, 70 pp. Price not stated.

This short history of the early years of the New Zealand Shearers' Union (and the New Zealand Workers' Union) is a valuable addition to local trade union history. The author traces the development of the union from the first attempts in the 1870's to recover the losses in wages and conditions that had been suffered since the labour shortages of the previous decades.

The narrative fits the developments of union membership in to the broad pattern of New Zealand industrial relations. As the author shows, the task of creating a union of mobile rural workers posed different problems from that of urban unionisation. Not the least of these problems was the vulnerability of the shearing occupation to scab labour either from non-union workers or even from across the Tasman. In 1876, for instance, pastoralists in New Zealand actively organised to bring in shiploads of non-union shearers. It was the awareness of this inherent weakness that gave rise to the philosophy of a national, as opposed to a local, union structure. It may also have been a major cause of the early interest that the Union showed in recruiting Maori as well as Pakeha members. For example, in 1887 the Union (then a branch of the Australian body) decided to print several hundred copies of its rules in Maori.

The one big union concept caused problems for the Shearers and associated groups. With the establishment of the IC&A system the structure of unionism implicit in the Act did not fit the needs of the Shearers. As has been often noted, the IC&A system tended to foster small, locally oriented unions. In addition, the focus on unions as defined by industry cut across the attempts of the key shearers' group to unionise other rural and semi-rural workers. Although some groups did join the IC&A system, eventually the Shearers abandoned the system (1915) to operate under the pre-IC&A legislation.

Interestingly, the Union was strongly affected by the rise of syndicalist ideas in the decade before the First World War. The culmination of this movement in the strike of 1913, although it broke the main syndicalist force in New Zealand, appears to have helped spread radical unionism in the countryside. In the context of the decade before 1914, it is interesting to speculate how far the growing distrust of the IC&A system was fostered by the complexion of the Court under the guidance of Mr. Justice Sim (1907-1913). This

Judge appears to have interpreted the role of the Court and the Act in a much narrower legal spirit than that envisaged by Pember Reeves, the architect of the system.

Chapter 7 gives an account of the formation of the New Zealand Workers' Union in 1919-1920. The new Union was formed against the background of the end of the war-time boom, in which the Shearers had gained in common with other groups. After 1919, when the Shearers achieved an award of 30 shillings, the story is one of steady decline in earnings, a process which accelerated after the crash of 1929. The text concludes with a series of potted biographies of key union organisers.

The New Zealand Workers' Union are to be commended for their initiative in publishing this book. Let us look forward to a second volume bringing the story up to the period of recovery from the slump and the post-war era of full-employment.

P. Henderson
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Roth, Bert *Remedy for present evils: a history of the New Zealand Public Service Association from 1890* Wellington, NZPSA, 1987, xv and 320 pp. \$38.45.

For all the recent emphasis on cooperation and participation, labour relations remains an essentially cold hearted business. As such, it is not one to which public employees have, historically, been particularly well suited. There has been an historical tendency, among those drawn to public service, and particularly to the service of national governments in democratic societies, to be trusting employees almost to the point of naivete. They have been inclined to believe that their meritorious claims, presented reasonably and with restraint, would be recognized as such by the governing politicians. And, of course, that the latter would do the right thing by them.

There has been, too, in the minds of public employees and in the consciousness of the public at large, a blurring of the distinction between standing up for one's rights as a government employee, on the one hand, and disloyalty to one's country, on the other. The blurring of the line is most pronounced during times of national crisis, but it exists to some degree at all times. Private sector workers go out on strike, but government workers "hold the country to ransom."

This confusion has been routinely exploited by governments throughout the free world in their efforts to shame and condemn government employees for their protests. It is also under cover of this confusion that governments have consistently enacted legislation and installed labour relations machinery applicable to government employees far more restrictive than that applicable to private sector workers. Extraordinary loyalty has always been demanded of government employees by political leaders. Always expected, this loyalty has seldom been rewarded except under the "cold hearted" patronage system, and is often exploited. In difficult economic times, government employees have been routinely conscripted to lead the national sacrifice, either by giving up their jobs, or for the luckier ones, by working harder for less money. On occasion, when announced "tough measures" have in fact amounted to symbolic gestures, government employees have *been* the national sacrifice.

