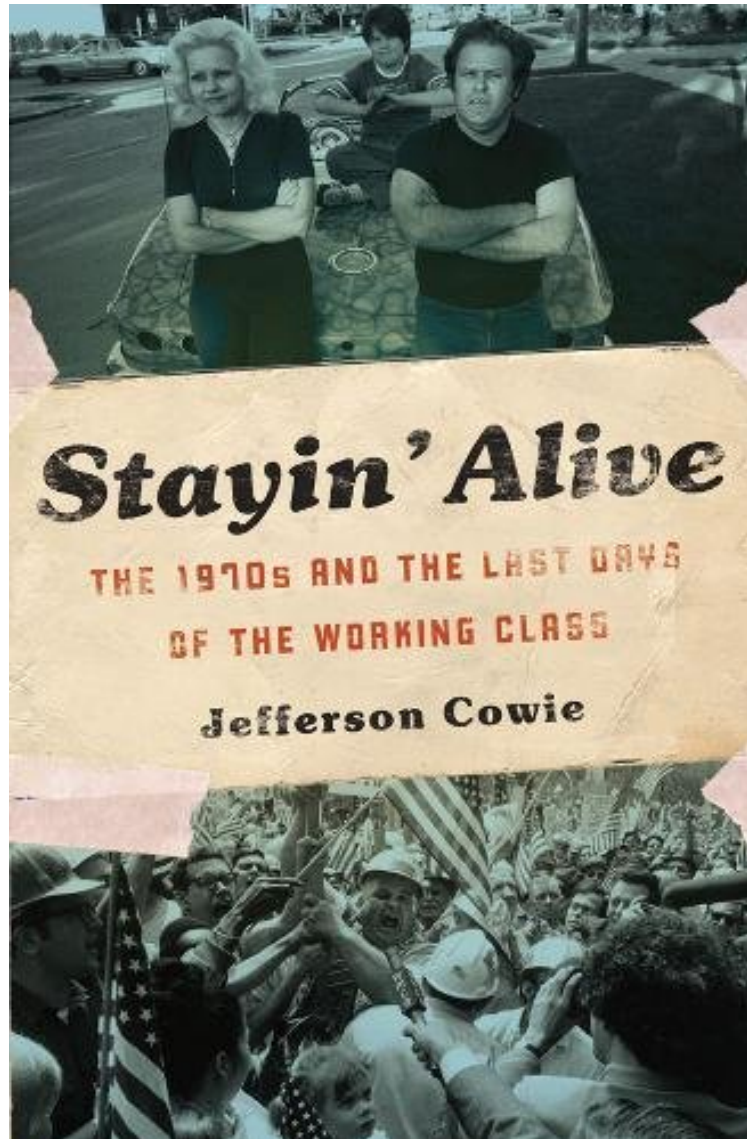


[Download] Stayin Alive: The 1970s and the Last Days of the Working Class

Stayin Alive: The 1970s and the Last Days of the Working Class

Jefferson R. Cowie

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Jefferson R. Cowie : Stayin Alive: The 1970s and the Last Days of the Working Class before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Stayin Alive: The 1970s and the Last Days of the Working Class:

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Cowie gets tedious detailing the labor history of those times yet those ...By Joe WardI was a teen and young adult in the 1970s. I sort of remember those days but I really wasn't paying attention. This book explains events that I vaguely remember but didn't really care about back then, but should

