

Date: 2014-11-10

Applicant's Name : Prof Harry Katz

Workshop Name : LABOR RELATIONS IN A GLOBALIZING WORLD: AN INTRODUCTION FOCUSED ON EMERGING COUNTRIES

Track : Track 5: Employment Relations

Chair : Janice Bellace (Wharton School, University of Pennsylvania)

Presenter/s : Greg J Bamber (Monash University), Russell D Lansbury (University of Sydney), Nick Wailes (University of New South Wales) and Chris F Wright (University of Sydney)

Carola Frege (LSE) and John Kelly (Birbeck College)

Harry Katz (Cornell University), Thomas Kochan (MIT), and Alex Colvin (Cornell University)

Discussant : Ming Wei-Liu (Rutgers University) and Paul Marginson (University of Warwick)

Convenor : Harry C. Katz (Cornell University)

Contact email : hck2@cornell.edu

PROPOSAL

We propose a special workshop focused on the three recently published texts on comparative employment relations authored (or edited) by Carola Frege and John Kelly; Greg Bamber, Russell Lansbury, Nick Wailes, and Chris Wright; and Harry Katz, Tom Kochan, and Alex Colvin. These texts offer major new insights and advances. A particular strength of all three of these new books is their extensive coverage and analysis of developments in emerging countries and issues related to global supply chains. At the same time, the emphasis of each book differs as do the frameworks each uses to analyze contemporary developments

Our presentation will provide an overview of the contents of our forthcoming (January 2015, ILR/Cornell University Press) comparative textbook. Our book covers both generic labor relations issues and how those issues play out in emerging countries. There has never been a text that does so. A new approach is needed given the importance of emerging countries in the global economy and the fact that globalization has shifted the nature of labor relations so that explicitly international factors such as global supply chains, multi-national corporations, NGO's, and cross-national labor rights and union campaigns are now central determinants.

We recognize that labor relations are more political nature in emerging countries as compared to advanced industrialized countries. We also address the traditional role played by state dominated unions in emerging countries and the recent increased importance of independent unions who in many of those countries have developed as alternatives to traditional unions. These independent unions tend to promote firm or workplace level collective negotiations in contrast to the more traditional top-down systems.

Our book makes use of the three-tiered structure of labor relations developed by Kochan, Katz, and McKersie in their analysis of the transformation of U.S. labor relations. In our new book the three tier framework is adapted to take account of the greater role that political factors play in labor relations and the increasing role played by NGO's and international agencies, such as the World Bank and the IMF. In addition, our new book pays much attention is paid to the role of multi-national corporations and cross- national union and labor rights campaigns as well as to NGO's, reflecting the fact that the importance of these factors has increased in all countries in recent years and because these factors are especially important in emerging countries. We continue to make use of the three tiered framework because the framework, when appropriately modified, provides a helpful way to understand how labor relations actually works – what factors shape bargaining power, how bargaining power is exercised, and the way that political and international forces shape the nature and use of power in emerging countries.

Our new text highlights examples from China, India, Brazil, and South Africa. We focus on these four key countries because each of these countries is a sizeable contributor to the global economy and is the leading economy in their respective regions of the world, and because each of these countries has features that illustrate phenomena and processes

that are common in other emerging countries.

Our book provides an analytic basis for labor relations actors and citizens in various emerging countries to make choices about how to carry out labor relations. We note that labor relations choices critically influence the work lives of employees and the performance of economies. As a result, we feel compelled to remind the parties that their labor relations choices have moral as well as profound economic consequences.