Boom, Bust, Exodus: The Rust Belt, the Maquilas, and A Tale of Two Cities
by Chad Broughton
A factory closes in Galesburg, Illinois; a maquila opens in Reynosa, Mexico. This book examines globalization’s effects on manufacturing on both sides of the U.S.-Mexico border.

Hidden America: From Coal Miners to Cowboys, An Extraordinary Exploration of the Unseen People Who Make this Country Work
by Jeanne Marie Laskas
TV’s Dirty Jobs meets Studs Terkel’s Working in this account of ordinary Americans doing jobs that most people don’t think about.

Playing Through the Whistle: Steel, Football and An American Town
by S. L. Price
A Sports Illustrated writer’s profile of Aliquippa, Pennsylvania, known for its defunct steel mill and its legendary high school football team.

White Trash: The 400-Year Untold History of Class in America
by Nancy Isenberg
This sweeping social history of the class system in America spans the Colonial period to the present and focuses on poor whites.
Broke, USA: From Pawnshops to Poverty, Inc.  
by Gary Rivlin  
There's big money in poverty, concludes this book, which examines subprime loans, pawnshops, check-cashing businesses, payday loans and other (lucrative) industries that target the poor.

Dreamland: The True Tale of America's Opiate Epidemic  
by Sam Quinones  
When a pharmaceutical company’s aggressive marketing of OxyContin coincides with an influx of black tar heroin, a perfect storm of opiate addiction ensues, devastating lives and communities.

Hillbilly Elegy: A Memoir of a Family and Culture in Crisis  
by J. D. Vance  
This author of this moving memoir, a Yale Law School graduate, reflects on his upbringing in Kentucky and the struggles of his working-class family to enter the middle class.

$2.00 A Day: Living on Almost Nothing in America  
by Kathryn Edin  
A sobering look inside a handful of the 1.5 million American households (including 3 million children) surviving on as little as $2 a day.

The Unbanking of America: How the New Middle Class Survives  
by Lisa Servon  
Banks cater to wealthy corporate clients at the expense of ordinary people, forcing them to navigate a “shadow” system of alternative financial services and underground economies.

The Unwinding: An Inner History of the New America  
by George Packer  
“Winning and losing are all-American games,” says author George Packer in this National Book Award-winning examination of the United States’ unraveling social contract and its impact on public and private life.