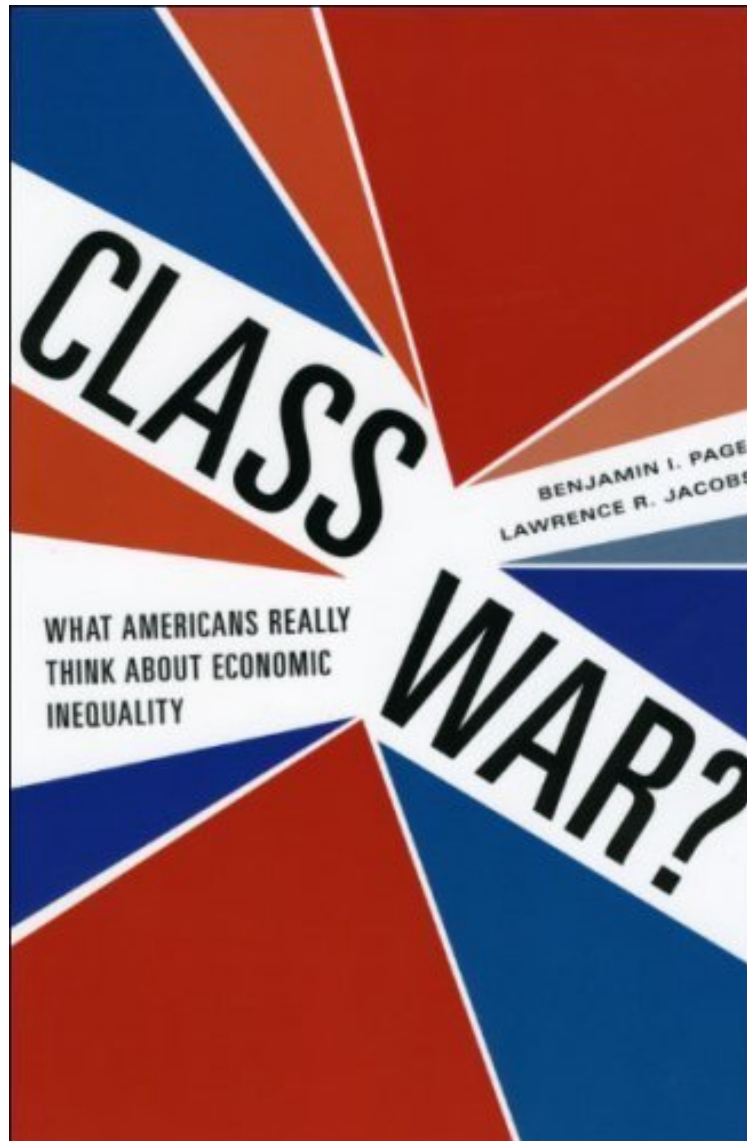


[Free pdf] Class War?: What Americans Really Think about Economic Inequality

Class War?: What Americans Really Think about Economic Inequality

Benjamin I. Page, Lawrence R. Jacobs

**Download PDF | ePub | DOC | audiobook | ebooks*



[Download](#)

[Read Online](#)

#989082 in eBooks 2009-08-01 2009-08-01 File Name: B002R81CNC | File size: 15.Mb

Benjamin I. Page, Lawrence R. Jacobs : Class War?: What Americans Really Think about Economic Inequality before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Class War?: What Americans Really Think about Economic Inequality:

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. What's Left in Class Warfare?By John M. FordAfter reviewing previous opinion research on wealth inequality, the authors launched their own 2007 Inequality Survey of attitudes

toward the distribution of wealth, the value of government programs, and the appropriate use of tax revenue. "The evidence shows that most Americans are both philosophically conservative and operationally liberal. They believe in the American Dream, individual initiative, and free markets. In the abstract, they are uneasy with government. But Americans are also pragmatic. When their well-being (and that of people they care about) is threatened, or when their dreams are blocked by forces beyond their control, they turn to concrete government programs for help--programs that would greatly decrease economic inequality. Most Americans are conservative egalitarians."The rest of the book summarizes responses to the Inequality Survey and makes a case that wealth inequality is a concern for the majority of Americans. They report that three quarters of all Americans, including majorities of Republicans and majorities of the wealthy themselves, believe that differences in income are too large. While sixty percent of Americans believe that significant differences in income are necessary in order to motivate hard work, there is wide recognition that there are gaps in the opportunities available to those born and raised in different circumstances. There is widespread support for expanding government aid for "...preschool, elementary, and college education, and for retraining displaced workers."The authors document their sources of previous research responsibly and present a reasonable account of their methods. These methods are described only briefly in the book's appendix, but there is a link to a web site with more extensive description, including a copy of the survey itself. Many of their questions do seem very generally worded. One wonders if the results would be different to more specific questions, particularly given the finding that Americans are more conservative in the abstract and liberal with respect to specific government interventions. The authors use the phrase "assumes facts not in evidence" when a discussion wanders into unsupported territory. The authors do some of this as they speculate about the reasons for their results. Claims that "GOP elites" are misleading and misrepresenting other Republicans are a bit shrill. Readers could benefit more from a clear definition of various levels of income and wealth accumulation than vague condemnations of the "fabulously wealthy." The authors' ideology shows in places and does suggest we use some caution with their conclusions. But the research itself seems to have been done professionally and well. It is worth reading.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful.
Good study, based on methodologically sound polls
Good study, based on methodologically sound polls, that shows how most Americans are liberal at the practical level but conservative at the ideological level. Which means that most Americans support Social Security, progressive taxation, inheritance tax, and other such concrete programs. The authors are accomplished academics and scale this down to a general audience.

0 of 1 people found the following review helpful.
GOOD BOOK
By Allyson schnoor
I was assigned to read this book by my Political Behaviour professor at the University of Iowa. I thought it was an easy read and benefited the class well. I would definitely recommend it.

Recent battles in Washington over how to fix America's fiscal failures strengthened the widespread impression that economic issues sharply divide average citizens. Indeed, many commentators split Americans into two opposing groups: uncompromising supporters of unfettered free markets and advocates for government solutions to economic problems. But such dichotomies, Benjamin Page and Lawrence Jacobs contend, ring false. In *Class War?* they present compelling evidence that most Americans favor free enterprise and practical government programs to distribute wealth more equitably. At every income level and in both major political parties, majorities embrace conservative egalitarianism--a philosophy that prizes individualism and self-reliance as well as public intervention to help Americans pursue these ideals on a level playing field. Drawing on hundreds of opinion studies spanning more than seventy years, including a new comprehensive survey, Page and Jacobs reveal that this worldview translates to broad support for policies aimed at narrowing the gap between rich and poor and creating genuine opportunity for all. They find, for example, that across economic, geographical, and ideological lines, most Americans support higher minimum wages, improved public education, wider access to universal health insurance coverage, and the use of tax dollars to fund these programs. In this surprising and heartening assessment, Page and Jacobs provide our new administration with a popular mandate to combat the economic inequity that plagues our nation.