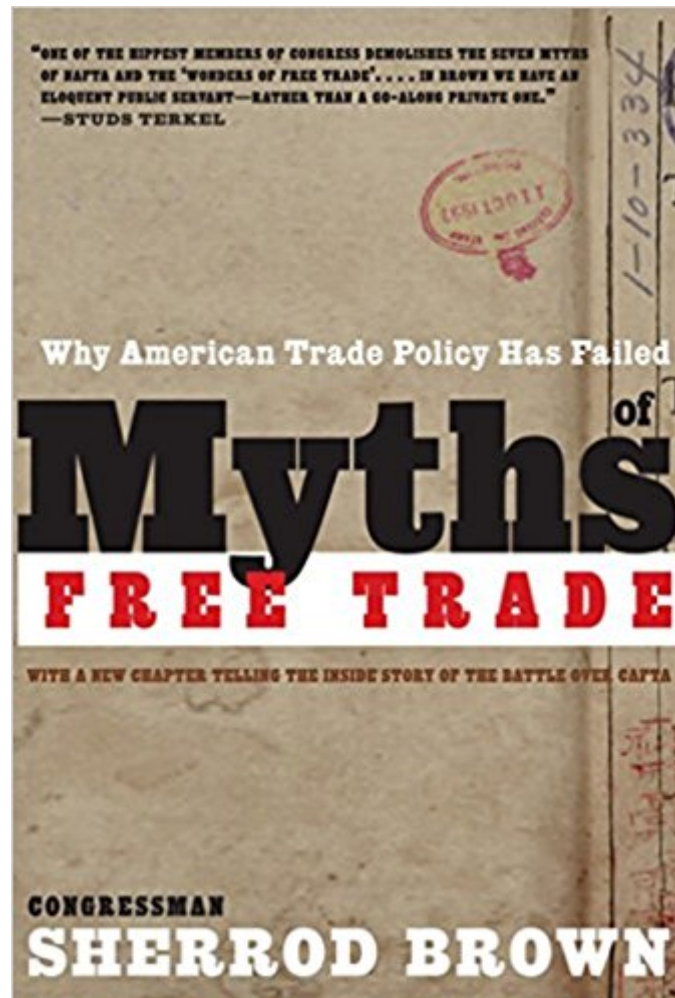




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Myths Of Free Trade: Why American Trade Policy Has Failed



Synopsis

The subject of widespread attention when first released, including the pages of the New York Times Book Review, *Myths of Free Trade* provides a front-row seat to the Washington spectacle of corporate lobbying and political intimidation that keeps the free-trade mantra alive as American policy, despite all the evidence of its failure. U.S. Representative Sherrod Brown "a leading progressive voice in Congress and a twelve-year veteran of Washington's trade wars" takes apart free-trade dogma, myth by myth. His book is an accessible, personal, globe-trotting chronicle, taking the reader from the coffee fields of Nicaragua to the sweatshops of China; from the toxic wastelands on the Mexican border to the halls of Congress. Described as an "essential primer" by The Progressive and a "voice of truth" by Public Citizen News, this edition includes a fascinating update that describes the congressional battle over the Central American Free Trade Agreement "a battle led by Tom DeLay on one side and Sherrod Brown on the other."

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Brown, a Democratic congressman from northeastern Ohio's steel belt, is a veteran of legislative battles; described here in gory, arm-twisting detail; over NAFTA, GATT and other trade agreements, and in this impassioned polemic, he rebuts the usual rationales offered by free traders. Our current free trade agenda, Brown insists, is an un-American departure from a history of tariffs and government intervention aimed at developing the nation's economy and protecting workers and the environment from the excesses of the market. He contends that free

trade doesn't promote growth in either developed or developing countries, but simply shifts well-paying American jobs to Third World sweatshops. There, miserably underpaid workers, denied workplace safety regulations or the right to unionize, can't buy the products they make, which creates imbalances of supply over demand and thus contributes to global economic stagnation. Rather than spreading American values around the globe, he argues, free trade buttresses the power of authoritarian regimes like China's. Indeed, in Brown's view, no one benefits from unregulated trade except corporations and rich investors, eager to deploy their assets wherever labor and the environment are most profitably exploited. Although not systematically developed, Brown's fact-filled argument is a cogent critique of American trade policies in a punchy left-populist style that is rarely heard in Washington these days. Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

