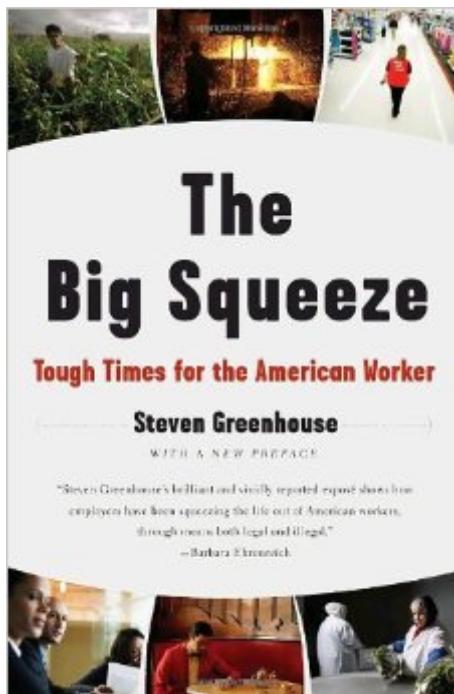


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# The Big Squeeze: Tough Times For The American Worker



## **Synopsis**

Why, in the world's most affluent nation, are so many corporations squeezing their employees dry? In this fresh, carefully researched book, New York Times reporter Steven Greenhouse explores the economic, political, and social trends that are transforming America's workplaces, including the decline of the social contract that created the world's largest middle class and guaranteed job security and good pensions. We meet all kinds of workers—white-collar and blue-collar, high-tech and low-tech, middle-class and low-income—as we see shocking examples of injustice, including employees who are locked in during a hurricane or fired after suffering debilitating, on-the-job injuries. With pragmatic recommendations on what government, business and labor should do to alleviate the economic crunch, *The Big Squeeze* is a balanced, consistently revealing look at a major American crisis.

## **Book Information**

Paperback: 384 pages

Publisher: Anchor; Reprint edition (February 10, 2009)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1400096529

ISBN-13: 978-1400096527

Product Dimensions: 5.2 x 0.8 x 8 inches

Shipping Weight: 9.6 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.4 out of 5 stars— See all reviews (38 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #290,887 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #64 in Books > Law > Business > Labor & Employment #65 in Books > Law > Specialties > Labor Law #222 in Books > Business & Money > Economics > Labor & Industrial Relations

## **Customer Reviews**

The book is both an overview of the deteriorated state of affairs for American workers as well as a few up close and personal looks at some of those so affected. For one brief generation after WWII, American workers empowered through union contracts, achieved a somewhat harmonious status with their employers, which included good wages and benefits and expectations of job security. And the government provided support as well, especially for veterans. But that's not the way things are now. As the author so well examines, employees are now viewed as mere factors of production and can be subjected to egregious capriciousness. They now can be fired arbitrarily, forced to work off the clock, have their time sheets altered, forced to work as so-called independent contractors or

part-time, etc. Employee wages have been flat for over thirty years, despite increasing productivity over those years, while CEO pay has skyrocketed. The labor movement is a mere shell of its former self with private sector union membership being at the same density as one hundred years ago. Advances in computers and telecommunications have facilitated shipping even high tech jobs overseas; trade agreements have enabled establishing production off shore for intra-corporate trade; and immigration is having profound impacts on jobs and wages domestically. Those left behind after downsizing have to redouble their efforts with apparently little appreciation by many employers. The traditional way to advancement, education, is increasingly becoming out of reach for many because of the costs. American workers have truly become an afterthought or invisible. There really is nothing in this book that has not been discussed repeatedly in the electronic media, books, and newspapers over the last several years.

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