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*People at Work: Life, Power, and Social Inclusion in the New Economy.* Marjorie L. DeVault, Editor.  
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methodological positivism, Chicago, Wisconsin, Michigan, and Berkeley are virtually ignored. Finally, there is no mention of sociology dissidents led by Alfred McLung Lee forming in 1951 the Society for the Study of Social Problems.

*Richard K. Caputo, Yeshiva University*

Marjorie L. DeVault (Ed.), *People at Work: Life, Power, and Social Inclusion in the New Economy*. New York: New York University Press, 2008. \$25.00 papercover.

Social scientists including social policy scholars have extensively documented the dramatic changes that have taken place in recent decades in well-established employment patterns associated with industrialization. Instead of working in secular jobs for most of their lives, increasing numbers of people now change jobs regularly and responsibility for livelihoods, social benefits and careers are passed from organizations to individuals. As is well known, the individualism of the new economy is associated with far greater flexibility, risk taking, individual decisions and responsibility.

The question of how the real-life experiences of people are affected by this environment is explored in this interesting book by scholars who use what is known as institutional ethnography to gain insights into the way lives are shaped by the wider social context. Although the case studies in the book interpret these experiences from a subjective perspective, they are linked to much wider systems and structures of rules and controls. In studying lives, institutional ethnographers also make extensive use of broadly defined texts that provide powerful insights into the phenomenology of everyday experience. The result is an eclectic collection of papers that cover issues such as working on an electronic manufacturing assembly line, managing family life, employment and children's education, the experiences of Indian immigrants in the information technology sector, the role of microenterprise in addressing the problem of poverty, the way people with disabilities seek to integrate into the job market and the experiences of women subjected to time limits in terms of the TANF program.

The book is the result of papers originally presented at

a conference at Syracuse University under the leadership of noted sociologists Marjorie DeVault who is recognized as an leading exponent of the institutional ethnographic approach. She has successfully organized these very diverse paper is into a coherent collection that examines the way the everyday experiences of people are shaped by wider systems. Although the book is primarily written for sociologists and ethnographers, its concern with vulnerable people and those on the margins on the new economy will be of particular interest to social workers and social policy scholars. Indeed, the book contains several chapters on issues that are of direct social welfare interest such as disability, poverty and income maintenance and support. Despite its academic nature, the book is eminently readable and it makes a valuable contribution to professional as well as scholarly literature.

*James Midgley, University of California, Berkeley*

Robert Chaskin and Jona M. Rosenfeld (Eds.), *Research for Action: Cross-National Perspectives on Connecting Knowledge, Policy, and Practice for Children*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2007. \$42.95 hardcover.

The themes of cross-national collaboration and learning have increasingly appeared in literature on child welfare policy. Likewise, the notion that research should not be an end goal but should rather serve a practical purpose that effectuates social change has moved from the realm of idealism to become an expectation in policy research, particularly social policy research. This text attempts to move researchers one step closer to action research by providing a framework to engage diverse stakeholders in the research and knowledge dissemination processes.

Robert Chaskin and Jona Rosenfeld divide the text into three parts. In Part I, they provide an overview of the cross-national promotion of evidence-based policy and cross-sectoral governance that involves not only a collaborative sharing of research information between government, non profit, and private sectors, but also the adaptation and application of strategies and technologies among stakeholders. The editors