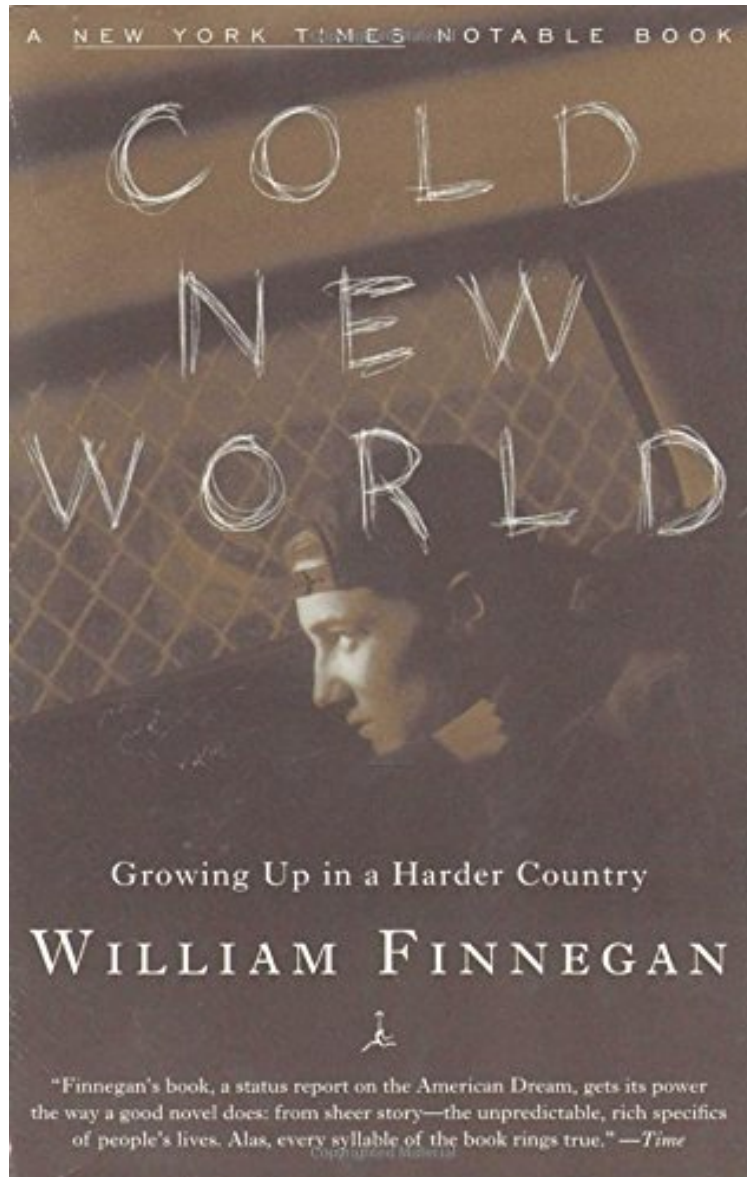


[Pdf free] Cold New World: Growing Up in a Harder Country (Modern Library Paperbacks)

Cold New World: Growing Up in a Harder Country (Modern Library Paperbacks)

William Finnegan

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William Finnegan : Cold New World: Growing Up in a Harder Country (Modern Library Paperbacks) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Cold New World: Growing Up in a Harder Country (Modern Library Paperbacks):

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. ExhiliratingBy Adam RustIt is hard to overstate how much I liked

this book. Finnegan reports on young Americans living in compromised circumstances. He could probably have found this story in any community. He chose four places -- the inner city of New Haven, rural Texas, a California exurb, and the farm fields of Washington state. In New Haven, you see the logic of the choices faced by inner city kids, and the struggle to get by in a world where so many people have so much. That first section is good, but its probably also the one with a theme that matches the expectations of readers. The rest of the story is more complicated. In rural Texas, Finnegan shows a system of justice dominated by local sheriffs that serve to balance the interests of everyone in a pothole politics that reminds me of Chicago aldermen. It also shows the footprint of race upon land use. In Washington state, the young people fail to understand the social justice aspirations of their migrant farmworkers parents. These kids don't feel that they belong anywhere: not in the consumerist schools of Washington state, and certainly not in the underdeveloped cinder block streets of their parent's Mexico. In California, Finnegan shows how economic insecurity among parents trickles down into distorted opinions about race among a group of white power youth. Finnegan uses a first person narrative approach that allows him to report and analyze what he sees as he travels. The analysis helps him to weave in local politics, history, and even some academic research. He does not interject his opinion into his writing, at least until the end of the book when he offers a conclusion. When I think of peers for this book, a few come to mind: "There are No Children Here," by Alex Kotlowitz and "A Hope in the Unseen" by Ron Suskind are the two that most match its power. Even so, going to four places so different is a bit harder. Like catching lightning four times. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Four Stars By david aThe book's an eye opener for anyone that doesn't live in a larger city. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Kind of a bummer yet a good exposure to the machinations of poverty and how people ... By Nancy D. Kind of a bummer yet a good exposure to the machinations of poverty and how people end up staying there. He uses good storytelling here but not in a disrespectful way.

