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# The Global Evolution of Industrial Relations: Events, Ideas, and the IIRA.

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# The Global Evolution of Industrial Relations: Events, Ideas, and the IIRA.

**Keywords**

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## REVIEW SYMPOSIUM

*The Global Evolution of Industrial Relations:  
Events, Ideas, and the IIRA,*<sup>1</sup>  
by Bruce E. Kaufman

**Editor's Introduction by George R. Boyer\***

The past century has seen the rise and, in the United States and several other industrialized nations, the decline of the field of industrial relations. *The Global Evolution of Industrial Relations: Events, Ideas, and the IIRA*, by Bruce E. Kaufman, examines the field of industrial relations from its early twentieth century origins as "a strategy and set of tactics developed by social reformers" in the United States to keep the Labour Problem "from boiling over into destructive class struggle" through its globalization after the Second World War and up to its present period of decline. The study is comparative as well as historical, tracing the spread of industrial relations to the United Kingdom in the 1930s, to Australia, Canada, and New Zealand in the 1950s, and to continental Europe and the rest of the world after 1960. Along the way, Kaufman examines recent trends in industrial relations in North America, Europe, Asia, Af-

rica, and Latin America, and the important roles played by the ILO and the International Industrial Relations Association (IIRA). Finally, he addresses the decline in industrial relations in many industrialized nations and its vitality in several countries within the European Union. Kaufman concludes that the field "must have a future" because, without a program of industrial relations to "humanize, professionalize, democratize, stabilize and balance the labour market process and employment relationship," global capitalism could "turn dysfunctional and quite possibly self-destruct."

*The Global Evolution of Industrial Relations* is an important addition to the small but growing literature on the history of the field of industrial relations. Because of the breadth of the book, the editors of the *ILR Review* believe that it should be reviewed both by an industrial relations scholar and by a labor historian. We therefore invited John T. Delaney, Associate Dean for MBA Programs at the Eli Broad Graduate School of Management, Michigan State University, and Howell J. Harris, Professor of History at Durham University, to contribute reviews of the book. We express our appreciation to these critics for their excellent commentaries on an important book.

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## Comment by John T. Delaney

### The Flattening of Industrial Relations

In 1992, Francis Fukuyama created a stir with his book, *The End of History*. Time has shown that it was not the end. By contrast, Bruce Kaufman's book could have been titled *The End of Industrial Relations*, as the assessments, inferences, and conclusions suggest a bleak, if not dire, outlook for the future of the field.<sup>2</sup> To Kaufman's credit, he did not intend this, and even suggests some "rays of hope" (p. 629) for the field. But the facts speak for themselves, and Kaufman's comprehensive historical compilation and assessment of the field of industrial relations (IR) suggests that the end of the field as we have known it may be at hand.

My intention is not to attempt a close review of twelve chapters containing 631 pages of historical detail on the evolution and state of IR across the world. Moreover, readers familiar with Kaufman's work know that it tends to be dense—full of detail—and this book is no exception. Because the dense exposition defies succinct description, I provide a general overview of the book, outline some strengths and weaknesses, and offer observations about Kaufman's conclusions and the future of the field. Most of my discussion is concerned with the book's latter half, which focuses on IR's global expansion, current circumstances, and future prospects.

The book provides an expansive history of the field, extending Kaufman's other recent writing. It contends that IR emerged in the United States as John R. Commons and others articulated practical ideas for solving the vexing "labor problem" facing the country. In particular, the field's founders sought to identify ways to create

decent jobs, promote industrial peace, and allow American industry to prosper. Kaufman regards the field's origination in America as surprising, given that "the field's most towering intellectual work" (p. 586), the Webbs' *Industrial Democracy*, was British. The field developed an American character and flourished for five decades before descending to its current state.