have. Cowie gets tedious detailing the labor history of those times yet those details are important for understanding the ultimate triumph of the ruling class over the workers. He talks a lot about George McGovern, Nixon and Carter, describing the utter perfidy exhibited by politicians and labor leaders alike, in the pivotal decade of the '70. The most interesting chapters were about the cultural history of the times. His discussions of Merle Haggard, Bruce Springsteen, and Devo, among others, are fascinating. Cowie does a good job making his case that the 1970s were the years the New Deal came to an end, organized labor was crushed, and the working class decisively lost the class war.⁴ of 5 people found the following review helpful. Dare to Struggle Dare to Win Dare to Snuggle Dare to Grin By Reckless Reader A great piece of historical writing that deserves a close reading by anyone who has ever wondered how we descended from the great days of FDR, JFK, LBJ, and the Warren Court to W, Drumpf, and the Roberts Court... a lively and well-researched account of the pivotal '70's, when corporate America decided to "re-take" the land from the new Sixties generation, and how the working class got ground to smithereens in the process - how the working class was gutted by economic and political decision making and policy implementation designed to keep them in check and submission so a new Gilded Age could emerge. The book becomes ever more relevant as the economy constricts more and more and narrows the choice for working people to either accept poverty or resist with all their might.⁶⁰ of 63 people found the following review helpful. Recovering Broken Dreams By John Metzgar This book is an exhilarating combination of political, economic, and cultural history written as if somebody besides a history professor might be interested. I turned 27 in 1970, and though only semi-conscious of all the things that were going on as covered in Stayin' Alive, I lived the decade and experienced what Jefferson Cowie calls "the last days of the working class" almost exactly as he portrays it. There is still an American working class, and by any sensible social science definition, it is still a substantial majority of all the people who work for a living. What was lost in Cowie's "last days" was the possibility of a "vibrant, multi-cultural, and gender conscious" reorganization of a working class capable of effective collective action as a class. Cowie sometimes argues, sometimes merely "suggests," and sometimes simply assumes that a "New Popular Front" of working-class unity was possible in the early years of what finally got tagged as the Me Decade. How this possibility was lost through a complex causal web involving the rise of the New Right, the limits of the New Deal, stagflation, Viet Nam, as well as white guys behaving badly in the face of racial and gender cultural revolutions is what Stayin' Alive both documents and mourns. The book is sometimes a downer because it is a story of worthy hopes dashed, but in telling that story it renews the possibility, or at least the idea of it, and that should help a new generation recover it as it steps into history downstream from the "sound of things falling apart" in the '70s. Jack Metzgar

A wide-ranging cultural and political history that will forever redefine a misunderstood decade, Stayin Alive is prize-winning historian Jefferson Cowie's remarkable account of how working-class America hit the rocks in the political and economic upheavals of the 1970s. In this edgy and incisive book part political intrigue, part labor history, with large doses of American music, film and television lore Cowie, with an ear for the power and poetry of vernacular speech (Cleveland Plain Dealer), reveals America's fascinating path from rising incomes and optimism of the New Deal to the widening economic inequalities and dampened expectations of the present. Winner of the 2011 Francis Parkman Prize from the Society of American Historians for the Best Book on American History Winner of the 2011 Merle Curti Prize from the Organization of American Historians for the Best Book in American Social History Winner of the 2011 Labor History Best Book Prize Winner of the 2011 Best Book Award from the United Association for Labor Education

From Booklist There is no question that recent decades have been tough times for the so-called working class. The decline in power and influence of organized labor, foreign competition in industries like automotive and steel, and the shift to a service-oriented economy have eroded the chances for many workers to maintain the benefits of a middle-class lifestyle. Cowie charts this decline in a wide-ranging survey that moves from factory floors to union halls to the upper levels of corporate, union, and government bureaucracies. To his credit, Cowie doesn't allow broad themes to obscure the price paid by individual workers, and the testimonies of those who saw their economic position being squeezed is both disturbing and moving. Cowie's sympathies are obvious, and this is far from a balanced account. From the auto plants to mines to farm fields, he shows workers victimized by corporate greed and distant union and government officials. Still, as a portrayal of a decade that saw a great shift in the status of millions of people, this work is a valuable piece of social history. --Jay Freeman Will long stand as the finest and most sophisticated portrait of politics and culture in the American 1970s. E.J. Dionne Gives the best sense of the way that it felt to live through the decade Cowie's book captures the contradictory nature of the 1970s politics better than almost any other ever written about the period. Kim Phillips-Fein, Dissent One of the best books of 2010. Joan Walsh, Salon Might be the most groundbreaking and original national history of a working class since E.P. Thompson's Making of the English Working Class. Steven Colatrella, New Politics