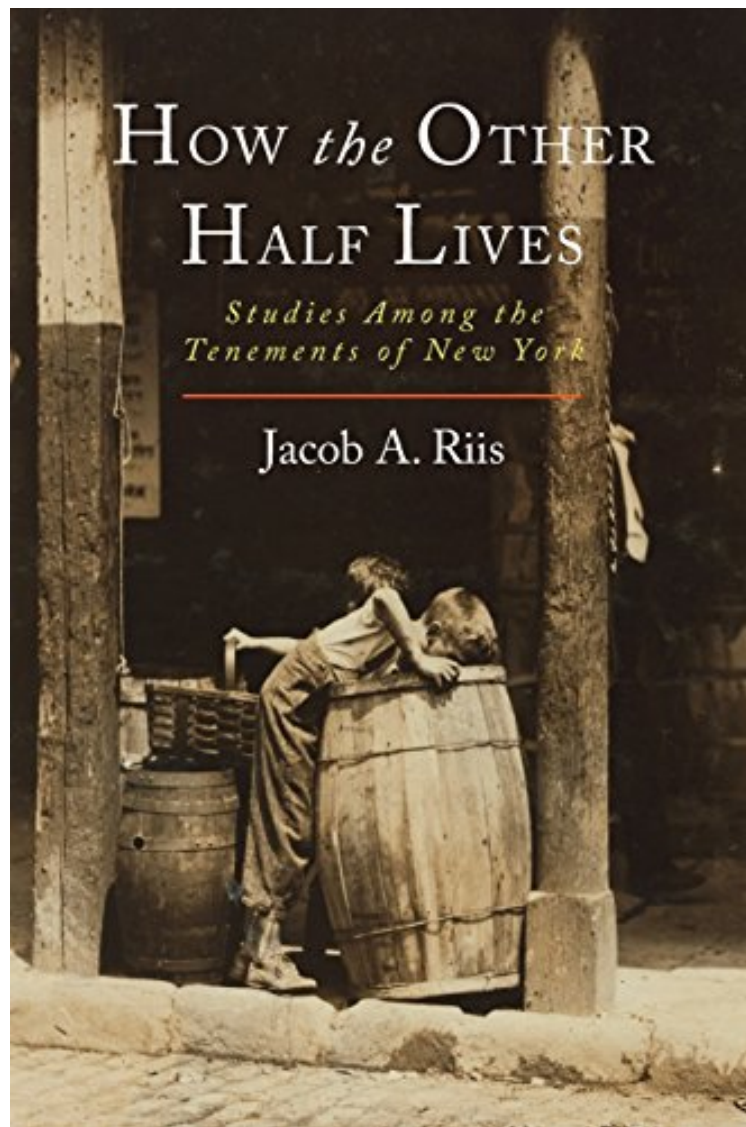


(Mobile book) How the Other Half Lives: Studies Among the Tenements of New York

How the Other Half Lives: Studies Among the Tenements of New York

Jacob A. Riis

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Jacob A. Riis : How the Other Half Lives: Studies Among the Tenements of New York before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised How the Other Half Lives: Studies Among the Tenements of New York:

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Highly recommended book about European immigrant poverty in America ghettosBy RichardWonderful book, I got it since my great g-parents, grandparents and parents came from the

