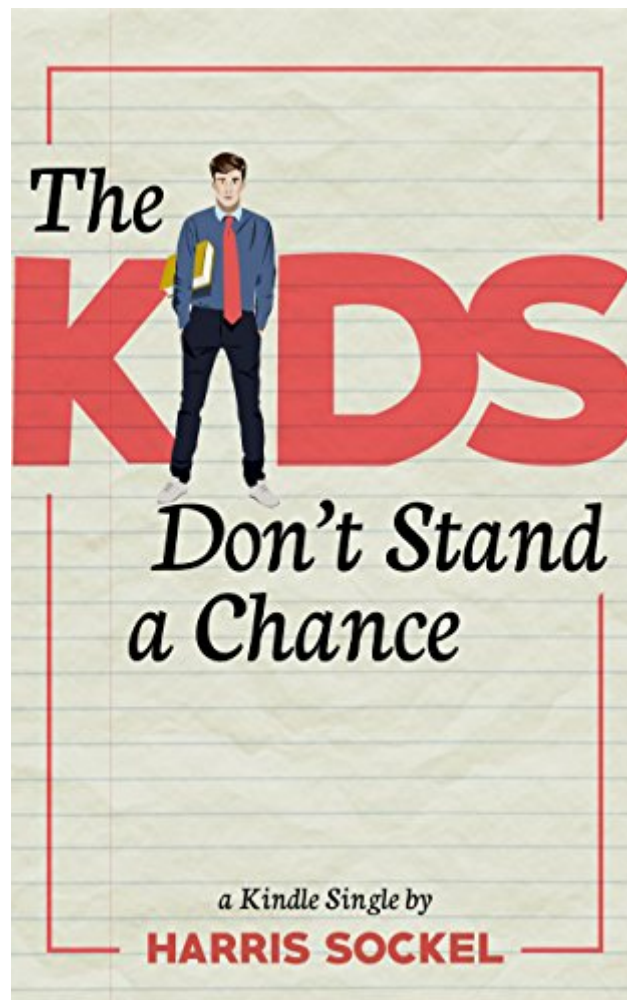




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The Kids Don't Stand A Chance: Growing Up In Teach For America (Kindle Single)



Synopsis

As a 22-year-old teacher with Teach For America—a program that puts college grads in front of the country's poorest children—Harris Sockel grew up in the same room as his students. From spending exorbitant amounts of money on neon-colored card stock to watching parents pull their kids from his class because he looked too young to teach, he saw the baffling, bleak, and very human side of the way we approach poverty in school. *The Kids Don't Stand a Chance* is an honest story about class, premature adulthood, and pretending to know the right answers. Harris Sockel is a writer, editor, and recovering middle school teacher. His work has been featured in *The Toast*, *The Daily Dot*, *xoJane*, *Thought Catalog*, and elsewhere. He co-edits the *Human Parts* collection on Medium.com, and he lives in New York City. Find him on Twitter @HarrisSockel. Cover design by Evan Twohy.

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Customer Reviews

An overview of a young person's experience in Teach For America. I did not know anything about TFA. I felt the author took a fairly unbiased approach to the subject and for that I say thanks. From a storytelling standpoint I like what the author was trying to do. Oddly, the one thing English majors

learn how to do poorly is write in a readable way. Every copywriter will tell you they need to unlearn what the colleges teach. I think some breaking up of paragraphs and shortening of sentences would make a big difference. I think it is a great short and recommend it. Good job Harris.

The author does a great job describing the challenges within the classroom, throughout the school system, and amongst the children and families contributing to the achievement gap and many front-liner's difficulty in navigating it. As a mental health counselor working in the exact same area described in the book and a best friend who is a third grade teacher in Brooklyn, I can attest that none of these descriptions are exaggerated from porn addicted middle schoolers to attacking parents and paper negotiations. I enjoyed and appreciated reading my own observations and surprises about the system depicted so accurately. Unfortunately, this is only the tip of the iceberg in beginning to understand the achievement gap and the (mostly) ineffective approaches taken in NYC public schools.

Disorganized. Not much of a point. The stories just barely fit together. I'm Public school teacher and can relate somewhat.

As much as TFA recruits try to teach their students, they end up learning from their pupils to care for a society in need: that is my take!

Great, quick read. Learned a lot about Teach for America.

Good book

A fast read, and fairly interesting. A typical "white middle-class American with high ideals goes to the black ghetto to teach the underprivileged kids" kind of story. The Teach For America program he enters, aimed at giving recent college grads a crash-course in public education, was interesting to learn about. I had played with the idea of trying it myself once or twice. I give this short book 3 stars because of the vague and somewhat abrupt ending. Not really sure what kind of conclusions the author was trying to make: about his experience, the program, or inner city public education in general. If you are thinking about teaching public school, this is a good account to study first. I just wish the author had put a little more work into the ending, and drawn some definite conclusions.

Not what I was expecting. Somewhat interesting but really did not take me anywhere in terms of the point I thought he was trying to make. I believe the author was merely trying to relay his experiences to his reader, and he was effective in this endeavor. However, the title creates within the reader a certain expectation that there will be a definitive point regarding the outcome to "the kids." Instead, it seems that he is actually making a point about the recent graduates who undertake this challenge rather than the impact on the children he was trying to reach through this program. If you are planning to read this short, be aware that the kids in question are actually the "teachers" whose expectations, much like the reader of this book, are somewhat misguided. In the end, his story was similar to that of one of my former students who underwent a City Year experience.

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