IR did emerge in Britain and many other countries, albeit at a later date. Whenever and wherever the field emerged, however, it seemed to follow the same "inverted V"-shaped trajectory of growth followed by decline. In the United States, for example, after the field's early ideas were adopted as public policy and workers secured some protections at work—through laws and unions—difficulties and differences emerged. IR's hallmark "big tent" seemed no longer to cover important workplace subjects, such as human resource management (HRM), organizational behavior (OB), and important new areas such as negotiation and conflict management outside of union settings. This, inadvertently or by design, caused the field to become focused on labor-management relations at a time when global markets were beginning to erode the union power forged in the organizing battles of the 1930s. The net result was that by the 1980s it had become obvious that IR was in serious trouble as a field. It was no longer on the cutting edge of academic research, public policy, or solutions to perceived national problems. It no longer attracted the top university students. The field's leaders were decreasingly involved in major government reform efforts. As the union movement declined, IR followed in tandem. By the 1990s, IR programs began to close their doors and IR's professional organization in the United States was in serious decline. In such a

<sup>2</sup>Indeed, Robert Taylor (2005) titled his review of Kaufman's book "The End of Industrial Relations."

setting, predictions of the field's death were unsurprisingly frequent (see Purcell 1993; Roche 2000). If, at best, as Wood (2000:2) noted, "the trends of the past twenty years need not amount to the 'end of industrial relations,' they do expose weaknesses in its foundation."

Kaufman, whose *Origins and Evolution of the Field of Industrial Relations in the United States* (1993) earned him a Dr. Doom reputation among some, is well aware of these dire predictions and the field's weaknesses. He brings to this new book the same diligent approach that served him so well in the earlier one. *The Global Evolution of Industrial Relations* has three clear strengths. First, it is comprehensive. There can be no doubt that Kaufman has read and internalized virtually all of the field's early literature (at least that written in English) and that he has provided an excellent synthesis of the work. Moreover, because the economic roots of IR are strong, Kaufman's formidable knowledge of institutional economics ensures an accurate and measured assessment of the literature.

Second, the book uses history to place IR's key debates in perspective. For example, does IR encompass all aspects of the work relationship, or does it refer only to things unionized? This seemingly esoteric question is especially relevant to scholars today as they decide what to study and where to submit their research for publication. Are the thriving fields of negotiations and workplace justice part of IR, for example, or do they belong to some other discipline? Kaufman also addresses the field's largely unsuccessful quest for theory and its apparent second-class citizenship in comparison with the field of economics. He uses historical facts to trump some of IR's urban legends. For example, he points out that IR as a field grew because of private support from wealthy industrialists, not the rise of unions (p. 626). He also uses history to suggest an interesting hypothesis as to why the field did not originate in Britain: Sidney Webb needed to emphasize other areas of study as he sought to secure donations from the business sector to build the London School of Economics (pp. 178–

87). Interestingly, as Kaufman notes, "The central insight from the historical analysis in this volume is that the problem-solving approach of industrial relations narrowed both over time and as it moved outward to other countries" (p. 623). There is no single explanation for the narrowing, but its occurrence helped shape the current state of the field. A key implication of this, as articulated by Roche (2000), is that international descriptions of IR regimes are better characterized by contingency than convergence.

Third, Kaufman is true to the underlying values of the field. He is concerned about the role of equity at work and in society. He addresses the split between institutional labor economics (ILE) and personnel management (PM). He deals with the partisan political debates that have captured the field over time. He pays due notice to the tensions and frictions characterizing a field that bridges the interests of labor and capital. Whether Kaufman is a strict IR constructionist is unclear. That he knows the field's nature and development is unquestionable.

The book has two main limitations. First, the level of detail Kaufman provides on the history of IR in the United States, Britain, and Canada is not matched in his assessments of the field in other countries. While this gap probably does not affect Kaufman's conclusions about the state of the field in other nations, it generates an uneasy feeling about the field's situation outside of the big western English-speaking countries. Admittedly, this may be due to the lack of literature (especially English language literature) on IR in these nations. Whatever the cause, however, a consequence is that it is difficult for readers to assess the nature of the role played by the IIRA in promoting the field across the globe. In addition, the unevenness complicates predictions about the direction and future of the field outside the United States.