Victorian to 1935 era of in Manhattan. They left Ireland to make their fortune here. I was aware of some of the poverty and conditions, but this book really shows how awful and harsh the immigrants had things and especially their children living sometimes on the streets. They suffered much, and people have no idea except for eyewitness accounts of the appalling conditions of shelters, work houses, suicides, alcoholism that they fell into after leaving their poor home countries for a better life in America. This is a classic by Jacob Riis and a window into a world unknown to most people. He attempted to alleviate the bad living conditions of poor people by exposing their living conditions to the middle and upper classes. Think things are bad now?, You should see how bad, "bas is", as you travel with the writer into ghettos and alleyways of working people toiling to just eke out an existence at long hours, often working at home making clothes and other goods to sell.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. How to water down the How the Other Half Lives, Schools ignoring the benefits of teaching this bookBy CustomerThis isn't a bad copy of this text. However, Many Urban Historians such as myself look to this piece in order to gain an understanding of the environment in the tight ghettos of the lower east side of Manhattan. This piece is something that I would chronicle as being an important piece of urban literature, among the likes of Upton Sinclair's The Jungle. Jacob Riis took a long time and effort in providing illustrations and photographs in his original copies. However this copy contains no photographs, thus removing a monumental element of the effectiveness of this piece. When this piece was first released, the images provided sent a chill into the readers. Simply due to the fact of knowing that there were young immigrants, mainly children who were living in squalor six blocks beyond their comfortable abodes.Lack of Photographs aside, this is an important and historical piece of work in American, Urban American, and New York History. Unfortunately many schools neglect to include this in required reading, which is honestly disgraceful. If I were to turn back to teaching, I would include this in my syllabus. This should be required reading for all!0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A Testament To The Value of Investigative JournalismBy Gordon HastingsJacob Riis's book How The Other Half Lives, written in 1890, remains an outstanding example of the importance of investigative journalism and the continued vitality of the Fourth Estate.Jacob Riis was among the earliest of what Theodore Roosevelt later termed " muckraker", "taking the rake to uncover the most unpleasant conditions in American society." In Riis's case, the issue was the plight of thousands of immigrants living and working in horrid conditions in the New York City tenements of the late 19th century. How The Other Half Lives is not a historical novel but rather a work of non-fiction, well researched reporting, personally witnessed by the journalist.Riis was himself an immigrant, born in Denmark among a family of fifteen children. He apprenticed as a carpenter in Copenhagen but discouraged by job availability he immigrated to the United States in 1870 at age 21. Having caught a brief glimpse of the squalid living conditions among immigrants in New York's tenement district, he left for western Pennsylvania and found work there as a carpenter. Perceived as being taken advantage of by his employers, he returned to New York as a salesman of flat irons whereupon he saw an advertisement for a Long Island newspaper looking for an editor. Thus, with no experience as a writer, he began his career in journalism. He later accepted a position as a reporter for The New York News Association where he began writing with assignments covering both the rich and the impoverished. Riis was aware of conditions among the extremely poor in New York from his previous brief stay in and around the notorious Five Points. However, his job at the NYNA, the New York Sun and later in a big step up to the New York Tribune , he found a pulpit from which to begin informing the public on How The Other Half Lives . Riis turned his print platform into a personal crusade, attempting to alleviate the bad living and working conditions of the poor by exposing their horrid circumstances to the people who could make a difference, the middle and upper class of the city and its political establishment. Riis was perfectly willing to hold both the upper class and politicians accountable for the exploitation of men, women and children in both employment and housing. The pages of his early articles for Scribner's Magazine and later in the complete volume How The Other Half Lives are so vivid that uninformed critics, in disbelief, termed the details of his reporting an exaggeration and sensationalism.Surely this work is an early reformist look at income inequality but Riis referred to this large percentage of the New York City population as a class unto itself, literally without identity or voice, enslaved by landlords who exploited their fears. The same people were recruited as the machinery of piecework in the early garment and cigar making industry at wages below any standards of decency. The tenement districts in New York exploded with thousands of men, women and children crowded into one or two rooms often without ventilation, sanitation or running water. Riis estimated that at one fifth of the city's population lived under these conditions.There is a major difference between Riis's reporting and sensationalism. Riis spent months in the tenements, which were factories by day and barely livable sleeping quarters by night. His research was impeccable and he was among the very first reporters to incorporate photo journalism into his stories, utilizing the newly invented flash to photograph his subjects in their darkened rooms. His work was the beginning of photo journalism, adding documentation to the written word. The photos and editorial content had dramatic impact with his readers and ultimately gained the attention of New York's newly elected Police Commissioner, Theodore Roosevelt. Riis became an advisor to Roosevelt, escorting him on nighttime tours for the commissioner to see for himself how the poor were forced to live. Many credit this educational relationship with Roosevelt as the beginning of the Progressive Movement, a hallmark of TR's future presidency.After Roosevelt's election he wrote this tribute to Riis. " Recently a man, well qualified to pass judgement, alluded to Mr. Jacob Riis as '

the most useful citizen of New York.' The countless evils which lurk in the dark corners of our civic institutions, which stalk abroad in the slums, and have their permanent abode in the crowded tenement houses, have met in Mr. Riis the most formidable opponent ever encountered by them in New York City."How The Other Half Lives was first published as an article in Scribner's Magazine in 1889, but while working for the New York Sun, Riis expanded the work into the book, complete with his photographs and published it a year later. A much less famous work by Riis, Children of the Poor was published as a sequel in 1892. In it Riis wrote of children he had encountered while researching How The Other Half Lives. Riis was not alone among a new breed of investigative (muckraker) journalists. In 1872 Julius Chambers wrote an expose of institutional horrors in Bloomingdale Asylum and in 1887 Nellie Bly wrote Ten Days in a Madhouse a story of patient abuse in Bellevue Hospital. By the turn of the 20th century McClure's Magazine had assembled a group of new muckrakers including Ida Tarbell, Lincoln Steffens and Ray Stannard Baker, exposing the Standard Oil Trusts and labor unrest in the coal mines and steel mills. One wonders how slowly reform among the immigrants of New York's tenements may have come without the reporting of Jacob Riis. How The Other Half Lives punctuates the importance of investigative journalism in the fabric of a democracy. In the 20th Century we saw the results of the journalistic work of the Washington Post's Ben Bradlee, Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein in their reporting of Watergate. Currently we are witnessing excellent journalism in the New York Times's recent series Invisible Child, the brilliant work of reporter Andrea Elliott and the ongoing reporting of Times business journalist Gretchen Morgenson, together with her book Reckless Endangerment. In this readers view, Television, the 24-hour cable news cycle and the endless world of blogs have a long distance to travel before coming close to the credibility and impact of the work of Jacob Riis and those following in his footsteps. If you are a student of New York, treat yourself to a journey back to the nineteenth century and read How The Other Half Lives. It will make you want to keep buying a newspaper, print or digital! For more see gordonsgoodreads.com

2015 Reprint of 1957 Edition. Full facsimile of the original edition, not reproduced with Optical Recognition Software. Originally published in 1890, this is the classic indictment of slum life, written by one of the most famous reformers of the nineteenth century. "How the Other Half Lives: Studies Among the Tenements of New York" explained not only the living conditions in New York slums, but also in the sweatshops in some tenements which paid workers only a few cents a day. The book explains the plight of working children; they would work in factories and at other jobs. Some children became garment workers and newsies (newsboys). The effect was the tearing down of New York's worst tenements, sweatshops, and the reform of the city's schools. The book led to a decade of improvements in Lower East Side conditions, with sewers, garbage collection, and indoor plumbing all following soon after, thanks to public reaction. Our edition reprints the 1957 edition, without the photo illustrations done mostly by Riis himself.