

# DOWNLOAD PDF RACE AND LABOR MATTERS IN THE NEW U.S. ECONOMY

## Chapter 1 : Race and Labor Matters in the New U.S. Economy by Manning Marable

*Race and Labor Matters in the United States is a sobering book revealing that the color line remains bound with the growing poverty and declining wages for all workers. This book is a seminal work and should be required reading for students of race relations and political economy in America.*

Read the Full Transcript Amna Nawaz: And now back to our lead story, the new trade pact between the U. So, let me just start off with this understanding. Obviously, the president has a priority of rewriting big trade deals. He came in with that mission. Big picture, how is this new deal different from the old one? We have still got this North American supply chain from the U. There are some changes that I think are significant, particularly the rules about how cars have to be made. If you try to sell milk into Canada, the deal is a little bit better. There are provisions to try to keep countries from devaluing their currencies to gain competitive advantage. There are some important tweaks. There are really modest changes on the whole. So I want to go into some of those specifics in a moment. But just again, we heard the president, you mentioned, hailing this. He tweeted about it this morning. And he wrote that this is a great deal for all three countries, that it solves the many deficiencies and mistakes of NAFTA, greatly opens markets to our farmers and manufacturers, reduces trade barriers to the “ he says will bring our three great nations together. On this fixing part specifically, what do you think this deal fixed that needed fixing? Yes, you knew, whatever Trump came back with, he was going to say it was the greatest deal ever negotiated. But to sort of zero in, I think the biggest thing that has needed fixing is the stubbornly low wages in Mexico. Wages in Mexico are actually lower relative to U. So what they have tried to do in this deal was sort of force wages up by fiat, saying more of the content in cars has to be made by high-wage workers. Mexican labor standards have to be tougher in order to allow unions to organize, some effort to really go after a problem that, interestingly, Democrats and the labor left have been complaining about for years. Those specific changes in the auto industry, though, do those help the U. Does that mean higher wages or more jobs or different car prices? We will have to see. I mean, the auto industry is complicated. It could play out in a lot of different ways. You mentioned dairy farmers, the movement of milk from the United States to Canada. This will open up that market, right, greater access to the Canadian market. What kind of impact is that going to have here? Quebec is having a provincial election today. Prime Minister Trudeau in Canada needs support from Quebec to be reelected when he has to go to the polls next year. And the president promised in this negotiation he was going to do something about it, and he has. What do you see when you look at the overall deal that the U. I mean, he had called for a much more radical rewriting of the auto rules. He wanted a sunset clause, where the deal would automatically have to be renegotiated every five years. What they got is, the agreement survives, and their access to the huge U. I got to ask you about the way in which this deal came through too. It was a long negotiation, about a little over a year. It got really tough in terms of the public talk sometimes. What does that say about setting precedent for future deals and other countries? I mean, I think this is the bigger problem here. Trade negotiations have for decades now been conducted in a fairly collegial way. But countries tried to create a win-win. The president went into this one and create a win-lose. This deal was going to be better for the United States, and worse for Canada and Mexico. That cannot be a good thing long-term for our relations with those countries. Very quickly, less than 30 seconds. Now, is there a way to look at this and say, OK, the U. Democrats and Republicans have been so divided on this. Still too early to see then. We will follow it. Edward Alden, thanks for being here. Good to be with you. Listen to this Segment.

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## Chapter 2 : NPR Choice page

*Race and Labor Matters in the New U.S. Economy provides excellent advice to the labor movement and unions on improving their standing within the American society of the new millenium. (Lopez Matthews, The Journal of African American History).*

