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What's The Matter With White People?: Finding Our Way In The Next America



Synopsis

A CLEAR-EYED, COGENT CLARION CALL FOR ENDING THE DIVISIVE CLASS WARS THAT THREATEN THE AMERICAN MIDDLE-CLASS DREAM In *What's the Matter with White People?* Walsh argues that the biggest divide in America today is based not on party or ideology but on two competing explanations for why middle-class stability has been shaken since the 1970s. One side sees an America that has spent the last forty years bankrupting the country by providing benefits for the underachieving, the immoral, and the undeserving—no matter the cost to the majority of Americans. The other side sees an America that has spent the last forty years catering to the wealthy while allowing only a nominal measure of progress for the downtrodden. Using her extended Irish-Catholic working-class family as a case in point and explaining her own political coming-of-age, Walsh shows how liberals unwittingly collaborated in the “us versus them” narrative and how the GOP’s renewed culture war now scapegoats segments of its own white demographic. Part memoir, part political history, *What's the Matter with White People?* is essential reading to combat political and cultural polarization and to build a more just and prosperous multiracial America in the years to come. WITH A NEW AFTERWORD

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Customer Reviews

I learned a lot about America's past outside of what I was taught in history books. The memoir style of the book helped me get a good idea of how Joan's family saw the political and racial divide in the US. I really got a sense of how divisive politics is the main culprit behind much of the racial and social division we are dealing with today. This book certainly helped me grasp the complex nature of our political environment and see how even the founding of our country helped create the divisive patterns we see now. Joan also sheds light on how racism can be used deliberately or incidentally to create advantages for both Democrats and Republicans. This also alienates sectors of society, which further fuels racism. Overall, I learned a great deal from this book that I was not aware of in American history. It was a dense read for me, but worth it.

I still am in the dark as to why people, especially poor white people, vote against their own self interest. I was hoping this book would provide some answers but either I missed that part, although I did read the whole book, or Ms. Walsh is still having some difficulty expressing those reasons with greater clarity. At least she knows this is an enormous problem in our society and she is out there asking the questions that need to be asked and eventually answered if we are ever going to return to a society where class mobility, not class stagnation, is the norm. I give her four stars for such great historical perspective and a good read.

Walsh displays a sense of humor with a bite that is unmistakably Irish. Without disallowing her Irish working class roots, she manages to pinpoint the factors that led to the erosion of the working class - and how the Republicans sold its white members an empty bill of goods by stoking resentment and fear of other races. An absolute eye-opener.

Why do so many people vote against their own best interest? Why do so many people believe the lies despite being shown the facts? I read this to find out. I'm not sure I understand yet but I have some historical perspective. This is a highly personal journey through recent political history, one I have shared to some degree. Like all synopses, it put some things in perspective, things that were too tumultuous at the time to fully comprehend. OTOH, this is a slanted view.

Taken in total, society's upheavals from the Beatniks and the Hippies to the loss of majority status for whites has built up increasing levels of enmity and fear. Stoked by the Far Right media and their demagogues, it is not going to be easy to break the cycle. She has no suggestions.

It is a refreshing read for me. The only negative [to me] is her light-hearted approach to describing the white American CAUSE to present-day effects of that same group's working-class exclusion from every other race. I feel that her writing suffers from what modern news media is doing right now: not owning the multi-generationally 'tribalized' culture that has been dividing this country since it's very inception, through mostly violent and systematic coercion. Other than that, this is an awesome read. Oh yeah, I am black. LOL!

excellent

This was a gift for someone who enjoyed it.

Well-written, thoughtful, insightful. Research was good, what she did with that even better. Answers some tough questions using examples from her own family

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