

## Relations industrielles Industrial Relations



*Blue Collar World : Studies of the American Worker*, Arthur B. Shostok and William Gomberg, Prentice-Hall Inc., 1964. 616 pages.

Alan Barrett

Volume 21, numéro 4, 1966

Congrès de l'ICRRI - 1966  
1966 - CIRRI Annual Convention

URI : <https://id.erudit.org/iderudit/027747ar>  
DOI : <https://doi.org/10.7202/027747ar>

[Aller au sommaire du numéro](#)

Éditeur(s)

Département des relations industrielles de l'Université Laval

ISSN

0034-379X (imprimé)  
1703-8138 (numérique)

[Découvrir la revue](#)

Citer ce compte rendu

Barrett, A. (1966). Compte rendu de [*Blue Collar World : Studies of the American Worker*, Arthur B. Shostok and William Gomberg, Prentice-Hall Inc., 1964. 616 pages.] *Relations industrielles / Industrial Relations*, 21(4), 660–661.  
<https://doi.org/10.7202/027747ar>

souligne que pour la plupart des Américains, la libre concurrence est depuis longtemps un concept davantage politique qu'économique. Et il écrit finalement que l'action contre les combines est devenue une technique après avoir été une idéologie.

Au chapitre suivant, « The New Place of Business », Earl F. Cheit se demande pourquoi les dirigeants d'entreprise s'intéressent autant à la responsabilité sociale. Certains critiques prétendent qu'on n'a pas trouvé de substitut opératoire à la maximisation du profit au bénéfice des actionnaires; d'autres affirment que les dirigeants veulent légitimer leur pouvoir qui ne découle pas de la propriété par la responsabilité sociale.

Pour sa part Paul A. Samuelson, dans le chapitre six intitulé « Personal Freedoms and Economic Freedoms in the Mixed Economy », distingue deux notions de capitalisme, l'ancienne axée sur la maximisation du profit et la nouvelle « managerial capitalism ». L'auteur fait remarquer entre autres choses que le degré de concentration de la propriété parmi différentes corporations influence peu leur comportement.

Dans le dernier chapitre, on peut lire deux excellents textes: l'un de Philippe De Woot intitulé « The European Business » et l'autre de Gilbert M. Sauvage qui traite « The French Businessman in His Milieu ».

**Bertrand Belzile**

**The Nature of Human Conflict**, Edited by Elton B. McNeil, Prentice-Hall, Inc., Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1965. 315 pages.

A cursory examination of what is in fact a panoramic view by a number of social scientists of the problem of human conflict leads one to ask where the reader might want to focus his attention.

Here is a text that examines human conflict by applying the tools of knowledge derived from the social sciences in such a way as to focus the readers eye on the problem now with the telescope of the sociologist, now the anthropologist and now the economist, etc.

The series of essays form a whole if — viewing **a priori** the complexity of conflicts on the grand scale — one wishes to attempt to get to the bottom of it all. For it is clearly the editor's goal to put to work top social scientists in each of their respective disciplines and to treat a problem that heretofore has been insoluble, to say the

least. The attempt is fascinating, if perhaps a bit facile.

K. Boulding's article « The Economics of Conflicts » is perhaps the most interesting article for readers of this Journal and his usual livid mind explains with keen insight the conflict content of economics and focuses particularly on the content of the « rational » of conflict in labour-management relations.

Eaton B. McNeil has compiled a list of famous enough names and concentrated social science disciplines on the types of human conflict, that the book has at least the merit of demonstrating hope that the conflicts can be resolved when sufficient analysis are applied to their content.

In short, this is a text of the general reader variety, though the general reader might at least want to be a social scientist.

**Alan Barrett**

**Blue Collar World: Studies of the American Worker**, Arthur B. Shostak and William Gomberg, Prentice-Hall Inc., 1964. 616 pages.

The work presents a detailed examination of the style of life of America's blue-collar workers with a good deal of emphasis on family relationships and environments as well. The study is in fact a collection of some 61 essays by as many authors with the main emphasis being on the workers life outside of work.

