

Society Today and Tomorrow

Beyond
Contract:
Work,
Power and
Trust
Relations

Alan Fox

Beyond Contract:
Work, Power and
Trust Relations

ALAN FOX

This book is addressed to a number of audiences. It offers those interested in the sociology of work, of industry, of industrial relations, of exchange theory, and of organization generally an analysis of how industrialization, division of labour, and contract have created many 'low-trust' work roles in what can be characterized as a low-trust society. The analysis relates this 'institutionalized trust' in work situations to the allocation of discretion, status, and rewards; and shows how it interacts with power, legitimation, and the principle of reciprocity to generate dynamics of change which not only affect roles and authority relations within work organizations but also reach out to the wider society beyond. The notion of trust dynamics is then used to explore certain aspects of industrial relations, incomes policy and inflation, and the general texture of social relations now and in the future. Here becomes evident the relevance of the book for that wider audience concerned with the debate about the quality of life; a debate which grows as industrial societies pursue their pre-occupation with economic values.

Alan Fox is a lecturer in Industrial Sociology at the University of Oxford.

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