


EDITORIAL

The scholarly journal and its dependence on many interconnections

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If you say it quickly – 34/4 – the December issue of *ELRR* – it sounds quite simple. A single issue of an increasingly respected, longstanding journal.

With closer attention, you might see the contents of 34/4 – perhaps 12 articles, 2–3 book reviews, a Guest Editorial introducing one of our fabulous Themed Collections for December 2023, and a (possibly turgid) Editorial.

But that is all surface – like seeing a continental outline from a spaceship which tells you little of the people. Take a closer view, and there is much more detail in the production of an issue of, say, *The Economic and Labour Relations Review*, 34–4, December 2023. Like every other international scholarly journal, this issue of *ELRR* is the product of the work of dozens, perhaps hundreds of people – veritable assembly lines of contributors supporting each item in the journal. Multiply that by the fact that there have been perhaps 80 or so articles, book reviews and so in the last eighteen months – and a larger number of articles that were rejected or with revisions incomplete, then you begin to understand the rich tapestry and the immense amount of human expertise and activity, which is rarely visible in the complexity of publishing a journal issue.

The journey of an article – and appreciation of those essential for that journey

Articles are submitted to what I previously noted, was the not-quite-intuitive software system. And here our parade of essential people begins; what is behind the ScholarOne (S1) submission system are generations of technical, communication, and publishing experts. Once the article is successfully submitted by an author, it is first viewed by the small *ELRR* Editorial Team of **Anne Junor (Emerita Editor)**, **Tanya Carney (Assistant Editor)**, **Jason Antony (Technical Coordinator)**, and me. (In the absence of endnotes in editorials, may I express my deep appreciation here of the Editorial Team – their depth of knowledge, patience, and kindness for this novice Editor-in-Chief (EIC) has been greatly appreciated.)

The Editorial Team reads each article briefly, sorting out those that might be sent for review, those that are unsuited to the journal or not yet ready for consideration, and those that are potentially interesting, and might be suitable, but have some evident gaps in style or substance (and, dear colleagues everywhere, *please* read the Style Guide, including the advice on language of any journal to which you are submitting an article). We really mean it when we say articles for *ELRR* should be in UK English and use only Cambridge A citation <https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/the-economic-and-labour-relations-review/information/author-instructions/preparing-your-materials>. Similarly, please read

about the best and correct forms of files for your articles for *ELRR* when submitting tables text and title page at <https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/the-economic-and-labour-relations-review/information/author-instructions/submitting-your-materials>).

In the last eighteen months, about 120 or more articles made the first cut. They were deemed by the Editorial Team as potentially worthy of review. Once we agree an article is ready for review on that first check, we seek an Associate Editor, who would also read and consider the article before sending it out to reviewers. If the Associate Editor (who is generally rather expert) thinks the article should not proceed, they arrange for it to be rejected with some feedback to help scholars in their future research efforts. If the article has potential for publication, the Associate Editor will search for two reviewers to read and comment upon the paper. However, as previous editorials have grumbled about, it is rare to obtain two reviewers to agree to read the article immediately. Indeed, the norm seems to be about 7–8 requests and regularly, Associate Editors have had to contact 10 or 15 potential reviewers, before two reviewers have agreed to assess the article. (16 refusals was the record in 2023). (Another aside. So next time our response to an article is a trifle tardy, please remember that an Associate Editor is working on your behalf, searching, finding, and then nagging at least two reviewers, finally compiling a summary of the reviewers' recommendations for the EIC.)