Periodic political denigration of public services, inspired by the economic gospel of the moment, is not unique to New Zealand. Nor is the abuse of public employees for political expedience. Both phenomena are common to the twentieth century histories of all Western democracies. The response of New Zealand government employees has not been different than elsewhere. Ultimately, disillusionment sets in, as they realize that, while they have been operating on the basis of mutual good faith, the politicians have been playing by more cynical and calculating rules. The anger and sense of betrayal gradually give way to a resolve to play by the same rules. Public servants become public employees. Staff associations become labour unions. Collective begging becomes

collective bargaining. "Dignified patience" gives way to industrial action. And, some would suggest, perhaps a healthier balance of power in government labour relations results.

All of these themes are, if not explicitly stated, certainly well documented in *Remedy for present evils*, Bert Roth's splendid history of the New Zealand Public Service Association. This is a valuable historical document. It is an instructive study of the evolution of a voluntary organization that will have value beyond labour relations. It is equally valuable as a study of the transition of an organization from staff association to industrial union. It is a major contribution to the literature on government labour relations. And it constitutes an important chapter in the twentieth century history of New Zealand as a democratic nation.

Remedy for present evils is a sympathetic treatment of the PSA, but it is also an honest one. The PSA is properly given credit for its many accomplishments and principled stands, and for leading the way on such issues as equal pay and equal opportunities for women. But its timidity on occasion, even on these key issues, is also detailed.

All the trials and tribulations common to developing unions are well documented: the young radicals becoming the old conservatives; the near loss of control over the subsidiary PSIS; the fears of staff control; the periodic insurgencies; the hesitancy on the first strike; and much more. Both the PSA leaders and the members emerge as heroes in Roth's book. The influence of key individuals, both elected officials and staff, throughout the history of the organization, is amply demonstrated. So too are their acts of courage. Some of these were grand displays and easily appreciated. Others are hidden in the text, and might easily be missed by the casual reader. But nobody who has been there can fail to appreciate the "puckering" associated with the first-time excusing of the Prime Minister and his official party from the 1947 annual convention as they were settling in for some paternalistic slumming with the delegates.

What shows through most clearly, however, is the gradual transformation of the membership over the years from faith and naivete, through disillusionment and anger, to cold-hearted resolve. Often dragged along by the leadership on broad societal issues, government employees are shown to have been ahead of their leadership, as often as not, in their willingness to take direct action on "bread and butter" issues in the years since they started playing by the same rules as the politicians.

Roth's book ends with the election of the Labour government in 1984. This is appropriate for a work of history. The difficult years encountered by the PSA and its members under the Lange government need to be assessed later with the same benefit of hindsight as Roth has been able to apply to the first seventy-five years.

Roth has produced a detailed, yet highly readable history of the PSA. If there is any criticism, it is that, particularly for the broader readership the book deserves beyond the labour relations community, a final chapter pulling together major trends, themes and turning points would have been a worthwhile addition. For example, the PSA's rejection in 1947 of compulsory membership is applauded as "wise." But the reader is not given the benefit of Roth's thinking on what adherence to the voluntary principle has contributed to the PSA's character or development. Still, in the final analysis, such deficiencies are mere venial sins of omission. *Remedy for present evils* deserves to be read and recognized as a major work of New Zealand labour history.

Ian McAndrew
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Aggarwal, Arjun P. *Sexual harassment in the workplace* Butterworths, Toronto & Vancouver, 1987. Price: NZ\$69.08

This book does not claim to be an academic analysis. Rather, it seems to have two major aims. First, it describes to the layperson in non-technical language the recent development of the legal situation in Canada as it relates to sexual harassment. This is simply defined as "any sexually-oriented practice that endangers an individual's continued employment, negatively affects his/her work performance, or undermines his/her sense of personal dignity" (p.1). Second, it suggests how victims, employers and unions can act to remedy particular and general situations in the current Canadian legal climate.

The merits of this book are that it is clearly written and intensively researched. It also demonstrates a great deal of common-sense in an area fraught with emotional controversy. In brief, it suggests that sexual harassment is a major problem in the workplace, particularly for women by nature of their "crowding" into the service and clerical sectors, usually under male supervision and management. However, only in the last decade, as social norms change and women increasingly enter the labour force, has it become a matter of public and legal concern.

