



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

By Vaclav Smil



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"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.

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Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #381718 in Books
- Brand: MIT
- Published on: 2015-08-21
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 9.00" h x .69" w x 6.00" l, .0 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 280 pages



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Editorial Review

Review

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.

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