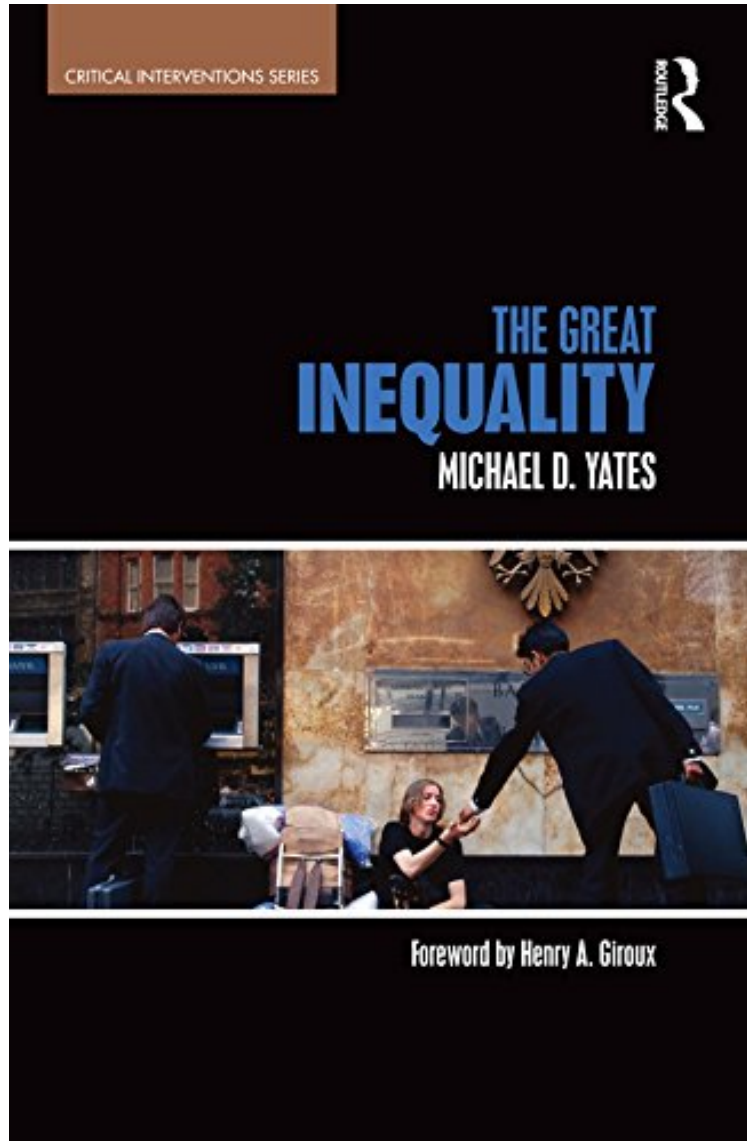


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The Great Inequality (Critical Interventions)

Michael D Yates

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Michael D Yates : The Great Inequality (Critical Interventions) before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Great Inequality (Critical Interventions):

5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. Michael D. Yates is a Visionary! By Virginia Simson Once I asked my "official" economist, Michael Hudson, if inequality was tied to having options. I clarified that I meant that wealth means you have options. He assured me that I was on the track. We need to take into account the comfort and security that wealth brings. Having the certainty of future wealth is nice, but wealth today makes a big difference because it gives me options if an emergency hits. If I don't have money in the bank, I might be able to borrow,

