

were linked to a web of institutions and the allocation of resources indicates much about state builders' concerns and the potential they perceived in their populace. Ricardo Salvatore's comparison of criminological theory and practice in Argentina and Brazil is the most revealing in teasing out these issues in relation to race and labor markets. Still, interesting questions remain, such as whether the Argentine state's emphasis on public education or the lack of a standing military in Costa Rica facilitated and encouraged the development of penitentiaries. Clearly such a comparison is a monumental task beyond the grasp of any one collection of essays. The merit of this well-researched collection is that it paves the way for just such an ambitious scholarly agenda through its multi-dimensional approach to criminology and penitentiary subjects.

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Human Resources and the Adjustment Process.

Edited by RICARDO PAREDES and LUIS A. RIVEROS. Center for Research in Applied Economics, book 10. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995. Graphs. Tables. Figures. Appendixes. Notes. Bibliographies. Index. 203 pp. Paper, \$18.50.

This book examines processes of economic adjustment and the characteristics of human resources and human resource training in Latin America. It focuses on the experiences of Brazil, Chile, Colombia, and Uruguay during the 1980s. One chapter is devoted to each of these countries; an introductory chapter summarizes the results of the research and highlights the similarities and differences between the countries studied.

In a world of rapid technological change and increasing economic globalization, structural adjustment will no longer be limited to the transition from a relatively closed to a substantially more open economy. More than ever before, structural adjustment will become an integral part of economic growth and development. Thus it is important to arrive at a better understanding of the human resource requirements that will minimize the social costs of this adjustment process and maximize its economic benefits. This book is a step in that direction. The strength of *Human Resources and the Adjustment Process* lies in its rich descriptive detail of existing human resource programs in the four countries studied and the theoretical reflections it offers about the characteristics of those human resource programs that are best equipped to respond to the ongoing need for adjustment. The main weakness of the book is a lack of detailed empirical analysis that would demonstrate in the context of specific countries the particular nexus that exists between the nature of the structural adjustment process, the skills required, and the institutional training structure most conducive to teaching these skills.

The absence of country-specific details on the links between adjustment and human resource development is to a large extent due to the fact that three of the four countries did not experience major structural change during the 1980s. Therefore, one has to wonder about the original choice of countries. Chile is the one country whose economy actually underwent substantial structural change, primarily in the 1970s.

Unfortunately, some of the analytical statements on the links between adjustment and human resource requirements in the Chilean experience are not persuasive. They are not supported by empirical evidence, or at least they cannot be inferred from the evidence provided in the chapter (e.g., the argument that the growth of the tradable goods sector was constrained by a mismatch of skills). In the absence of significant structural adjustment in the 1980s, the discussion in the chapters on Colombia and Uruguay is motivated by the likelihood of major structural change in the 1990s, resulting from Colombia's liberalization measures in this decade and Uruguay's membership in the Mercado Común del Sur (MERCOSUR).

The authors of each country study concur that a fundamental precondition for the success of adjustment in social and economic terms is an educational system that would provide everyone with a good general education. Universal basic education will make it easier for people to find new jobs and adapt to new skill requirements. While Chile, Colombia, and especially Uruguay have relatively few problems in this respect, the analysis in *Human Resources* provides ample evidence that the general level of education in Brazil is extremely low given the country's GDP per capita.

Each chapter provides interesting insights both about the kind of human resource developments that are required to meet the challenge of ongoing structural adjustment and about the adequacy or inadequacy of the existing educational and training structure in each country. There are several issues common to the four countries studied. One concerns the importance of general versus specialized training; the authors agree that there has to be the right complementarity between the two, and that, in analogue to a good basic education, a good general technical training is crucial in an era when skill requirements will change more rapidly over a worker's life span. The Universidad del Trabajo del Uruguay is a particularly interesting example of how this problem between general and specific training may be resolved: it qualifies students in general for a particular trade, but not for work in a specific company. A related question concerns which aspects of training are best addressed by the public sector and which by the private sector. All authors stress the need for a high degree of cooperation between both sectors although they have little doubt that specific training is often most fruitfully provided by the companies themselves. Nevertheless, in specific cases the private sector may on occasion also be well equipped to undertake general training, particularly when companies in a given industry jointly offer training at an industry-specific institute.

With privatization of industries on the rise in Latin America, a number of training services have also been privatized. But these privatized training facilities are generally aimed at improving the skills of those who are already employed; the unemployed, who are probably most in need of training or retraining, are left out. In all four countries the unemployment rates of young people and of women are particularly high. This situation calls for special attention to the human resource needs of these groups, attention that has to be initiated by the public sector and that must comprise a variety of measures, including widely available, quality daycare, as the authors of the Uruguay study suggest. Another important issue highlighted in the chapter on Uruguay is the need for

appropriate funding levels and fiscal mechanisms to cover the necessary expenditures. Resources earmarked for training should not be diverted for other purposes (as happened, for example, in the case of the Servicio Nacional de Aprendizaje, SENA, in Colombia). And present funding mechanisms (which often rely on a payroll tax) have to be modified so that funding is not affected by cyclical economic trends and does not decline when the economy declines (and such programs are needed most).

The book is easily accessible to a general audience. It should be of interest to anybody concerned with the nature of Latin American human resource development in an era of structural adjustment.

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Labor and the Course of American Democracy: U.S. History in Latin America Perspective.

By CHARLES BERGQUIST. New York: Verso, 1996. Photographs. Illustrations. Figures. Tables. xiv, 209 pp. Cloth, \$60.00. Paper, \$20.00.

Charles Bergquist undertakes two ambitious tasks in this collection of five essays: to urge scholars to pursue work that “transcends the sacrosanct boundaries of the nation-state,” (p. 7) and to show general readers how a historical understanding of labor can advance political struggles for a “more democratic” (p. 1) future. By *democratic* he means more than “government by the people” with universal suffrage, regular elections, and civil liberties. He also includes “the ways private economic power affects the politics of family, the workplace, the community, and the nation” (p. 2). The five essays deal with the following topics: 1) the strength of democracy in the United States and its weakness in Latin America; 2) the impact of U.S. imperialism on democracy within the United States; 3) the opposition of the U.S. government to radical social reform in Latin America; 4) the contradictory nature of popular culture as seen in Disney comics; and 5) how democratic leadership can help citizens understand the social changes of the last generation. The most thought-provoking essays, in my opinion, are the first and the last.

The first essay, “The Paradox of American Development,” asks why the United States “developed into a powerful democracy while Latin American countries remain weak, unstable, and poor” (p. 9). Bergquist examines the emergence of the Atlantic economy and argues that differences in labor systems explain why segments of the Atlantic economy developed differently. The northern British colonies had been among the least prosperous areas in the Western Hemisphere in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, dwarfed by the economic significance of the West Indies and Brazil. However, because the North depended on free labor, it developed into a relatively egalitarian and dynamic society. The Caribbean, the southern United States, and the former Spanish and Portuguese colonies, in contrast, could never overcome the legacy of forced labor.

The last essay, “Envisioning a History and a Politics Democratic,” has a similarly grand sweep, and is constructed on the basis of three interrelated arguments. First,