So very sincere thanks on behalf of readers, writers and journal production are due to the Associate Editors of *ELRR* over the last eighteen months. Their commitment to, and effort on behalf of, the journal is immense – thank you to

Antonio Andrés; Bruce Bradbury; John Burgess; Lynne Chester; Anis Chowdhury; Paul Dalziel; Jimmy Donaghey; Norbert Ebert; Scott Fitzgerald; Abebe Hailemariam; Neil Hart; Burcin Hatipoglu; Elizabeth Humphrys; Therese Jefferson; Michael Johnson; P.N. (Raja) Junankar; Peter Kriesler; George Lafferty; Yiqiong Li; John Lodewijks; Lisa Magnani; Astghik Mavisakalyan; Susan McGrath-Champ; Alan Morris; Terri Mylett; Yuvisthi Naidoo; Michael O'Donnell; Andrew Pendleton; Michael Quinlan; Al Rainnie; Peter Sheldon; Ben Spies-Butcher; Lucy Taksa; Greig Taylor; Elsa Underhill; Shaun Wilson; and Bingqing Xia.

These Associate Editors are all members of the *ELRR* Editorial Board, and while most act as formal Associate Editors, others also help informally, providing their expertise in statistics or econometrics or some corners of constructivism, to provide clarity to the Editorial Team; others monitor the journal's finances and scholarly impact, or develop initiatives or mentor novice scholars. However, whether they are formal AEs or have other roles, these 36 members of the *ELRR* Editorial Board have been a committed and essential part of the fabric of every issue of the journal in 2023, to whom the readers of *ELRR*, and especially, this novice EIC, owe a significant debt.

The complexity of publishing 70 or so articles over the eighteen months since mid-2022, and the demands of finding reviewers, makes our gratitude to those reviewers who agree to review an article, even greater. Academics across the world have been experiencing increased workloads as universities have continued to lose their traditional focus as communities of scholars and students where learning and research were central, to become corporations focussed on buildings, profits, and business growth. This is not a new phenomenon as economist Thorsten Veblen bewailed at the end of the nineteenth century (Veblen 1899). However, the demands on academics have increased even more in recent years. As competition for profits, funding, and prestige have grown, the spending and support for scholarly endeavours have shrunk, and academics, in particular, have been required to do ever more with ever-less. So the reviewer who says 'Yes – I will review this paper' is a wonderful human being, and a grand scholar to whom we are extremely grateful.

On behalf of all ELRR, our many thanks to those 100s of reviewers who read, reviewed, and articulated advice and commentary, in the last eighteen months.

