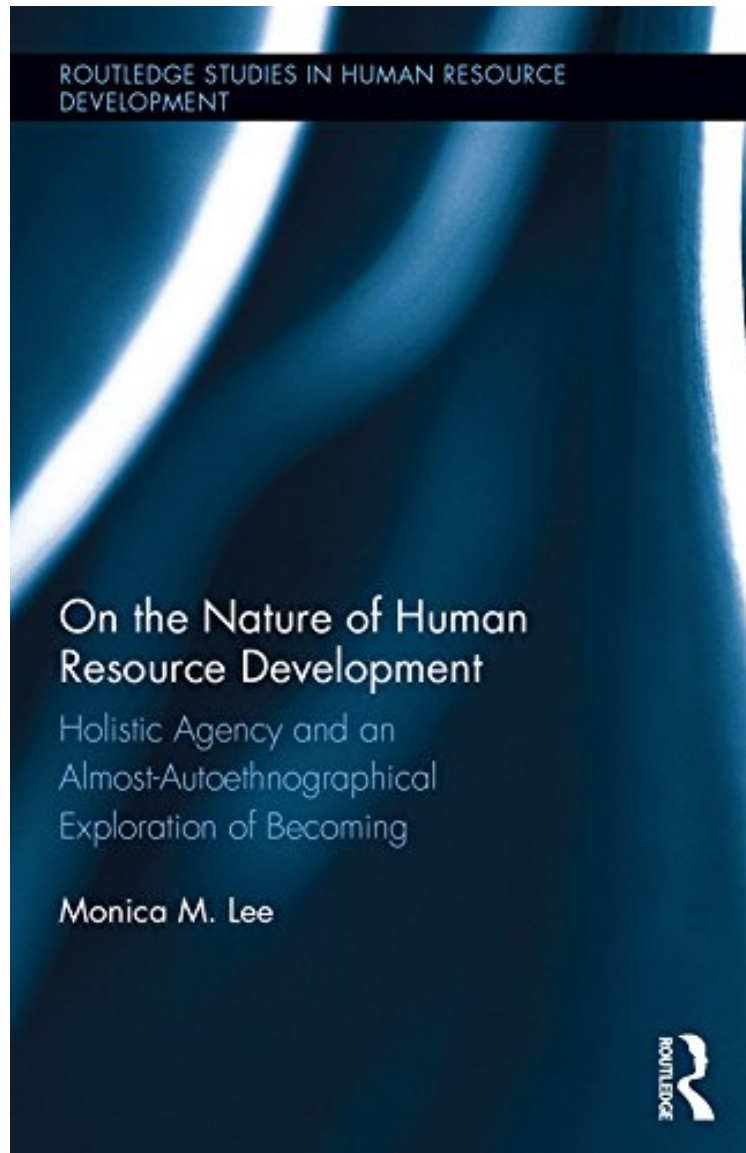


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## **On the Nature of Human Resource Development: Holistic Agency and an Almost-Autoethnographical Exploration of Becoming (Routledge Studies in Human Resource Development)**

*Monica Lee*

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**Monica Lee : On the Nature of Human Resource Development: Holistic Agency and an Almost-Autoethnographical Exploration of Becoming (Routledge Studies in Human Resource Development)** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised On the Nature of Human

Resource Development: Holistic Agency and an Almost-Autoethnographical Exploration of Becoming (Routledge Studies in Human Resource Development):

The nature of human resource development (HRD) has been, and remains, a contested topic; the debate was sparked in part by Monica Lee's seminal 2001 paper which refused to define the discipline of HRD, but has been accentuated by increasing globalization, political unrest, inequality and the erosion of boundaries. Should HRD now be seen as more than 'training' or a sub-function of large western bureaucracy? This book represents a very wide view of HRD: that it is at the core of our 'selves' and our relationships, and that we continually co-create ourselves, our organisations and societies. These ideas are hung upon a model of Holistic Agency, and supported from sources as diverse as evolutionary psychology, science fiction, the challenges of transitional economies, and the structural uncertainties of contemporary society. Examining the tensions between self and other, agency and structure, the book draws inspiration from an almost-autoethnographic approach. This yields a text that is personal, entertaining, and easier to read than many academic tomes; yet considers the depth and development of the human condition, and locates HRD within that.

