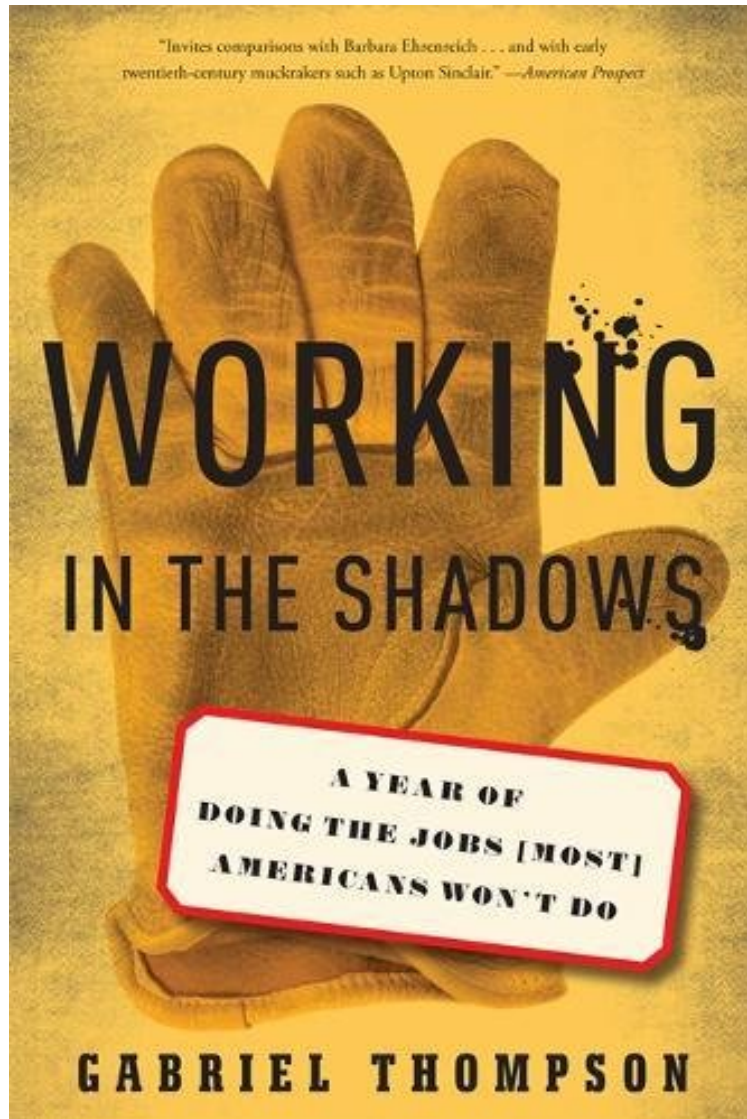


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## Working in the Shadows: A Year of Doing the Jobs (Most) Americans Won't Do

Gabriel Thompson

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**Gabriel Thompson : Working in the Shadows: A Year of Doing the Jobs (Most) Americans Won't Do** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Working in the Shadows: A Year of Doing the Jobs (Most) Americans Won't Do:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. One of the best books I've read in a long timeBy Susan

Anderson One of the best books I've read in a long time. I read it originally as an e book, but ordered a paper copy to share with friends. It is an inside look at the lives of the people in country who faithfully perform the tasks that most people don't want to do and that we take for granted. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Interesting book but skip the conclusion! By S. Block This helped made me to appreciate the work I don't have to do. It was a very interesting look at a day laborer's life - very hard work, often dangerous, with very little pay. I'm glad I read it. However, the problem I have is that the first 95% of the book was honest and unbiased. The last 5% was a political bashing. The author went completely off course and dedicated his final chapter to putting 100% of the blame on "Wall Street" for the last recession and "corporate greed" for all the hardship day laborers face. He then suggests that unions are the answer to the troubles the working man faces. Unfortunately, life isn't that simple, and there are a myriad of reasons why capitalism isn't a perfect economic system and why unions aren't always our savior. There are constructive ways we could improve the poor working guy's life - bashing corporations and "Wall Street" doesn't help. 2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Interesting read By Philbert I just finished this book and found it an interesting read. I live in an agricultural area, so we have many Hispanic workers both documented, and undocumented. Much of it is back breaking field work, but we also have a vibrant community that provides manufacturing jobs at or above minimum wage. I own two businesses, and except for entry level, I pay above minimum, offer advancement, and health benefits. Tough to do in this economy, but I feel it is good business to take care of my associate family. It also yields a more satisfied and loyal workforce. The weakest parts of the book are some of his conclusions. Unionizing is going to be tough, and may actually hurt in some ways. The author is spot on, however, in stating that we need comprehensive immigration reform. Our economy needs these workers, and they add much to our communities. As he points out in Alabama, they are often an unseen part of the community, and contribute to the overall economy. Overall, I recommend this book. I think you will find it interesting.

What is it like to do the back-breaking work of immigrants? To find out, Gabriel Thompson spent a year working alongside Latino immigrants, who initially thought he was either crazy or an undercover immigration agent. He stooped over lettuce fields in Arizona, and worked the graveyard shift at a chicken slaughterhouse in rural Alabama. He dodged taxis not always successfully as a bicycle delivery boy for an upscale Manhattan restaurant, and was fired from a flower shop by a boss who, he quickly realized, was nuts. As one coworker explained, These jobs make you old quick. Back spasms occasionally keep Thompson in bed, where he suffers recurring nightmares involving iceberg lettuce and chicken carcasses. Combining personal narrative with investigative reporting, Thompson shines a bright light on the underside of the American economy, exposing harsh working conditions, union busting, and lax government enforcement while telling the stories of workers, undocumented immigrants, and desperate US citizens alike, forced to live with chronic pain in the pursuit of 8 an hour.