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Shayla Reese Griffin

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Shayla Reese Griffin : Those Kids, Our Schools: Race and Reform in an American High School before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Those Kids, Our Schools: Race and Reform in an American High School:

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. SoberingBy ReaderAs an educator, this book hit me pretty hard. There are some eye-opening descriptions of race relations in this school, both among students, between students and staff, and among staff members. I am personally familiar with the school that was studied here (its name has been changed) but I definitely suspect that the author's findings are likely to hold true at many other schools nationwide. This should be a wake-up call for educators about what kind of environment we are creating, and whether we are willing to engage in self-reflection about our own personal biases that may influence us each day.

In *Those Kids, Our Schools*, Shayla Reese Griffin examines patterns of racial interaction in a large, integrated high school and makes a powerful case for the frank conversations that educators could and should be having about race in schools. Over three years, Griffin observed students, teachers, and administrators in a “post-racial” exurban high school in the Midwest. In its hallways, classrooms, lunchrooms, and staff meetings, she uncovered the disturbing ways in which racial tensions and prejudices persist and are reinforced. Students engaged in patterns of behavior that underscored racial hierarchies. Teachers—no matter how intellectually committed to equity and diversity—often lacked the skills, resources, or authority to address racial issues, while administrators failed to acknowledge racial tensions or recognize how school practices and policies perpetuated racial inequality. This astute and thoughtful book offers a revealing glimpse into the world of young people struggling with the legacy of racism. More important, it highlights the disservice being done to all students in our schools when educators fail to critically interrogate issues of race. Griffin’s perceptive analysis illuminates the persistent influence of race in our education system and shows how—with appropriate support—teachers and students can develop the capacity to address racial issues and dynamics in schools in a frank and constructive way.

"The text provides useful suggestions for 'making change in schools,' and ... [offers] questions that could initiate true dialogue in staff development situations." — A.W. Peterson, *Choice Magazine*

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