but I probably have to pay a pretty high interest rate. Some people will die in debt, while others will leave their children and grandchildren large piles of wealth. Surely this matters in terms of how we should think about inequality. Our government is the main system for redistributing income from the rich to the poor with programs such as food stamps, Medicaid or the earned income tax credit but there is an obvious problem because the policies adopted obviously don't change the distribution of income very much -- nor do income taxes on the rich. Corporate taxation is loaded with loopholes, so those who hold the stocks and bonds are really paying fully anyway with the legions of accountants and lawyers and then of course there are the tax havens! With seas of hidden money, no one can even say with authority how vast the gulf is between the rich and poor but we can surely take a look at the trends of growing inequality. And we can get honest; under these last days of the capitalist experiment not much is left of social responsibility or desire to redistribute the planet's riches. Poverty is the worst form of violence, Ghandi said and the state these days doesn't seem to care one whit. Even the most curmudgenly conservative this inequality issue is the most timely discussion of the day. Let Yates reveal to you his complex, yet simple, analysis of the reasons for rising inequality and what to do about it. It's gonna take visionaries to solve the basic conundrum and that's where Michael D. Yates comes in! It's not just policies at the core of the problem; it's The System that's the problem but no one's going to cover you in roses if you say so, but it must be said. Yates not only says it- it shows the vast outline and submits the best collection of solutions I have ever read. And before we get too far, let me say it's frightfully great writing, as the Brits would say. Very fine, utterly compelling and INSPIRING without being a brow-beater. The book is not a agitprop exercise, it is a finely constructed, compelling document that absolutely illuminates how capitalism is not healthy for the poor any other living thing. I am a voracious reader and I have seldom looked forward to the publication of a book as much as I did The Great Inequality. I have read The Other America several times and often wished I could be the clever one to rewrite Harrington's material to match current times and trends, particularly following the Piketty treatise. Having torn off the wrapping, the first thing I did was hit the index. What? No remarks about Veblen? Guy Standing? Michael Hudson? Tax havens? Where is the entry for plutocracy? Where is the long list of charts and graphics? Ah -- but here are the references the racism, the sexism, the nature of imperialism and dystopia in spades! Here is an index of the landscape of despair -- and words about the routes up the steep mountain where we are trying to create change and our options at this time. Here is one of the best bits when you start doing the backward trace: "We are the 99 percent" suggests an "us versus them" politics that foreshadows the class perspective so badly needed in the United States. The issue here is not the literal meaning of the "1 percent" but power. Whether we speak of income or wealth, power resides in the households of the 1 percent. They own our workplaces and control our labor. They construct nearly every aspect of society -- government, media, schools, culture -- to maintain and increase their dominance over us. What the slogan "We are the 99 percent" has done is bring power into the open and help change the political landscape. p.159 - 160 Hopefully with that clearly in mind, you can put the rest of the book to see how forthrightly Yates takes us to a place where with his help we get some tools and insight into what will bring the 1% awesome POWER into full-time view and help change the political inequality, not through endless tagging, trying to cite figures and charts you can never remember anyway, but through our efforts when it seems like we are living in a time they have totally boxed us in. Chapters such as "Work is Hell" will show on a case by case basis what that control has led us to endure, while others will show how capitalism makes it essential that we all get dehumanized and eaten by "the system" that requires the submission of each and every worker to the dictates of the eternal need for greater profit. Other chapters lead you to other writers and thinkers on inequality designed to illuminate other facets of the boots on our necks put there by unreasoning and morally repugnant plutocrats. Some may sigh in relief you don't have to try to analyze Piketty all by yourself! Yates has the chops to do it and he does. To me the best parts of the book are his solutions and his Dickensian ability to expose the telling details. This is not economics, it's not sociology, this is instructive anthropology of a nation sliding ever further into hell -- although the last chapter shows you some global comparison. If I had one emphasis to make to you, it is to read his fine chapter "Still Slavery By Another Name". It is full of insight and bulging with suggestions of what we can do. I think next time I'll bug him until he does something similar about a focus on women's issues in this country! If this country needs something quickly to stop the degeneration we need to break the awesome power of the plutocrats -- buying off the politicians which leads to all the hideous corporate takeovers called free trade agreements AND the a coalition of oppressed people of color (who have the boot on the necks for too long!) to provide leadership in an alliance with progressives. Take that in and then read p. 63-65. Digest it and be joyful Yates took the time to write this book! This book is the gem in the crown of Yates' work. Read them all! Despite the desperate things he saying just so enjoyable. As we say, Agitate! Educate! Organize! And get your friends, family, and political allies to read this book and discuss it. In this year of electioneering, it is easy to forget we are fighting a capitalist system, not voting in saviours to the death of the American soul. Everyone who learns from this book has truly added to the the real political revolution. We have an option no matter where we sit in this great inequality and that is this: we can make this place better. The uploaded picture was done by someone in Africa and as Giroux says we need our symbols!