"Sherrod Brown demolishes the seven myths of NAFTA, and the 'wonders' of free-trade. . . . In Brown we have an eloquent public servant rather than a go-along private one." —Studs Terkel
"Sherrod Brown reveals the power, corruption, and lies behind U.S. trade policy." —Eric Schlosser

Another book by Senator Brown that I highly recommend.

This book punctures the so-called Free Trade arguments and illustrates how these agreements hurt the interests of the American people. We need more Senators like Sherrod Brown.

Sen. Brown has given an unblinking look at the way rich countries abuse poor countries. This is the only book-length treatment of this injustice I've seen. He deals with the causes of the poverty in the poor countries, and how to deal with them. Treating the symptoms by sending handouts to support our agriculture industry is scandalous. Karl Hess

I received the book prior to Christmas; since we shuffled furniture around, the book's gone missing.....can't wait to recover it and read it!...God Bless Sherrod Brown!

The book, written by someone close to the subject in the Congress puts into perspective one of the most significant "trends" of the modern economic world, and justifies a lot of people's doubts. JAT

Sherrod Brown has written in plain English an easy-to-understand explanation of the myths that the American public has been spoon-fed on free trade by the usual suspects, those who profit by it, their lackeys and errand boys, and the editorial pages of the daily newspapers. Brown lays it all out in a book that is filled with common sense and clear-headed analysis.

I doubt that Senator Brown is a 'trained economist,' and neither am I. However, he's honest, can do basic math, and therefore sees through the horrible myths of 'free trade.' Rather than revitalizing the American economy, it has increasingly decimated it since 1980 - running up a cumulative deficit tab of \$12 trillion or so in net lost jobs/wages/benefits/tax collections from workers' paychecks. My own opinion is that free trade has repeatedly been dangled in front of other nations as an enticement for them to align with us in a half-century of trying to limit the Soviet Union (now also China), boosting Wall Street in the process while blue-collar workers on Main Street pay the price. Brown's book points out that this rationale has now been extended to fighting terrorism as well. Another very bothersome fact - the secrecy and inaccessibility of trade talks, from Clinton's administration through Obama's, and the establishment of trade dispute panels that override American laws. Congressional staff with necessary security clearances are prohibited from seeing 30-chapter TPP text on their own, and many legislators announce their intent to sign the agreement before they can even read it. It is currently illegal for the press, experts, advocates, or the general public to review TPP text. One portion of the agreement allows tariff-free importation of vehicles into the U.S. if only 45% of it was made in a TPP country. That is irresponsible, as well as completely undemocratic. Author Brown points out that 'with one exception, the WTO has overturned very environmental and public health rule or law brought to its trade dispute panel.'

In a clear, concise fashion, Senator Brown demolishes the myths of free trade and provides substantial evidence through facts and statistics that our trade policy is not working in the American interest. From NAFTA to PNTR with China, free trade has weakened the American middle class through outsourcing jobs in all sectors overseas, exponentially increased our trade deficits, sustains authoritarian regimes and exploits workers in developing countries in a "race to the bottom". It only benefits multinational corporations and the elites in power. Free trade also creates gluts in supply with a diminished demand, which are perfect conditions for an unstable economy. Brown advocates fair trade policies at the end of the book as a solution. That is, labor and environmental standards that uplift developing countries to our level rather than pushing us downward, going back to our

economic roots, the American system by deploying tariffs when needed to protect our industries and our workers, and using trade agreements to create markets for our exports rather than finding new places to outsource jobs to. This is a comprehensive work that any lawmaker, policymaker, and citizen should read, and will help get us back on the right track.

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