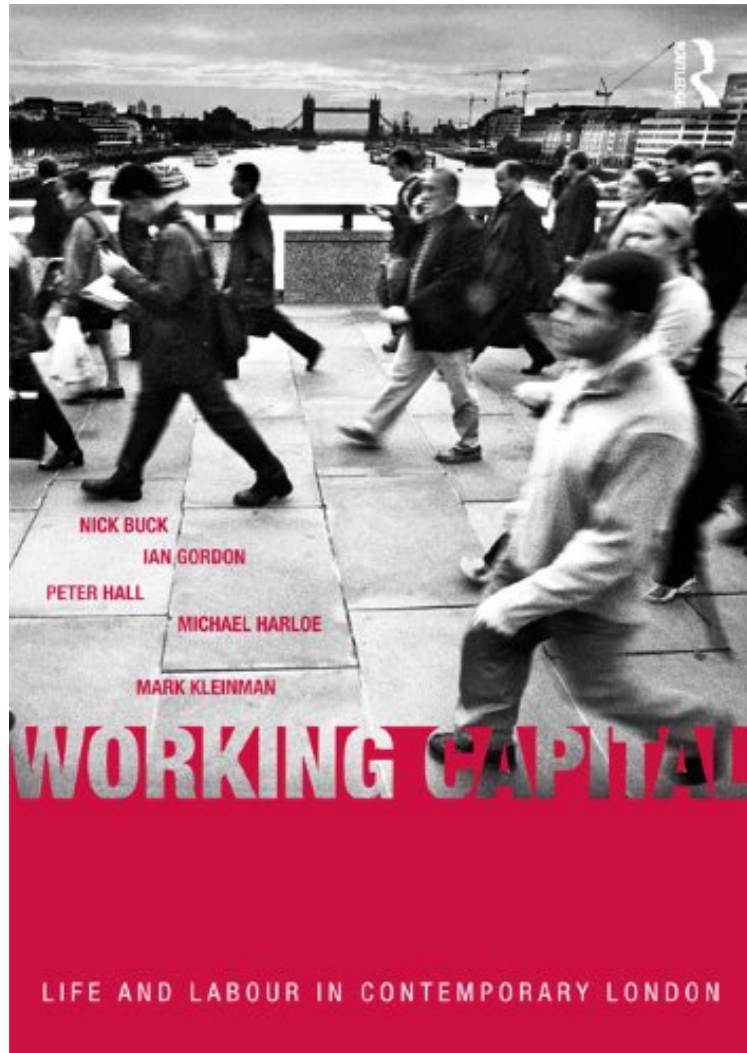


[Download pdf ebook] Working Capital: Life and Labour in Contemporary London

Working Capital: Life and Labour in Contemporary London

Nick Buck, Ian Gordon, Peter Hall, Michael Harloe, Mark Kleinman

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Nick Buck, Ian Gordon, Peter Hall, Michael Harloe, Mark Kleinman : Working Capital: Life and Labour in Contemporary London before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Working Capital: Life and Labour in Contemporary London:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Excellent study of Britain's capital city By William Podmore Livingstone's 2000 report, The State of London, said, "the prosperity of every Londoner is completely tied up with the city's role in the international economy." But most London workers produce goods or provide services that are used locally: only 19% of London's turnover is exported. The authors conclude, "the global and European roles together are still clearly much less significant for London than its continuing role as a national centre." London was Britain's largest single manufacturing centre, but since 1962 it has lost 1.6 million manufacturing jobs. Its

unemployment has worsened recently. The authors attack Blair's approach to local government: "Within each local authority the proliferation of government ordained partnerships and specially focused programmes (by service, group and/or locality) is making a coordinated approach and 'joined up' governance harder than ever. ... our work has tended both to cast doubts on the efficacy of local programmes, and to underline the importance of a number of mainstream policy areas. ... Labour's pursuit of 'joined-up' action seems quite perversely to have brought ever more complex arrays of 'initiatives' which are short-term, unsustainable, uncoordinated and even contradictory. ... area-based approaches ... have been the staple of urban policy for the past 35 years, but rarely matched their promises with sustainable achievements. ... We are sceptical, however, about what has been achieved through the proliferation of health, education and other action zones." Southwark, for example, has contracted out education and housing benefit administration, reducing its ability to coordinate policies. The council relies on private investment for regeneration, but most residents have not gained from the spectacular new South Bank. This kind of 'regeneration' is just like the old discredited 'trickle-down'. The authors propose national programmes for "improving the supply of low- and moderate-income housing - and conditions in the existing stock of social housing - in ways that prevent this stock from being subsequently 'captured' by other groups; improving public transport provision while restricting the costs of such travel, so as to enhance particularly the mobility of disadvantaged groups; and raising performance in those state schools at the bottom of current league tables ..."

For decades the cities of the developed world were seen as problem-beset relics from times of low mobility and slow communications. But now, their potential to sustain creativity, culture and innovation is perceived as crucial to success in a much more competitive global economy. The vital requirement to secure and sustain this success is argued to be the achievement of social cohesion. Working Capital provides a rigorous but accessible analysis of these key issues taking London as its test case. The book provides the first substantial analysis of key economic, social and structural issues that the new London administration needs to deal with. In a wider context, its critical assessment of the bases of the new urbanism and of the global city thesis will raise questions both about the adequacy of urban thinking and about the capacity of new institutions alone to resolve the fundamental problems faced by cities.

'Working Capital is an essential read for many people; indeed all involved in the developing the future of London.' - Built Environment '[An] extensive, thoroughly grounded and well-conducted study of current life and labour in London..... Working Capital: Life and Labour in Contemporary London approaches critically some of the most-debated concepts of urban theory and policy with a strong empirical grounding and does so in an engaging and stimulating manner, relevant for practitioners, academics and students.' - Gesa Helms, Urban Studies Vol 42, April 2005
About the Author Nick Buck is Professor and Associate Director of the Institute for Social and Economic Research at the University of Essex, UK. Ian Gordon is Professor of human geography at the London School of Economics, UK and Director of London School of Economics, London. Sir Peter Hall is Bartlett Professor at University College, London, Director of the Institute of Community Studies and a Fellow of the British Academy. He is the foremost writer in English on issues of urban development and planning with 30 books in this field. Michael Harlow is Vice-Chancellor and Professor of Sociology at the University of Salford and a Fellow of the Academy of Learned Societies in the Social Sciences. Mark Kleinman is Professor of International Social Policy at the University of Bristol.