From the Pulitzer Prizewinning author of *Barbarian Days*, this narrative nonfiction classic documents the rising inequality and cultural alienation that presaged the crises of today. A status report on the American Dream [that] gets its power [from] the unpredictable, rich specifics of peoples lives. Time [William] Finnegan's real achievement is to attach identities to the steady stream of faceless statistics that tell us Americas social problems are more serious than we want to believe. The Washington Post A fifteen-year-old drug dealer in blighted New Haven, Connecticut; a sleepy Texas town transformed by crack; Mexican American teenagers in Washington State, unable to relate to their immigrant parents and trying to find an identity in gangs; jobless young white supremacists in a downwardly mobile L.A. suburb. William Finnegan spent years embedded with families in four communities across the country to become an intimate observer of the lives he reveals in *Cold New World*. What emerges from these beautifully rendered portraits is a prescient and compassionate book that never loses sight of its subjects humanity. A NEW YORK TIMES NOTABLE BOOK A LOS ANGELES TIMES BEST NONFICTION SELECTION Praise for *Cold New World* Unlike most journalists who drop in for a quick interview and fly back out again, Finnegan spent many weeks with families in each community over a period of several years, enough time to distinguish between the kind of short-term problems that can beset anyone and the longer-term systemic poverty and social disintegration that can pound an entire generation into a groove of despair. Los Angeles Times Book Review The most remarkable of William Finnegan's many literary gifts is his compassion. Not the fact of it, which we have a right to expect from any personal reporting about the oppressed, but its coolness, its clarity, its ductile strength. . . . Finnegan writes like a dream. His prose is unfailingly lucid, graceful, and specific, his characterization effortless, and the pull of his narrative pure seduction. The Village Voice Four astonishingly intimate and evocative portraits. . . . All of these stories are vividly, honestly and compassionately told. . . . While *Cold New World* may make us look in new ways at our young people, perhaps its real goal is to make us look at ourselves. The Philadelphia Inquirer

.com "When I first started going to New Haven," writes William Finnegan, "I was taken on a tour of the city's neighborhoods by two black residents. Their conversation reminded me of others I've heard--in countries suffering from chronic guerrilla war." *Cold New World* depicts the lives of American teenagers and young adults, struggling to hang onto what little they've got. They are part of a growing underclass whose lives have become saturated with drugs and violence. Whether he's talking to an African American drug dealer who plies his trade in the shadow of Yale or a young woman caught up in the feud between two rival skinhead gangs in the northernmost suburbs of Los Angeles, Finnegan brings his subjects to life on the page with a compassion that doesn't undermine any of his bluntness about their desperate conditions. You may not like what *Cold New World* has to say about the state of the nation, but it's a book that you ignore at your peril. From Publishers Weekly Finnegan, a staff writer for the *New Yorker*, here functions as both a messenger and as a journalist His message is that America is raising a new generation of young people shaped by an "oppressive sense of reduced possibilities." If that phrase smacks of sociological jargon, the book itself does not because of Finnegan's unobtrusive reportorial style that combines intuition with insight and fieldwork. While in the past 25 years poverty among the elderly has dropped by more than 50%, it has increased by 37% among children, notes the author. To find out what that means in human terms, he met with young people in four impoverished or lower-middle-class communities: the black slums of New Haven, Conn.; rural San Augustine County

in Texas; the Yakima Valley in Washington, where the economy relies on underpaid Mexican labor; and Antelope Valley in California, a distant suburb of Los Angeles caught up in a struggle between warring bands of teenage skinheads. From each community, Finnegan draws vivid portraits of individuals caught between a sense of despair that they can never achieve the good life and an almost utopian dream that they can somehow break through to the middle class. The struggle between gangs is probably the most arresting section of the book, but the level of grim insight throughout will disturb the optimism of a healthy economy supposedly reflected in Wall Street's rising numbers. This book is a vibrant eye-opener. Copyright 1998 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Library Journal On the evidence of this very American investigation, Finnegan has earned the deep respect accorded him for his earlier, risky reporting on African affairs. A New Yorker staff writer, he is best known for *Crossing the Line* (LJ 9/15/87), a work about apartheid in South Africa. For this new project, Finnegan dropped himself into the lives-particularly, the teenaged lives-of four communities missing out on the much-hyped market prosperity of the early Clinton years. Finnegan makes himself a benign feature in the blistered landscapes he draws, befriending the lead characters without corrupting the outcome of the stories in university-distant New Haven, CT; rural-remote San Augustine in East Texas; rural-suburban Sunnyside, in Washington State's wine country; and suburban-urban Antelope Valley, comprising the outer reaches of Los Angeles County. Finnegan produces page-turning social journalism, writing beautifully about the ugly lives of alienated teenagers and desperate parents sinking fast. Drugs, sex, and violence are the running themes. Only rarely does Finnegan insert personal or political commentary into his extended vignettes, until the surprisingly charged epilog. Highly recommended for all academic and public libraries and especially high school collections. A Scott H. Silverman, Bryn Mawr Coll. Lib., PA Copyright 1998 Reed Business Information, Inc.