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Announcing:

**Pain and Prejudice:**
*What Science Can Learn about Work from the People Who Do It*

By Karen Messing

“Pain and Prejudice is an important book. . .” ~ David Suzuki

In 1978, when workers at a nearby phosphate refinery learned that the ore they processed was contaminated with radioactive dust, Karen Messing, then a new professor of molecular genetics, was called in to help. Unsure of what to do with her discovery that exposure to the radiation was harming the workers and their families, Messing contacted senior colleagues but they wouldn’t help. Neither the refinery company nor the scientific community was interested in the scary results of her chromosome studies.

Over the next decades Messing encountered many more cases of workers around the world—factory workers, cleaners, checkout clerks, bank tellers, food servers, nurses, teachers—suffering and in pain without any help from the very scientists and occupational health experts whose work was supposed to make their lives easier. Arguing that rules for scientific practice can make it hard to see what really makes workers sick, in *Pain and Prejudice* Messing tells the story of how she went from looking at test tubes to listening to workers.

**About the author**

Karen Messing is an award-winning (including a Governor General of Canada award) and internationally recognized expert on occupational health. She is the author of more than 130 peer-reviewed scientific articles and the book *One-eyed Science: Occupational Health and Working Women*. She is also the editor of *Integrating Gender in Ergonomic Analysis*, which has been translated into six languages.

**Turn over for praise for Pain and Prejudice**

*Pain and Prejudice: What Science Can Learn about Work from the People Who Do It*

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Science & Technology | Labour | Health
Praise for *Pain and Prejudice*

“Karen Messing demonstrates a profound empathy for “invisible” people, the legion of workers performing jobs of which most of us are unaware or ignore. Pain and Prejudice is an important book that informs us how uninformed or thoughtless we are to problems of stress and pollution which can be relieved by taking them seriously and listening to the workers themselves.”
~ David Suzuki, author of *The Sacred Balance*

“A scientific treatise, a page-turner, an exposé. It’s hard to exaggerate the attractions of this extraordinary book. It makes the personal political and the political personal, drawing the reader along in the careful and scientific exploration of the sexism, biases, and silences of science. *Pain and Prejudice* should be required reading for all scientists.”
~ Pat Armstrong, Distinguished Research Professor, Department of Sociology, York University and Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada

“How can scientists be objective and empathetic at the same time? Karen Messing’s decades of research into workers’ health, especially the health of women workers and those of the lower rungs of the working class, are examined and analyzed in a very interesting and readable style. Dr. Messing shows how collaboration with community partners such as unions can improve research but how this type of research is increasingly threatened. She shows how research can and should make change in the workplace to improve workers’ health.”
~ Cathy Walker, past director, National Health and Safety, Canadian Auto Workers

“Karen Messing is a riveting storyteller who illuminates areas usually enveloped in the fog of expertise and pedantry. She belongs to a lamentably rare breed; she is a militant intellectual. An accomplished scientist, she tells, in a personal, evocative style, of the way she came to better understand the relationships between employers, science, and labour. Her encounters with, and analyses of, science and scientists hired by capital and government to regulate working conditions lead her to question both the impartiality of science and the accompanying lack of empathy for workers, particularly women. This is a valuable book for anyone interested in social theory, sociology, and, most importantly, the health and safety of workers.”
~ Harry Glasbeek, author of *Wealth by Stealth*

“Messing has long been one of the leading practitioners of “listening to workers’ stories” as a way of understanding their health. *Pain and Prejudice* describes how this approach evolved, why it is so effective, and some of the leading findings. It provides a unique window into the world of worker health and safety.”
~ Wayne Lewchuk, professor, School of Labour Studies and Department of Economics, McMaster University