Individual essays by sociologists, psychologists, psychiatrists and others on a wide variety of topics form the core of the work. A listing of some of the areas of study examined will indicate in a broad manner the scope of the work: Persistence and change in working; Class life style; The behavior and values of skilled workers; Middle-class misconceptions about lower-class families; Mental strain in the blue-collar family; Moral perspectives of blue-collar workers; The meaning of work...

A work designed perhaps more for the case of « personnel managers » than industrial relations people, the studies are of particular interest to those involved in sociology, psychology and social and public health work. For as the jacket suggests: « The volume includes studies from many disciplines and ranges widely over pre 8 a.m. and past 5 p.m. areas of working class life ».

In a sense the title of the work is perhaps a misnomer and its sub-title «*Studies of the American Worker*», more properly suits the ends that the book serves as the various studies transcend any specific work group.

To repeat, this is largely a text of psychological and sociological diagnostics, and its insights, especially in essays dealing with the family environment of workers, are largely of the «*popular psychology*» type and a number of them even border upon the melodramatic.

However, here and there, one finds essays of real substance and quality, such as the *essay on the meaning of work*, adjustment to retirement and adjustment of older workers to job displacement, that make the text readable and worthwhile.

Alan Barrett

#### **Consolidated Bargaining in California Construction:**

An appraisal of twenty-five years' experience. Gordon W. Bertram. Monograph Series: 12, Institute of Industrial Relations, University of California, Los Angeles, 1966. 259 pages.

The major theme of this study is an examination of the various facets of consolidated bargaining in California construction that is, those systems of regional bargaining covering large geographic and population areas. As noted by the author, the construction industry represents a significant sector in the State economy with over 300,000 employees and more than 30,000 contractors. Setting a conciliatory tone to the text by emphasizing the quality of the relationship between employers and unions to the one of «*comfortableness*», the author there sets about examining the multipant bargaining relationships under the existing six types of bargaining systems in California.

The types of agreements are worth noting: National Agreements, Multistate Agreements, Statewide Agreements, Regional Agreements, Metropolitan Agreements, Local Agreements.

Subsequent to an examination of regional bargaining and general contractor bargaining organizations, the characteristics of the basic trades involved in bargaining are examined, these include the ironworkers, the operating engineers, the piledrivers, the laborers, the teamsters and the carpenters. A chapter is then devoted to specialty trade bargaining.

After an analysis of the reasons for contractor and union support a long chapter of the work is devoted to the Hiring Hall and the New Legal Environment in the industry. An interesting resume of the legal status of the workers with regard to their preference in job referrals being based on the employment experience of the worker rather than on union membership status of the worker is followed by an analysis of Hiring Hall practices in the light of this new legal environment.

Wage structure and its determinants, labour mobility and the allocation of the labor force, unemployment and productivity, and wage determination in collective bargaining are the main aspects studied in detail from the labor economics point of view.

Unquestionably a work of high scholarship with meticulous care to detail, this study can be considered a classic in the field. Professor Bertram deserves high praise for a study that will interest all industrial relations practitioners as the study, in spite of the limited geographical application of any of its observations and insights, is a lesson in sound industrial relations research, particularly from the labor economics standpoint and it is perhaps here that the sub-title of the work: «*An appraisal of twenty-five years' experience*» takes on particular significance as the statistical data in the study is detailed back to 1940.

The text is charitably concluded by an excellent summary for readers interested in a less detailed examination of the work.

Alan Barrett

**Répartition fonctionnelle des revenus**, Gérald Marjion, Les Presses de l'Université de Montréal, 1965, 125 pages.

Chapitre I: La part des salaires dans le revenu national, 1910-1960

L'auteur retient le concept du revenu national au coût des facteurs qui représente du point de vue comptable la valeur des produits finals, valeur exempte de doubles emplois. La disponibilité des statistiques l'amène à accepter comme contenu de la masse salariale à la fois les salaires et les traitements. A la fin du premier chapitre, on peut lire qu'«*en période de récession ou de dépression... la part salariale s'accroît, dans un revenu diminué. Dans les phases ascendantes du cycle économique... il se produit un déclin de la part des salaires. Ces*