

Mid-American Review of Sociology

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BOOK REVIEWS

Mavis Hiltunen Biesang and John Biesang. *Introduction to Sociology*. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1978.453pp.

This is an introductory text which is based on the premise that the novice sociological student is new to the discipline and therefore has no background in the field. No details have been overlooked by the authors in their efforts to present this material in an easily assimilated manner.

Among the more outstanding and innovative tactics employed are a well-indexed table of contents; the red highlighting of each newly introduced sociological term or phrase (common usage terms and words which often have a sociological interpretation are also emphasized in red); and end-of-the-chapter glossary of new terms and words, and a composite glossary in the appendix; a cross-referenced index to facilitate the collating of related ideas; an annotated bibliography, compiled on a chapter-by-chapter basis; a concise, pertinent summary concludes each chapter; and the easy to read format of the columnar printed page.

The text answers the student's questions: What is sociology? What can one do with sociology? How does sociology apply to me? What does sociology hope to accomplish? These questions are answered in a forthright manner. It should whet the introductory student's appetite for further sociological study.

The text is divided into six major sections: The Introduction; Culture and Socialization; Social Structure; Population and the Urban Trend; Social Institutions; and Social Change. Theorists may fault the text on the apparent lack of theoretical emphasis, but in truth, the theory is there, the presentation is simplified, and made palatable and relevant to life.

The material contained in the text is easily understood; not at all condescending. The level and coverage of the material, while intended for the underclassperson, is still pertinent and adaptable for those students who may be further along in their studies.

The authors have lived up to the promise contained in the Preface and have produced one of the most comprehensive introductory level textbooks this reviewer has had the pleasure to read.

Wichita State University

Muriel Faltz Lembright

Ross E. Azevedo (ed.), *Labor Economics: A Guide to Information Sources*. Gale Research Company, 1978. 261pp.

Labor economics, as a subdivision of economics, concerns the "economic aspects of the problems, insecurities, and institutional developments associated with labor and labor market." Such a subject-matter inevitably is related to a number of different issues and, consequently, to a variety of distinct disciplines. The interdisciplinary nature of labor economics, in turn, leads to complexities which make the adoption of a multi-dimensional perspective a necessity for doing research.

The issues involved in labor economics are significant in all societies and their importance is not limited by degree of economic development and industrialization; they have gained an ever-increasing importance in our era, which is marked by the emergence of monopoly capitalism and state socialism. Consequently, the need for scientific, reliable and practical research has become multiplied. The first step in fulfilling this need is having access to the works already available in the area of labor economics. By reviewing these works, students of labor economics will become able not only to have a better grasp of the issues involved, but also to correct the mistakes already made in the field and create new approaches based upon the existing ones. However, the number of books and journal articles in the area are too numerous to be reviewed by each individual researcher. In this regard, source books gain a lasting importance. Azevedo's book is one of this kind. *Labor Economics: A Guide to Information Sources* is an attempt to provide interested people with a bibliography of existing materials in the area of labor economics. The work could be used not only by professionals but by anyone who wants to become acquainted with the problems of labor economics which have become a part of our everyday lives.

This book starts with a brief remark concerning labor economics, its nature, and the complexity of its subject-matter. This brief review is followed by two sections which deal with textbooks, general works, related journals, government publications and information services. In the first section, after the name of each text or general work in the area, a brief summary of