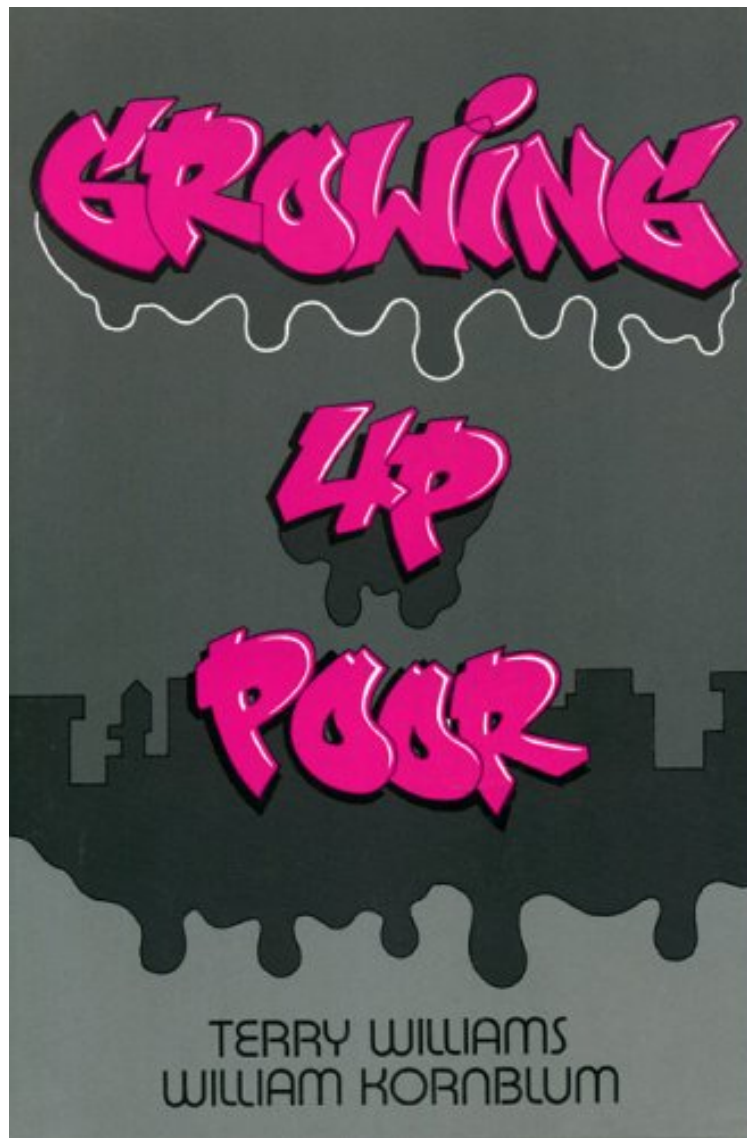


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Growing up Poor

William Kornblum, Terry Williams

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William Kornblum, Terry Williams : Growing up Poor before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Growing up Poor:

This ethnographic study looks at teenagers trapped in povertyhow some succeed in the struggle to get out and others finally give up trying. It is an outgrowth of interviews with some 900 teens in New York City, Cleveland, Louisville,

and Meridian, Mississippi. The neighborhoods where they live are socially and racially diverse. Among them are white areas sliding into poverty as traditional blue-collar jobs in smokestack industries fade away, and black and Hispanic neighborhoods where chronic unemployment has long been the prevailing tradition and fact of life. Based on the teenagers' own accounts, the book describes their experiences with working and seeking work, achievements in school and athletics, family life, and the positive influences of their peers and adult mentors. It also details the negative choices that tend to make poverty a life sentence: prostitution and street hustles, pregnancy and early parenthood, gang membership and criminal outlets, drugs and withdrawal into despair. Still, hope is an unquenchable attribute of youth, and it bubbles up in this book as the authors show how much these teenagers seek to do for themselves in exercising their limited options.