A growing inequality in income and wealth marks modern capitalism, and it negatively affects nearly every aspect of our lives, especially those of the working class. It is and will continue to be the central issue of politics in almost every nation on earth. In this book, the author explains inequality in clear, passionate, and intelligent prose: what it is, why it matters, how it affects us, what its underlying causes are, and what we might do about it. This book was written to encourage informed radical action by working people, the unemployed, and the poor, uniquely blending the author's own experiences with his ability to make complex issues comprehensible to a mass audience. This book will be excellent for courses in a variety of disciplines, and it will be useful to activists and the general reading public.

"It is suddenly in fashion to decry inequality and its impact on society and the global economy. But Michael Yates has been warning us about growing inequality for years, and explaining how it is not just an inconvenient side effect of poorly managed capitalism but rather part of its very core. Capitalism by definition is unjust. Once again Michael Yates provides a clear, timely, and powerful book explaining our economy, dissecting varieties of mainstream economic thought, and inspiring readers to fight for a more just world." Stephanie Luce, Professor of Labor Studies, Murphy Institute/CUNY and Professor of Sociology, The Graduate Center CUNY "One of the many things I've always admired about Michael Yates is his courage. Yates has the guts to go inside the belly of the beast and return with a tale as stark and immediate as Dante's descent into the Inferno. His vitally important book *The Great Inequality* is nothing less than a necropsy of the collateral damage inflicted by unfettered capitalism, detailing in vivid prose how a predatory economic system has wrecked communities, immiserated lives, looted the environment and subverted our democracy. But Yates never submits to fatalism. His book is an alarm for our attenuated times, piercing through the white noise of the media, calling us off our couches and onto the streets." Jeffrey St. Clair, editor CounterPunch, author of *Born Under a Bad Sky*. "As economists and pundits make glib pronouncements about the inevitability, the immorality, or the paradox of inequality, Michael Yates lays bare the real source: capitalism. In crystal clear prose, he demonstrates that the system we are currently burdened with produces inequality in all realms of social life, resulting in a prolonged social death not only for the exploited class but for the planet as a whole. Read this book. Heed its warning. Our very survival may depend on it." Robin D. G. Kelley, author of *Freedom Dreams: The Black Radical Imagination* "This is another fine book by Michael Yates. *The Great Inequality* is an account of the roots of the momentous rising inequality we are witnessing today, which it describes as the 'consequence of uncontested employer power.' Yates' timely prescription is not so much focused on policy changes (although he discusses these aplenty) as it is on the need for a particular kind or orientation of action in solidarity: we need 'radical change, with black America in the lead.' Read this book if you want to understand the present and perhaps help change the future." Eric Schutz, Prof. Emeritus, Rollins College "In a series of essays, he takes stock of the human and environmental costs of growing inequality, and zeroes in on its root causes. In the process, he offers a valuable primer to both newcomers and experienced activists for how to make the case for a better world." Leela Yellesetty, SocialistWorker.org "The Great Inequality is classic Yates. It combines a critique of national and global economic trends that's highly readable and accessible for non-experts, with a call to action by the latter." Steve Early, Counterpunch

About the Author Michael D. Yates is a writer, editor, and labor educator. He is currently associate editor of *Monthly* magazine and editorial director of *Monthly Press*. He served as professor of economics at University of Pittsburgh-Johnstown from 1969-2001 and adjunct professor of labor studies at UMass-Amherst from 1998-2014. He and his wife Karen Korenoski have been traveling the United States for the past fourteen years. These travels are recounted in his book *Cheap Motels and a Hot Plate: an Economist's Travelogue*.