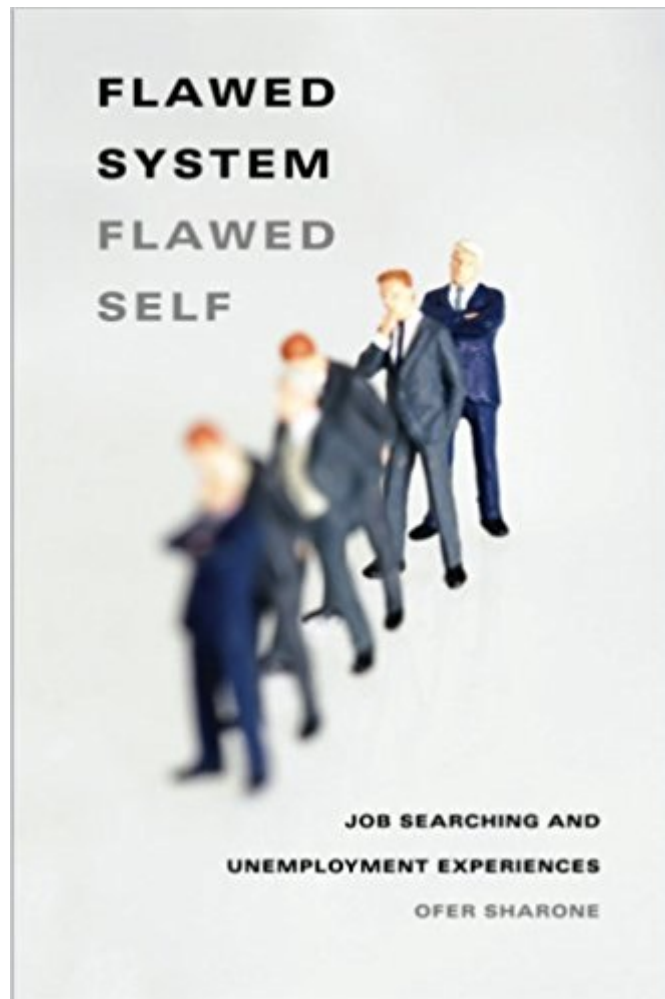


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Flawed System/Flawed Self: Job Searching And Unemployment Experiences



Synopsis

Today 4.7 million Americans have been unemployed for more than six months. In France more than ten percent of the working population is without work. In Israel it's above seven percent. And in Greece and Spain, that number approaches thirty percent. Across the developed world, the experience of unemployment has become frighteningly common; and so are the seemingly endless tactics that job seekers employ in their quest for new work. *Flawed System/Flawed Self* delves beneath these staggering numbers to explore the world of job searching and unemployment across class and nation. Through in-depth interviews and observations at job-search support organizations, Ofer Sharone reveals how different labor-market institutions give rise to job-search games like Israel's résumé-based "spec games," which are focused on presenting one's skills to fit the job; and the "chemistry games" more common in the United States in which job seekers concentrate on presenting the person behind the résumé. By closely examining the specific day-to-day activities and strategies of searching for a job, Sharone develops a theory of the mechanisms that connect objective social structures and subjective experiences in this challenging environment and shows how these different structures can lead to very different experiences of unemployment.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Bravo Professor Sharone!! He hit a grand slam with this book! I am so glad that someone out there finally got it right! His research into the exact experiences of the older white collar long-term unemployed trying to find work in the U.S. (as well as in Israel) is spot on. As of this writing, I am a

49-year-old unemployed engineer who has been out of work for over 7 years (long story there). The unbearable feelings of loss, loneliness, betrayal, and emotional trauma that I have experienced throughout my working life from my job losses are validated and verified in his research and interviews with other unemployed workers. My only constructive criticism of the book is with Chapter 1. It deals with mostly many previous theories of other authors which I found a bit too heavy in the wording, like reading a bunch of legalese. However, once I got to Chapter 2 and thereafter, I found the reading so much more understandable and useful. It took me many hours spread out over ~2 weeks to finish the reading because of the emotional response the rest of the book gave me. The sense of our flawed inner selves in the U.S. (self-blame), the sense of a flawed system in Israel (system blame), and the similarity of the U.S. blue collar unemployed worker experiences to the Israeli white collar unemployed worker experiences are an eye-opener for me. One point I would like to make in regards to the inner self-blame is that I also have received so much external blame from others due to my plight, which are the major contributors to my feelings of worthlessness and shame. I wonder if other research subjects received this same external blame, since Professor Sharone did not really mention this.

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