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Made in the USA: The Rise and Retreat of American Manufacturing (MIT Press)

Vaclav Smil

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Vaclav Smil : Made in the USA: The Rise and Retreat of American Manufacturing (MIT Press) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Made in the USA: The Rise and Retreat of American Manufacturing (MIT Press):

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Interesting read and perspectiveBy Spalding W. CoyoteThis was an excellent walk-through of U.S. manufacturing and where it may be heading in the future.I loved some of the history, especially the narrative of how the Great Depression was the period of one of the most significant investments in

infrastructure -- not just by the government as part of WPA, but private investment as well. The P-51 and Flying Fortress planes were developed in the mid-1930s, but weren't developed until they were needed during World War II. There's not any extensive sex/violence/gore here, so if that's your thing, maybe seek out a different book. 6 of 6 people found the following review helpful. Manufacturing vs service economy By robrrt thoburn Provides well documented review and historical significance of manufacturing in the development of the US economy and compares it with other nations. Has a well-reasoned argument for building our economic base as an important corner-stone of the economy. Automation will prevent huge increases in employment, but will likely help provide jobs for properly trained workers. The Walmart's of the country have little loyalty to the country seeking only to maximize profit by seeking the lowest cost labor. This being the case we need to find ways to encourage companies to sell products from here and return capital here to bring the trade deficit back into balance. The imbalance in manufacturing and service and consumption appear to be creating areas of economic illness. 13 of 14 people found the following review helpful. A top-notch historical-scientific book with past accomplishments to emulate, and business strategy pitfalls to avoid By Chad MI was pretty sure I would appreciate this book even before I bought it, since Prof. Smil's track-record for books is impeccable. Since the future of U.S. manufacturing and its essential role for U.S. energy security is of interest to me, I decided to look at the broad picture that Prof. Smil provides here. In particular, I am interested in how a combination of solar thermal infrastructure and advanced nuclear power stations -- all U.S. built -- will improve U.S. security, prosperity, and climate stability. To understand where we need to go, and how to get there, an expertly written and comprehensive history needs to be understood. After reading the book I grasped the high growth years and the key role of electricity generation in the late 1800s, the U.S. leadership in many fields in the 1950s and 60s (truly impressive in light of today's competition with China and Western Europe), and the gradual (and sometimes steep) decline in the 70s and 80s. Just as in his other books, Prof. Smil has a way of presenting insights that few realize, just a few here are: the overall increase resource intensity in spite of the common idea that an information economy and computers reduce resource consumption; the narrative showing US federal government and semiconductor chip company RD alliances (a partial model for U.S. energy infrastructure alliances in the future?). Finally, there is Prof. Smil's partly inspiring and partly foreboding last chapter of the book.

"There's no author whose books I look forward to more than Vaclav Smil." -- Bill Gates In *Made in the USA*, Vaclav Smil powerfully rebuts the notion that manufacturing is a relic of predigital history and that the loss of American manufacturing is a desirable evolutionary step toward a pure service economy. Smil argues that no advanced economy can prosper without a strong, innovative manufacturing sector and the jobs it creates. Smil explains how manufacturing became a fundamental force behind America's economic, strategic, and social dominance. He describes American manufacturing's rapid rise at the end of the nineteenth century, its consolidation and modernization between the two world wars, its role as an enabler of mass consumption after 1945, and its recent decline. Some economists argue that shipping low-value jobs overseas matters little because the high-value work remains in the United States. But, asks Smil, do we want a society that consists of a small population of workers doing high-value-added work and masses of unemployed? Smil assesses various suggestions for solving America's manufacturing crisis, including lowering corporate tax rates, promoting research and development, and improving public education. Will America act to preserve and reinvigorate its manufacturing? It is crucial to our social and economic well-being; but, Smil warns, the odds are no better than even.

There's no author whose books I look forward to more than Vaclav Smil. With his vast knowledge of science and energy, history and business, he brings new insights to every topic he examines. (Bill Gates) Another irreplaceable entry in Smil's chronicling of the modern world. If anyone needs help understanding why making 'things' still matters in a digital world, start here. The US position as the world's reserve currency probably rests on the outcome. (Michael Cembalest, Chief Investment Officer, JP Morgan Asset Management) Vaclav Smil is one of our time's most insightful, thorough, and prolific analysts on the history and state of technology, humanity, and industry. Every book Smil has written has made an important contribution, but none may be more important, more timely than *Made in the USA*. Smil's fascinating and lucid exploration of the history and state of manufacturing in America comes at a critical time and should be the starting point for any discussion about the future for the USA. (Mark P. Mills, Senior Fellow, Manhattan Institute) About the Author Vaclav Smil is the author of more than thirty books on energy, the environment, food, and the history of technical advances, including *Harvesting the Biosphere: What We Have Taken from Nature*, published by the MIT Press. He is a Distinguished Professor Emeritus at the University of Manitoba. In 2010 he was named by *Foreign Policy* as one of the Top 100 Global Thinkers. Vaclav Smil is a Distinguished Professor Emeritus at the University of Manitoba. He is the author of more than thirty books, including *Harvesting the Biosphere: What We Have Taken from Nature* and, most recently, *Made in the USA: The Rise and Retreat of American Manufacturing*, both published by the MIT Press. In 2010 he was named by *Foreign Policy* as one of the Top 100 Global Thinkers. In 2013 Bill Gates wrote on his website that "there is no author whose books I look forward to more than Vaclav Smil."