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*Employee Rights and Employer Wrongs: How to Identify Employee Abuse and How to Stand Up for Yourself*, by Suzanne Kleinberg and Michael Kreimeh, Thornhill, Ont.: Potential To Soar Publishing, 2011, 377 pp., ISBN: 978-0-9866-6842-5.

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[See table of contents](#)

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travail avec leurs responsabilités familiales, les maintenant ainsi dans un cercle vicieux de précarité. De plus, l'auteure permet aux lectrices et aux lecteurs de mieux saisir les dynamiques qui s'opèrent en ayant recours à une multitude de citations des participantes tout au long de l'ouvrage. Certaines personnes pourraient cependant être déçues parce que l'auteure fait souvent référence au rôle des réseaux dans le soutien personnel et dans l'accès à l'emploi mais qu'elle n'explore jamais en profondeur cet aspect. Néanmoins, cet ouvrage demeure très intéressant et porteur de réflexions fort pertinentes en matière d'inclusion sociale et économique de groupes historiquement désavantagés.

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### **Employee Rights and Employer Wrongs: How to Identify Employee Abuse and How to Stand Up for Yourself**

by Suzanne Kleinberg and Michael Kreimeh, Thornhill, Ont.: Potential To Soar Publishing, 2011, 377 pp., ISBN: 978-0-9866-6842-5.

Kleinberg and Kreiman's manual is about the federal and provincially-derived rights and responsibilities of employees and employers. The work is dichotomously structured to address the concerns of each party to the employment relationship. It places special emphasis on employee entitlements. The scope of this treatment includes remuneration, holidays and leave (e.g., maternity, paternity, adoption, and personal). Chapters consists of tables which straightforwardly lay out the provincial/territorial and Federal obligations of employers. Insofar as leave is concerned, accompanying text explains pay entitlements and other benefits associated with planned employee absence. For example, on the one hand, during maternity leave in some jurisdictions, employment insurance benefits can be paid for up to 15 weeks. On the other hand, paternity leave may cover part of a father's salary for up to 35 weeks.

In some cases employers may "provide a supplemental unemployment benefit plan that partially or wholly makes up the difference between EI maternity (and/or paternity) benefits and the workers salary" (p. 55).

For employers, the manual presents strategy concerning pay, drug and alcohol testing, and personal relationships within the workplace. These issues each have a privacy dimension that is controversial in Canada. The key legal elements of employee privacy address marital status, personal relationships in the workplace, monitoring of emails and internet use and drug testing. These matters are comprehensively dealt with. The authors conclude that employers cannot monitor the keystrokes of their employees whilst they are working; irrespective of whether they can justify such an intrusion on the grounds of improving organizational performance. Kleinberg and Kreimeh use case law to illustrate to employers what may constitute a privacy breach.

There are some weaknesses in the manual. For example, it would have been better if it had acknowledged upfront that any violations of the rights that are outlined by the federal and/or the respective provincial governments are considered anti-social behaviour on the part of the employer toward their employees. Notwithstanding this concern, a gap in the anti-social behaviour literature exists. To date, such material has mostly focused on the anti-social behaviours of employees and not employers. Kleinberg and Kreiman's manual does a solid job of addressing this omission. It acknowledges that employer conduct that intentionally breaches employee rights – and/or could reasonably be assessed as negatively impacting their well-being – can be viewed as anti-social. From a more critical perspective, Kleinberg and Kreiman have not adequately delineated anti-social behaviour as a concept. Doing so would have better helped the reader to get a sense of what is wrong with their workplace which, in turn, would have better

empowered them to hold their organization accountable.

A noticeable shortcoming of the manual is found in the section addressing workplace aggression. Here the book does not adequately stress the adverse impact that such behaviour may have on employees as well as other contextual elements. It does not highlight that workplace aggression is a growing social pandemic throughout the world. There is evidence that it lowers an employee's commitment to their organization which, in turn lessens their productivity. This problem is dealt with only superficially in the chapter

“Workplace Bullying/Mobbing.” The narrative here portrays bullying as repeated instances of aggressive behaviour. A better definition would have been “any behaviour that intentionally targets an individual, eliciting negative emotions in order to capitalize on them as a way to limit his/her options can be considered to be acts of aggression (see Einarsen, 2000; Einarsen

*et al.*, 2003).” Such acts may be circuitous in nature; making them difficult to define and/or pinpoint (Baron and Neuman, 1996). If the authors had discussed this view – and perhaps given examples of the range of disparate workplace behaviours that may be interpreted as aggressive – they would have produced a more sophisticated book.

Kleinberg and Kreiman's manual is highly readable. It clearly indicates how different Canadian jurisdictions deal with notions such as workplace equity and fairness. In so doing it highlights a comparative perspective on the interpretation of federal workplace law and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. The manual gives an all-encompassing notion that Canada is an egalitarian culture; and that this is desirable. In short, it is a quick ‘go to’ manual that educators, employees, and employers can use with ease and confidence.

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