Saima Ahmad, Australia; Bridget Anderson, UK; Antonio Rodriguez Andres, Egypt; Rutvica Andrijasevic, UK; Mark Anner, USA; Dorothea Anthony, Australia; Anthony Asher, Australia; Tom Barnes, Australia; Stephanie Barrientos, UK; Ambareem Beebejaun, Mauritius; Francesca Bellesia, Italy; Michael Betz, USA; Andreas Bieler, UK; Derick Blaauw, South Africa; Leslie Boden, USA; Jeff Borland, Australia; Dick Bryan, Australia; Nicolas Bueno, Switzerland; Andreas Cebulla, Australia; Jun Chen, USA; Filip Chybalski, Poland; Lorenzo Cini, Italy; Andrew Clarke, Australia; Nicki Cole, Austria; Richard Croucher (dec), UK; Hernan Cuervo, Australia; Kantha Dayaram, Australia; Robert Dixon, Australia; Peter Docherty, Australia; Veronika Dolar, USA; Brian Dolber, USA; Niels van Doorn, Netherlands; Jamie Doughney, Australia; Ray Fells, Australia; Adam Fforde, Australia; Luca Eduardo Fierro, Italy; Claudia Finger, Germany; Jocelyn E Finlay, USA; Jörg Flecker, Austria; John Flint, UK; James Fraser, UK; Daniel Fuchs, Germany; Hubert Gabrisch, Germany; Santiago J. Gahn, Italy; Bernard Gan, Australia; Rufaro Garidzirai, South Africa; Antonio Rodriguez Andres, Egypt; Matthias Giesecke, Germany; Leon Goberman, UK; Caleb Goods, Australia; Katherine Gough, UK; Sarah Gregson, Australia; Teis Hansen, Denmark; Robert Hassink, Germany; Thomas Hastings, UK; Terry Hathaway, UK; Josh Healy, Australia; Brett Heino, Australia; Arne Heise, Germany; Bala Subrahmanya Mungila Hillemane, India; Barbara Hopkins, USA; Baiding Hu, New Zealand; Qian Huang, China; Christian Lyhne Ibsen, Denmark; Peter Iyer, USA; Phil James, UK; Therese Jefferson, Australia; Peng Jia, China; Peter John, UK; Derek Jones, USA; In Jun, Korea; Arunas Juska, USA; Steve Keen, UK; Elainw Kiiru, USA; Miyea Kim, Korea; Murat Kirdar, Turkey; Riandy Laksono, Australia; Marc Lavoie, Canada; Andrew Leyshon, UK; Shimeng Liu, China; Ian Thomas MacDonald, Canada; Enrico Marelli, Italy; Wesley C Marshall, Mexico; Jordan McKenzie, Australia; Grant Michelson, Australia; Anna Minasyan, Australia; Anamika Moktan, India; Richard Morris, Australia; Pouya Morshedi, Canada; Gabriele Leite Mota, Portugal; Ahmed Taneem Muzaffar, Australia; Gibson Nene, Australia; Sean O'Brady, Canada; Abiodun Olayiwola, Nigeria; Laurie Parsons, UK; Greg Patmore, Australia; James Peoples, USA; Marjan Petreski, North Macedonia; Nigel Pitchford, UK; Lucia Pradella, UK; Brad Pragnell, Australia; Alison Preston, Australia; Peter Prowse, UK; Robert Raeside, UK; Uma Rami, Switzerland; Raul Ramos, Spain; Mashele Rapatsa, South Africa; Badri Narayan Rath, India; Bjarke Refslund, Denmark; Charles G. Ripley, USA; Sarah Rix, USA; Beltran Roca, Spain; Isabel Maria Bonito Roque, Portugal; Stuart Rosewarne, Australia; Jonathan Sale, Australia; Jokubas Salyga, Finland; Leslie Salzinger, USA; Manuel Santos Silva, Germany; Stegan Schmalz, Germany; Patturaja Selvaraj, USA; Desai Shan, Canada; Dishil Shrimankar, UK; Noelia Somarriba, Spain; Jim Stanford, Australia; Paweł Strawiński, Poland; Mark Stuart, UK; Yane Svetiev, Australia; Chaitanya Talreja, India; Philip Taylor, Australia; Adrien Thomas, Luxembourg; Jill Toh, Netherlands; Phillip Toner, Australia; Long Trinh, Japan; Eric Tucker, Canada; Mattia Vacchiano, Australia; Vinh Vo, Australia; Feicheng Wang, Australia; Barry Watson, Canada; Xiahai Wei, China; Robert Wells, Australia; Stephen Whelan, Australia; Jonathan Woodside, Canada; Chris F Wright, Australia; Yuan Xin, China; and Lin Xiu, USA.

Again, thank you to all those reviewers for your advice, expertise, kindness, and well-articulated suggestions for authors, whether you are recommending revisions, rejection, or acceptance. You are essential, and we all greatly appreciate your time and expertise. (A note here – many members of Editorial Board are called on as reviewers at times – thank you to you too!!)

Once an article has been reviewed by two reviewers, at least once – because reviewers may be asked to read revisions – an article may be rejected, sent back for minor or major revisions, or – eventually – accepted for publication.

The article then goes on a new journey, starting again through our Editorial Team for copy-editing. We then submit it to CUP for production. The article then leaves the submission software and starts a whole new process with CUP production. In this respect, we owe appreciation to Amy, our former Senior Content Manager for ELRR at CUP, and her colleagues who steer the articles through various production processes, and who advise, console, and fix mistakes, with nary a grumble. At this point, my description of the journey of an article becomes somewhat vague, because, through the wonders of modern technology, it then goes to a wonderful production team in Puducherry, India. When preparing for this editorial, I asked them what they actually do in turning an academic text document into a journal proof. Certainly, these printing/publishing experts have been helpful and effective ever since *ELRR* started with CUP at the beginning of 2023. However, their answer to my question involved explanations using a technical discourse of systems and software far beyond this non-technical EIC's comprehension! I did understand that it is they, who subject articles to the publishing software platforms for formatting; they then send their formatted proofs to authors for their approval. Sometimes Jansi and the team in Puducherry offer suggestions to authors as well, while also meeting numerous quality checks and schedules, all in what must sometimes be rather tight time frames. They, too, are essential to the production of each issue – so thank you Jansi and her group for your wonderful, expert, and ever-helpful production support.

