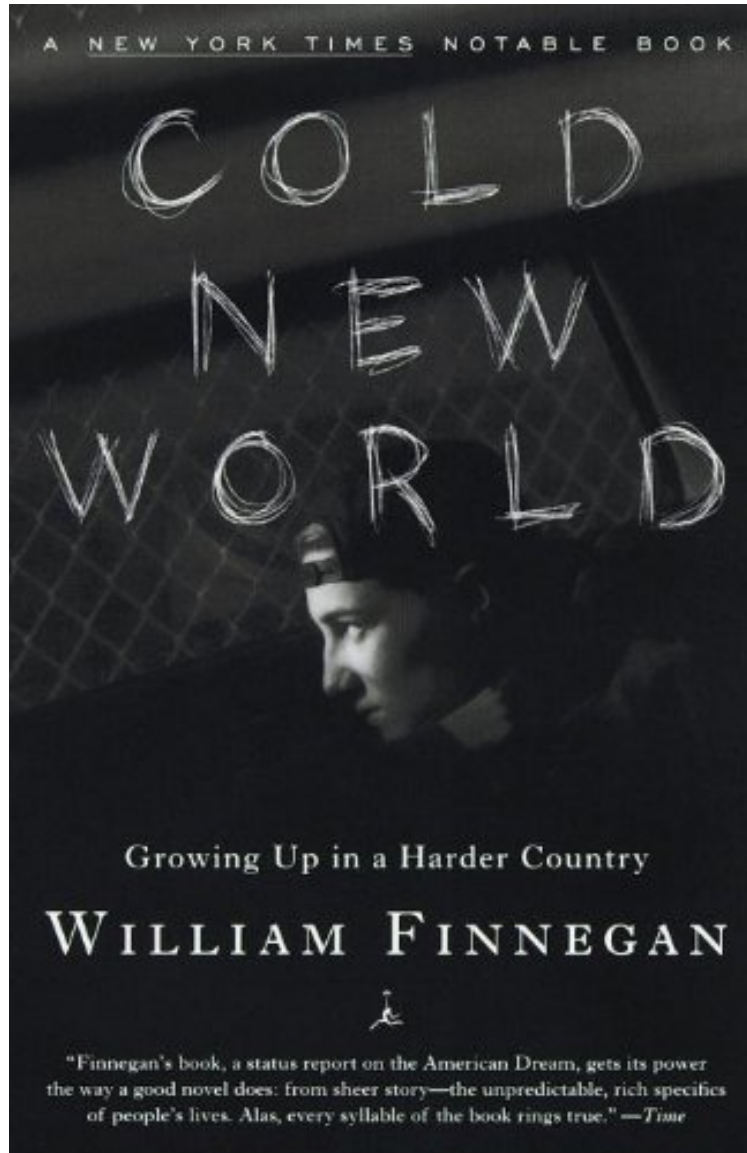


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Cold New World: Growing Up in Harder Country

William Finnegan

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William Finnegan : Cold New World: Growing Up in Harder Country 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 Harder Country:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. ExhilaratingBy 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

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 comment 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.