



# **The Problem of Jobs: Liberalism, Race, and Deindustrialization in Philadelphia (Historical Studies of Urban America)**

*Guian A. McKee*

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Contesting claims that postwar American liberalism retreated from fights against unemployment and economic inequality, *The Problem of Jobs* reveals that such efforts did not collapse after the New Deal but instead began to flourish at the local, rather than the national, level.

With a focus on Philadelphia, this volume illuminates the central role of these local political and policy struggles in shaping the fortunes of city and citizen alike. In the process, it tells the remarkable story of how Philadelphia's policymakers and community activists energetically worked to challenge deindustrialization through an innovative series of job retention initiatives, training programs, inner-city business development projects, and early affirmative action programs. Without ignoring the failure of Philadelphians to combat institutionalized racism, Guian McKee's account of their surprising success draws a portrait of American liberalism that evinces a potency not usually associated with the postwar era. Ultimately interpreting economic decline as an arena for intervention rather than a historical inevitability, *The Problem of Jobs* serves as a timely reminder of policy's potential to combat injustice.

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