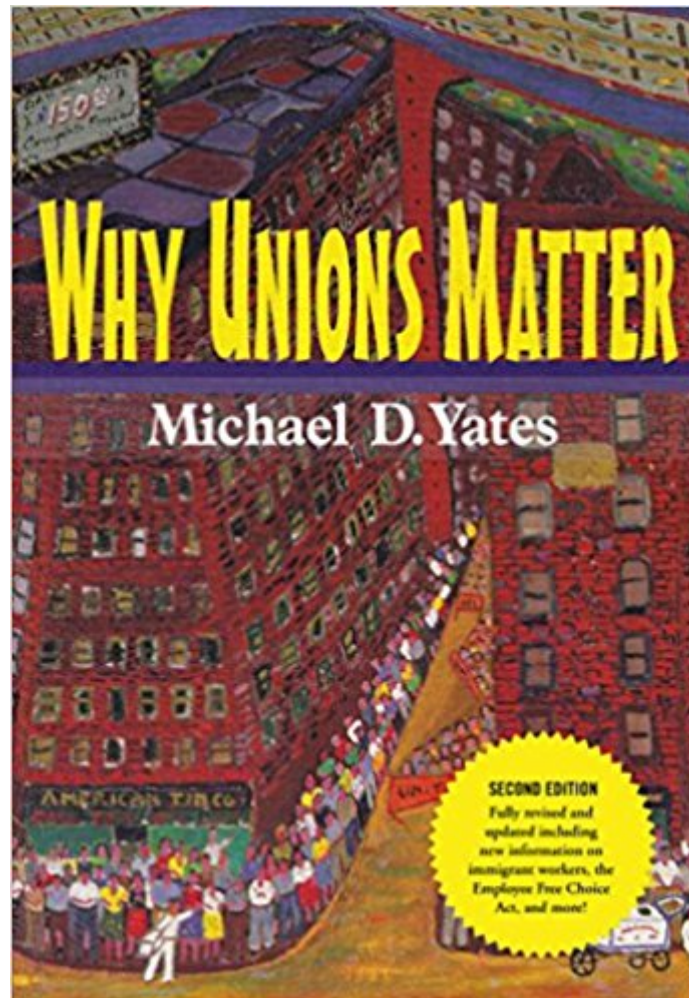




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# Why Unions Matter



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## Synopsis

In this new edition of *Why Unions Matter*, Michael D. Yates shows why unions still matter. Unions mean better pay, benefits, and working conditions for their members; they force employers to treat employees with dignity and respect; and at their best, they provide a way for workers to make society both more democratic and egalitarian. Yates uses simple language, clear data, and engaging examples to show why workers need unions, how unions are formed, how they operate, how collective bargaining works, the role of unions in politics, and what unions have done to bring workers together across the divides of race, gender, religion, and sexual orientation. The new edition not only updates the first, but also examines the record of the New Voice slate that took control of the AFL-CIO in 1995, the continuing decline in union membership and density, the Change to Win split in 2005, the growing importance of immigrant workers, the rise of worker centers, the impacts of and labor responses to globalization, and the need for labor to have an independent political voice. This is simply the best introduction to unions on the market.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Yates, an economics professor and labor educator whose earlier books focused on workers legal rights (*Power on the Job*, South End, 1994), here seeks to cover a much broader canvas: how labor unions work, the victories they have won on the battlefields of sexism and racism, and an argument for unions as the sole means by which working people can obtain dignity, equity, and power. Written in a personal, anecdotal style, yet well documented, this book is particularly successful in the

chapters that focus on the nuts and bolts of union activities (collective bargaining, structures, organizing), an area largely ignored by current business and political literature. For this reason alone it is a valuable addition to large public and academic libraries. Donna L. Schulman, Cornell Univ. Libs., Ithaca, NY Copyright 1999 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

"A comprehensive, readable introduction to the history, structure, functioning, and yes, the problems of United States unions. For labor and political activists just coming on the scene or veterans looking for that missing overview, this is the best place to start."-â Kim Moody, founder of Labor Notes, author of *Workers in a Lean World* and *U.S. Labor in Trouble and Transition*

I am trying to become better informed on the history of the labor movement. I found this book very informative and helpful. As a worker who never had the chance to belong to a union, I am always looking for more knowledge in this area. It was not a difficult read either. I would highly recommend this to anyone who wants to learn more about unions and why they are still needed.

This book hits all the highlights and explains why labor needs to be organized. Sometimes the book takes on a decidedly political tone, which is understandable because of the relationship Beltway folks have with the little guy. There is a bunch of information and a good historical prospective on Unions. He doesn't pull any punches, and covers mistakes that have been made by some large Unions. No organization is perfect, and it's great to see a more complete picture then just talking points.

Great book, well written. Clear and concise.

PEOPLE NEED TO REALIZE WITHOUT UNIONS YOU WILL LOSE THE MIDDLE CLASS. I AM A UNION MEMBER AND DO NOT ALWAYS AGREE WITH WHAT IS DONE NATIONALLY BUT IT IS DONE FOR THE WHOLE MEMBERSHIP NOT JUST ONE PERSON. ALSO MY DUES DO NOT GO TO ANYTHING POLITICAL. ANY POLITICAL MONEY IS SEPARATE.

All the fact that too many people seem to have forgotten. Then they wonder why companies no longer provide benefits like pension, health insurance, sick pay, paid vacation, overtime rate.

Yates offers a great historical overview combined with critical analysis on Labor unions. This is definitely a must read for laborites and those simply interested in the way in which labor, race, the state, and management function.

Of course unions matter. While the employer has an army (managers, attorneys, spies, etc.) working for it to keep the upper hand over the employee, the employee is alone unless nepotism is involved. The author gives countless reasons for the need of a union but also reveals how the unions eradicated the radicals and became a tool for the establishment to control anti-establishments throughout the world.

Used book on a class and it facilitated great discussion. Final chapter should be required reading for everyone! Great work!

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