

(Free pdf) Only One Thing Can Save Us: Why America Needs a New Kind of Labor Movement

# Only One Thing Can Save Us: Why America Needs a New Kind of Labor Movement

*Thomas Geoghegan*

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**Thomas Geoghegan : Only One Thing Can Save Us: Why America Needs a New Kind of Labor Movement** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Only One Thing Can Save Us: Why America Needs a New Kind of Labor Movement:

23 of 24 people found the following review helpful. A must-read for anyone who cares about the future of the U.S. By John Wasik This is an essential read for anyone interested in the future of the middle class in this country. At first, the

scenario that Geoghegan presents is a disturbing yet familiar one: Wages for most Americans aren't even coming close to keeping up with the cost of living, much less financing a dignified lifestyle. Then he weaves an interesting patchwork of how this crazy quilt of inequality came to be: Employers are heading full speed ahead in this globalized race to the bottom. Propelled by CEOs with outlandish salaries and stock options, multi-national corporations know that they have cover in the political system to abuse workers. In Geoghegan's gentle, Socratic and conversational style, he gets the dialogue flowing. How can we raise wages and bring back lost benefits like real pensions (not faux retirement vehicles like 401ks)? The partial answer is the right to organize, which is being seen throughout the country in front of McDonald's and WalMarts. A more comprehensive answer is to change the political climate so that employee organizations are not seen as socialist subterfuge. That's the most daunting challenge of this book. But please read this book and discuss it with your friends, neighbors, associates, co-workers and elected officials. The time is right for the timeless message of taking action through grassroots organization. This book is full of hopeful ideas that can work -- if only we get away from cable TV, advertising and the corporate propaganda that is ruining the country's heart and soul.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Very disappointed in this book  
By Priscilla Ciccariello  
Very disappointed in this book. No real answer to his title question. And there is no reference to the unfair international Trade deals such as North American Free Trade (NAFTA) which viscerated the U.S. trade deal and left the unions with no workers or factories. The mid-west was left with home foreclosures and unemployment. The U.S. with no industries, no garment industry, no manufacturing - fast food and a minimum wage. Didn't find this discussed helpfully in the books starting with the Taft-Hartley Act and other discriminatory laws against unions, ending with these unfair international corporate trade deals. Besides it was wordy, and didn't really answer the title's question. .0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Great read!  
By Customer  
This book is a great read, and as topical (and relevant) as ever. Now more than ever, labor needs a way forward, and this book is a great map. Alternating between "in the park" legal-ese, and anecdotes, this book will engage anyone in today's working class.

Is labor's day over or is labor the only real answer for our time? In this new book, National Book Critics Circle Award finalist and labor lawyer Thomas Geoghegan argues that even as organized labor seems to be crumbling, a revived—but different—labor movement is now more relevant than ever in our increasingly unequal society. The inequality reshaping the country goes beyond money and income: the workplace is more authoritarian than ever, and we have even less of a say over our conditions at work. He tells us stories, sometimes humorous but more often chilling, about problems working people like his own clients—cabdrivers, cashiers, even Chicago public school teachers—now face in our largely union-free economy. He then explains why a new kind of labor movement (and not just more higher education) will be crucial for saving what is left of the middle class; pushing Keynes's original, sometimes forgotten ideas for getting the rich to invest and reduce our balance of trade; and promoting John Dewey's "democratic way of life"—one that would start in the schools and continue in our places of work. A "public policy" book that is compulsively readable, *Only One Thing Can Save Us* is vintage Geoghegan, blending acerbic and witty commentary with unparalleled insight into the real dynamics (and human experience) of working in America today.

"I doubt any writer has suffered longer over the plight of American unions or described their troubles more vividly than Thomas Geoghegan."—Bookforum "A fluid writer, Geoghegan devotes the bulk of his engaging book to that famous question: What is to be done?"—Commonweal Magazine "Wonderful."—David Bensman, *The American Prospect* "History shows that the ideas that grow into legislation need an expansive advocacy to fertilize their bloom—which is why Geoghegan's book is so useful."—*The New York Times Book Review* "A valuable contribution to current debates about the future of the labor movement. The U.S. labor movement can often be an intellectually bereft place, and Geoghegan deserves a lot of credit for the contributions he's made to combatting its debilitating stolidity."—Jacobin "Contributes passion and knowledge to the work of rebuilding the backbone of American democracy—thriving workers."—*Minnesota Educator*