Second, I wonder whether one of the book's strengths is also a weakness. Specifically, the historical focus used by Kaufman to analyze IR may have unnecessarily restricted the analysis. Kaufman frames IR

issues in the classic manner used by the Wisconsin School, namely from the perspective of the “labor problem.” This approach gave the field a broad wake at its inception, but may be limiting when used to understand the field in other nations or in contemporary times. Admittedly, this may be an unfair criticism given Kaufman is providing a history of the field. But the approach seems to lead the analysis to standard IR solutions despite the fact that some of the most critical “labor problems” facing the United States (and the world) today seem to be resistant to those solutions. For example, globalization threatens to reduce the living standards in many traditionally well-off nations, even as it raises living standards in other parts of the world. How will the newly impoverished workers and the newly enriched ones react? What will each group expect and demand? One of IR’s problems is that the field has not tended to address these questions in anything other than standard ways—for example, by calling for collective action to level the playing field with employers. Perhaps because of familiarity with traditional IR approaches or sentimental attachment to unions, collective organization and bargaining are seen as *the* solution to every workplace problem. Although there is nothing wrong with collective bargaining, its ability to address problems is compromised in a global marketplace that keeps wages in competition. Industrial democracy may no longer be obtainable within plants or business units or firms operating in a competitive environment. Kaufman’s adoption of the standard analysis prevents him from contemplating nonstandard answers, such as the possibility that unionization and bargaining offer workers less protection than ever before (more on this below).

Kaufman’s book generates many ideas about the future. I hope it will stimulate a no-holds-barred debate. Partly as a result of its particular strengths and limitations, the book gives rise to at least four questions that need to be considered by the IR community. First, is the future of the field going to be determined by chance? One of

Kaufman’s insights was that IR advanced in no small part because of the idiosyncratic efforts of individuals—the great men and women of the field. If this is true, the field’s future will depend on whether Andy Stern proves to be this generation’s Walter Reuther and whether the titans of today’s wealthy industries, such as Gates, Buffett, and the Waltons, will support efforts to identify and promote ways to improve workers’ circumstances. Currently, the prospects for such positive developments appear remote. It may be that on this question, although the clock has not run out, the field’s luck has.

Second, will IR’s decline coincide with a result vindicating Karl Marx? Kaufman recognizes the important role that the writings of Marx played in the development of IR. Marx, he argues, along with the Webbs, had “unsurpassed influence” on the field of IR. But he views Marx’s influence as having been on the dark side: “his great influence was to present a vision of capitalist society so compellingly dire and dark that it moved the defenders of capitalism to mount a major counter-response” (p. 586). With the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and the general conclusion that communism failed, contemporary sentiment (academic and political) is that Marx was wrong. Ironically, the forces unleashed by globalization and technological advance may resurrect the question. Few have considered the possibility that today’s global economic developments could precipitate class warfare. Widening class divisions could become especially noticeable to those U.S. workers who, because of globalization, are made clearly and conspicuously less well off than were their parents and grandparents. This may not lead to an armed revolution, but it could lead to a political one. And it would be ironic indeed if a movement proving Marx right gathered force under the eyes of scholars and politicians who continued to discount him.

Third, does it matter that the number of IR scholars has sunk below critical mass and that remaining IR programs survive by emphasizing HRM? These are interrelated questions to the extent that student enroll-

ments drive the demand for IR faculty. As interest in unions and collective bargaining has declined, IR programs have survived in part by educating students interested in HRM. This strategy faces challenges from two trends—one business and one academic.

Over time, businesses have increasingly asked HRM recruits to have an understanding of business fundamentals; such knowledge is essential as HRM is expected to show evidence of a positive contribution to the bottom line. This trend has caused some employers to seek MBA students for HRM jobs. For IR programs to provide the education desired by recruiters, it is increasingly necessary to offer training in normal business subjects as well as specialized HRM courses. In turn, this blurs the line between IR programs and business programs. If universities choose to avoid redundancy in programs, it is more likely that an IR program will be sacrificed for the business school than the reverse. For IR programs to survive in this environment, they may need to operate as pseudo-business schools, with uncertain implications for the field. Will the field be affected, for example, if it is assumed some day that the School sponsoring this journal is Cornell's *de facto* undergraduate business school?

