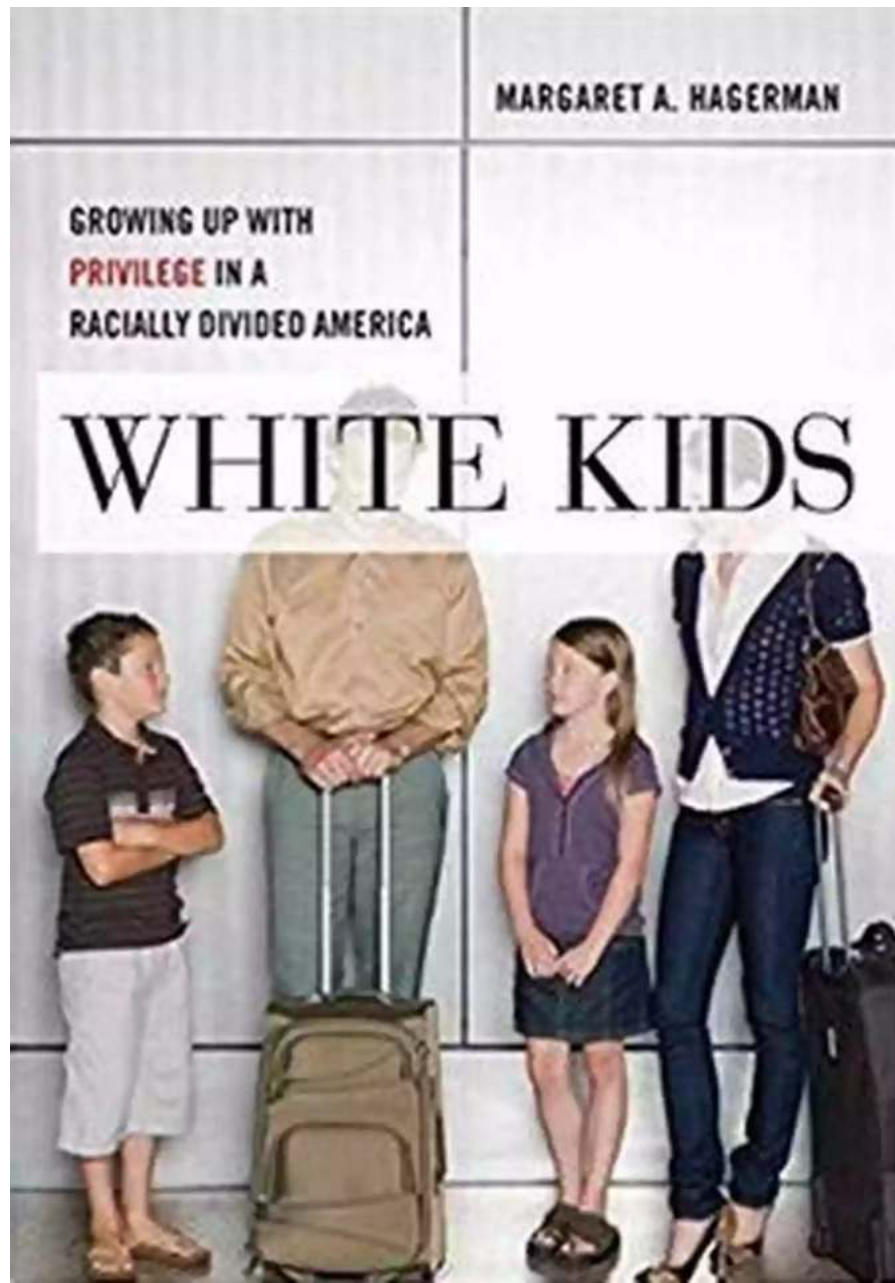


# Privilege Unmasked: My Journey Growing Up in Racially Divided America



In a racially divided America, growing up with privilege can be a complex and nuanced experience. For many, it's a reality that often goes unnoticed or unacknowledged. I, too, was once oblivious to the benefits and advantages that

came with my skin color. But as I grew older and started to critically reflect on my journey, I began to understand the true weight of my privilege.

## Understanding Privilege

Privilege is not a topic we often discuss openly, particularly in a racially divided society. However, it is essential to shed light on this topic and examine our experiences from a critical perspective. While my intentions are not to invalidate anyone else's personal struggles, I aim to peel back the layers and provide an introspective view of my own upbringing.



### White Kids: Growing Up with Privilege in a Racially Divided America (Critical Perspectives on Youth Book 1) by Margaret A. Hagerman (Kindle Edition)

★★★★☆ 4.6 out of 5

Language : English  
File size : 1521 KB  
Text-to-Speech : Enabled  
Screen Reader : Supported  
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled  
Word Wise : Enabled  
Print length : 267 pages



Being born into a privileged family, I had access to resources and opportunities that others could only dream of. I grew up in a neighborhood where racial diversity was scarce, my schools were predominantly filled with individuals who looked like me, and I rarely faced overt discrimination or prejudice.

