

# The Fissured Workplace

*David Weil*

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DAVID WEIL

## The Fissured Workplace

WHY WORK

BECAME SO BAD

FOR SO MANY AND



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**David Weil : The Fissured Workplace** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Fissured Workplace:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. making unions a thing of the past and causing a great strain on the working classBy Dana TomlinThis book gives an in depth look into modern business practices. How this notion of fissuring is causing extensive damage within big businesses in the public sector, making unions a thing of the past and causing a great strain on the working class. Before this book I was not fully aware of the impact outsourcing had on big business and I am extremely glad to have found this.This author writes to a specific audience, one with an economic background so it can be a little confusing at times but well worth the read.11 of 12 people found the

following review helpful. This is a path breaking book exploring and analyzing the ...By Jeffrey KeefeThis is a path breaking book exploring and analyzing the increasing complex employment relations as employers franchise, subcontract, and otherwise construct intermediaries to insulate themselves from the obligations of being an employers. It is a must read for anyone in the field0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five StarsBy K454Extremely well-written. Insightful as well as enlightening.

In the twentieth century, large companies employing many workers formed the bedrock of the U.S. economy. Today, on the list of big business's priorities, sustaining the employer-worker relationship ranks far below building a devoted customer base and delivering value to investors. As David Weil's groundbreaking analysis shows, large corporations have shed their role as direct employers of the people responsible for their products, in favor of outsourcing work to small companies that compete fiercely with one another. The result has been declining wages, eroding benefits, inadequate health and safety protections, and ever-widening income inequality.From the perspectives of CEOs and investors, fissioning--splitting off functions that were once managed internally--has been phenomenally successful. Despite giving up direct control to subcontractors and franchises, these large companies have figured out how to maintain the quality of brand-name products and services, without the cost of maintaining an expensive workforce. But from the perspective of workers, this strategy has meant stagnation in wages and benefits and a lower standard of living. Weil proposes ways to modernize regulatory policies so that employers can meet their obligations to workers while allowing companies to keep the beneficial aspects of this business strategy.

Authoritativehellip;As inequality has drawn increased public debate, most recently thanks to Thomas Piketty's influential work, the changing conditions of employment have gotten far too little attention. Work remains the prime source of income for most people. The fissioning of work, Weil finds, is one of the main factors in the widening gap between productivity and earnings because it allows corporations to batter down labor costspeoplesquo;s paycheckshellip;[The Fissured Workplace] shed[s] important new light on the resurgence of the power of finance and its connection to the debasement of work and income distribution. (Robert Kuttner New York of Books 2014-10-23)The kinds of workplace fissioning discussed heresubcontracting, franchising and global supply chainshave been the subjects of a number of studies detailing the employment effects that Weil describes. The Fissured Workplace is unusual in bringing this research together into an integrated, detailed and decidedly policy-oriented analysis. Through linking organizational strategies that share an underlying logic, it makes a compelling case that workplace fissioning should be given a more prominent place in analyses of the causes of growing inequality. Along the way, Weil shows that fissioning constitutes a fundamental and formidable challenge to existing employment regulationshellip;It makes a convincing case that the better regulation of fissured workplaces is a first step towards reversing the erosion of pay and conditions at the bottom of the labor market. (Virginia Doellgast Times Higher Education 2014-03-06)This book is an excellent application of institutional analysis in economics. In exacting detail, Weil describes the process by which employers subcontract business functions in pursuit of efficiencies, but often at the expense of employees. (D. C. Jacobs Choice 2014-07-01)With insight and precision, David Weil has brought to light the shell game played by so many modern business organizations. Today, the company whose logo is on your work shirt, smock, or ID badge may not be the one that recruits, hires, manages, pays, disciplines, and sometimes even houses you. This fracturing of the basic employer-employee relationship is reshaping lives and industries. If there's one book you should read about work today, this is it. (Richard Trumka, AFL-CIO President)The Fissured Workplace paints a striking picture of the underside of the U.S. labor market: the workers who service expensive hotels but need food stamps and income support for their families to survive; the 'independent contractors' who clean office buildings under contracts that pay below minimum wages; and hundreds of thousands of others struggling in an economy where you work not for branded name companies in the open light but for subcontractors behind the scenes. Weil documents the growth of the fissured labor market, tells us how it contributes to the impoverishment of America, and offers ways to make matters better. You will think differently about the world of work after reading this marvelous book. (Richard B. Freeman, Harvard University)The book persuasively argues that widening income inequality has less to do with technological innovations and more to do with organizational innovations. The deep dive that Weil does on subcontracting, franchising, and supply chains is a must-read for anyone interested in how these practices have affected pay and working conditions. He goes beyond just documenting what is happening and presents a detailed proposal on how and why we need to mend, through legislation and enforcement, the increasingly fissured relationship between workers and their employers. (Lisa M. Lynch, Dean, The Heller School for Social Policy and Management, Brandeis University)About the AuthorIn May 2014, David Weil became the U.S. Wage and Hour Administrator in the U.S. Department of Labor. Prior to that appointment, he was Peter and Deborah Wexler Professor of Management; Professor in the Department of Markets, Public Policy, and Law; and Everett W. Lord Distinguished Faculty Scholar at Boston University School of Management. He has also served as co-Director of the Transparency Policy Project at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government.