



The Working Poor: Invisible in America

David K. Shipler

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“Nobody who works hard should be poor in America,” writes Pulitzer Prize winner David Shipler. Clear-headed, rigorous, and compassionate, he journeys deeply into the lives of individual store clerks and factory workers, farm laborers and sweat-shop seamstresses, illegal immigrants in menial jobs and Americans saddled with immense student loans and paltry wages. They are known as the working poor.

They perform labor essential to America’s comfort. They are white and black, Latino and Asian--men and women in small towns and city slums trapped near the poverty line, where the margins are so tight that even minor setbacks can cause devastating chain reactions. Shipler shows how liberals and conservatives are both partly right--that practically every life story contains failure by both the society and the individual. Braced by hard fact and personal testimony, he unravels the forces that confine people in the quagmire of low wages. And unlike most works on poverty, this book also offers compelling portraits of employers struggling against razor-thin profits and competition from abroad. With pointed recommendations for change that challenge Republicans and Democrats alike, **The Working Poor** stands to make a difference.

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