On the academic side, the field's cohort of scholars is breaking apart as job opportunities disappear. Jarley, Chandler, and Faulk (2001) examined publication patterns in leading IR journals and wondered whether "IR journals will continue to provide a venue for sustaining a coherent, cumulative literature that will distinguish the field from other areas" (p. 343). Essentially, "casual authorship" by individuals outside of IR appears to be coming to dominate IR journals. This both shapes and reflects the reduction of academic IR positions. As this occurs, IR becomes increasingly defined by non-IR scholars and the remaining bastions of the field become increasingly segregated. Shrinkage in the number of scholars dedicated specifically to IR cannot help the field, and reliance on HRM does not guarantee stabilization of that number.

Fourth, why is the field declining at a time when IR issues are growing in importance? The "labor problem" is at the heart of some of the most critical dilemmas facing the United States (and the world) today. For example, U.S. workers' adjustment to globalization is hindered by the lack of portability of pensions and health care. Issues of this kind are similar to those stressed by John R. Commons and his associates when the field of IR developed. Moreover, education and employment issues related to immigration are also important today and relevant to IR. Many factors can be cited as contributing to the current situation—the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks; the priorities of the Bush administration and the leadership in Congress; indifference by some employer groups; partisanship—but it is still odd that the field declines as its subject matter becomes more important. To some extent, members of the field are complicit in this problem. We have not advanced the issues in a way that has captured the public's imagination.

To some extent, the traditional approach in IR may be losing relevance (for a contrasting view, see Kochan 2005). For example, one part of the problem is that work today is increasingly comprised of "assignments" rather than "jobs." Long-term commitments between employers and employees are dwindling, in part because such commitments introduce more cost, friction, and bureaucracy into the global marketplace than organizations desire. As fewer and fewer firms are able to continue finding adequate productivity enhancement in the traditional job structure, more of them are being forced to adopt an assignment approach. There is no doubt that as this change occurs, it shifts potentially large new burdens and risks onto workers. Whether we like the result or not, however, the shift is taking place and will be difficult to slow.

In an assignment world, workers' success depends not on having a great union representative but on having an unbeatable set of skills. Thomas Friedman (2005) has asserted that the world today is "flat" and



competition in a flat world is no longer between nations or even companies—it is among individuals. In such a world, traditional workplace mediating institutions have less to offer workers or employers than they had before. To the extent that IR is tied to the belief that workplace equity can only be provided by the introduction of a third-party representative, the field is in an untenable position. And to the extent that unions focus on this specialty, they will generate lower support. For unions to thrive, they must emphasize as never before a function with which they already have some experience: identifying ways to help workers develop current and adaptable skills. In a flat world, the sets of skills workers acquire will, in the end, determine who in society (and which society) wins and who loses.

Although the fate of IR may already be determined, there are many rays of hope for a field that looks at today's critical work-related issues. The key to unlocking the hope is to move beyond IR's standard approach. This includes recognizing that competition among workers is going to increase just as competition among firms has increased. In such a situation, workers can achieve stability only when they possess top-of-the-line or adaptable skills. If IR's basic purposes are to "humanize, stabilize, professionalize, democratize, and balance the market system" (p. 631), then it must do so in a way that promotes individual skill building, flexibility, and efficiency. Kaufman's book shows us where the field has been. Friedman's book indicates where the world is going. IR must adapt to the flat world or be flattened by that world.

