



The Cosby Cohort: Blessings and Burdens of Growing Up Black Middle Class (Perspectives on a Multiracial America)

Cherise A. Harris

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The Cosby Cohort examines the childhood experiences of second generation middle class Blacks who grew up in mostly White spaces during the 1980s and 1990s. This probing book explores their journey to upward mobility, including the discrimination they faced in White neighborhoods and schools, the extraordinary pressures placed upon them to achieve, the racial lessons imparted to them by their parents, their tenuous relationships with Black children of other classes, and the impact that all of these experiences had on their adult racial identities. At young ages, this generation of middle class Blacks, whom Harris coins as the Cosby Cohort, was faced with racial displacement, frustration, and the ever-present pressure to emerge victorious against the pull of downward mobility. Even in adulthood, they continue to negotiate the tensions between upward mobility and maintaining ties to the larger Black community and culture. While these young Blacks may have grown up watching *The Cosby Show*, as the book reveals, their stories indicate a much more complex reality than portrayed by the show.

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