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Political Science

The Unworthy: A Blue Collar Approach to Fixing America's Economy

Dr. Robert Daniels
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★★★☆☆
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America is a nation where “privilege is valued over work” and where the “grotesquely greedy and disturbingly dysfunctional” ruling elite not only rewrite the rules of the game but also “set about corrupting our referees.” Such is the angry lament at the core of Robert Daniels’ short work of political commentary. While he does resort to some very unflattering name-calling when talking about the “pinheads” in previous administrations whom he charges with getting the country into its current mess, *The Unworthy* is not just about placing blame; it also offers correctives to fix what he says they broke.

A retired air force officer and medical doctor, Daniels does not technically qualify for the “Blue-Collar Economist” label he has given himself, but he does write from the point of view of the common man. As someone who has suffered financial ruin due to what he claims is the corruption of the American system by the super wealthy, Daniels speaks as a man with an empty wallet and a heavy heart. His anger and frustration is that of the “brave and noble souls” of Occupy Wall Street to whom he dedicates this fifty-page treatise.

This work should play well to that audience, as well as to any American who has lost or fears losing their job, their home, or their savings. The wealthy elite Daniels criticises are unlikely to pick up a copy of *The Unworthy*, and if they did they would probably dismiss it as a liberal rant. That is unfortunate because Daniels’ slim volume, although quite vituperative at times, does contain some very solid, commonsense ideas that could form the basis for a discussion—not that anyone in the current political climate seems to care about what the other side has to say.

Daniels lists twelve steps he believes should be taken to restore the economic, political,

and moral health of America. He does not go into great detail in any of them, save one: universal health care. To address health care, the author draws on his training and experience as a doctor as well as his own sufferings as a patient. Daniels presents a strong and emotional case for reorganizing the American health-care system, which, if not fixed over the next decade, he predicts, will "be responsible for ten million families going bankrupt and five hundred thousand needless deaths."

The Unworthy is not a scholarly blueprint for fixing what is broken in modern-day America. It is instead an outline, a set of talking and thinking points meant to spur others into pushing for and taking action to "recreate the country America was in the '50s, '60s, and '70s, minus the Vietnam War." Perhaps more speech than book, or more editorial than white paper, *The Unworthy* is nonetheless valuable for presenting a set of ideas for voters and, hopefully, for policy makers to consider as they set about trying to restore the American dream for all of the people—not just the wealthiest 1 percent.

Mark McLaughlin