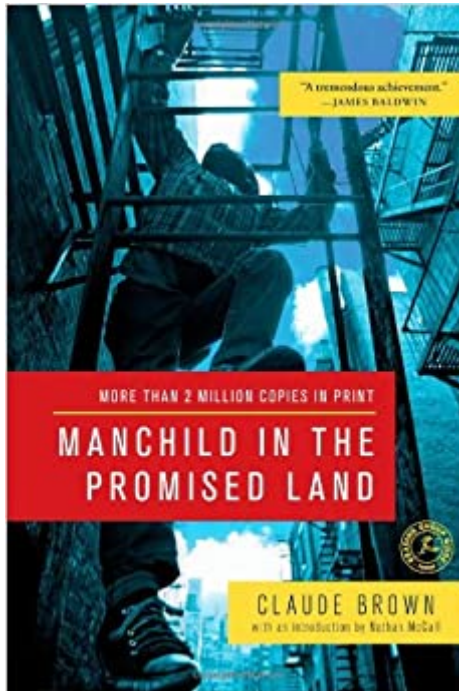




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Manchild In The Promised Land



Synopsis

With more than two million copies in print, *Manchild in the Promised Land* is one of the most remarkable autobiographies of our time—the definitive account of African-American youth in Harlem of the 1940s and 1950s, and a seminal work of modern literature. Published during a literary era marked by the ascendance of black writers such as Richard Wright, Ralph Ellison, James Baldwin, and Alex Haley, this thinly fictionalized account of Claude Brown's childhood as a hardened, streetwise criminal trying to survive the toughest streets of Harlem has been heralded as the definitive account of everyday life for the first generation of African Americans raised in the Northern ghettos of the 1940s and 1950s. When the book was first published in 1965, it was praised for its realistic portrayal of Harlem—the children, young people, hardworking parents; the hustlers, drug dealers, prostitutes, and numbers runners; the police; the violence, sex, and humor. The book continues to resonate generations later, not only because of its fierce and dignified anger, not only because the struggles of urban youth are as deeply felt today as they were in Brown's time, but also because of its inspiring message. Now with an introduction by Nathan McCall, here is the story about the one who "made it," the boy who kept landing on his feet and grew up to become a man.

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> Authors

Customer Reviews

Daniel A. Poling Brown's Harlem is alive in a way that no black ghetto has heretofore been brought to life between book jackets. Nat Hentoff "Book Week" Sprung from the alley, a rare cat...As a

survivor among the dying and the dead, Brown tells it like it was-and like it still is."Atlanta Journal"
He writes about his life -- and Harlem -- with frank, brutal, and beautiful power. Mr. Brown's graphic narrative will make you laugh, cry, think, and possibly understand.Dick Schaap "Books" This is a magnificent book, not a good book, not an interesting book, a magnificent book....It is a guided tour of hell conducted by a man who broke out.Tom Wolfe "Manchild in the Promised Land" is Claude Brown's unforgettable epic of growing up as a boy on the streets of Harlem. His Zola-esque gift for slices of life is made all the more striking by his brilliant insights into character and social pressures.Tom Wolfe "New York Herald Tribune" Incredible! No Negro writer ever told the whole street thing in Harlem: Claude Brown is the first.James Baldwin A tremendous achievement.Norman Mailer The first thing I ever read which gave me an idea of what it would be like day by day if I'd grown up in Harlem.Romulus Linney "The New York Times Book Review" It is written with brutal and unvarnished honesty in the plain talk of the people, in language that is fierce, uproarious, obscene and tender.William Mathes "Los Angeles Times" Sometimes a unique voice speaks out so clearly and with so much passion that it comes to speak for an era, a generation, a people...and we have to listen.

Claude Brown was born in New York City and grew up in Harlem. At age seventeen, after serving several terms in reform school, he left Harlem for Greenwich Village. He went on to receive a bachelor's degree from Howard University and attended law school. He also wrote a book called *The Children of Ham* in 1976. *Manchild in the Promised Land* evolved from an article he published in *Dissent* magazine during his first year at college. He died in 2002 at the age of 64.Nathan McCall, author of *Makes Me Wanna Holler*, has worked as a journalist for *The Washington Post*. Currently, he teaches in the African American Studies Department at Emory University and lives in Atlanta, Georgia.

