

(Free download) White-Collar Government: The Hidden Role of Class in Economic Policy Making  
(Chicago Studies in American Politics)

## **White-Collar Government: The Hidden Role of Class in Economic Policy Making (Chicago Studies in American Politics)**

*Nicholas Carnes*

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**Nicholas Carnes : White-Collar Government: The Hidden Role of Class in Economic Policy Making (Chicago Studies in American Politics)** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised White-Collar Government: The Hidden Role of Class in Economic Policy Making (Chicago Studies in American Politics):

10 of 10 people found the following review helpful. I'm waiting for the sequelBy Shannon SkoglundLet me preface

this by saying that I am a layperson in political science. And I don't think I'm the target market for the book, which is written in a very scholarly style, complete with parenthetical citations and footnotes on tables about the statistical margins. The general conclusion of the first four chapters of this book, namely that white-collar government types tend to vote in white-collar self-interest, seems so astonishingly self-evident to me that I was very surprised that Carnes' research was really the first to statistically and empirically demonstrate it. I'm sure his work will add a great deal to the literature. Reading as an armchair fan of politics, though, I did find the book to be a touch redundant. This is probably just because I was inclined to accept the conclusions as premises. His arguments are meticulous and his conclusions diligently earned. I thought the last two chapters -- the chapters about what harm is done through under-representation of blue-collar workers in government and what we can do about it -- were by far the most interesting, and I would be very interested in reading more in that vein. Bottom line: If you're into scholarly political science or you have an appreciation for fine statistics, pick this up. Otherwise, read some of the author's papers and columns on related subjects instead.

6 of 6 people found the following review helpful. Required Reading  
By Donald L. DeLong  
People are beginning to realize political parties are not what is causing most of the problems in this nation. This book clearly points out Congress is dominated by people who represent the white-collar class (98%) and have little or no representation for the working class (2%). This ruling class creates legislation that supports the social class they represent. Congress does not necessarily represent the middle class either. The book should be required reading for all Americans who want our government to do what's best for all Americans.

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. How to Remediate the Unequal Representation of Working-Class Americans in the Country's Legislatures  
By Serge J. Van Steenkiste  
Nicholas Carnes convincingly demonstrates with a wide range of data sets that lawmakers from different classes clearly bring different economic opinions to the legislative process at the federal, state, and local levels and make different choices on economic issues. The shortage of working-class Americans in the country's legislatures and the over-representation of white-collar Americans have as consequences that tax policies are more regressive, business regulations are more pro-business, and social safety net programs are thinner. To overcome this under-representation of working-class Americans in the country's legislatures, Mr. Carnes estimates based on his research that the social class makeup of government is easier to equalize than either political participation or money in politics. The existing organizations supporting working-class candidates also sponsor get-out-the-vote efforts and other routine forms of political participation and help these candidates raise money to fund their campaigns. Mr. Carnes concludes that the current unequal representation of the working class in the country's legislatures goes against the U.S.'s most cherished political ideals.

Eight of the last twelve presidents were millionaires when they took office. Millionaires have a majority on the Supreme Court, and they also make up majorities in Congress, where a background in business or law is the norm and the average member has spent less than two percent of his or her adult life in a working-class job. Why is it that most politicians in America are so much better off than the people who elect them -- and does the social class divide between citizens and their representatives matter?

"If you're wondering 'what's the matter with Kansas?' -- working-class Americans voting against their own class interest -- you should be asking, 'what's the matter with Congress (and state legislatures, the Supreme Court, and basically every other American political institution)?' As Nicholas Carnes engagingly shows, politicians with working-class backgrounds take positions very much in line with working-class interests. The problem is that there are hardly any of them in office. Sure to stir debate, *White-Collar Government* opens up exciting research vistas and new strategies of reform."