It is important to acknowledge this interconnectedness of scholars and producers, all of different discourses and priorities, working together to produce each of the articles of a single issue, several times a year, year after year. The production of a single issue depends not just on the 30 or so authors in this issue (although they too are amazing!) but also on the submission software experts, the Editorial Team, the Associate Editors, the reviewers, and the Content and Production management groups, to say nothing of many others! It is a complex and collegial process, drawing on many skills, expertise, knowledge, and mutual respect from many people across many fields working together. Thank you!

This issue December 2023 (34/4)

As ever, this issue is evidently international – there is scholarship from and on, South America, Canada, India, Bangladesh, Vietnam, Australia, and Europe. As ever, there is a wealth of research methods and scholarly approaches, and as ever, the issue offers outstanding and engaging scholarship. The first seven articles comprise the excellent Guest Editorial/overview/Introduction to a fascinating Themed Collection and six related articles under the umbrella heading of **Platforms in the City: Spaces and Alliances for the Renewal of Social Movements in the Platform Economy**. That Guest Editorial by Dif-Pradalier, Jammet, Tiberghien, Bignami, and Cuppini, which is an excellent overview of the debates in this area, will pique your interest in the other six articles in this terrific Themed Collection (Alyanak, Cant, Lopez, Badger, and Graham; Frapporti and Pirone; Niebler and Animento; Heiland; Perrig; and Guichoux).

The remaining articles are – yet again – global, well-researched, and provocative. **MacEachen, Hopwood, Crouch, and Amoako** offer a great example of how excellent scholarly research can uncover invisible injustices through rigorous research. Drawing on a mixed methods approach, the authors demonstrate the injustice meted out to workers who have received workers' compensation payments following illness or injury from their work. As the authors demonstrate, these injured workers are also those who receive much lower retirement-age pensions than if they had been uninjured, because such pensions

depend on prior contributions. For these already disadvantaged workers, the pension contributions are unpaid or reduced, mainly as a consequence of the 'neoliberal discourses about affordability' from agencies, such as workers' compensation boards. The very thorough use of critical discourse analysis of multiple sources from Ontario, Canada offers a grim but compelling picture of an unremarked source of injustice, and one which might be evident in many workers' compensation systems across the world.

Clibborn and Wright are similarly provocative in demonstrating how employer-sponsored migration visas are fundamentally flawed in terms of such outcomes as the mistreatment and a lack of rights of migrant workers, and the effective working of labour market. They offer a range of better alternatives, most notably, a 'mobility visa', which would permit migrant workers to change employment, rather than being compulsorily tied to one employer, as is the case in Australia at present. Such a mobility visa, they argue, is not only better for the migrant workers in terms of equity and voice but also more effective in addressing labour market needs.

Given the recognised causal links between injustice and power resources, the next article by **Uddin** also offers some important insights. Acknowledging global insecurities and barriers to achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and trade union effectiveness, Uddin seeks to promote a 'new' power resource that could be available to trade unions. He argues that the Ethical Power Resource available to unions should be integrated into any Power Resources Approach. Drawing on two well-delineated case studies of organisational activism in South Asia, (Joint Movement of Bangladesh Road Transport Workers and Owners Association to Revoke the Amendment of the 'Road Transport Act 2018' and the National Association of Street Vendors of India), Uddin offers a great example of how the benefits from an advance in a theoretical or heuristic framework can offer greater clarity to the ways collective organisations and the scholars investigating them, can strengthen their effectiveness.

