

research agenda for accumulating and integrating the rapidly expanding body of case-based knowledge on workplace resistance.

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Parents' Jobs and Children's Lives, by Toby L. Parcel and Elizabeth G. Menaghan. Hawthorne, NY: Aldine de Gruyter, 1994, 256 pp. \$39.95 (cloth); \$19.95 (paper).

In the United States, a long-running and often acrimonious debate has focused on the effects of maternal employment on children. Maternal employment is said to have two potential effects on children. On the one hand, when mothers go to work outside the home they reduce time spent with their children, and this reduction in time investment in children may be detrimental to development. On the other hand, maternal employment increases total family income, and thus could be expected to improve child development because parents are able to purchase the food, clothing, housing, and other basic goods—as well as educational toys and books—that promote children's optimal development. Because the two effects work in opposite directions, there is no clear way to predict whether mother's employment will have positive or negative effects on children. And, not surprisingly, some studies show positive effects, some negative, and some show no effects at all. The only consistently negative effects of maternal employment show up in the child's important first year.

To date, theory has focused primarily on the implications of time spent in employment for time spent with children. This is a simplistic formulation of the issue. As Parcel and Menaghan painstakingly set out to demonstrate, more matters than just the hours spent in employment. Drawing on Kohn and Schooler's social structure and personality framework, Parcel and Menaghan argue that the actual paid working conditions parents face in their jobs—specifically, the occupational complexity, work hours, and wage level of the job—are important determinants of the home environment, which, in turn, significantly impacts child development. The authors argue that complex jobs, appropriate work hours, and reasonable pay promote children's cognitive development and prevent behavior problems.

This timely book is impressive. The authors review the evidence from the literature, then carefully develop and test their models using the 1986 and 1988 Child-Mother Files from the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth. Whereas the amount of empirical evidence is overwhelming at times, the authors provide a concluding chapter that helps the reader make sense of the results in both theoretical and policy perspectives.

The results show that higher maternal and paternal occupational complexity, higher wages, and gender-appropriate work schedules predict a better home environment. In turn, good home environments positively affect cognitive development,

particularly higher reading and math scores at ages 5-8. The effects on behavior problems are weaker.

The authors come to several conclusions regarding the effects of maternal and paternal work conditions. Whereas, in general, less occupational complexity, lower wages, and mother's full-time and father's part-time or over-time work were linked to worse outcomes for children, in most cases these effects depended on other factors.

First, the effects of workplace conditions varied depending on parental family circumstances. For example, father's over-time work hours had more adverse effects on child behavior problems when the family had recently added a child. Children's PPVT scores were less negatively affected by low paternal job complexity when mothers had high cognitive skills.

Second, the effects of one parent's working conditions depended on the working conditions of the other parent. For example, the negative impact of both parents working part-time was stronger than when only one parent did so.

Finally, the effect of maternal entrance into and exit from the labor force depended on the quality of maternal employment. Foregoing employment was more beneficial for those with less complex jobs than for those with more complex jobs. The effect on children of mothers stopping work was better for those whose mothers' jobs had been less complex, and had involved over-time hours.

The authors conclude that the dangers of early maternal employment have been exaggerated. In fact, greater early maternal investment in paid employment positively affects her later opportunities. These occupational rewards benefit both her and her family. Foregoing employment is less beneficial to mothers with higher human capital than to those with lower capital. To those facing poor job opportunities, the costs involved in seeking and maintaining employment and child care may be excessive. The quality of the employment women can obtain, the demands of work, and the resources parents can bring must be considered. This suggests that pushing welfare mothers into the workforce may be exactly the wrong direction without strong accompanying support services such as child care and medical assistance.

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The Employment Relationship: Causes and Consequences of Modern Personnel Administration, by William P. Bridges and Wayne J. Villemez. New York: Plenum, 1994, 243 pp. \$34.50 (cloth).

As the authors of this volume attest, sociologists and economists have tended to extrapolate—and to speculate—a great deal more about the operations of internal labor markets than the available data would seem to allow. Indeed, the internal labor market construct is used so widely that it has become what economists lovingly refer to as “stylized fact,” that is, something that we have all heard so much about that none