"Development and learning are the cornerstones of Human Resource writes Monica Lee in this important re-appraisal. Conceptualising the self as person, whole, rich and multiplex puts warm flesh around the arid bones of "agency" and accords with the experienced realities of those who work in HRD." ndash;David Weir, Professor Emeritus, Northumbria University, UK "Monica Lee weaves a fundamental understanding of what it is to be an individual in society, acting and reacting to the problems and possibilities that social - and especially organisational - life creates. This challenging manifesto offers thoughtful scholarship and perceptive craftsmanship in social investigation within the strong architecture of a sensitive and highly reflective autobiography." ndash;Oliver M. Westall, Emeritus Orator, Lancaster University, UK "This book is a real page turner, it does not read like a standard "management book" and it combines current knowledge, timeless wisdom with striking narrative style it does not just make a "contribution to knowledge" - it is a truly inspiring invitation to pursuing a living path to knowledge that matters through reflexive engagement with organizing, management, ideas and life itself." ndash;Monika Kostera, Jagiellonian University, Poland "When she calls for interdisciplinary, multilevel, dynamic approach informing managerial education ndash; we should hear a call for a civic, open, value-driven education of responsible citizens capable of creating and negotiating organizational scaffoldings for evolving social agencies." ndash;Slawek Magala, Erasmus University-Rotterdam, the Netherlands "Monica's model of holistic agency provides the foundation for the book's structure which draws amongst others Greek philosophy, evolutionary psychology and the science of climate change to inform her understanding of HRD. This breadth of influence reminds us that we live in a world of fluid boundaries; if we are concerned with encouraging learning and development in organisations then we do well to remember that the boundaries we create are necessarily ethnocentric and a response to our socially constructed epistemologies and views of the world. I recommend this book to scholars and practitioners who are interested in, and open to, challenging views on the very idea of Human Resource Development as an area of practice, as a subject of study and as a response to local and global development challenges." ndash;Carole Elliott, Roehampton University, UK "For HRD practitioners the world over, this book challenges us to reinvent who we are and to magnify our impact on society. It would be impossible to read this book and not come away seeing our work in a totally different light." ndash;Darren Short, Sr. Director Learning Development, GoDaddy, USA "Despite the breadth and range, the content is unfailingly relevant and applied directly to building the case for and explicating Monica's account of the nature of HRD. You will, in the pages of this book, gain understanding of and insight into complex concepts such as self, other, agency and structure, but more importantly how they fit and connect with each other to provide understanding of HRD. As a reader, you will benefit from the grace and wisdom of a true polymath." ndash;Jim Stewart, Coventry University, UK "In this book, Monica Lee confronts the legacy of the past, In hindsight, this book may come to be considered as one of the first contributions toward a critical HRD approach that, in the author's words, " seeks to understand more by looking through the cracks in the rhetoric of the mainstream portrayal of HRD." ndash;Adrian Carr, University of Western Sydney, Australia Breath-taking, outstanding, illuminating and immense, The Nature of HRD is an incommensurable feat which puts HRD at the centre of Humanity, its main questions and its principal endeavours. A phenomenal achievement done by only one individual. The big advantage is cohesion, strength and humanism The Nature of HRD looks more like a map, the map of Mankind's struggles done by a very skilful, extremely informed, super-intelligent and amusingly witty cartographer." ndash;Eduardo Tomeate, Universidade Europeia, Portugal "Lee "writes like life"; her work is not a neat package with a singular answer. Instead it is messy, filled with emotion, steeped in reflective insight; it confronts us to question. She has changed the way I, and countless of my students, have come to understand what HRD can be...can become." ndash;Jamie L. Callahan, Drexel University, USA "Dr. Lee has been known throughout her career as a trailblazer, challenging traditional thinking. You may not agree with everything

that she writes, but this is a must-read book for everyone serious about how we research and practice HRD and management." ndash;Gary N. McLean, Professor Emeritus, University of Minnesota, USA "This well-written book models the deep reflection and criticality we should all engage in as we "become" better HRD scholars and practitioners. Dr. Lee set out to offer an auto-ethnography that would help us to grapple with the deep and nuanced complexity of HRD and in successfully doing so, she offers us a gift that can help us all to question, interrogate, and stretch for possibility in our individual and collective futures." ndash;Wendy Ruona, University of Georgia, USA "I find this book to be a transformative read. It has brought the 'human' right front and centre into discussion of the essence of HRD. This book will inform our thinking and research endeavours for many years to come." ndash;Thomas Garavan, Edinburgh Napier Business School, Scotland "Monica Lee takes us on a ride of discovery by way of autoethnographic reflection, identity work, consciousness, agency, actor-networks, and power/knowledge. The result is a profound rethinking of HRD as a humane process of development." ndash;Albert J. Mills, Saint Mary's University, Canada "Exploring the nature of HRD through autoethnography provides a unique perspective of our multidisciplinary field and triggers critical reflections on the meaning and future of our field and on us and our relationships as human beings and professionals in our increasingly complex, global environments." ndash; Maria Cseh, George Washington University, USA

About the Author  
Monica Lee is a Chartered Psychologist, a Fellow of CIPD and RSA, and Associate Fellow of British Psychological Society.