



The Privileged Poor: How Elite Colleges Are Failing Disadvantaged Students

Anthony Abraham Jack

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Getting in is only half the battle. *The Privileged Poor* reveals how--and why--disadvantaged students struggle at elite colleges, and explains what schools can do differently if these students are to thrive.

The Ivy League looks different than it used to. College presidents and deans of admission have opened their doors--and their coffers--to support a more diverse student body. But is it enough just to let them in? In *The Privileged Poor*, Anthony Jack reveals that the struggles of less privileged students continue long after they've arrived on campus. In their first weeks they quickly learn that admission does not mean acceptance. In this bracing and necessary book, Jack documents how university policies and cultures can exacerbate preexisting inequalities, and reveals why these policies hit some students harder than others.

Despite their lofty aspirations, top colleges hedge their bets by recruiting their new diversity largely from the same old sources, admitting scores of lower-income black, Latino, and white undergraduates from elite private high schools like Exeter and Andover. These students approach their new campuses very differently from students who attended local, and typically troubled, public high schools and are often left to flounder on their own. Drawing on interviews with dozens of undergraduates at one of America's most famous colleges and on his own experiences as one of the privileged poor, Jack describes the lives poor students bring with them and shows how powerfully background affects their chances of success.

If we truly want our top colleges to be engines of opportunity, university policies and campus cultures will have to change. Jack provides concrete advice to help schools reduce these hidden disadvantages--advice we cannot afford to ignore.

The Privileged Poor: How Elite Colleges Are Failing Disadvantaged Students Details

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From Reader Review The Privileged Poor: How Elite Colleges Are Failing Disadvantaged Students for online ebook

Kathleen says

This is important, and all college administrators need to read this book. There are many other facets to the situation that the author didn't delve into... and he's honest about that... but hopefully either he or others will explore this topic further. What's happening to these kids is unconscionable and it needs to be remedied.

The sheer lack of awareness is astonishing, which just goes to show we often don't know what we don't know. Which is also a display of just how wide the gap is between the have's and the have not's. So often we think we're "doing good" by "helping" the disadvantaged... and most of the time we are... but there's also a deep underlying insensitivity and some of that was portrayed in this book. Sometimes we think, "well, gosh... we're giving so much... isn't that enough?" Well, if you open the door, then you'd better be prepared for what/who walks through it. These kids come with a LOT of "stuff," and if colleges aren't prepared to help these kids on a deep level, then don't do them the "favor" of admitting them to your school.

Suggestion: For those colleges that do a "group read" (the entire college reads the same book over the summer), then let it be this one!

Jordana Churchill says

This was kind of an emotional read for me. Not only did I have a lot of rich classmates where I went to school, but the fact that it is an urban school even though I am from a rural town was a big culture shock. In urban areas, visual status symbols seem to be more important than in rural areas (Guns, Germs, and Steal has a good part on that). So maybe if I had gone to a smaller more rural school, my experience would have been different.

For example...

I guess I was one of the students that never actually figured out the new culture though, because when the author started talking about "Hunter boots", I thought he was referring to boots hunters wear (my family is a hunting family). I had to Google what the heck he was talking about! This instance while reading the book reminded me of a brief incident my senior year of college when Canada Goose was just becoming popular. I thought that the Canada Goose jackets I was seeing more frequently on campus were jackets people got from doing a community service or research project abroad in Canada. I asked one of my classmates, and she was like "Ummmmm.... no... it's a really good brand..." Apparently a REALLY expensive brand, too. I was SO embarrassed....

I should have read this book BEFORE I got to college-maybe I would have fit in better, and maybe my own college experience wouldn't have been so much of a culture shock. At least I would have had a better idea of what I was getting myself into.

John Tyson says

While the main points of this book certainly deserve attention, I thought Jack's writing and research were only "okay".

The most compelling parts of the book were the conversations with various students, especially those that were *not* editorialized by the author.

I give it a three stars for form and five stars for function.
