

Safety or Profit?: International Studies in Governance, Change and the Work Environment (Work, Health and Environment Series)

Theo Nichols, David Walters

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As the title Safety or Profit? suggests, health and safety at work needs to be understood in the context of the wider political economy. This book brings together contributions informed by this view from internationally recognized scholars. It reviews the governance of health and safety at work, with special reference to Australia, Canada, Sweden, and the United Kingdom. Three main aspects are discussed. The restructuring of the labor market: this is considered with respect to precarious work and to gender issues and their implications for the health and safety of workers. The neoliberal agenda: this is examined with respect to the diminished power of organized labor, decriminalization, and new governance theory, including an examination of how well the health-and-safety-at-work regimes put in place in many industrial societies about forty years ago have fared and how distinctive the recent emphasis on self-regulation in several countries really is. The role of evidence: there is a dearth of evidence-based policy. The book examines how policy on health and safety at work is formulated at both company and state levels. Cases considered include the scant regard paid to evidence by an official inquiry into future strategy in Canada; the lack of evidencebased policy and the reluctance to observe the precautionary principle with respect to work-related cancer in the United Kingdom; and the failure to learn from past mistakes in the Deepwater Horizon disaster in the Gulf of Mexico.



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