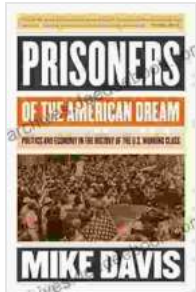


Politics and Economy in the History of the US Working Class



Prisoners of the American Dream: Politics and Economy in the History of the US Working Class

by Mike Davis

★★★★☆ 4.5 out of 5

Language : English
File size : 1250 KB
Text-to-Speech : Enabled
Screen Reader : Supported
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled
X-Ray : Enabled
Word Wise : Enabled
Print length : 334 pages



The history of the US working class is inextricably linked to the interplay between politics and economics. From the earliest days of the American republic, the struggle for economic security and social justice has been at the heart of the political process. And in turn, the political landscape has had a profound impact on the economic conditions faced by working people.

The Early Years: From Artisans to Industrial Workers

In the early days of the United States, the working class was primarily composed of skilled artisans, farmers, and small businessmen. These workers were largely independent and had a strong sense of autonomy.

However, the Industrial Revolution, which began in the late 18th century, transformed the nature of work and the working class.

The rise of factories and mass production led to the creation of a new class of industrial workers who were largely unskilled and had little control over their working conditions. These workers faced long hours, low wages, and dangerous working conditions. In response, they began to organize themselves into unions in order to fight for better wages and working conditions.

The Rise of Labor Unions

The first labor unions in the United States were formed in the early 19th century. These early unions were often small and localized, but they gradually began to grow in size and influence. By the late 19th century, the labor movement had become a major force in American politics.

Labor unions played a key role in the fight for the eight-hour workday, the minimum wage, and other important labor reforms. They also played a role in the development of the welfare state, which provided basic social services to working people.

The 20th Century: The New Deal and the Cold War

The Great Depression of the 1930s had a devastating impact on the American working class. Unemployment reached unprecedented levels, and wages plummeted. In response to the crisis, President Franklin D. Roosevelt launched the New Deal, a series of programs designed to stimulate the economy and provide relief to the unemployed.

The New Deal had a mixed impact on the working class. Some of its programs, such as Social Security, provided important benefits to working people. However, other programs, such as the National Recovery Administration, were less successful.

After World War II, the United States entered a period of economic prosperity known as the Cold War. During this time, the working class experienced a period of relative stability and prosperity. However, the Cold War also led to a rise in anti-communist sentiment, which had a negative impact on the labor movement.

The Late 20th Century: Economic Restructuring and Globalization

The late 20th century was a period of major economic restructuring in the United States. The decline of manufacturing and the rise of the service sector led to a loss of jobs and a decline in wages for many working-class Americans.

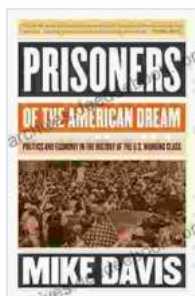
Globalization also had a significant impact on the working class. The movement of jobs overseas led to further job losses and downward pressure on wages. In response to these challenges, the labor movement began to decline in size and influence.

The 21st Century: The Great Recession and Beyond

The Great Recession of 2008 had a devastating impact on the US working class. Unemployment reached levels not seen since the Great Depression, and wages continued to decline. The recession also led to a decline in the value of homes and other assets, making it difficult for working people to build wealth.

In the years since the Great Recession, the US working class has continued to face challenges. Economic inequality has risen to record levels, and wages have remained stagnant. The labor movement has also continued to decline in size and influence.

The history of the US working class is a story of struggle, perseverance, and resilience. Working people have fought for better wages, working conditions, and social justice throughout American history. And while the challenges facing the working class today are significant, the history of the US working class shows that it is possible to overcome these challenges and build a more just and equitable society for all.



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