### Comment by Howell John Harris

#### Industrial Relations: A Field in Search of a Future?

#### But Don't Worry, Bruce Kaufman Has Done the Past

This is an enormous book—hence the *ILR Review's* decision that a division of labor was the only fair way of treating its chosen reviewers (and also the author, who could not expect to encounter any single reviewer whose knowledge of the field is as compendious as his own). It is also a curious work—a combination of history of ideas (though Kaufman is emphatically not an intellectual historian), institutional history, and commemorative volume—that would surely have acquired neither its bulk nor its hybrid character without its, presumably generous, ILO sponsorship. It cannot be said to be an easy read. Never lively—though, considering how much Kaufman writes, it is almost unreasonable to expect him to have style as well as content, or, for that matter, for the proofreading to have

been perfect—at times it sags badly. Kaufman evidently likes lists, and his book often turns into a catalogue weighed down with potted plot-summaries of key texts in the history of industrial relations, narratives of institutional developments that can never have been especially compelling even to the key participants at the time, and lots of names of people and organizations associated with the early development of IR in countries outside its Anglo-American homelands, as if Kaufman is desperate to mention almost everybody. Much of the research on which it is based is synthetic, and most of the sources are journal articles, books, and official publications, to which Kaufman's work therefore provides a valuable bibliographical guide. He has also worked through ILO and IIRA records, and



interviewed a whole host of the Grand Old Men of the business. Kaufman uses the Harvard system rather than proper footnoting to cite all this material, a quite unreasonable imposition on the reader of a text of these biblical proportions, especially as it permits Kaufman to refer to entire secondary works when he is summarizing their conclusions rather than to the particular sections he is actually drawing on; only when there is a direct quote do we get a helpful page reference. This technique may be acceptable in a social science journal article, but it breaks down in a work of history with 631 pages of main text and 52 pages of bibliography, one where the reader needs to be helped along, not tripped up by brackets in almost every paragraph. Also ill-advised was the author's frequent use of the historic present when discussing past events or research. Consistent use of the simple past tense in such cases would have removed another bone from this reader's throat.

Cavils aside, this is a book worth reading. It requires patience and persistence: the first time I tried, the beginning almost put me to sleep. Chapter 1, "The Roots of Industrial Relations," stretching almost from the dawn of time (or at least the late eighteenth century) until the First World War, and concentrating on Britain and Europe, is dry and dull and really adds very little, except for a sense of completeness that seems to have satisfied Kaufman's zeal to cover everything, however sketchily. But perhaps this is just a historian's reaction; industrial relations practitioners may need to be reminded about something called the Industrial Revolution, which happened once upon a distant time (or so some people think), and they may value some rather rudimentary plot-summaries of the works of Adam Smith, Karl Marx ("Another classical economist," p. 47), and other intellectual contributors to the definition and discussion of the emerging "Labour Problem." A second reading of the chapter is more rewarding, because then one can begin to see the merits of Kaufman's approach: he is interested in "the intellectual and policy effort to defuse and contain the Labour

Problem" (p. 35) and in answering the question why this produced what became the scholarly field of Industrial Relations in Britain and the United States rather than in Imperial Germany, given the vital intellectual contributions of German historical-social economics to it. His answer is essentially political: IR, with its pluralist, reformist, accommodationist, even managerialist vision, was a product of, and a natural fit within, the two most democratic of the advanced capitalist states, which developed their own strategies of incorporating their emerging working classes into the political culture and preventing industrial conflicts from generating larger social turbulence. This is entirely plausible, though hardly original.

In Chapter 2, "The Birth and Early Development of Industrial Relations: North America," Kaufman comes as near hitting a stride as his technique permits. There is the same catalogue feel to the text—bullet-pointed lists (pp. 128–30), paragraphs started "First" to "Eighth" (by which time the reader is flagging; there is even a "Ninth, and finally," on p. 115). But, as one would expect of the author of *The Origins and Evolution of the Field of Industrial Relations in the United States* (1993), Kaufman has something interesting and distinctive to say; though, to readers of his earlier book at least, not especially new. Kaufman's grasp of the historical background of America in the late Progressive Era, World War I and its aftermath, and the 1920s is sometimes a little shaky, and the unproblematic exceptionalism of his one-paragraph discussion of American culture and consciousness (p. 126) would probably make intellectual historians reach for their guns; but his understanding of the ideological and policy reaction to the industrial relations crises of the late 'teens is more confidence-inspiring. He provides a good narrative of developments in the study and teaching of industrial relations in some U.S. universities, the practice of personnel management in a growing minority of large and progressive firms, and the intellectual outlooks and resulting policy advocacy of members of both of the schools of practitioners he iden-