The article by **DK Nguyen, DN Nguyen, Son The Dao, and Trang Phan** focuses on analysing how effective has been implementation of the 2012 Labor Code in Vietnam. The Code had been developed to formalise rights and standards of employment in Vietnam during an era of rapid economic change. It specifies the rights and roles of employers and employees and the processes and procedures for their relationships. Using data on labour supply, income, and social protection using the difference-in-differences technique, the authors analyse how the Code has been put into effect. In so doing, they illuminate a variety of ways in which the Code has not always been implemented in accordance with its ideals and objectives. In particular, the authors highlight the continuing plight of former rural workers, in order to show how the Code might benefit from greater rigorous articulation and implementation.

In the last full-length article, **Garvey, Mendonça, Torres, Stefano, and Pitta** explore and analyse community, social, and political responses to the forced reallocation of traditionally and collectively held rainforest and savannah lands of the Cerrado and Amazon biomes of Brazil. Drawing on two extended ethnographic case studies, the authors describe and analyse a complex set of responses and demands from the formerly isolated communities, in dealing with businesses and governments that are intent on making financial and profitable gains from the 'illicitly grabbed resources', their lands. As the authors note, their research and analysis have needed to take a different approach from normal approaches to capital-labour conflict, because what is at stake is the very survival of communities and resources, inherent in the lands themselves. The authors show how the strong and sustained community movements have made some gains, despite a difficult political environment. As the authors conclude in this lively and convincing article, 'In the face of intensified land grabbing, violent threat and the laundering of illicit resource extraction, the two cases presented open up new dimensions of and possibilities for

capital-labour struggles linked to commodity expansion and extraction on resource-rich frontiers’.

The ELRR **Contested Terrains** article for December 2023 comes from the widely respected scholar, **David Peetz**. On 4 September 2023, the Federal Government in Australia introduced a Bill, called the Fair Work Legislation Amendment (Closing Loopholes) Bill 2023. This so-called ‘Loopholes Bill’ was designed to improve aspects of work and employment in Australia by, perhaps, closing some legislative ‘loopholes’. Peetz focuses on one aspect of the Bill, questioning the ways in which the gig economy can or should be regulated (especially with regard to workers in road transport and the platform economy). Or, asks Peetz provocatively, ‘is the “loophole,” as some consider the existence of “employee-like” work undertaken by contractors in the gig economy, too hard to close?’ His question is particularly apposite in considering the competing definitions of employee and contractor. As you, dear reader, perhaps know, the *ELRR* established the **Contested Terrains** articles as a means of publishing research dealing with emerging or controversial issues. A **Contested Terrains** article seeks to provoke discussion debate and engagement in tricky topics. Peetz’s article, *Can and How Should the Gig Worker Loophole Be Closed?*, is a wonderful and provocative example of **Contested Terrains** scholarship.

A great book review reveals the salient attributes of a book while piquing readers’ interest in that book. The two book reviews in this issue certainly do that. Both cover concept of ideal-type wage/income systems. **Lansbury** in his review of Wilson’s book, *Living Wages and the Welfare State: The Anglo-American Social Model in Transition*, describes and analyses in detail what he asserts in an excellent review of research on living wages and the welfare state in countries within the Anglo-American and English-speaking together with a consequential set of possible reforms, which could provide the means to improve wage and welfare systems. **Jee Eun Jang’s** review of Hiilamo’s *Participation Income: An Alternative to Basic Income for Poverty Reduction in the Digital Age* begins with the comment that this book is ‘the first comprehensive examination of participation since the foundation work of neo-Keynesian scholar, Barry Atkinson in 1996.’ Jang offers wise discussion on the differences between *Participation Income*, as propounded by Hiilamo, and the perhaps more widely known ideal of *Basic Income*; both schemes seek to ensure every member of society has sufficient income. In particular, Jang offers insights into the important role of conditionality and labour market involvement in these schemes, and their advantages and disadvantages.

This is a terrific issue of *ELRR* to finish 2023 – I commend it to you (including the Calls for Papers at the end)!