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Mary Gatta

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Mary Gatta : All I Want Is a Job!: Unemployed Women Navigating the Public Workforce System before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised All I Want Is a Job!: Unemployed Women Navigating the Public Workforce System:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five StarsBy Kelvin HicksGreat book! !

In *All I Want Is a Job!*, Mary Gatta puts a human face on workforce development policy. An ethnographic sociologist, Gatta went undercover, posing as a client in a New Jersey One-Stop Career Center. One-Stop Centers, developed as part of the federal Workforce Investment Act, are supposed to be an unemployed worker's go-to resource on the way to re-employment. But, how well do these centers function? With swarms of new clients coming through their doors, are they fit for the task of pairing America's workforce with new jobs? Weaving together her own account with interviews of jobless women and caseworkers, Gatta offers a revealing glimpse of the toll that unemployment takes and the realities of social policy. Women—both educated and unskilled—are particularly vulnerable in the current economy. Since they are routinely paid less than their male counterparts, economic security is even harder for them to grasp. And, women are more easily tracked into available, low-wage work in sectors such as retail or food service. Originally designed to pair job-ready workers with available openings, the current system is ill fitted for diverse clients who are seeking gainful employment. Even if One-Stops were better suited to the needs of these workers, good jobs are scarce in the wake of the Great Recession. In spite of these pitfalls, Gatta saw hope and a sense of empowerment in clients who got intensive career counseling, new jobs, and social support. Drawing together tales from the frontlines, she highlights the promise and weaknesses of One-Stop Career Centers, recommending key shifts in workforce policy. America deserves a system that is less discriminatory, more human, and better able to assist women and their families in particular. The employed and unemployed alike would be better served by such a system—one that would meaningfully contribute to our economic recovery and future prosperity.

From Booklist: "It's like for a woman with few skills looking for a job during one of the worst recessions in the nation's history? To find out, ethnographic sociologist Gatta went undercover as an unemployed waitress for six months at a New Jersey One-Stop Career Center. Relying on her experience and interviews with clients and workers, Gatta offers a broad portrait of joblessness among the recently unemployed, long-term unemployed, immigrant workers, those with prison records, and those with little formal education. She tackles the misperceptions of the centers, which are often mistaken for welfare offices or the place to go to apply for unemployment benefits, and analyzes the relentless focus on immediate jobs rather than the kind of training that could lead to more sustainable careers. Gatta explores the struggle to cope with stereotypes of the long-term unemployed in general and biases that direct women away from nontraditional, higher-paying jobs. This is an insightful look at the emotional and economic elements of joblessness as well as the larger context of the nation's policy concerned with job training and the development of human capital. --Vanessa Bush "All I Want is a Job! is an engaging and timely book. It addresses the very pressing issue of the services provided to jobless workers, while also doing an excellent job of placing its findings in historical context." (Ofer Sharone MIT Sloan School of Management) "In this short and very readable narrative, Gatta takes a different and unique approach. Posing as a client at a One-Stop Career Center, she experiences firsthand the trials and tribulations of job seekers. The author interviews the workers in these centers, discovering the difficulties of trying to implement policies set by others and the anxiety and stress in meeting the needs of the unemployed . . . The author concludes that there are no quick fixes, but at the margin there are key shifts to improve the system, which would serve the employed and unemployed alike and contribute to economic recovery and future prosperity . . . Recommended." (J. F. O'Connell CHOICE) "Mary manages to discuss the problems that unemployed women face in finding work, not only from a practical point of view, but also from a personal standpoint. This book illustrates her rare talent for looking at individual concerns alongside bureaucracy with an eye toward reform. While giving us an intimate look inside the public work force system, she constructively suggests ways to improve government initiatives. *All I Want Is a Job!* is at once an eye opener and a beacon." (Frank Pallone, Jr. New Jersey Congressman) "Gatta's research makes a significant contribution to the literature on the workforce development system as little is known about the One-Stop Career Centers and even less is known about women's experiences at the One-Stop Career Centers. In addition, Gatta's work is unique in its methodology. Whereas many existing studies are quantitative and outcomes-focused, Gatta uses participant observation and focus groups. In doing so, she is able to explore how women are experiencing the workforce development system rather than just how many women were served or obtained employment." (Skye Allmang) "By studying the work of helping others find work, Mary Gatta shifts our attention to the link between government policy and the experiences of unemployed workers seeking work . . . Gatta has pointed to one approach by studying work beyond the employment relation. We would do well to follow her example with other approaches." (Mark Zbaracki IRL) "All I Want Is a Job! offers a valuable look inside our nation's main workforce development program. It should be required reading for anyone interested in low-wage work, labor markets, social welfare policy, and economic development." --Stephanie Luce, Gender Society "This is a special book that gives the reader a real sense of the world of One-Stop Career Centers. Delivering an insider's glimpse into their operation, Gatta's research will spark a serious discussion about the need to change our current system so that it actually meets the needs of those seeking employment." (Henry Plotkin Former Executive Director of the New Jersey State Employment and Training Commission) "Mary Gatta has written a forceful, lucid, and critical guide for women to secure a living wage. Understanding the bewildering hell that is the public workforce system, Mary knowingly helps us to navigate it in order to produce the practical result we all seek: employment. This book is a 'must read' for those

who care about lifting women out of poverty!" (Jim McGreevey former Governor of New Jersey)"Mary Gatta adds to the literature by focusing on the felt experiences of women at One Stop Career Centers. With qualitative data, Gatta explores the experiences of customers and front line workers at a New Jersey Center . . . With its lens on gender, this book is an important addition to workforce development literature." (Joyce Bialik)About the AuthorMary Gatta is a Senior Scholar at Wider Opportunities for Women and an Adjunct Professor at Rutgers University . She is the author of Not Just Getting By: The New Era of Flexible Workforce Development and Juggling Food and Feelings: Emotional Balance in the Workplace.