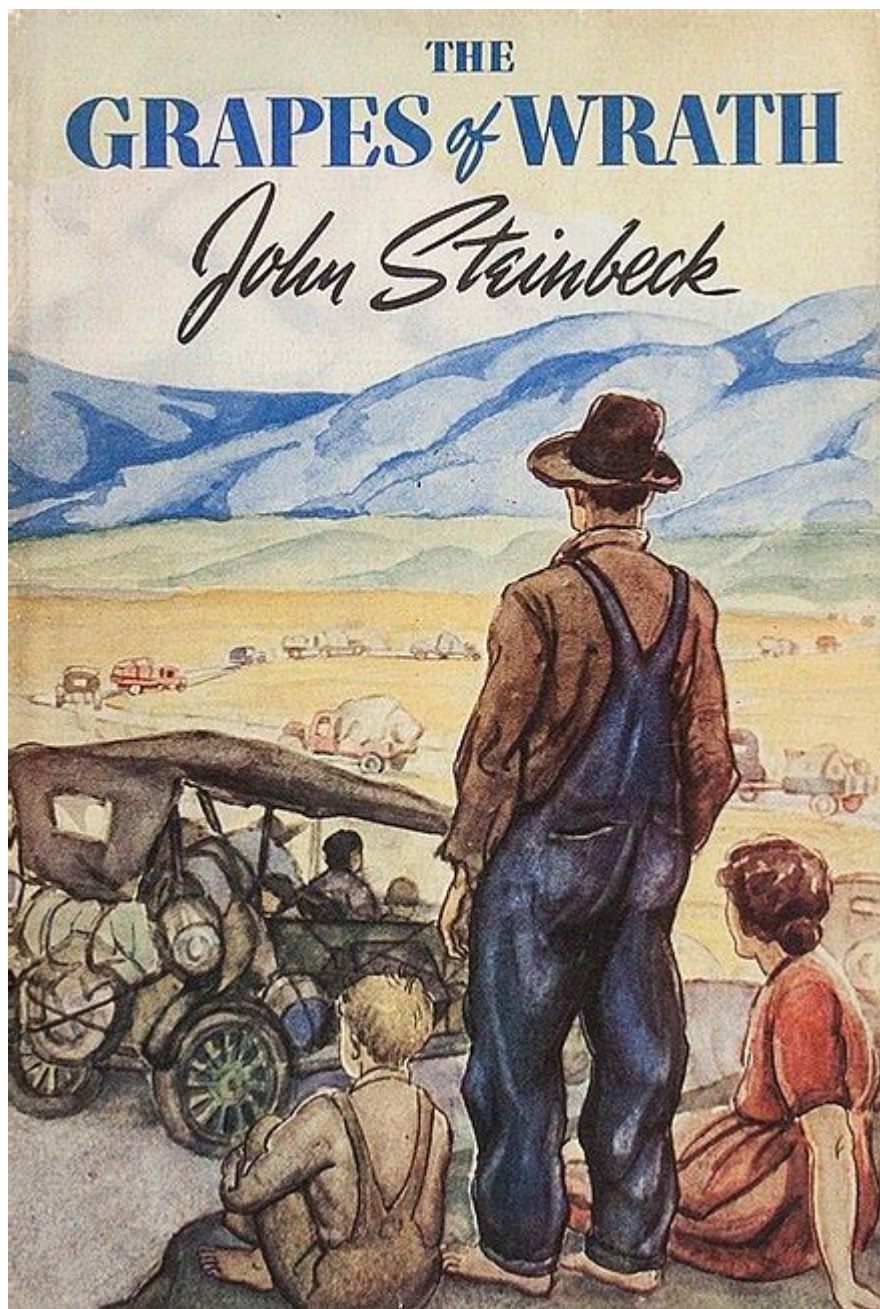


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own right. In an era when the country was deeply divided on social legislation issues and millions drifted unemployed and homeless, Babb recorded the stories of the people she greatly respected, those “whose names are unknown.” In doing so, she returned to them their identities and dignity, and put a human face on economic disaster and social distress.

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thousands of other Rust Belt towns--experiences bullying, relishes first kisses, and comes of age and matures as a man before the economic hardships of the 1980s and 1990s wear on his spirit. Earl takes his turn at a variety of low-paying retail jobs in the new economy before becoming mired in homelessness and succumbing to meth, alcohol, and destitution. As he takes a final, metaphorical bus ride, Earl reflects on his past, considering the impact of the war on his father--and, subsequently, on himself--his own demise, and the romance between himself and Angel, which ultimately redeems him. This is a tale about the death of manufacturing, the deindustrialization of America, and a way of life that has been irrevocably lost. Anyone interested in the impact of political and business policy on the American Dream will be drawn to this profound, humorous, and moving novel.

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Ethan Allen Hawley, the protagonist of Steinbeck's last novel, works as a clerk in a grocery store that his family once owned. With Ethan no longer a member of Long Island's aristocratic class, his wife is restless, and his teenage children are hungry for the tantalizing material comforts he cannot provide. Then one day, in a moment of moral crisis, Ethan decides to take a holiday from his own scrupulous standards. Set in Steinbeck's contemporary 1960 America, the novel explores the tenuous line between private and public honesty, and today ranks alongside his most acclaimed works of penetrating insight into the American condition. This Penguin Classics edition features an introduction and notes by leading Steinbeck scholar Susan Shillinglaw. For more than seventy years, Penguin has been the leading publisher of classic literature in the English-speaking world. With more than 1,700 titles, Penguin Classics represents a global bookshelf of the best works throughout history and across genres and disciplines. Readers trust the series to provide authoritative texts enhanced by introductions and notes by distinguished scholars and contemporary authors, as well as up-to-date translations by award-winning translators.

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