The first part of the book demonstrates at length, through a detailed reference to case studies, how the courts have come to accept the illegality of all aspects of sexual harassment, initially with regard to its blackmail effects regarding employment and promotion, but also in relation to its creation of an unfavourable or "poisonous" atmosphere in which an employee might work. The illegal status of harassment in Canada was determined, first, by its gradual acceptance as a form of "sexual discrimination", and, latterly, in its own right. Throughout, the author suggests how the law takes into account the complexity of the issue where subjective perceptions, different characters of workplaces and changing social values and customs mean that "sexual harassment" cannot be neatly and universally identified. Essentially, it can be identified by the negative, though not necessarily vocal, response of the recipient to sexual overtures; it is the repetition of the latter which amounts to harassment.

The second part of the book describes reasons for, and ways in which, employers, unions and the victim might take remedial action. In the case of employers, the author demonstrates that there is a legal obligation in Canada on the employer to put a stop to such behaviour on the part of supervisors, co-employees and non-employees such as customers. Furthermore, he sets out a table of costs, including such items as turnover and stress expenses, suggesting that the employer has a strong financial motive to take action. Unions, he asserts, have always set out to help the disadvantaged (though industrial relations experts may take a different view); he claims they also have a legal obligation to protect the interest of an increasingly large part of their membership. For both the employer and union, he proposes useful and formal plans of action. For the victim, he clearly lists several courses of redress available in Canada, suggesting that costs need not be incurred and damages may be gained.

The problems with the work for the academic reader are that it tends to be merely a structured, albeit informative, narrative. It is also repetitive, verbose and even pedantic in parts. It takes a largely uncritical approach towards the law and, because there is no serious attempt at legal analysis, excerpts from case studies take on an anecdotal character. Nevertheless, it fulfils its own objectives and an investigation of the same issue in the New Zealand situation would be most welcome.

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Lewis, Christopher *Employee selection* Hutchinson, 1985.

Employee selection is part of "The Personnel Management Series", a collection of texts under the overall editorship of David Guest from the London School of Economics.

The volume has two basic sections - Section One, "The Nature of Recruitment and Selection: The Dilemmas and Controversies"; and Section Two, "Practices and Principles of Selection". The first section introduces the reader to a range of issues often ignored by the more superficial 'how to' texts with their narrowly prescriptive checklists and advice. The first chapter, "Solving Organisational Problems Through Recruitment and Selection," starts the book by addressing all the alternatives to recruitment and selection and so challenges the basic assumption of many texts who begin with the mechanics without considering whether recruitment selection is needed. The major strength of the first section is the treatment of measurement in selection. Chapter 3, "Selection - Art or Science?" deals simply but effectively with prediction, statistical methods and the role of human judgement. It encourages the reader to believe in predictability and the application of parts of the scientific method to selection. Chapter 4 is concerned with the nature and measurement of ability, interests and personality and for the newcomer to the field will raise a lot of interesting questions and give good operational definitions. The continuing question of the 'criterion' problem could have been addressed.

The second section of the book concerns "Practices and Principles of Selection". In addition to the familiar material on job analysis, generating candidates and interviews, there are three more innovative chapters. The section begins with a chapter on "Acquiring Training and Rewarding Recruitment and Selection Staff" - another example of taking stock before entering the mechanical steps in selection. The importance of tester training, interview training and the appraisal of line managers on their staff selection are developed and most welcome in such a text. A number of organisations overseas are moving to "Qualified Random Selection" and it is refreshing to see this and other more radical ideas included in the "Choosing Selection Methods" chapter. The final chapter, which insists on the importance of both validation and evaluation of the process, rounds the book off by returning to the organisational context of selection with which it began.

This is a thoroughly sensible book. It manages to ask discomfiting questions about what the reader is doing in the selection process and it also suggests some very practical ideas. The referencing is well done. It leads into a wealth of up-to-date practitioner material from their journals and the more accessible academic journals. It will be a starter into the area for personnel managers and industrial relations practitioners who wish to progress from the checklist stage to a selection activity based on the discussion of a range of sometimes difficult issues. It is written in a fresh and uncluttered style.

The text will be an entertaining quick read for those familiar with the mechanics of selection and some of the arguments. It is a useful text for University programmes introducing Human Resource Management studies to the thinkers about selection rather than role learning techniques. The major disadvantage of the volume is the \$39.99 price, for a 190 page text with large type and generous use of white space. For a segment of the size that Selection is in most programmes it is excessive - particularly as the £8.50 UK price is closer to NZ\$24.00.

