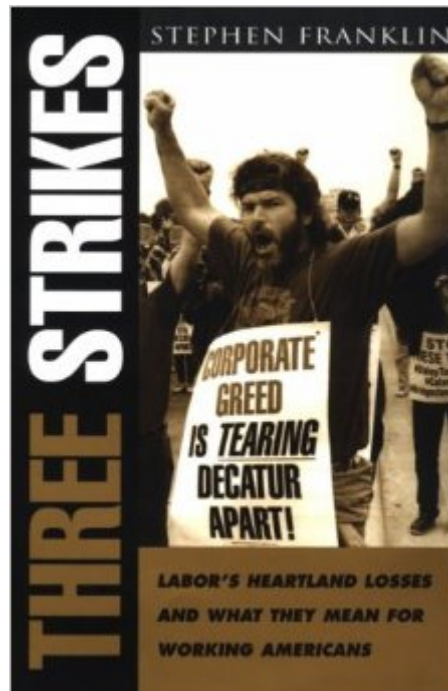


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# Three Strikes: Labor's Heartland Losses And What They Mean For Working Americans



## Synopsis

This eloquently written book chronicles the massive, protracted strikes waged against three large corporations in Decatur, Illinois, in the 1990s. Veteran journalist Stephen Franklin shows how labor disputes at Bridgestone/Firestone, Caterpillar, and A. E. Staley left lasting scars on this town and its citizens--and marked a turning point in American labor history. When workers went on strike to retain such basic rights as job security and the 8-hour day, the corporations hit back with unprecedented hard-line tactics. Through the moving stories of individual workers and union activists, Franklin illuminates the hardships and disillusionment left in the wake of the strikes, and the powerful forces that caught an unprepared labor leadership off guard. He vividly portrays how the balance of labor management power was shifted by corporate globalization, cutthroat labor practices, the outdated responses of national unions and government regulators, and an apathetic public. Reflecting on the hard-won lessons of Decatur, the book describes how the quality of work and life are now threatened not just for blue-collar workers, but for all Americans and what it will take to safeguard them. Bronze Medal Winner in Politics--ForeWord Magazine's Book of the Year Awards

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

It is necessary to begin with a disclaimer. I am mentioned in a couple of places in Stephen Franklin's excellent work on the labor disputes that rocked Decatur, Illinois in the 1990s. His title, Three Strikes, is slightly in error as one of the disputes--at A.E. Staley Mfg. Co.--was actually a

lockout. I also talked with Steve several times as he prepared the book. I found it to be a powerful work that clearly demonstrates the "dark side" of the globalization and "new economy" that is often presented as the inavoidable wave of the future. What happens when honest, hard-working people who have played by the rules all of their lives suddenly find themselves as so much cannon fodder for multi-national corporations? Franklin shows us. I would strongly recommend this book to anyone interested in social justice. He paints strong, vivid portraits of leading characters like the two Dave Watts (one at A.E. Staley, the other at Firestone), Father Martin Mangan, a Catholic priest who became a leading advocate of workers, Annie Floyd, a Firestone wife who was the Mother Jones of the time, and many, many others. The effects launched by those days still impact Decatur and the United States and Franklin's book is essential in understanding those effects.

This is an account of corporate America attacking working people in the heartland. Of course the corporations won and look at our country and work force as a result. If you think you are more than just a number you need to read this book. It is very well written, not a hatchet job on anyone, and it keeps the human element intact.

This is a well researched and documented book. I know, or have met, a lot of the players in this book and it provided me with a lot of information I was not aware of. Shows the human side of many lives.

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