## The Awakening

As I entered college, I started engaging in discussions centered around race and privilege. It was through these conversations and exposure to diverse perspectives that I began to comprehend the vast disparities and systemic inequalities that persisted in our society. The realization hit me like a ton of bricks.

I acknowledged that my privilege shielded me from endemic discrimination and prevented me from understanding the depth of racial animosity my peers faced. It wasn't that I hadn't encountered any challenges in life, but I recognized that my skin color wasn't one of them.

## **Confronting My Privilege**

Confronting my privilege wasn't an easy task. It forced me to acknowledge the uncomfortable truth that my success and opportunities were partly rooted in a system that inherently disadvantaged others. I had to confront my biases, educate myself on the experiences of marginalized communities, and actively work towards dismantling the very systems that upheld my privilege.



## **An Ongoing Journey**

Growing up with privilege enabled me to have more options, greater access, and a smoother path in life. It equipped me with the tools to navigate a world filled with countless barriers. However, it also carries a responsibility to advocate for change and erode the racial divisions that plague our society.

Understanding my privilege was just the beginning. It sparked a desire within me to engage in conversations about race, to amplify the voices of those who had been silenced for far too long, and to use my position to challenge the status quo. It's an ongoing journey that requires empathy, humility, and a willingness to do the necessary work.

## The Call To Action

Rather than feeling guilty or defensive, acknowledging and unpacking privilege is crucial for creating a more inclusive and just society. It's not about perpetuating guilt or shame, but rather about channeling that awareness into meaningful action.

We can start by educating ourselves, listening to others' experiences without dismissing or minimizing them, and actively supporting policies and initiatives that address the inherent inequalities present in our society. We must continuously reflect on our own biases, challenge them, and strive to dismantle oppressive systems, while uplifting the voices of marginalized communities.

All it takes is one person to initiate change. Let that person be you.

Growing up with privilege in a racially divided America has shaped my perspective on the world in profound ways. It has taught me the importance of self-reflection, empathy, and the ongoing commitment to be an agent of change. By critically examining our own privilege, we can embark on a journey to bridge the racial divides, create a more equitable society, and ultimately, foster unity among diverse communities.

So let us embrace our journey of growth, unmask our privilege, and work tirelessly towards a more just and inclusive America. Our collective future depends on it.

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Winner, 2019 William J. Goode Book Award, given by the Family Section of the American Sociological Association

Finalist, 2019 C. Wright Mills Award, given by the Society for the Study of Social Problems

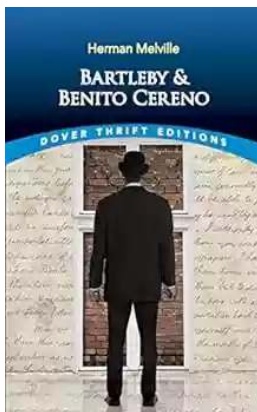
Riveting stories of how affluent, white children learn about race

American kids are living in a world of ongoing public debates about race, daily displays of racial injustice, and for some, an increased awareness surrounding diversity and inclusion. In this heated context, sociologist Margaret A. Hagerman zeroes in on affluent, white kids to observe how they make sense of privilege, unequal educational opportunities, and police violence. In fascinating detail, Hagerman considers the role that they and their families play in the reproduction of racism and racial inequality in America.

White Kids, based on two years of research involving in-depth interviews with white kids and their families, is a clear-eyed and sometimes shocking account of how white kids learn about race. In doing so, this book explores questions such as, “How do white kids learn about race when they grow up in families that do not

talk openly about race or acknowledge its impact?” and “What about children growing up in families with parents who consider themselves to be ‘anti-racist’?”

Featuring the actual voices of young, affluent white kids and what they think about race, racism, inequality, and privilege, *White Kids* illuminates how white racial socialization is much more dynamic, complex, and varied than previously recognized. It is a process that stretches beyond white parents’ explicit conversations with their white children and includes not only the choices parents make about neighborhoods, schools, peer groups, extracurricular activities, and media, but also the choices made by the kids themselves. By interviewing kids who are growing up in different racial contexts—from racially segregated to meaningfully integrated and from politically progressive to conservative—this important book documents key differences in the outcomes of white racial socialization across families. And by observing families in their everyday lives, this book explores the extent to which white families, even those with anti-racist intentions, reproduce and reinforce the forms of inequality they say they reject.



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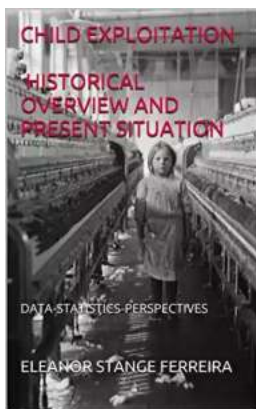
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