



Worked Over: The Corporate Sabotage of an American Community

Dimitra Doukas

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Worked Over is a book about large-scale social change seen at close range, through the lives of generations of working people in a small manufacturing center along New York State's old Erie Canal. Their compelling stories add a new dimension to current debates over corporate power and the public good. Dimitra Doukas draws on ten years of ethnographic and historical research on the Mohawk River Valley towns of Herkimer, Illion, Frankfort, and Mohawk, where the Remington company, maker of arms and typewriters among other things, was for many years the backbone of a thriving regional society. Corporate takeover of the varied Remington enterprises in 1886 sent shock waves through this society, ushering in a century of social distress and decreasing political autonomy. Since the 1970s, the area has suffered mightily from deindustrialization. Local experience, Doukas finds, has shaped an American culture of strongly egalitarian ideals. From this perspective, the region's present plight appears, to many in the region, as a betrayal of American values. Knitting together the ethnographic present, the remembered past, and the historical past, the author tracks today's discontent to the dawn of the modern corporate era for a revealing and intimate look at the rise of a new political and economic power structure.

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