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Campbell, Ian B. *Legislating for workplace hazards in New Zealand: overseas experience and our present and future needs* Massey University, 1987, 124 pp. Price: \$20.00 plus GST.

Ian Campbell has consistently called for consideration of the problem of industrial health and safety in New Zealand. This updated version of his book sets out the issues concerning industrial health and safety in a straightforward, well-argued manner, bringing together a good deal of the discussion and criticism of steps taken internationally and relating them to the New Zealand situation. Particular reference is made to the problems and limitations encountered in enforcement and assessment of the effectiveness of legislation both in terms of compliance and reduction of accident frequencies.

As Campbell points out, Government and industry in New Zealand have paid scant attention to industrial health and safety. In the early 1970's Great Britain, the United States and many European nations tackled this burgeoning problem by way of drastic revision and rationalisation of their legislation. Australia and Canada followed suit in the late 1970's. In contrast New Zealand directed its attention to compensation in the form of the Accident Compensation Act, which came into force in April 1974. New Zealand has subsequently failed to address the issue of its scattered and often ineffective legislation governing health and safety in the workplace. Easy access to compensation for workers has become an alternative to imposing safety standards on employers.

The issue of health and safety resurfaced in 1987 in the form of a voluntary Code of Practice (Department of Labour, 1987).¹ This Code was developed as the result of tripartite consultation between the Department of Labour, the New Zealand Employers Federation and the Federation of Labour, an approach strongly recommended by Campbell. Whilst codes of practice have been issued on previous occasions for certain sectors of industry, this new Code represents a novel attempt to standardise practices in all New Zealand places of work. The extent to which the Code will be adopted is still a matter for conjecture. In its present form it is little more than an addendum to the Factories and Commercial Premises Act 1981. The New Zealand Employers Federation has already issued an alternative code which waters down the provisions of the original, particularly the participative element. This supports Campbell's view that New Zealand employers are unenthusiastic about worker participation, which, he states:

...does not auger well for improving health and safety aspects of our workplaces (p101).

An area which might have borne closer examination in this volume is levies and ACC levies in particular. Brief comment only is made on the lack of success in varying levies to improve performance in the United States. ACC levies in New Zealand were drastically increased in 1987 causing employers to call for changes including variation according to performance and a reduction in their contribution to the cost of non-work related accidents. Failure to consider what employers see as their very real grievances in this area could lead to resistance to any future changes in health and safety legislation which could involve them in further heavy costs.

In addition to the co-operation and support of employers the relative strength of the trade union movement is a vital factor in the potential effectiveness of legislation. If, as Campbell indicates, we see an erosion of trade union power in the workplace similar to that experienced in Great Britain, then the impact of any legislation may well be reduced.

With regard to Campbell's recommendation that codes of practice are negotiated into awards and agreements, at present approximately 28 percent of firms are covered by health and safety clauses (McIntosh and Gurdon, 1986).² The chance of extending these to

¹ Department of Labour (1987) *Code of Practice for Health and Safety Representatives and Health and Safety Committees* Wellington, Department of Labour.

² McIntosh, Barbara and Gurdon, Michael A. (1986) Factors influencing health and safety performance in New Zealand *The journal of industrial relations* 8: 521-533.

include a code of practice in the 1987/88 wage round seems remote in the face of the new Labour Relations legislation and the present economic and political climate.

We can only hope that armed with the experience gained from health and safety legislation from around the world and the lessons and conclusions that Campbell draws from this in his book it is still possible to design for New Zealand what he describes as:

...a single safety and occupational health and safety statute, a community-wide representative commission and a unified, qualified and well-trained education and enforcement force,

providing a firm base for a

comprehensive and co-ordinated attack on all aspects of the problem (p105).

If the economic and other barriers to legislation can be overcome we could achieve not only a unique system of compensation but also a unique and effective system of accident prevention in industry and society in general. This book makes an excellent contribution to what must be an ongoing debate - it deserves to be read and taken into account on behalf of the working people of New Zealand.

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McLennan, Roy, Inkson, Kerr, Dakin, Stephen, Dewe, Philip, and Elkin, Graham *People and enterprises - human behaviour in New Zealand organisations* Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1987, 344 pp.

