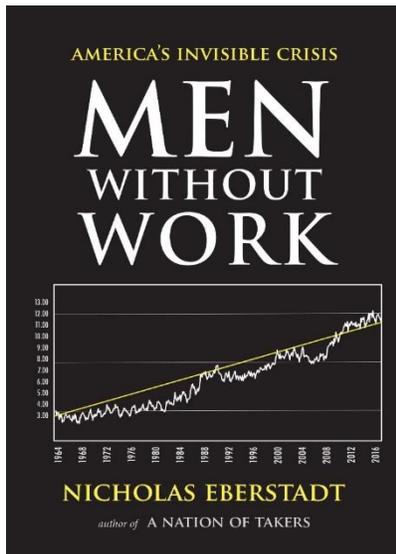




# NEW BOOK REVEALS MALE UNEMPLOYMENT CRISIS



**WASHINGTON, D.C.** The stock market continues to set new records. Unemployment continues to go down. The United States is now at or near “full employment,” at least according to received wisdom. But a closer look at economic data by **Nicholas Eberstadt** reveals something else entirely. While “unemployment” has gone down, the work participation rate, and especially the male work rate, has been relentlessly declining for most of the postwar era and is now reaching a crisis with Depression-era levels.

At the height of an election cycle in which jobs, income inequality, underemployment, and the plight of the working class figure prominently in the national discussion comes a book that promises to change the terms of that debate entirely.

In *Men Without Work* (Templeton Press, September 19, 2016) Nicholas Eberstadt, a political economist who holds the Henry Wendt Chair in Political Economy at the American Enterprise Institute, contends there is a huge population of men—one-sixth of all prime-aged men in America—that is not only without jobs, but has stopped looking for jobs altogether. All of this amounts to a hidden time bomb with far reaching economic, social, and political consequences.

Eberstadt’s groundbreaking research reveals:

- The work participation rate for American males aged 25-54—termed “men of prime working age”—*is today lower than it was in 1940, at the end of the Great Depression.*
- By historical standards, the United States is short nearly 10 million male workers—some ten percent of the male workforce. These literally decimated men live and walk among us, though without productive economic purpose, as they endure an overlooked, modern-day Depression.
- One in six working-age men in America are jobless, and most of them have given up searching for work altogether. At current rates, one in five men in America will be jobless in a generation.



- African-American men are twice as likely to constitute this American "un-worker" than white or Latino men.
- In recent years, leisure time has increased dramatically among American non-working men aged 25 to 54.
- Disability benefits—temporary or permanent pensions for those officially declared incapable of working to support themselves—are a major source of income for working age men who neither have a job nor are looking for one.
- Over-criminalization and the prevalence of non-institutionalized felons and ex-prisoners are key variables in the collapse of work and the flight from work.

The dramatic expansion of a class of non-working males—including the ostensibly able-bodied and those in the prime of life—constitutes a new and unfamiliar kind of crisis for America. And yet, the economic, social, and moral consequences of the rise of the American un-worker have been met with indifference by modern society.

A life without work (or the search for work) has become a viable option for today's prime age males, and ever greater numbers of them seem to be choosing this option. Who are these men? How did they get to this point? What are they doing with their time? And what are the implications of their exit from work for American society?

Nicholas Eberstadt has the answers. He lays out the issue and argues for a renewed look at this hidden American crisis, and for a determined and sustained commitment to bringing these detached men back—back into the workplace, back into their families, and back into our civil society.