NOTEWORTHY BOOKS IN INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS AND LABOR ECONOMICS, 2004*


This volume is comprised of edited papers presented at the Twenty-third Annual Conference on Economic Issues: “Changing Role of Unions,” held April 13-14, 2002, at Middlebury College. In Part I, Richard Freeman and Christopher Erickson focus on new forms of unionism: Freeman explores open-source unionism which allows several unions to share programming via the web, and Erickson et al explain the success of the SEIU in organizing janitorial labor in Los Angeles. In Part II, Bruce Kaufman uses the work of early twentieth-century labor economist John R. Commons to revise the Freeman and Medoff “two faces” model to examine the current growth prospects of unions, while Rafael Gomez and Morley Gunderson explain the “experience good” model. Empirical chapters comprise Parts III and IV and focus on union wage and employment effects using United States and international data. The two chapters in Part V, one by Clive Belfield and John Heywood, the other by Belfield and John Addison, are based on British data. Part VI focuses on union organizing trends: Henry Farber and Bruce Western look at the United States and Solomon Polacheck compares the U.S. situation with several other countries.


The unheralded advocacy and pivotal role of working-class women in the labor movement in the decades following the Depression are illuminated for the first time in this work. Labor women, or “labor feminists,” advocated reform through legislation and collective bargaining to eradicate the disadvantages women suffered due to gender discrimination. For labor feminists, women’s economic progress depended in part on the right to employment for all women. They believed women should receive “equal pay for comparable work,” including women’s unpaid labor in the domestic sphere. This book scrutinizes intersections and divergences in the history of the labor movement and American feminism.