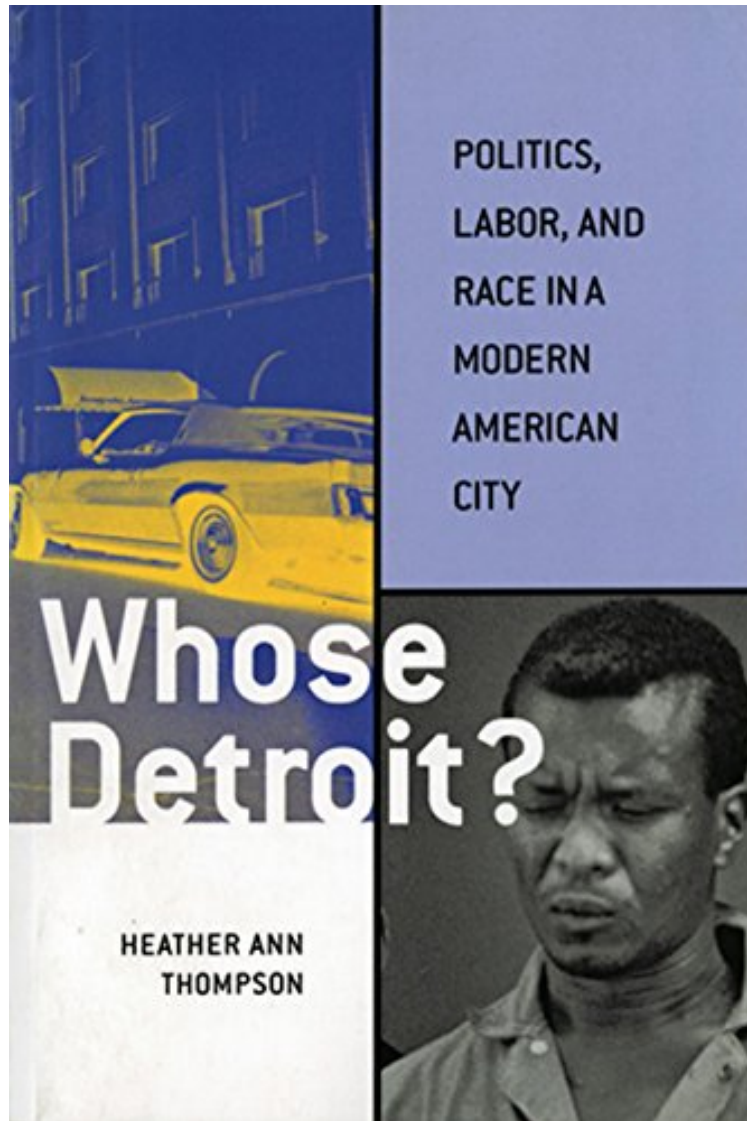


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Whose Detroit?: Politics, Labor, and Race in a Modern American City

Heather Ann Thompson

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Heather Ann Thompson : Whose Detroit?: Politics, Labor, and Race in a Modern American City before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Whose Detroit?: Politics, Labor, and Race in a Modern American City:

America's urbanites have engaged in many tumultuous struggles for civil and worker rights since the Second World

War. In *Whose Detroit?*, Heather Ann Thompson focuses in detail on the struggles of Motor City residents during the 1960s and early 1970s and finds that conflict continued to plague the inner city and its workplaces even after Great Society liberals committed themselves to improving conditions. Using the contested urban center of Detroit as a model, Thompson assesses the role of such upheaval in shaping the future of America's cities. She argues that the glaring persistence of injustice and inequality led directly to explosions of unrest in this period. Thompson finds that unrest as dramatic as that witnessed during Detroit's infamous riot of 1967 by no means doomed the inner city, nor in any way sealed its fate. The politics of liberalism continued to serve as a catalyst for both polarization and radical new possibilities and Detroit remained a contested, and thus politically vibrant, urban center. Thompson's account of the post-World War II fate of Detroit casts new light on contemporary urban issues, including white flight, police brutality, civic and shop floor rebellion, labor decline, and the dramatic reshaping of the American political order. Throughout, the author tells the stories of real events and individuals, including James Johnson, Jr., who, after years of suffering racial discrimination in Detroit's auto industry, went on trial in 1971 for the shooting deaths of two foremen and another worker at a Chrysler plant. Bringing the labor movement into the context of the literature of Sixties radicalism, *Whose Detroit?* integrates the history of the 1960s into the broader political history of the postwar period. Urban, labor, political, and African-American history are blended into Thompson's comprehensive portrayal of Detroit's reaction to pressures felt throughout the nation. With deft attention to the historical background and preoccupations of Detroit's residents, Thompson has written a biography of an entire city at a time of crisis.