Organisations are central to our lives. We are born into, and grow up in, a wide range of social organisations, and it is through economic organisations that most of us derive our means of subsistence. Of pertinence to this journal, organisations are the media through which industrial relations are conducted. Given the centrality of organisations to the social life of all New Zealanders, the paucity of New Zealand texts in this area is a glaring omission, which is why I approached *People and enterprises* with some anticipation.

I shall evaluate this book from two perspectives. In the first place, it is a New Zealand text on organisational behaviour and is an alternative to the great plethora of imported (mostly U.S.) books. But it is not only a text about a particular social science sub-discipline and its subject matter. It also presents a theoretical account of the behaviour of people in organisations and so should be assessed on the validity of that account.

People and enterprises was written primarily as a textbook for New Zealand management students; i.e. those who are training to become managers, and who will have to deal with the practical realities of managing people in organisations. As a secondary audience, the book is also aimed at practising executives and the interested public. Its approach is descriptive (i.e. describes "what goes on" in New Zealand organisations), analytical (provides accounts of "why it goes on"), and normative (prescribes what action is required "...in order to better shape our organisations to our needs"). The focus of the book is on the subset of social organisations which provide goods and services within the formal economy, and within which people experience the institution of paid work. The authors use the value-laden term "enterprise" (sharing, as it does, its etymological roots with the work "entrepreneur") to refer to this type of organisation.

As a textbook, *People and enterprises* is very attractively laid out, with the text broken up by figures, evocative photographs, and exemplary case study extracts. The text itself is presented in very accessible language - there is no obfuscation here. The coverage of the

subject matter is wide, ranging from the features of paid work in New Zealand, through the nature of New Zealand organisations and the enterprise of management, to organisational change. Most welcome are chapters on two particularly disadvantaged groups in the New Zealand workforce, women and ethnic minorities. These chapters point to the structural disadvantages encountered by such groups at work, and suggest directions for possible affirmative action (e.g. through management practice). Although the theoretical constructs derive mainly from overseas, the text content is based exclusively on New Zealand case study materials, and the bibliography provides a comprehensive coverage of the New Zealand literature in this area.

In sum, a most absorbing text and a pleasure to read. No doubt it will form an indispensable part of introductory courses on organisational behaviour in New Zealand. However, I feel I must qualify my enthusiasm when I consider the theoretical account implicit in the book's approach.

The theory of human behaviour informing *People and enterprises* reflects the eclectic origins of the field of Organisational Behaviour. Four central themes can be identified here. Firstly, from Durkheim's sociology comes the notion of the organisation as an organism, a complex whole comprised of inter-dependent parts. Organisations require order and cohesion to be fully effective, according to this view, so "disintegrative" influences have to be avoided or managed. Such a view underlies the discussion of conflict within organisations (pp167-174), for example, as pathological and requiring resolution. Secondly, a psychologistic theme, derived from industrial psychology via the Human Relations Movement, can be discerned with a tendency towards individualistic interpretations of human behaviour (hence, an interest in the leadership qualities of management, and the psychology of entrepreneurs) and a concern with the needs of individuals in organisations. Thirdly, it is informed by a positivist approach to its practice:

As a discipline Organizational Behaviour involves the systematic, scientific study of people at work...It seeks to replace hunch-based or intuitive explanations about why people behave as they do in the workplace and what may be done about it, by the results of systematic, rigorous, scientific study, which analyses causes and effects (p38).

Finally, Organisational Behaviour, reflecting its growth as an applied discipline in the service of power, is an extremely pragmatic (one could even say entrepreneurial) enterprise:

Organisational Behaviour is 'about knowledge and action, about knowing and doing. It is about learning and practising, about conceptualising and behaving.' It is a way of thinking about problems of people at work in enterprises and formulating solutions to those problems. It is about acquiring knowledge about people at work in organisations and using that knowledge in some way" (Ibid).

The theory of Organisational Behaviour, which informs this book, is a theory of "enlightened management". It accepts the existing social order (and the structured inequalities therein) as a given, and seeks to optimise organisational performance within this. It is "enlightened" in that to achieve this end, the approach sets out to simultaneously resolve the problems of worker performance and job satisfaction. All the managerial tools, devised predominantly by enterprising social scientists, to facilitate this resolution are given an airing in the text, e.g. the "job dimensions" approach to work design, personnel selection techniques, worker motivation, quality circles, autonomous work groups, etc. The approach is based on the pious belief that the interests of all those with a stake in an enterprise, both employer and employee, can be harmonised.

