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Sommario/riassunto	<P>The middle class is often viewed as the heart of American society, the key to the country's democracy and prosperity. Most Americans believe they belong to this group, and few politicians can hope to be elected without promising to serve the middle class. Yet today the American middle class is increasingly seen as under threat. In <I>The American Middle Class: A Cultural History</I>, Lawrence R. Samuel charts the rise and fall of this most definitive American population, from its triumphant emergence in the post-World War II years to the struggles of the present day.</P><P>Between the 1920s