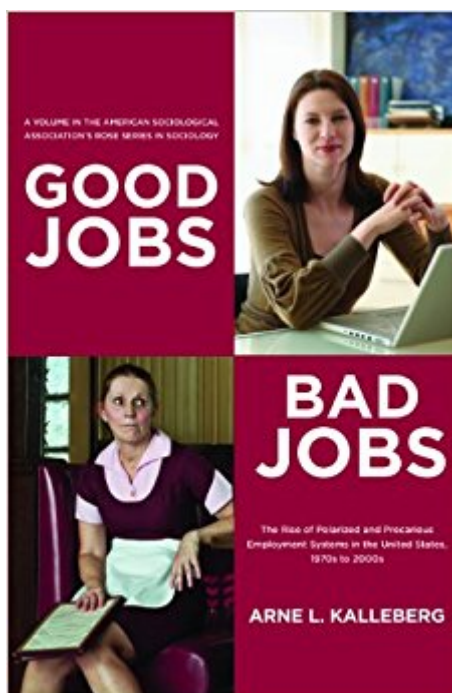


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# Good Jobs, Bad Jobs: The Rise Of Polarized And Precarious Employment Systems In The United States 1970s To 2000s (American Sociological Association's ... Rose Series In Sociology (Paperback))



## Synopsis

The economic boom of the 1990s veiled a grim reality: in addition to the growing gap between rich and poor, the gap between good and bad quality jobs was also expanding. The postwar prosperity of the mid-twentieth century had enabled millions of American workers to join the middle class, but as author Arne L. Kalleberg shows, by the 1970s this upward movement had slowed, in part due to the steady disappearance of secure, well-paying industrial jobs. Ever since, precarious employment has been on the rise—paying low wages, offering few benefits, and with virtually no long-term security. Today, the polarization between workers with higher skill levels and those with low skills and low wages is more entrenched than ever. *Good Jobs, Bad Jobs* traces this trend to large-scale transformations in the American labor market and the changing demographics of low-wage workers. Kalleberg draws on nearly four decades of survey data, as well as his own research, to evaluate trends in U.S. job quality and suggest ways to improve American labor market practices and social policies. *Good Jobs, Bad Jobs* provides an insightful analysis of how and why precarious employment is gaining ground in the labor market and the role these developments have played in the decline of the middle class. Kalleberg shows that by the 1970s, government deregulation, global competition, and the rise of the service sector gained traction, while institutional protections for workers—such as unions and minimum-wage legislation—were weakened. Together, these forces marked the end of postwar security for American workers. The composition of the labor force also changed significantly; the number of dual-earner families increased, as did the share of the workforce comprised of women, non-white, and immigrant workers. Of these groups, blacks, Latinos, and immigrants remain concentrated in the most precarious and low-quality jobs, with educational attainment being the leading indicator of who will earn the highest wages and experience the most job security and highest levels of autonomy and control over their jobs and schedules. Kalleberg demonstrates, however, that building a better safety net—increasing government responsibility for worker health care and retirement, as well as strengthening unions—can go a long way toward redressing the effects of today's volatile labor market. There is every reason to expect that the growth of precarious jobs—which already make up a significant share of the American job market—will continue. *Good Jobs, Bad Jobs* deftly shows that the decline in U.S. job quality is not the result of fluctuations in the business cycle, but rather the result of economic restructuring and the disappearance of institutional protections for workers. Only government, employers and labor working together on long-term strategies—including an expanded safety net, strengthened legal protections, and better training opportunities—can help reverse this trend. A Volume in the American Sociological

Association's Rose Series in Sociology.

## Book Information

Series: American Sociological Association's Rose Series in Sociology (Paperback)

Paperback: 312 pages

Publisher: Russell Sage Foundation (January 1, 2013)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0871544806

ISBN-13: 978-0871544803

Product Dimensions: 6 x 1.2 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 1 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.8 out of 5 stars 8 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #404,824 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #395 in Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Politics & Government > Specific Topics > Labor & Industrial Relations #397 in Books > Business & Money > Economics > Labor & Industrial Relations #2102 in Books > Business & Money > Human Resources

## Customer Reviews

Arne Kalleberg has written the definitive volume on our precarious, polarized U.S. labor market. This engagingly written tour of the American workplace illuminates its subject matter beautifully. --Chris Tilly, UCLA  
Good Jobs, Bad Jobs powerfully documents the profound transformation that the U.S. labor market has undergone since the mid-1970s. In a lucid and compelling analysis, Arne L. Kalleberg exposes the complex dynamics driving the sharp polarization between good jobs and bad jobs as well as the accompanying decline in employment security that has affected workers at all levels. This is a thoughtful book that is essential reading for anyone interested in understanding the situation of workers in twenty-first-century America. --Ruth Milkman, CUNY Graduate Center --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

ARNE L. KALLEBERG is Kenan Distinguished Professor of Sociology at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

This is a fantastic piece of scholarship with equal importance given to each topic covered. The topic is covered with clear language, wholesome literature reviews, and a good closing chapter on what could be if we had stronger labor action. Topics include racial disparities causing labor market

disadvantages, core & periphery employees, Polanyi's trade-off between neoliberalism and social protection. Written from a sociological viewpoint, I did have some issues with some of the author's subtle biases. For example, I have difficulty believing minorities will continue being powerless or that corporations will create more hiring thresholds. The former will be impossible once white people are no longer the majority, the latter seems like excessive human resources investment. Regardless, it felt so refreshing to read accessible academic writing that blames capital for removing labor protections rather than beating around the bush + the book puts Carter and Clinton's (and not just Reagan's) labor market hampering actions into context too. I am so envious of his and Eileen Applebaum's friendship as her review for CEPR turned me on to this book.

<http://www.cepr.net/documents/publications/inequality-insecurity-2012-11.pdf>

good book

I am a couple chapters in, and it's certainly a broadly-implicating read. Psychology begat Sociology, and it's fascinating in this niche study!

Great book! A must have book for "work, occupation and organization" students and researchers. Very insightful analyses of U.S. new economic and the changing labor market.

excellent and readable book on the state of the U.S. and global economy

Superb book, which I use in my graduate class. Students really appreciate it.

Wonderful text a must read for anyone studying organizations occupations and work

Great book so far. Very helpful in understanding how society is collapsing under the weight of oppressive employment with no future for the workers. Plus I got the first chapter for my phone. I really liked being able to start it while having to wait for service at my docs.

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