Download image As people of color grow as a share of the labor force and working class, there is increased opportunity to reduce racial disparities in wages and employment. Nearly two-thirds of all job openings are expected to be in occupations that require less than a postsecondary education, in other words, working-class jobs. Parents of all socioeconomic backgrounds aspire to send their children to college and this is a solid working-class value as well. Making this goal equally attainable requires leveling of financial barriers and eliminating inequities in academic preparation based on race, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status. In fact, eliminating student achievement gaps is essential to building a highly productive workforce, regardless of how many of those workers choose to attend college. Therefore, the accessibility and affordability of college is more than an aspirational goal of working-class parents. These outcomes are influenced by academic preparation, family income, and wealth. Unfortunately, the majority of African American and Hispanic students enter kindergarten in highly segregated schools where nearly half of their peers live in poverty. On average, students in these heavily minority, high poverty schools are less prepared when they start kindergarten in the fall and make less progress relative to the average over the course of the year than those in low poverty schools Garcia and Weiss It is imperative that the nation invests more in the future of its workforce by making it a priority to provide high-quality education for all children at all levels. This includes sizable public investments in early childhood education including high-quality pre-kindergarten to allow all children to begin their formal schooling years with similar levels of preparation. The long-term benefits of such investments are universal, resulting in an increasingly productive workforce that will boost economic growth and provide budgetary savings at the state and federal levels Bivens et al. In addition to academic preparation, racial and ethnic differences in family income and wealth pose another set of challenges for college affordability. Disinvestment of public dollars in higher education has resulted in more of a market-based system of funding higher education that contributes to rising tuition. This has made college less affordable for families with limited wealth. The fact that these changes are taking place as children of color represent a growing share of the school-aged population has serious implications, for example increased student debt, delaying or forgoing college altogether, and lower rates of completion among people of color. Solutions to these challenges require bold structural reform rather than incremental changes. Given that the segregated nature of schools and unequal distribution of resources follows from the segregated nature of neighborhoodsâ€”by race, ethnicity, and poverty concentrationâ€”reforms to education policy will be most effective if accompanied by reforms to housing policy Rothstein Other recommendations include severing the tie between local tax revenues and funding for public schools, or at a minimum, investing a larger share of state and local budgets in schools and jobs in racially and economically segregated communities rather than in jails and other systems of punishment. Bridging the racial generation gap to build working-class economic security is a win-win Ironically, as the current working class retiresâ€”contributing to the boost in future job openings for workers without a college degreeâ€”this also presents a risk of underinvestment in youth and schools. The coming racial and ethnic generation gap will require balancing the interests of a younger, poorer, more racially and ethnically diverse population and those of an older, wealthier, predominantly white population. This ethnic generation gap to be navigated is at the heart of Evenwel v. This is significant given the changing demographics of our country, because whites are, and will continue to be for some time, a much larger majority among older voting-age citizens than among the population as a whole. Despite these political tensions, older workers and retirees have a stake in working-class issues and racial equity. As the demographic transition of the working class continues, people of color will be a larger share of those supporting the Social

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Security and Medicare systems, providing the services used by the aging population and creating the demand that drives the economy. That means the tax revenues used to pay benefits will be increasingly drawn from the wages of nonwhite workers. Higher working-class wages strengthen these critical safety net programs and the overall economy. Higher wages are also important in attracting and retaining greater numbers of highly qualified workers to deliver critical services. There are clear motivations for taking a proactive approach to strengthening the working class in all the ways that have been described. It is less clear whether the changing demographics of the working class present an opportunity that can be seized to accomplish that goal. The answer to that question pivots on the intersection of race, racial identity, class, and politics. Racial identity is not a fixed concept Sociologists have noted how definitions of white and nonwhite changed as once-excluded minorities such as Irish, Italian, and Jewish peoples assimilated into the mainstream, thus retaining a white majority as population demographics neared a tipping point. In an article in *The American Prospect*, Richard Alba argues that more recent immigrants and children of ethnically and racially mixed families could follow a similar path. This is significant because the demographic shift of the population and working class hinges on the projected growth of the Hispanic population, which the Census Bureau assumes will continue to identify as such in perpetuity, regardless of multiracial births. While racial identity tends to be less fluid for biracial people with one black parent most self-identify or are identified by others as black, this is not the case among individuals of mixed Hispanic-white or Asian-white family background Liebler et al. Protecting voting rights of people of color is critical to restoring the economic bargaining power of the working class Even if the assumed norms of racial identity hold, there is little evidence that a future working class that is majority people of color will have any more power in the workforce than the current working class. During the elections, big business outspent unions by a margin of to-1 Draut This imbalance of political and economic power has led many working-class voters to disengage from the political process, but for different reasons. People of color are less likely to vote because of obstacles, whereas whites are less likely to vote due to cynicism or frustration with the economic and political elite. Regardless of the reasons for disengagement, the result has been a pool of voters who tend to be more educated and more conservative on economic issues than nonvoters Leighley and Nagler While there may be different reasons for disengagement among whites and people of color, protecting the voting rights of people of color is a solution that addresses both problems. These voters are among the growing ranks of working-class people of color—the same populations affected by laws that suppress voter participation by requiring specific forms of identification, limiting the times available to vote, or lifetime disenfranchisement of formerly incarcerated citizens. Recommendations for overcoming these challenges include systemic changes such as mandatory voting and restoring the Voting Rights Act, as well as tactical changes to the way in which voter engagement has traditionally been done. Establishing multiracial working-class solidarity to advance racial and class equality presents opportunities as well as challenges Since class identity has often been racialized, one of the greatest challenges to rebuilding the economic power of the working class lies in establishing multiracial solidarity on a national scale. Getting to that point requires honesty and a collective reckoning about race, white privilege, and institutional racism, with respect to the costs and benefits to each of us. Workers without a college degree were once able to provide a comfortable middle-class lifestyle on a union factory job. Draut argues that this was possible in part because most of those workers were white men who benefited from an entire social contract that had been written with them in mind. Once the civil rights movement began expanding equal opportunity to African Americans and blurring the old racial lines, new lines were drawn. This was also the beginning of the antiunion backlash that continues today. Had the Supreme Court ruled against CTA, it would have drastically weakened the middle class, especially among blacks who are disproportionately employed in the public sector. Though the threat of this particular case has been neutralized, future challenges are expected once the Supreme Court vacancy has been filled.

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