This perspective stands in contrast to another, and I would argue more conceptually useful, tradition which locates organisations within their broader social context. This

latter tradition emphasises the *politics of work*, and seeks to analyse the inter-relationships between the nature of contemporary organisations and the structures of power and interest that exist within society. Some of the central concepts from this tradition are indeed introduced in the text (e.g. the notions of myth and ideology are discussed on pp148-149), but these are not developed in the analysis of organisational behaviour. While some radical perspectives are introduced (e.g. the brief reference to Harry Braverman on p74), again these form no part of the implicit theoretical framework. The limitations of this framework stem ultimately from its ideological nature. As Graeme Salaman has argued:³

A more critical analysis of the politics of work argues for the ideological nature of much that has passed for organisational analysis, seeing much conventional organisation theory, for example, as buttressing and mystifying existing inequalities and deprivations" (1980, pp12-13).

But perhaps I am expecting too much of an introductory text for potential managers. Its value lies not in its explanatory power, but in its panoramic exposition of a range of perspectives on organisations as social entities. The social dimension of organisations is all too often overlooked in the current milieu, dominated as it is by the impersonal rhetoric of rationalisation and economic restructuring.

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Junankar, P.N. (ed) *From school to unemployment? The labour market for young people* Basingstoke, Hampshire, Macmillan, 1987, xi and 310 p. Price \$68.95.

This book makes depressing reading, for three reasons. First, the topic is youth unemployment in Britain. In the mid-1980s 'unemployed' is the status of one in five British young people. Second, the treatment of the topic offers nothing new in the way of concepts or insights. Third, the documented research yields mainly negative indications for the policy options discussed.

The chapters of the volume are based on papers originally presented to the 'Young Persons Labour Market Conference' held at the Institute for Employment Research, University of Warwick, in 1984. The data presented are from the United Kingdom. Seven chapters of the volume are about the relative wages of young people. A particular concern is the examination of the thesis that the wages of young people relative to adults have a significant effect on the unemployment level of young people. Cases are made both pro and con over the several chapters. This reader's conclusion is that, in sum, the material presented offers no assurance that the thesis can be sustained for the labour market of the United Kingdom. The marshalled econometric analyses reveal a weak foundation for the policy option of attempting to reduce unemployment of young people by lowering their real wages.

In addition to the arrays of econometric analyses on this issue, there is one chapter about a trade union perspective on the issue of substitution of youth for adult labour. Substitution is considered in relation to factors such as relative skill and training requirements of jobs, and relative productivity of youth and adult workers.

Intervention by the British government in the youth labour market through subsidy schemes is evaluated in three chapters. In one job subsidy scheme, the Young Worker's

³ G. Salaman (1980) *The sociology of work: some themes and issues*. In G. Esland and G. Salaman (Eds.), *The politics of work and occupations* Milton Keynes, Open University Press.

Scheme, employers were paid a recruitment subsidy for each young person under 18 years. This was paid to the employers for 12 months, and irrespective of whether the employer's stock of labour was increased or even reduced. The conclusion of the evaluation is that 20 to 25 percent of the jobs so subsidised owed their existence to the scheme.

Another of these subsidy schemes, called the Youth Training Scheme, cost £1.1 billion over the two years 1983-4. And this came from the coffers of a government claiming commitment to reduced intervention in the labour market! The scheme was aimed at 16 and 17 year olds. (The school leaving age in Britain is 16 years.) The scheme operated for a year for each trainee/employee, and this included a minimum of 13 weeks off-the-job training. Did this intervention improve the chances of young people in the labour market or was it yet another 'holding pen', keeping some school-leavers out of the unemployment statistics? The conclusion of one chapter was that the job prospects of those completing the scheme was likely to be determined more by aggregate demand of the economy than by the merits or demerits of the scheme. As with the seemingly endless succession of youth training or employment schemes in this country, there are arguments that they serve the political imperatives of governments, or serve employers, more than they do the employment prospects of young people.

The limited value of this book is that of a cautionary guide to dead-end options for intervention in the youth labour market. The way out will not be found here.

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Book Reviews

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