tified in his earlier work—IIE (institutional labor economics) and PM (personnel management). Kaufman's background is in labor economics, and it shows: he is at his most original and fluent when discussing institutional economics as the intellectual core of the IIE school, in particular, in these early years (pp. 95–116). He also explains very well the ethical roots of their reformist commitments, which found practical expression in their problem-solving involvement with the real world of workers, unions, and management. Kaufman is probably more impressed by the practical achievements of his PM school in shaping corporate policy in the 1920s than he should be, but he is spot-on in identifying the cultural prestige of managerial progressivism at this time and, in one of his most original insights, demonstrating its impact on the outlook of labor relations scholars, starting with John R. Commons himself. Kaufman has rediscovered two of Commons's neglected works, *Industrial Goodwill* (1916) and *Industrial Government* (1921), as well as an important summary of 1920s managerial progressivism, published when its tide had gone out—C. Canby Balderston's *Executive Guidance of Industrial Relations* (1935)—and the insight that results is that, in the 1920s, IIE scholars made their peace with corporate America, or at least with its liberal variant. Trade unionism and social regulation were for those parts of the labor market that an enlightened capitalism could not reach. The “labor problems” approach had always been merely reformist; its readiness to accommodate itself to the requirements of a dynamic capitalist economy and the defense of managerial rights and functions, and its preference for “private ordering, decentralized decision making, and voluntary agreement” (p. 130), would prove to be very significant for its future, post-New Deal, incarnation.

Kaufman's history of this New Era coming-together between his two streams in the U.S. industrial relations tradition serves an important purpose in the overall scheme of his book: the latter chapters, whose review is assigned to my colleague, reach grim

conclusions about the present state and future prospects of the IR profession in its American homeland. The outline of his argument is probably familiar to many readers: in and after the 1930s, IR turned its back on much of its own history, and became narrowly defined as the study, operation, and defense of the post-New Deal system of “workplace contractualism,” to use David Brody's term for “voluntarist” collective bargaining within an originally supportive, but increasingly restrictive, legal and administrative framework. After some decades in the doldrums, Kaufman's PM tradition reemerged as Organizational Behavior within the academy, and as positive human resource management within a corporate world freeing itself from the incubus of trade unionism. These, not old-fashioned IR, turned out to be the shapers of the future. What had seemed to be a sidetrack turns out to have had the locomotive of history running down it. The result is a growing crisis of intellectual respectability, self-confidence, and relevance for IR practitioners within the United States: the New Deal labor relations system that nurtured them has gone down the tubes; perhaps they are fated to do the same, joining other antiquated crafts (saggar-makers' bottom-knockers and others) in the dustbin of history, or at best lingering on in a sort of living museum or reservation. They are trying to reinvent or at least re-badge themselves, the IIRRA turning itself into the Labor and Employment Relations Association, as if this will make a significant difference to its fate. Perhaps, Kaufman seems to be saying, they are paying the price for taking a wrong turning seventy years ago; the temporary fusion between his IIE and PM schools in the 1920s, largely on the latter's terms, offered, and perhaps still offers, a better way of making their recommendations relevant to a near union-free, business-dominated America than the tired repetition of homilies from IR's post-New Deal “Golden Age.”