This book gives GREAT insight as to the way of the world for poverty-stricken youths in Harlem in the 40's and 50's. The reader is taken back into a time when things were so different and puts the spotlight on many of NYC's famous institutions and preventative youth programs. I have not finished the book but i compare reading this book to slowly eating one of my favorite desserts because every page is just so juicy!

This is a great book. I have read it several times and it never fails to entertain. It says thinly fictionalized but I believe it is a true story. It's hard to believe children ran wild like that back then.

Although this book was written in the 1960s, it is, still, very relevant today. This book was recommended to me back in 1983 or 1984 when I was in the military. I bought it with a number of other books. It took me twenty years to read it. I should have read it alot sooner; but, the rigors of life and the fact that a good many other books I bought kept pushing this one further back on the reading list. I grew up in the streets of NYC and saw his life being played out in a number of guys and gals I hung out with at that time. I didn't get caught up in the drug scene nor in the gangsta scene but, like the author, there was a lot going on outside the walls of the house to keep me outside nearly all day. Yeah this world was much newer for me then rather than now but I had to see what was going on within and without my neighborhood. As a parent looking at my kid, I know this world is new to them, which I can't shelter them from. As my kids look at me as their parent, they are constantly telling me to get out of their way. I want to see what is going out there. This only helps me to keep life real for them with a dose of non-reality here and there. Fortunately for Claude Brown, the street made him wise and through his book some of us can reminisce about those days and explain to others what urban life was like for us and how it made us what we are today. For others who have not experienced this urban lifestyle, take the book for what it is and re-evaluate your own experiences in hopes of passing on a reality check of your own life to your children.

I read it when it first came out, and still remember it. This purchase was on behalf of a friend in jail who requested it. I'm happy to report that it got to him.

Been loving this book since I was a teenager. Lent it out and never got it back so was looking to buy it again. And very happy I did....the quality was even better than I expected!

Manchild In The Promised Land is, unlike Tookie's diatribe, the real deal. A facinating insight into the lifestyle and politics that dumped so many of our minority communities into a civil rights wasteland of tragedy, economic strangulation, academic failure and political correctness. A classic that deserves to be on every young person's reading list. It is a message that has meaning in Beverly Hills and in the Bronx. The author is one of the very few who can write the story in the first person, but, with the enhanced vision of someone who has risen above the narrow confines of his neighborhood to experience the best of American education. What is especially refreshing within this tragedy is that the author is content to tell the story without seeking to shakedown your pocketbook or heart. The net effect is of course to create a much deeper sadness for those who experience the "inner

city".For those on the inside it gives a glimpse of the experience of someone who breaks free, but whose heart remains attached. For those who have never experienced streets where people avoid eye contact and yet are always alert for the next threat and the elderly and infirmed only venture out in the middle of the day this is the painful, tragic reality.

This is my second time reading it and it is just as relevant today as it was in the 50's. I read this when I was 14 years old and it is still riveting.

I first read *Manchild in the Promise Land* when I was sixteen. At fifty-six - I have finished reading the book for a second time. From a child's eyes this book showed me why one should never use drugs and I never did. From an adults view it taught me how to deal with a family member that is actually using drugs. This is one of the best books ever written on young-boy's street life. In and out of boys homes, poverty, seeing his best friends drugged, this book should be required reading for all young male and females. It even teaches readers the transverse of some males into homosexuality, and his acceptance of this shocking revelation in the black community is honestly portrayed. Just when it seemed that Sonny was headed towards the destructive path his friends were on, he pulled himself out, which is surprising because Sonny was the baddest kid in his community. I think mentors like group home professional, Papanek and his mother paved the way for Sonny to have optimism in life. It was sad to see that when Sonny got out of the boys home, he actually missed being there. Once home, he'd actually get on the "jail bus" to go back to the home, if for nothing else to have a conversation with his mentors. His young love relationship with a girl that ended up on Heroin was very touching to me. "Nodding" was not something Sonny wanted to see any of his friends or loved ones do and when he sees his brother Pimp nodding for the first time, that literally changed my life. This was and always will be the book that kept me from ever using or sampling drugs.Â *Manchild in the Promised Land* I even had an inkling to what street life was about. It's Claude Brown and *Manchild in the Promise Land*. Kudos to you my brother. May you rest in peace.

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