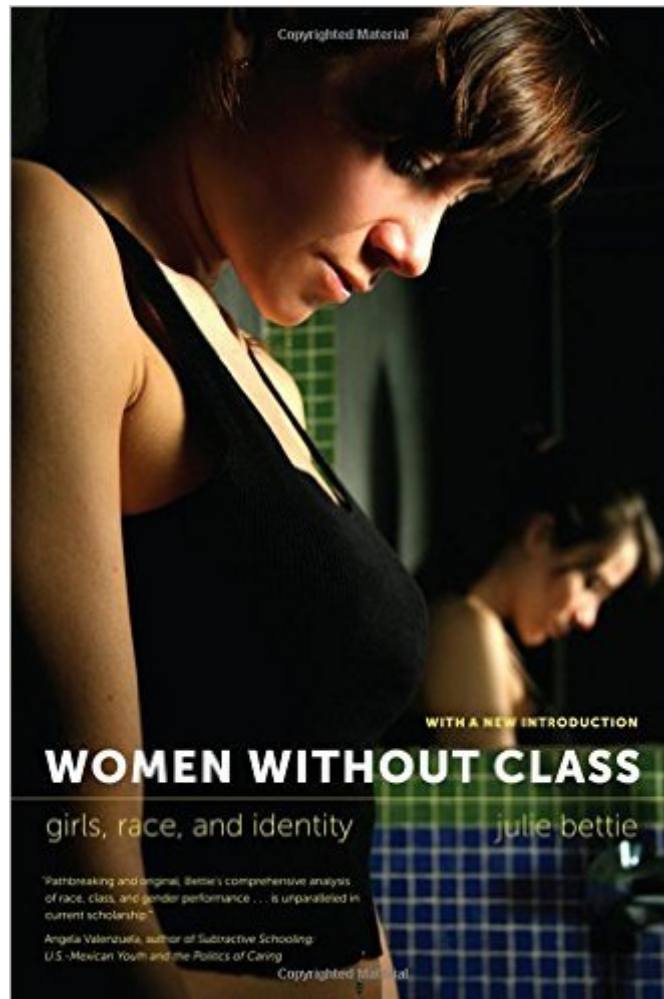


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# Women Without Class: Girls, Race, And Identity



## Synopsis

In this ethnographic examination of Mexican-American and white girls coming of age in California's Central Valley, Julie Bettie turns class theory on its head, asking what cultural gestures are involved in the performance of class, and how class subjectivity is constructed in relationship to color, ethnicity, gender, and sexuality. A new introduction contextualizes the book for the contemporary moment and situates it within current directions in cultural theory. Investigating the cultural politics of how inequalities are both reproduced and challenged, Bettie examines the discursive formations that provide a context for the complex identity performances of contemporary girls. The book's title refers at once to young working-class women who have little cultural capital to enable class mobility; to the fact that analyses of class too often remain insufficiently transformed by feminist, ethnic, and queer studies; and to the failure of some feminist theory itself to theorize women as class subjects. *Women without Class* makes a case for analytical and political attention to class, but not at the expense of attention to other social formations. [Â](#)

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"*Women without Class*" is a tour de force of exceptional scholarly research and keen social observation. Bettie does a tremendous job exploring how class operates in many powerful, yet subtle ways in the lives of young women in one California high school. She highlights the role of economics, but also addresses issues of race/ethnicity, gender, and sexuality. Through sustained, in-depth ethnographic research, Bettie illuminates the complex social dynamics of a community and

brings the personalities, experiences and worries of these young women to life. The book is honest and sharp, reading almost like a novel. I highly recommend this book to anyone interested in sociology, education, youth, race/ethnic relations, or gender.

As a person who works daily with young people both in and out of academic settings, I found this book gave a fresh perspective on how we view teenagers (both men and women) and the influence we have on their lives; especially those influences that are unconscious on our part. It changed the way I perceive my students and gave me new tools for communication. I also thought it was a terrific read; often dramatic and moving. I highly recommend this book to anyone whose work or lives are connected with young people in America.

Great book that deals with how we see other races, cultures, and or ethnicity in light of our own. Will make you think and reevaluate your take on Race in America. A Thought provoking book by Dr. Julie Bettie. She is Associate Professor in the Department of Sociology at the University of California (Santa Cruz). I hope to one day have a successful career and at least one book dealing with matters of race from my stance on psychology and theology. She has helped me out a lot in that regard.

This is a great ethnography for anyone interested in teaching and/or school administration. Should be required reading before anyone steps foot in the classroom! Teachers expectations and actions matter! Julie Bettie (2003) conducted an ethnographic study about how high school girls experience class in the school, and how their experiences of class intersect with race and gender. Bettie presents a case that girls and women have often been ignored in studies of class, and that when girls are studied it is usually with a focus on their gender over all other parts of identity. Her study demonstrates how girls' experience of class influences how they experience gender and race, and vice versa. She does not seek to establish class as the primary aspect of one's identity, but rather to show how the social discourses of class, race, and gender interact with each other and the individual to shape our identity and understanding of the world. Bettie is particularly interested in how these discourses shape girls' educational experience and attainment. Bettie outlines the recent scholarship and theoretical debates regarding class, gender, race, and education. Studies on class include the symbolic meaning of class and how these meanings inform our identity. Feminist theory incompletely recognizes women as subjects with class, making gender the primary analytical feature. This tendency within feminist scholarship hides the way class impacts women's experience

of gender (and race and age), making class invisible in the scholarship. The ways class is hidden or invisible in scholarship is demonstrated through Bettie's analysis of the research and through her study.

Used for Human Development/Women's Studies course. Relatable based on the topics of race, gender, class, and identity.

Read this book for a summer course. Interesting perspectives, helped me get a better grade.

Very interesting text on class performance.

Very interesting perspective on class.

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