Chapter 3, “Early Industrial Relations in Europe: The United Kingdom, the ILO, and the IRI,” takes Kaufman and his readers off into less familiar territory. His

method is much the same, a focus on Sidney and Beatrice Webb taking the place of Chapter 2's extensive discussion of Commons. But nothing of importance is neglected—the birth of the LSE, the contributions of G.D.H. Cole, the establishment of the first chairs in industrial relations at British universities. He also addresses, not altogether convincingly, the apparent paradox that the institutionalization of the study and practice of IR proceeded much more slowly in Britain despite the pioneering intellectual contributions of the Webbs and the presence of a labor movement much stronger than that in the United States. Kaufman is at his weakest when he indulges in culturalist explanations for difference, and at his best when he follows the money trail—the demand for IR professionals' services, the supply of corporate and foundation resources for capacity-building in universities—which better explains the outcome. The chapter also contains a useful introduction to the early history of the ILO, together with an explanation for its trade-union orientation, and a brief account of the Industrial Relations Institute (IRI) at The Hague 1925–39, which brought an American “PM” perspective to the heart of Europe.

In Chapter 4, “American Industrial Relations in the Golden Age,” Kaufman is back on home territory. He starts with the New Deal, whose labor reforms, “due to several ironic and unexpected twists and turns, ... irreparably split the industrial relations community and helped contribute to a gradual divorce between the PM school of progressive employers and the ILE school of institutional labour economists” (p. 222). The Wagner Act is Kaufman's “turning point” (p. 226), as it is for so many labor historians. It helped usher in the world in which the IR profession would prosper; but it also contained the seeds of their current crisis, because it encouraged them to put all their money on trade unions, collective bargaining, “voluntarist” dispute settlement, and “pluralist” labor law. For decades the bet paid off, but eventually the old nag ran out of steam, stumbled, and died. The essence of Kaufman's argument

is one with which many labor and business historians would agree: the Wagner Act was an aberration within the American political economy, only explicable by the exceptional circumstances of the Great Depression; the growth of the post-New Deal labor movement further depended on unusually favorable conditions within wartime and postwar labor and product markets. The tragedy, or at least error, of the American IR business was to come to think of these conditions as normal and permanent, when they were anything but. When circumstances changed, IR professionals would have no new or useful answers, simply a tool-kit of practices for which there was less and less demand, and hoary old policy recommendations commanding less and less of a respectful or even attentive audience. In dealing with this “Golden Age,” Kaufman is as usual encyclopedic, discussing the Human Relations movement of the 1940s and 1950s, developments within labor economics, the growth of IR programs at American universities, and the founding of the IRRA as a leading professional body, in theory for all academics and practitioners with an interest in matters of labor and employment, in practice mostly for those wedded to the New Deal model. There is the usual competent summary of field-defining researchers' work, with John Dunlop and Clark Kerr filling the shoes earlier occupied by Commons and the Webbs.

Chapter 5, “The Institutionalization of Industrial Relations in Australasia, Canada, and the United Kingdom,” really takes up where Chapter 3 left off and explains the rise to academic prominence and, for a while, in the 1960s and early 1970s, political influence of the “Oxford School” of British labor specialists. Here as elsewhere Kaufman is an informative guide—a good explainer, synthesizing the conventional wisdom. There is a sustained comparison (pp. 268–78) of the differences—in emphasis, outlook, class background, political commitments, and even readiness to incorporate a broader interdisciplinary research agenda—between the closely related worlds of British and American IR scholars during

the overlapping periods when both were at the zenith of their self-confidence and importance. The sections on the smaller, less-studied Anglophone nations are interesting because readers (including this reviewer) are likely to know much less about them, but Kaufman's approach is more descriptive than analytical, almost genealogical indeed in digging up the provincial fathers of these small emerging communities of IR professionals.

And here my commission from the editors ended. It is a curious challenge to review half a book, and not know what the other reviewer has made of the rest of it. I

have to confess to cheating—by the time I reached page 299 I was hooked, and read the other 330 too. Other readers will probably do the same. What turns Kaufman's book into more than a compendium, and what will probably attract most attention from an American readership, is his sense of the historically grounded crisis of the modern American labor relations system and of those IR professionals most closely attached to it. American readers might not agree with his prescriptions and predictions, with which my colleague will deal; but they will find Chapters 2 and 4 a useful introduction to why the crisis came to pass.

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